



LOCH LEVEN CASTLE

LOCHLEVEN,

AND

OTHER POEMS,

BY

MICHAEL BRUCE.

WITH A LIFE OF THE AUTHOR FROM
ORIGINAL SOURCES,

BY

THE REV. WILLIAM MACKELVIE,

BALGEDIE, KINROSS-SHIRE.

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MDCCCXXXVII.

TO THE
MEMBERS OF THE DICK CLUB,
THIS VOLUME
IS RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED
BY THEIR SECRETARY,
THE EDITOR.

P R E F A C E.

THE DICK CLUB, under whose auspices this volume is published, is an Association of those Ministers and Preachers who studied Theology under the late Rev. Dr Dick of Glasgow. At a meeting of this Association, many of the facts stated in the following narrative were detailed by the writer, whose residence in the immediate vicinity of the poet's birth-place afforded him peculiar opportunities of becoming acquainted with them. These facts were considered so interesting by the meeting, that a unanimous wish was expressed that they should be embodied in a short paper, and sent to some of the periodicals. This the narrator readily consented to do, and had begun to prepare his

communication, when the gentleman, whose name appears on the title-page as publisher, proposed to him to draw up a new Life of Michael Bruce containing these statements, and he would publish it, with a new edition of his Poems, free of all expense, save that incurred by paper and printing. The Dick Club had previously been entertaining the intention of raising a subscription to complete a monument erected to the memory of our poet in Portmoak burying-ground. The generous offer of Mr Paterson at once appeared to the Editor as a more likely way of securing a sufficient sum for this object than the proposed subscription, and he therefore consented to his proposal.

Such is the history of this book. But, though it appears under the patronage of an Association of Ministers, the Editor is alone responsible for what it contains. The gentlemen who expressed a wish for the publication of the statements made to them, cannot be understood as in any way pledging themselves to the truth of the narrative. Many things are here stated which were not communicated to them, having

only become known to the writer in the further investigation of his subject; and, therefore, whatever animadversions are made upon the work, or upon the motives which prompted it, ought to be confined wholly to the Editor, for the origin, as well as the execution of it, rests properly with him.

But he is conscious of having written as if upon oath, and therefore he feels indifferent to any animadversions which may be made upon his statements. Nor is he much more concerned about approbation, for he already enjoys a higher reward than it is in the power of the public to bestow—the reward of a pleasing consciousness of having done an act of justice to injured worth.

Had the first Editor of Bruce's Poems faithfully discharged the trust reposed in him, the present Editor had been able to respect the long-received maxim, "Let nothing be said of the dead but what is favourable." But Mr Logan having failed in this, it was impossible for the writer to respect the maxim except at the sacrifice of truth; and truth, it is allowed,

is still more worthy of respect than the character of the deceased. Hence the maxim is now generally amended, by substituting *verum* for *bonum*, and rendered, "Let nothing be said of the dead but what is true." Thus altered, full honour has been paid to the maxim in the following pages.

BALGEDIE, KINROSS-SHIRE,

1st August 1837.

* * * The paragraphs in the Life of Bruce have been numbered for the sake of easy reference, and to make them thus serve as notes to the Poems.

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LIFE
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1. THE parentage of those who have been celebrated for their worth or genius, has not always been such as to allow their biographers to make it the subject of particular notice, although, in all cases, it is desirable to know what peculiar influences in the histories of such persons may have operated in forming or modifying their characters. In some instances these cannot be alluded to, even remotely, without making the party affected suffer by the contrast; while survivors connected with them feel themselves injured by what they are apt to consider an unnecessary exposure. Happily such hinderances to a detailed account of our poet's parents do not exist; whilst that account, in our opinion, is especially called for, in consequence of the erroneous impressions conveyed by the very brief statements which have hitherto been made respecting them.

2. Alexander Bruce, our poet's father, was by trade a weaver, in which vocation he is allowed to have excelled most others in his parish. It is, nevertheless, admitted, that in that vocation there were others more diligent than he ; not that he was idly disposed, for he was always busy ; but it was as often with his book as with his loom, and it is conceded by his friends that it had probably been better for those dependent upon him if his business had called him to mental rather than manual labour. His education had been neglected in his youth, or rather we should say that then, as is still too much the case, education was not sufficiently valued by the class to which he belonged, and he was therefore considered to have received enough when he had been only one or two quarters at school. But though, in the common acceptation of the phrase, he was an uneducated man, he was not so in fact ; for he was self taught, and, as is often the case, succeeded by this tuition in attaining more knowledge than many possessed of superior advantages. He was endowed by nature with a strong mind, which he enriched by extensive reading and accurate observation. He was a pre-eminently pious man, and as such his presence was much sought after by the sick and the dying. Notwithstanding his very humble circumstances in life, he was chosen by popular election (as is always the case in the Secession Church), an elder of the congregation of Milnathort, under the pastoral superintendence of the Rev. Thomas Mair, consisting at the time of about two thousand members, many of whom were not only

proprietors of land, and in otherwise comfortable circumstances, but were also remarkable for their intelligence and acquirements.* 3. In the evening his house was the regular haunt of the young men of the parish who cared for rational entertainment or improvement, and several of the Octogenarians yet alive, whose knowledge and judicious thinking are generally admitted are ready to acknowledge, that for much of their information, and peculiar modes of thought, they are indebted to Alexander Bruce.† The remark, therefore, of Logan, which has been repeated by all the subsequent biographers of the poet, that “he was descended from parents remarkable for nothing but the innocence and simplicity of their lives,” does not convey a correct idea of what they really were; understanding this remark to imply that the talents of Alexander Bruce were rather below than above mediocrity.

* Mr John Miller, proprietor of the lands of Ballingall, and Mr David Arnot, proprietor of the lands of Portmoak, were both members of this congregation. Such was the public confidence in the scholarship and integrity of these gentlemen, that they were invited to take part in the examinations of candidates for parochial schools, in all the neighbouring parishes, whenever an election took place.

† “It may be affirmed, without flattery, that, to the present day, the inhabitants of that parish (Portmoak, in which Kinness-wood is situated) generally speaking are superior to many in respect to the attainments in Christian knowledge, and their marked veneration for godliness, sobriety, and honesty.”—*Life of the Rev. Ebenezer Erskine, by Dr Donald Fraser.*—P. 201.

Mr David Pearson, (of whom some account will be given in the sequel) was constrained to draw up a memoir of him that appeared in the "Missionary Chronicle" for May 1797, in which he affirms that Bruce was familiar with the writings of the most eminent divines, both of his own and former times, extensively read in ancient and modern history, and "mighty in the Scriptures." This testimony of Pearson to the elder Bruce's intelligence only corroborates that of his son, for our poet is known to refer to his father in his poem of Lochleven, when he says

" I knew an aged swain whose hoary head
 Was bent with years, the village chronicle,
 Who much had seen, and from the former times
 Much had received. He hanging o'er the hearth
 In winter evenings, to the gaping swains
 And children circling round the fire, would tell
 Stories of old, and tales of other times."

In short, whilst Schiller, and Goethe, and Thomson, and Sir Walter Scott, have all ascribed much of their talents and genius to the early cultivation of their powers by their mothers, with Allan Cunningham* and Robert Burns,† Michael Bruce must be considered as greatly indebted to his father.

* "He (the father of Allan Cunningham) was, as all who have read the writings of his son will readily believe, a man of remarkable talents and attainments; he was a wise and a good man."—*Lockhart's Life of Burns*.—P. 190.

† "I have met with few," (said the poet after he had him-

3. It is not only insinuated of Alexander Bruce that he was illiterate, but also that he was illiberal—that as he was below others in point of intellect, so he was beyond them in point of bigotry. Had such a suspicion been thrown out against him in his own day it would have been regarded by most of those who knew him as intended for irony; for he was considered by what was then deemed the sober thinking portion of the community, so liberal as to have become heretical. So little respect did he pay to the long received opinions of the religious denomination to which he originally belonged, that he suffered himself to be ejected from it, along with the clergyman upon whose ministrations he attended, for nonconcurrence in its creed.* The insinuation of illiberality on the part of the poet's father is founded on the postscript of a letter written by his son to Mr Arnot of Portmoak, his early friend and patron. "I ask your pardon," says he, "for the trouble I have put you to by these books I have sent. *The fear of a discovery made me choose this method.* I have sent Shakspeare's Works, 8 vols., Pope's Works,

self seen a good deal of mankind) "who understood men, their manners, and their ways equal to my father."—*Letter of Burns to Dr Moore, as quoted by Lockhart in his Life of the Poet.*—P. 10.

* The Rev. Thomas Mair, together with all who adhered to him, who were not less than two thousand examinable persons, besides children, were ejected from the Anti-burgher Synod for holding that "there is a sense in which Christ died for all men."

4 vols., and Fontenelle's *Plurality of Worlds*." The discovery which the poet feared is understood by his biographers to have been his father's coming to the knowledge of his having purchased such books.* But so far was Alexander Bruce from interdicting his son's perusal of the poets, that he borrowed or bought for his use every book of poetry that came in his way. It is a scene yet well remembered by those who witnessed it when the father of our poet went down to a book-stall, at one of the fairs in the place, with Michael, then a mere child, in his hand, and inquired for the poems of Sir David Lindsay, the Burns of his day. The vender of knowledge did not happen to have the book, but upon learning that it was intended for the child before him, was so surprised that *he* should wish it, that he took up a little volume entitled, "A Key to the Gates of Heaven," and promised to give it to him, on condition that he would read a portion of it

* "But poverty was not the only difficulty with which the youthful Bruce had to contend. He had also the narrow prejudices of worthy but illiberal parents, who seem to have regarded general learning as unnecessary, if not positively mischievous. Bruce could not but feel how unnatural these prejudices were—what injustice they did to those powers and aspirations with which he was endowed, and which glowed within him. He was too dutiful a son, however, to give his parents any offence, and accordingly, when about to return home from College he took the precaution of sending Mr Arnot such volumes in his possession as he thought his father would disapprove of."—*Penny Cyclopædia, article Michael Bruce.*

upon the spot, which being done to his satisfaction, he awarded him the prize. That it was not the fear of a discovery that he had been reading Shakspeare which led our poet to send the books to the house of his friend Arnot rather than to his father's residence, is rendered evident from the fact, that he did not hesitate to commend and vindicate the immortal dramatist in his father's presence, as he did one day to Mr John Birrel, who, having admitted that the poetry and fictions of Shakspeare were most excellent, objected to the profanity which often appears in his works, to which young Bruce replied, "It is the design of dramatic poetry to portray human character, and therefore the persons introduced must be made to speak in the language which is known to be common to them." And as to Pope's works, "the fear of a discovery" could not refer to them, for they formed a part of old Bruce's own library; at least, an edition different from that referred to by Michael was found among his other books after his death, and sold by Mr Birrel along with his other effects. The fear of a discovery refers, we presume, not to the kind of books which our poet had purchased, but to their quality and the time of their purchase. Michael's taste was such, that he was impatient to furnish himself with the best editions of his favourite authors,* and he had good reason to believe that the sound judgment of his father would dis-

* Several of Bruce's Latin Classics are at present in possession of the writer. They are printed by Elzevir, and as such regarded valuable by classical scholars.

approve of his buying such books at such a time ; seeing that it was with the greatest difficulty that the finances necessary for his support had been raised during the two sessions at College which he had now attended, and it was not known where funds could be procured for the further prosecution of his object. In order, therefore, to escape the censure which he felt he deserved, he committed his purchase and his secret to the safe keeping of one, whom he knew was not likely to speak of his folly to any but himself, and whose reproofs, however severe, were not likely to pain him so much as those of a father whom he tenderly loved and highly esteemed.

4. Ann Bruce, our poet's mother, who, though not previously related to her husband, was of the same name, a name which, though it could not honour the poet, the poet, peasant as he was, has in no small degree honoured. Ann Bruce was possessed of as much piety as her husband, though not of so much discretion. She was as forward in pronouncing an opinion as he was cautious in forming one, as gay as he was grave. She seemed formed for action, he for contemplation, and accordingly she was the mainspring of all the movements in the family. The mother's liveliness, together with the father's reflection, and the piety of both, descended upon Michael, and constituted a character which commanded universal love and esteem.

5. These pious partners were the parents of eight children, of whom our poet was the fifth. Previous to the birth of Michael they adopted an amiable girl of

the name of Mary Miller, who had been left an orphan at the early age of ten, by the death of both parents. This child was Michael's nurse during his infancy, an office which he required somewhat longer than usual from the delicacy of his constitution. She was cherished both by his father and mother with parental fondness, and they succeeded in imbuing her mind with pious feeling. After residing four years in the family, she died, pouring out blessings on the heads of her foster parents. She was buried at their expense. All their own children were removed by death, at a comparatively early age, except two, a son and a daughter. James, the last member of the family, with the exception of one quarter at school, received no other education than what his father had been able to give him at home ; but his natural good sense made up for this deficiency, and enabled him to take his place among those who had been better educated. He, too, attempted rhyme, and could string verses together with great facility. In this way he frequently furnished amusement to the villagers, who would suggest a subject, and receive his thoughts upon it in verse before leaving his apartment. A number of these productions, chiefly in the Scottish dialect, and written after the manner of Ramsay and Fergusson, are still in circulation in the parish. Of these only one, entitled "The Farmer," consisting of about fifty stanzas, was printed, at the suggestion, we suppose, of some friend who must have valued it more for its wholesome advices than its poetry. It begins thus—

O happy lot ! in Britain's isle
 To dress the field, to bid the soil
 Forego its barrenness, and smile
 In plenty clad,
 Nane had mair joy at farmers' toil
 Than ance I had.

Up wi' the dawn I've held the pleugh,
 Or sawn the field, or thrash'd the mou,
 Or shorn the rig, or yard filled fu'
 Wi' stacks well figured ;
 Nae turn came wrang ; to work I trow
 I was nae niggard.

These days are gane ! oh ! weel I ween
 Now sixty-five times I hae seen
 Spring robe the Lamond Hill wi' green
 Awa I'm wearin',
 But still to farmer lads a keen
 True love I'm bearin'.

6. MICHAEL BRUCE, the author of the following Poems, was born at Kinnesswood, in the parish of Portmoak, a village mean in itself, but beautiful in its locality, being situated upon the south-west declivity of the Lomond Hills, and north-east banks of Loch-léven. The house still stands in which he received his birth. It consists of two stories, with a thatched roof, in the centre of a narrow lane, which runs up the hill from the main street, the upper flat of which was occupied by our poet's family. This flat consisted properly only of one apartment, and served at once for a work-shop and a dwelling-house. No visitor to this

humble dwelling, acquainted with the writings of Washington Irving, will fail to apply his description of Shakspeare's birth-place to that of Michael Bruce: "It is a true nestling place of genius, which delights to hatch its offspring in bye-corners." The interior of the house, and the adjoining garden, have been pathetically described by Dr Huie, himself a poet, in the "Olive Branch" for 1831. "On returning," says he, "to Kinnesswood (from Portmoak church-yard, where Bruce is buried), I attended my venerable guide to the lowly dwelling where the parents of the poet resided. We first entered the garden. 'This,' said Mr Birrel, 'was a spot of much interest to Michael. Here he used alternately to work and to meditate. There stood a row of trees which he particularly cherished, but they are now cut down,' added the good old man, and as he said this he sighed. 'Here, again,' said he, 'was a bank of soft grass on which Michael was accustomed to recline after he became too weak to walk; and here his father would sit beside him in the evening, and read to amuse him.' We next entered the house. I experienced an involuntary feeling of awe when I found myself in the humble abode where neglected worth and talents had pined away and died. The little square windows cast but a feeble light over the apartment, and the sombre shades of evening (for the sun had now set) were strikingly in unison with the scene. 'There,' said my conductor, 'auld Saunders used to sit at his loom. In that corner stood the bed where the auld couple slept; in this the bed which was occupied by

Michael, and in which he died.' The good old man's eyes filled as he spake. I found it necessary to wipe my own. I was not ashamed of my tears. They were a tribute to departed genius, and there was nothing unmanly in their flow."

7. From the moment that his children were capable of distinguishing the letters of the alphabet, it was the great object of Alexander Bruce to make them master of them. Under his father's instructions, Michael had acquired the power of reading with facility before he had reached his fourth year, at which age he was sent to the parish school, then only a few doors from his own home, with the Bible for his lesson book. The master was surprised at what he considered the stupidity of his parents, in furnishing their child with the sacred volume instead of the Shorter Catechism; the sheet through the medium of which children were then initiated in the art of reading. His surprise, however, was transferred from the parents to the child, when, upon asking him to shew what he could do, he commenced reading with fluency at the place pointed out to him. At the end of the first week, he was considered by his instructor to have been long enough among the easy lessons of the Gospels, and was therefore enjoined to bring with him, upon his return, the book read by the more advanced class. Into the other branches of learning acquired in boyhood he was introduced proportionably early. That he was able to write by the time he was six years of age, appears from a letter of his own to his friend Pearson. "I could

write," says he, " or, at least, scratch my name, with the year 1752 below it. In that year I learnt the elements of pencraft, and now let me see—1752 from 1766 leaves fourteen, a goodly term for one to be a scholar all that time." But although at the period at which he thus wrote Michael Bruce had been fourteen years a scholar, he had not been fourteen years at school. He was often unable to attend from ill health ; for the wasting disease which brought him to a premature grave was engendered in his constitution at his birth, and was imperceptibly strengthening itself in his delicate frame. His appearance, even then, indicated his tendency to phthisis. He was slenderly made, with a long neck, and narrow chest ; his skin white, and shining ; his cheeks tinged with red, rather than ruddy ; his hair yellowish, and inclined to curl. Such is the description of him which we have received from some of those who were his schoolfellows, and upon whom his interesting appearance, and aptitude to learn, seem to have made an indelible impression.

8. But his attendance at school was more frequently prevented by the poverty of his parents than interrupted by disease. In order to procure the necessaries of life in greater abundance than their own personal labours admitted, they hired out each child to herd cattle as soon as it was capable of performing the task. In this service Michael was employed during six successive summers. His pastoral duties were chiefly performed on the Lomonds, the range of hills which rise behind his native village. Although deprived du-

ring this period of the benefits of a living instructor, his mind was schooling itself in the elements of poetry, by imbibing those impressions which Nature, when she presents herself in the sublime and beautiful, never fails to make upon susceptible minds. Cowper affirms, that "the love of nature's works is born with all." But few appear to possess an exquisite relish for its beauties. Michael Bruce, however, child as he was, even then "looked round on nature and on life with the eye which nature bestows only on a poet." The impressions which he imbibed thus early remained with him, and were the same upon which he fell back, when in after life he was shut out from the society of kindred spirits, and deprived of such scenery as his eye could rest upon with delight. He then placed himself in imagination upon the knoll on which he had often reclined when tending his herd, and lived over again those delicious moments when life was new, and when nature, for the first time, presented to him some of her loveliest scenes. His poem on "Lochleven" is wholly made up of these reminiscences, and ought to be regarded by the reader as the impressions of the shepherd boy, clothed in the language of the student and the scholar.

9. Most young persons feel the tending of cattle irksome, as is manifested by their often-repeated question to passing travellers, "What is the time of day?" But Michael Bruce felt not thus. This mode of life seems to have comported with his feelings, especially

when the scene of his duties lay upon the higher portions of the hills—

“ Where he could trace the cowslip covered banks
Of Leven, and the landscape measure round,”

and whence his eye could

“ Wander o'er all the various chequered scene
Of wilds, and fertile fields, and glittering streams.”

This capability of communing with Nature kept him as cheerful, though alone, as the urchin who had neglected his charge to join his fellow cowherds in their childish sports. For all those whom chance threw in his way in this solitude, he had his little joke ready ; and, if he found them intelligent and communicative, he would get them to sit down beside him, and tarry till he examined them upon all they knew. The late proprietor of Upper Kinneston, a small estate upon the south-west declivity of the Lomond Hills, used to relate, with much feeling, the amusing stories told him, and the strange questions put to him by Michael when herding his father's cattle, and how he would offer his services to carry the boy's meals to the hill for the sake of having half an hour's conversation with this interesting youth.

10. Even thus early he manifested that his feelings were as deeply devotional as his mind was contemplative. His conversation was very generally about sacred things ; and the enjoyment he felt when any new thought connected with theology was suggested to him, was rendered obvious by his again reverting

to the topic after it had been dropt. When at any time his father was from home at the usual hour for family prayer, Michael, by the common consent of the household, led the devotions. It has been stated to the present writer, by a person who was once present upon an occasion of this kind, and was, besides, well qualified to judge of what was becoming in such circumstances, that he was impressed with a sense of incongruity in a child acting as the domestic minister in a family where there were at the time both a man and a matron ; but that, before the boy had concluded the service, he was so struck with the propriety of his language, the variety of scriptural allusions, the suitability of the petitions, and the solemnity of the manner, that he could hardly permit himself to believe that the boy whom he saw uttered the prayer which he heard.

11. That our poet's progress in learning was greatly hindered by his frequent and long-continued absence from school, will be readily supposed by the reader ; but it is known that he was as diligent in the prosecution of his studies when upon the hill-side, or by the ' farmer's ingle,' as when upon the form at school, or under his father's eye, with the task of the succeeding day prescribed to him. When attending upon a master's instructions, he had often to wait for his class-fellows to come up to him ; but, upon his return after a six months' absence, they did not require to wait till he should come up to them. Before a fortnight had elapsed, he was uniformly at the top of his class. Nor

did this precedence at which he so speedily arrived, and which he so constantly maintained, excite any jealousy among his rivals, or suspicion that partiality was shewn to him. The greatest deference was unhesitatingly rendered him, not only by those who had been more recently introduced to the school, but also by those who contended with him for the place of honour in his own class. Michael's word was of as great authority in the school as the master's. His presence quelled all quarrels,—to him the injured fled for protection,—and to him the disputant made his appeal. For this precedence, so universally conceded to him, it is not easy to account. Some boys fight their way to supremacy; others, without either bravery or talent, appropriate it as belonging to them of right; but Michael Bruce was too good-natured ever to attempt ascendancy by conquest, and too modest ever to put forth claims to it of right. His peculiarity of manner was in all probability the cause of this deference; for already he began to display individuality of character, and might have served as the prototype of Beattie's Minstrel, although it is not likely that his existence was known to that bard.

“ Silent when glad, affectionate though shy,
And now his look was most demurely sad,
And now he laughed aloud, yet none knew why,
And neighbours star'd, and sigh'd, and bless'd the lad;
Some deemed him wondrous wise, and some believed
him mad.”

The same deference was paid him at home as at

school. All the family looked up to him as one in whose sagacity they had confidence, and whom they did well to consult in all their movements. His delicate frame stood out in strong contrast with their robust persons, and constrained them to cherish him with all possible intensity of interest, as something peculiarly valuable, which they were in danger of losing. His dress was somewhat finer in texture than that of his brothers, and he paid some attention to its becoming adjustment. He is accordingly spoken of by those who still retain the recollection of him, as *a pet*, but not a spoiled child; and he appears to have been the Joseph of the family, without provoking, which very rarely happens, the envy of his brethren.

12. Michael Bruce was not more beloved by his relations, than by some of those whom the tide of life had thrown into the current along with him. Of two of these it is necessary, for reasons which will afterwards appear, that we take particular notice. David Pearson was apprentice to Bruce's father, and continued some time to work with him as journeyman, sleeping in the house with Michael as his bedfellow. He was the poet's senior only by a year. He is justly described by Dr Anderson, in his *Life of Bruce*, as "a man of strong parts, and a serious, contemplative, and inquisitive turn, who had improved his mind by a diligent and solitary perusal of such books as came within his reach." He had almost no education, understanding by that term training at school; but, like the subject of our narrative, he had a natural taste for poetry,

which the older Bruce encouraged him to cultivate, and which he and the younger Bruce stimulated in one another. The whole of Pearson's manuscripts have been preserved, and are in possession of the writer of this narrative. It appears from these, that he and Bruce wrote upon the same subjects, for he has also a poem on Lochleven, an Ode to Spring, Thoughts on Weaving, &c. &c. A perusal of these manuscripts has recalled to our mind the following beautiful lines in Wordsworth's "Excursion," and impressed us with a deep conviction of their truth:—

“ Oh many are the poets that are sown
By nature ; men endowed with the highest gifts—
The vision, and the faculty divine ;
Yet wanting the accomplishment of verse,
Which, in the docile season of their youth,
It was denied them to acquire, through lack
Of culture, and the inspiring aid of books,
Or, haply, by a temper too severe,
Or a nice backwardness, afraid of shame.”

To this person Bruce was in the habit of repeating his poetical pieces while they were in progress, so long as they continued together, and of transmitting them to him in letters after he had left home. Notwithstanding the superior acquirements of the friends with whom Bruce became acquainted at the University over those of Pearson, he still cherished him with all the ardour which he felt towards him at the commencement of their friendship, and continued to address epistles to him till within a few weeks of his death.

No person had better opportunities than Pearson to know what our poet wrote, and, consequently, no one could be better able to give evidence on the subject, when evidence was wanted. The estimate which has been formed of his talents, shews that he was a competent witness, and his sterling integrity is still the subject of eulogium in the parish of Portmoak.* When no longer able to support himself, through the infirmities of age, he had a comfortable provision afforded him by Mr White, one of the proprietors of the lands of Balgedie, by whom, as well as by all others who knew him, he was held in the highest respect.

13. Another person, whom it is here necessary to introduce to the reader's notice, as one of whom he requires to know something in consequence of the frequent reference which will be made to him in these pages, is Mr John Birrel. This gentleman was the junior by a few years of Bruce and Pearson, but was very early in life admitted into the intimacy of both. He afterwards became the elder Bruce's most intimate friend, and, by his intimacy with him, learned many of the particulars which will be detailed in the course of this narrative. Mr Birrel received a somewhat liberal education, and followed land-surveying as his profession. He is the person referred to in Dr Huie's

* "The friends of Logan think I have paid too much attention to Mr Pearson's testimony; but I think he is not disqualified from giving his testimony on this point by his want of learning. His integrity is admitted on all hands."—*Letter from Dr Anderson to Mr John Birrel.*

paper, which we have quoted, and Dr Anderson, in his life of Bruce, acknowledges himself indebted to him for a portion of the materials which he employed in drawing up his memoir of the poet. The Rev. Dr Fraser has also made public acknowledgment of obligation to him for information of which he availed himself, when preparing the lives of Ralph and Ebenezer Erskine. Mr Birrel contributed several papers to the "Edinburgh Magazine," conducted by Dr Anderson; as also to the "Perth Magazine," the "Christian Repository," "Christian Monitor," and other periodicals. He is regarded as a man of sound judgment and undoubted piety. Previous to the formation of the congregation at Balgedie, he was an elder of the Secession Church in Milnathort, under the pastoral superintendence of the Rev. Mr Porteous, since which, he has been senior member of session in the congregation of which the writer of this narrative is minister.* Mr Birrel is himself a poet, and has publicly appeared in this character in the periodicals to which we have referred. Dr Anderson was so pleased with some specimens of his poetical talents, that he pressed him to publish a volume of poetry, offering to assist him in the correction of his pieces. The original letter is now

* Mr Birrel died whilst these sheets were preparing for the press, and among the last acts in which he was engaged, was furnishing the writer with evidence of the truth of some of the statements which he finds himself called upon to make in drawing up a new Life of Michael Bruce.

before the editor, in which Mr Birrel declines compliance with this suggestion, giving as his reason, that his attention must be called away for the present from poetry, to the performance of duties which he owed to a rising family.*

14. By the time Michael Bruce had reached his eleventh year, his mind was so matured as to enable him to discuss with his friends what profession he should choose, and the means by which the qualifications necessary for the discharge of its duties were likely to be obtained. It was his father's wish, so soon as he perceived his aptness to learn, to educate him for the ministry; but he despaired of being able to raise the funds requisite for so expensive an undertaking. But the son was even more bent upon the prosecution of this object than the father, and his determination defied all the hardships which he was apprised he would have to encounter, and all the privations he would have to endure. It is certain, that he could not then form any adequate notion of what these hardships and privations would be; but there is reason to conclude, from his perseverance, when he did come to know them experimentally, that his determination would have been the same, although he had been able from the first to form the most distinct con-

* The editor takes this opportunity of expressing his obligations to the daughter of the late Dr Anderson, for the original letters of Messrs Pearson and Birrel to her father, with which she readily and kindly furnished him, upon request.

ception of them, and that he did not choose this profession, as is too often the case, from a mistaken notion that it is an easy, as well as a respectable occupation.

15. It happened that the parochial schoolmaster had a son of much the same age with our poet, whom he wished to educate for the ministry, and who was afterwards ordained as pastor of the Presbyterian congregation in Maryport, Cumberland, in connection with the Church of Scotland. There were also some other children of *portioners* in the parish, whose parents wished them to be instructed in the elements of Latin. Of these, a class was formed, and Bruce joined it, by his master's desire as well as his own. The books required during his study of this language at school, were either lent him by friends interested in his success, or purchased at second hand. It can readily be supposed that Mr Dun, who is known to have been an excellent classical scholar and an enthusiastic teacher, would bring his energies to bear upon a class in which his own son was a pupil, especially as he had resolved that he should pass immediately from his own school to the University, without receiving instructions from any other master. Of this class, Michael Bruce was uniformly at the top. The acquisition of the Latin language seemed to cost him about as little effort as the acquisition of his mother tongue; and if his master had no reason to lament his deficiency of talent, neither had he to complain of his want of diligence.

15. With the other four scholars, besides himself, who composed this class, he was upon terms of intimacy; but to one of them in particular he formed the warmest attachment. This youthful friend was the son of Mr David Arnot, proprietor of Portmoak. William Arnot was a boy of lively parts, studious habits, and warm heart. In addition to a liberal education at school, he enjoyed at home the instructions of a father, who combined a highly improved taste with great intelligence and piety. Reared amidst scenery calculated to inspire the mind with poetic sentiment, and associated from his earliest years with youths who had been favoured by the muse, he could hardly fail to be operated upon by such influences, and to become intelligent, poetic, and pious. This congeniality of sentiment and feeling, which characterized Bruce and Arnot, led them to cherish each other with even more than fraternal fondness, and, accordingly, rendered them inseparable companions. This friendship, so pure and warm, was suddenly and prematurely broken up by the death of Arnot, whilst yet a boy at school. This breach gave the first of many shocks to Bruce's feelings, which, during his brief career on earth, he received, and which threw over his natural cheerfulness a tinge of sadness. Visiting the spot, some four years after, where this most intimate companion of his boyhood is interred, he wrote a monody to his memory, and inclosed it in the following letter to Arnot's father:—“Gairney Bridge, May 29. 1765. Walking lately by the church-yard of your town, which inspires a

kind of veneration for our ancestors, I was struck with these beautiful lines of Mr Gray, in his 'Elegy written in a country church-yard,'

'Perhaps, in this neglected spot is laid,
Some heart once pregnant with celestial fire,'

and immediately I called to mind your son, whose memory will be ever dear unto me ; and, with respect to that place, put the supposition out of doubt. I wrote the most part of this poem the same day, which I should be very sorry if you look upon as a piece of flattery : I know you are above flattery, and if I know my own mind, I am so too. It is the language of the heart ; I think a lie in verse and prose the same. The versification is irregular, in imitation of Milton's Lycidas." The manner in which Bruce speaks of his friend, a boy of fifteen, will perhaps appear to our readers like flattery, when they find him writing thus of him :—

"Oft by the side of Leven's crystal lake,
Trembling beneath the closing lids of light,
With slow, short-measured steps, we took our walk ;
Then he would talk
Of argument far far above his years ;
Then he would reason high,
Till from the east, the silver queen of night,
Her journey up heaven's steep began to make,
And silence reigned attentive in the sky."

But it is considered by all who knew Arnot, that Bruce has not overrated him, for he was a youth of

great attainments, considering his years, and gave promise of pre-eminence in whatever profession he might have chosen. It is believed that our poet's early companionship with this youth was useful to him ever afterwards, by stimulating him to the greatest efforts of which he was capable, from seeing in his friend what effort could accomplish.

16. But his early friendship with this youth was productive of another kind of benefit to Bruce. The farm of Portmoak, the property and residence of Arnot's father, is situated on the very margin of Lochleven, which forms part of its boundaries, and is fully two miles from Kinnesswood, where the parish school then was. Thither our poet would often accompany his companion in the summer evenings, and as the road by which he had to return lay through an extensive morass, not easily traversed at mid-day, much less at twilight, he was often induced to remain with him over the night. In this way, the father of his friend was afforded abundant opportunities of discovering his talents and dispositions. Few parents can perceive the excellence which gains approbation, in the competitors with their children for praise, and most of them are disposed to deny that it exists. But Mr Arnot was not only sufficiently just to allow that Michael Bruce possessed both intellectual and moral excellence, but he was sufficiently generous to commend and reward it. The feeling of a less liberal-minded man would have been, that it was most presumptuous in this boy to aim at any higher profession than that

followed by his father, and equally presumptuous in the father to think of putting his child upon an equality with those above him. But the proprietor of Portmoak was not only willing that talent should rise to equality with wealth, its just position, but he was disposed to assist in its elevation. With this desire, he encouraged Bruce to frequent his house, till he might be said to be a member of the family. In this way, he relieved his parents, to a great extent, of the burden of his support, which was still farther lightened by Mr White, proprietor of Pittendreich, a farm further to the west, who was a distant relative of Bruce's, with whom he also frequently resided. But Arnot was a patron much more to his mind than his own relation, and, accordingly, he made him his sole confidant and adviser ; and, from all that we can learn, Arnot was one of few persons from whom a noble mind would willingly accept an obligation. Bruce has himself thus portrayed the character of his friend :—

“ Learned, but not fraught

With self-importance, as the starched fool
 Who challenges respect by solemn face—
 By studious accent, and high sounding phrase,
 Enamoured of the shade, but not morose—
 Politeness raised in courts, by frigid rules,
 With him spontaneous grows. Not books alone,
 But man, his study, and the better part
 To tread the ways of virtue, and to act
 The various scenes of life with God's applause.
 Deep in the bottom of the flowery vale
 With blooming shallows, and the twine

Of verdant alders fenced, his dwelling stands
Complete in rural elegance. The door,
By which the poor, or pilgrim never passed,
Still open, speaks the master's bounteous heart."

Mr Arnot's library still remains in possession of his grandson, the present proprietor of the farm, and affords sufficient proof of his love of learning, and taste in literature. To this library Bruce had at all times the freest access. Its owner directed his attention to such books as would afford him information upon the topics which had been introduced in conversation, and pointed out to him such passages as he thought good models of composition. He not only heard him rehearse his Latin lessons when he was at his house, but continued to correspond with him in that language, with the view of promoting his improvement. He suggested to him subjects for his muse, and proposed emendations on what he had written. With the solicitude of a father he laboured to cultivate his understanding, improve his taste, and fortify his heart. After the death of his son, he seems to have regarded him as his own child, and his letters ever after were more those of a parent than of a patron.

17. By the time our poet had entered his fifteenth year, the class to which he belonged at school was broken up; Arnot had entered upon that state in which the student no longer "sees as through a glass darkly;" Dun had gone to college, and the other pupils had commenced the active employment of life. The question was therefore pressed upon Bruce—What course he

should follow? He was without funds, though not wholly without friends, but he did not know how far these were to be depended upon; besides, he seems to have had a strong dislike to be indebted to others for his support, if there was a possibility of providing it himself. His first intention was, to offer himself as a candidate for a bursary in St Andrew's College, and, if mere scholarship would have secured it, he would have been certain of success; but a youth of his acquaintance had been refused admission, after examination, and Bruce, suspecting that his connection with the Secession church had operated against him, resolved, rather than hazard rejection, not to make the application.

18. Whilst thus waiting for some event in providence to indicate the course he should adopt, he employed himself in transcribing large portions of Milton and Thomson's poetry; a task which presupposes a matured judgment and polished taste, as a previous condition; for these are authors which are seldom understood, much less relished, in very early life. The familiarity which he thus acquired with the style and sentiments of these master geniuses, tended to improve his diction, but also in some measure to hinder his originality of thought. His memory was at once ready and retentive, and the phraseology with which he had so thoroughly imbued it, was frequently recurring to his mind, and forcing itself into his compositions. Coincidences of thought and expression are thus occasionally to be met with in his works, which a mind con-

versant with "Paradise Lost" and "The Seasons" will readily trace to their source. Holding, with the great biographer of the English poets, that "what is borrowed is not to be enjoyed as our own, and that it is the business of critical justice to give every bird of the muse his proper feather," we have in this edition marked all the coincidences which we have been able to detect, and, considering the age and circumstances of the writer, they will be found fewer than might have been expected. His images are always beautiful if they are not all his own. His thoughts are natural and consecutive; and if his phrases be sometimes those which have been framed by others, they are generally equalled by those which have been framed by himself. Whilst it is allowed that he imitated the style, and even adopted the sentiments, of the poets that preceded him, yet no one who reads his productions, and is capable of forming a proper estimate of them, will deny that he is a poet from inspiration.

19. We have not been able to learn with accuracy when Bruce first commenced writing original verses. In his poem of "Lochleven," when referring to his residence at Gairney Bridge, he says—

"First on thy banks the Doric reed I tuned."

But he cannot mean that it was when domiciled there that he first wrote poetry; for it is well known that his "Last Day," and several other pieces, were written previous to that period. We presume that by "the Doric reed" he means love verses, in allusion to the

fact that the only two odes of Sappho which have come down to us from antiquity, are of that character, and written in the Doric dialect of the Greek language. Mr Dun had, in consequence of some poetical exercises which Bruce performed at school, at a very early period, discovered in him indications of "the faculty divine," and it was partly by his power of versification that he first attracted the attention of the proprietor of Portmoak. It is probable that he could not say with Pope that he "lisp'd in numbers," but it is certain he could affirm with a still greater bard, that "he was early smit with the love of song." He had a well tuned ear, and was delighted with music. He was impatient to possess himself of every ballad he heard sung, and while the other children of the village were seeking after the choicest sweetmeats on which to spend their halfpence, Michael was in search of "Chevy Chase" or "The Flowers of the Forest;" and when he had familiarized his mind with the music and the sentiments of these ballads, he would endeavour to supply his lack of novelty with verses of his own. It is pretty obvious, we think, that "Sir James the Ross" was not his first attempt at the historical ballad, any more than that his "Pastoral" was his first essay in song. The well-sustained narrative of the one, and the smooth numbers of the other, seem to indicate a mind somewhat practised in both. In short—

"Song was his first and favourite pursuit,
The wild harp rang to his adventurous hand,
And languished to his breath the plaintive flute.

His infant muse though artless was not mute—
 Of elegance as yet he took no care,
 For this of time and culture is the fruit,
 And Edwin gained at last this fruit so rare.”

20. After he had left school, and was yet uncertain to what course he should betake himself, it was intimated to his father that a relative had died, bequeathing him 200 merks Scots,* when it was determined that Michael should forthwith proceed to Edinburgh and enrol himself a student at the University. Mr Arnot, to whom this resolution was speedily communicated, declared his readiness to render him assistance, by sending him occasionally a supply of provisions. So with the legacy in possession, and the provisions in promise, he set out for the metropolis. † He had been accustomed at home to the humblest fare, and therefore would not be much concerned that he was unable to command luxuries abroad. But there is some reason to suspect that, in consequence of his peculiar delicacy in stating his wants, and from the necessity of eking out his little stock of means, he had often to dispense with necessary diet. Some of his fellow stu-

* L.11 : 2 : 2 $\frac{2}{3}$.

† Several of his biographers affirm, that after leaving the school in his native village, he attended for some time at the parish school of Kinross. This statement is incorrect, and is likely to have been made in consequence of Bruce having attended the theological class in that place. He went directly from Mr Dun's school to the University.

dents who suspected his very straitened circumstances, were willing to share their meals with him, but he could not brook the thought of being fed out of pity, and whenever the invitation seemed to him to proceed from that feeling, he uniformly declined it. He is even supposed to have excused himself, when he must have been convinced that the invitation was prompted by pure respect, because his finances would not permit him to return the compliment.

21. Having been apprized, shortly after his removal to Edinburgh, that his brother James had become a weaver, he addressed to him the following verses, which we insert more with a view to shew his pious turn of mind at this early age, than his pre-eminent talent; for it cannot be said that they contain much poetry, and perhaps the subject, as he proposed to treat it, does not admit of it. He was then in his sixteenth year.

WEAVING SPIRITUALIZED. *

A web I hear thou hast begun,
 And know'st not when it may be done—
 So death uncertain see ye fear—
 For ever distant, ever near.

* This subject appears to have been suggested to Bruce by Ralph Erskine's "Smoking Spiritualized." The piece is circulated amongst the villagers of Kinnesswood, in manuscript, with whom it is popular; and from a copy belonging to one of them the above is transcribed with a few verbal alterations.

See'st thou the shuttle quickly pass—
Think mortal life is as the grass,—
An empty cloud—a morning dream—
A bubble rising on the stream.

The knife still ready to cut off
Excrescent knots that mar the stuff,
To stern affliction's rod compare—
'Tis for thy good, so learn to bear.

Too full a quill oft checks the speed
Of shuttle flying by the reed—
So riches oft keep back the soul,
That else would hasten to its goal.

Thine eye the web runs keenly o'er
For things amiss, unseen before,—
Thus scan thy life—mend what's amiss—
Next day correct the faults of this.

For when the web is at an end,
'Tis then too late a fault to mend—
Let thought of this awaken dread,—
Repentance dwells not with the dead.

22. Bruce's companions at college were Mr George Henderson, of whom the reader will find some account in the Notes to "Lochleven;" Mr David Greig, afterwards minister in Lochgelly, and for many years clerk to the Associate or Burgher Synod; Mr George Lawson, afterwards minister in Selkirk, and Professor of Theology to the religious body just named; with two others, of whom, in consequence of the prominence which the writer of this narrative must give to the

name of the one, and the prominence which Bruce himself has given to the name of the other, it is necessary to furnish a more detailed account. The gentleman to whom the present writer refers is Mr John Logan, son of a farmer in East Lothian, who, reared under the ministry of the Rev. John Brown of Haddington, then Theological Professor to the Burgher Synod, purposed, when he had resolved upon the ministry as his profession, to enrol himself a student of his pastor's class ; but becoming acquainted with Patrick Lord Elibank, residing at that time upon his estate of Balingrief, near Aberlady, and also with Dr John Mair, the parochial clergyman of Athelstaneford, who shewed him particular attention, he began to waver in his purpose of connecting himself with the Secession church, and to manifest leanings towards the Establishment. These leanings were confirmed, when, at the recommendation of Dr Blair, who took an interest in him, in consequence of having distinguished himself in his rhetoric class, he was engaged as tutor by Sir John Sinclair. When Logan first became connected with this coterie of students, he made great professions of piety, and was regarded by his companions to be what he seemed. But after his introduction to the persons we have just named, he began to be less careful of his deportment, and by the time he became a student of divinity, most of them found it necessary to treat him with some reserve.* His change of manner and con-

* I have often heard my father refer to Bruce. Indeed his early days and youthful associates were subjects in which

duct became so marked, that Dryburgh, of whom we shall make more particular mention presently, took the liberty of stating, in a letter which he addressed to him, that he was shewing symptoms of backsliding. A copy of Logan's reply to this epistle is now before the writer, in which, referring to his correspondent's insinuation, he says, " You think I am not so religious as I was last winter, because I did not go to Kirkaldy under command ; but, in my opinion, there is no more religion in hearing sermons, than there is iniquity in hearing oaths ; and to convince you to the contrary, I travelled no less than twelve miles to hear Mr Shirra, your own parson ; prithee, tell him to speak no more Latin when he crosses the Firth of Forth, because the people there do'nt understand him, and oblige yours, &c."* Having passed through a theological course of study at the University, he was licensed as a preacher, in connection with the Established Church, by the Presbytery of Haddington. His popularity as a

he took great delight. He cherished the memory of Bruce with the deepest veneration and ardent affection, on account of his fervent piety, amiable dispositions, and true genius. Logan was also one of his College companions ; but so far from encouraging an intimacy with him, he rather kept aloof from him. Though a man of true genius, his fellow-students did not look upon him as an exemplary or religious character.—*Letter from the daughter of the late Professor Lawson to the Editor.*

* For the copy of the letter from which the above passage is extracted, and two others, the one from Dryburgh to Bruce, the other from Bruce to Dryburgh, the editor is indebted to his friend Mr William Kirk, Fleet Street, London, who obtained them from Dryburgh's relations.

preacher, gained to him fifteen months after licence, a presentation to the second charge of South Leith, from the Incorporated Trades of that town ; but, in consequence of the determined opposition of some of those who supposed they had a right to control the election, it was other fifteen months before he could be ordained, and not till both the Ecclesiastical and Civil Courts had decided upon the validity of his claims. Instead of conciliating his opponents, by an assiduous attention to the duties of his office, he gave himself up almost wholly to literary studies. A few years after his settlement, he delivered a course of lectures, in St Mary's Chapel, Edinburgh, on the philosophy of history, at first with little success, but afterwards both to the increase of his fame and emoluments. Whilst thus engaged, the chair of Universal History, in the College, became vacant, and he offered himself as a candidate for the professorship ; but the nomination being invested, by act of Parliament, in the Faculty of Advocates, from whose *leet* of two persons (generally, of course, members of that Body) the Town-Council are bound to make choice, they elected Mr Fraser Tytler, afterwards Lord Woodhouselee. This disappointment preyed upon Logan's spirits, more especially, when he found the fame of the new professor compelling him to discontinue his lectures. Determined, if possible, to raise his popularity in another department of literature, since it had failed in this, he offered, to the manager of Covent Garden Theatre, a tragedy, entitled Runnamede. It was however interdicted by the Lord Chamberlain, upon suspicion of having a seditious

tendency. He printed it, with a view perhaps to shew that the suspicion was groundless; and Campbell, in his "Specimens of British Poets," affirms, that the reader will look in vain either for politics or poetry in the play. It was afterwards brought out on the Edinburgh stage, but the public did not encourage its frequent performance. His congregation were highly offended with him for occupying his time in furnishing amusement to the public. This offence was aggravated, by his indulging in habits of intemperance. At length it became necessary, in order to prevent deposition, that he should resign his charge, which he did after retaining it twelve years, and retired to London, where he was supported, partly by the annuity which he had secured from his congregation, and partly by the productions of his pen in the form of contributions to the Reviews. He died in the metropolis in 1788, about forty years of age. It is said that his latter end was worthy of the professions of his earlier years; that when he could no longer hold a book, he would get his visitors to read the Scriptures to him. We hope his repentance was genuine, notwithstanding that truth will compel us to make some statements in the sequel, injurious to his memory.

23. The companion of all others at College, to whom Bruce was most attached, was Mr William Dryburgh, from Dysart. Like Bruce, he was a youth of extraordinary piety,* and alas! like him, also a youth of

* Letter from the Rev. W. Adair Pettigrew, Dysart, to the editor.

consumptive habit. Both of them had a presentiment that they were to drop into a premature grave, and the probable brevity of their mortal existence and their delightful hopes of a glorious immortality, were the frequent subjects of their conversation and correspondence. As pilgrims, soon to make their exit from this world, and as "heirs together of the grace of life," they were drawn towards each other by sympathies and regards such as none but pious minds can feel. Their presentiment was confirmed by the events: Dryburgh died in his eighteenth year, and Bruce followed him to the grave in less than a year after. How keenly our poet felt the death of his friend, is evinced by a letter which he addressed to Pearson upon receiving intelligence of the event. "I have not many friends," says he, "but I love them well. Death has been among the few I have; poor Dryburgh! but he is happy. I expected to have been his companion through life, and that we should have stept into the grave together; but heaven has seen meet to dispose of him otherwise. What think you of this world? I think it very little worth. You and I have not a great deal to make us fond of it; and yet, I would not change my condition with any unfeeling fool in the universe, if I were to have his dull hard heart into the bargain. Farewell, my rival in immortal hope! my companion, I trust, for eternity! Though far distant, I take thee to my heart; souls suffer no separation from the obstruction of matter, or distance of place. Oceans may roll between us, and climates interpose in vain,—the

whole material creation is no bar to the winged mind. Farewell! through boundless ages, fare thee well! May'st thou shine when the sun is darkened! May'st thou live and triumph when time expires. It is at least possible we may meet no more in this foreign land, this gloomy apartment in the universe of God. But there is a better world in which we may meet to part no more. Adieu." But Bruce loved Dryburgh too well to be content with merely telling Pearson how keenly he felt his loss. Genuine grief, like genuine love, is poetical, for the one is the natural offspring of the other; and prose is too cold and sluggish to be the vehicle of either passion when roused. In grief, as in love, the most dull and stupid are sometimes poetical without being aware of it. But Bruce was a poet by nature, and, therefore, a poet upon all occasions. Expecting his verse to live, after he himself was dead and his prose forgotten, he resolved, that if his memory should survive, Dryburgh's should survive along with it, and that the world should know how much he loved his friend, and how much his friend was worthy of his love.

Alas! we fondly thought that heaven designed
His bright example mankind to improve,
All they should be was pictured in his mind—
His thoughts were virtue, and his heart was love.

Calm as the summer's sun's unruffled face
He looked unmoved on life's precarious game,
And smiled at mortals toiling in the chase
Of empty phantoms,—opulence, and fame.

Steady he followed virtue's onward path,
 Inflexible to error's devious way*;
 And firm at last in hope and fixed faith
 Through death's dark vale he trod without dismay.

Whence, then, these sighs? and whence this falling tear,
 To sad remembrance of his merit just?
 Still must I mourn! for he to me was dear,
 And still is dear, though buried in the dust.

24. The young men to whom we have just referred, met, along with some other students, as a literary society, once a-week, during the session of College. The laws of their association required each member to read an essay, in turn, to the meeting. Bruce preferred writing verse to prose, and instead, therefore, of discussing some metaphysical point, or illustrating some maxim in morals, he read a poem on "The Last Day." The poem was so much admired by some members of the Society, that they asked his leave to take copies of it. Bruce is considered by some critics as not having been successful in this piece; but to expect that he should, is to expect an impossibility according to Dr Johnson, who remarks, in his Life of Philips, that "he began to meditate a poem on the Last Day, a subject on which no mind can hope to equal expectation." In the choice of this subject Bruce fell into an error common to young men, that of selecting a theme which admits of display without costing the trouble of thought or research. The Scriptures, the only source whence information can be obtained respecting the closing scene of this world's drama, gives little encouragement by

their example to dilate upon the theme ; and it is manifestly a matter of little moment what will be the grandeur of Nature's final catastrophe, since the parties interested in it will be too much occupied with other considerations, to attend to its splendours. But it would be unfair to judge of Bruce's success in this attempt, from the specimen which we are able to afford, even supposing that the subject were one, which, with propriety, might be "married to immortal verse." When first written, it was designed only to serve a trivial purpose, and therefore, great pains were not likely to be bestowed upon it. It is known that he afterwards enlarged and improved it, but the altered version was suppressed by him to whom it was entrusted for publication. The poem was first printed by Dr Anderson, in his edition of the British Poets, from a copy furnished by Mr Birrel, who, in the letter with which he accompanied it, gave this account of it : — "I have sent you the 'Last Day,' by Mr Bruce, transcribed from a copy which I long since took from the original, now in Dr Baird's possession. My copy was compared by Mr Harvey, with another belonging to the Rev. David Greig of Lochgelly, one of Bruce's College companions. He corrected mine in several places, and particularly inserted in the body of the poem about forty lines which I had written down as a fragment, not being sure if it really belonged to the Last Day, in consequence of the deranged state of the manuscripts."

25. Bruce, being now known to his fellow-students

as a poet, was solicited by several of them to furnish them with verses in commendation of their friends, or censure of their rivals. With one exception, he refused to comply, and when the occasion is stated, we do not think that exception will be deemed discreditable to him. A conceited youth belonging to the literary society, to which we have referred, was in the habit of boasting that he could write a style superior to Addison, or any popular author of the day. When his turn came to read an essay, there was a full muster of the members to hear the composition which was to outshine, in the polish of its diction, that of every author in the English language. It was a perfect piece of rodomontade, exciting the risibility, instead of the admiration, of his hearers. It was suggested to Bruce, that he might benefit this young man, by inflicting upon him a little gentle satire, which he attempted by producing the "Fable of the Eagle, Crow, and Shepherd," in which, as the moral of the tale, he tendered this piece of wholesome advice to the would-be-understood great man:—

"My son, said he, warned by this wretch,
Attempt no deed above your reach;—
An Eagle not an hour ago—
He's now content to be a Crow."

26. It was a principle laid down by Bruce, to which he most religiously adhered, never to give cause of personal offence by the effusions of his muse. Incidents were often occurring which presented him with temptations of this kind, especially as his mind was more

prone to pursue the sportive than the serious, to dwell upon the eccentric rather than the regular. But the tenderness that dwelt in his nature would not suffer him to inflict a moment's pain upon the most insignificant being alive, and he chose rather to sacrifice his reputation for talent, than lose the satisfaction arising from "a conscience void of offence." Writing upon one occasion to his friend Arnot, he says, "I was about to entertain you with a character, not altogether unknown to you, of a talker, or story-teller, but I do not choose, merely for a little diversion, to incur the reprehension of any person living."*

27. By dint of saving and borrowing, Alexander Bruce was enabled to render his son some assistance during his remaining sessions at College; while Mr Arnot continued to send him occasional supplies of his dairy and farm produce. But that he was in the most straitened circumstances, while prosecuting his studies, has been shewn by a letter of his already published addressed to his friend and patron. "Edinburgh, Nov. 27. 1764.—I daily meet with proofs that money is a necessary evil. When in an auction I often say to myself, How happy should I be if I had money to purchase such a book! How well should my library be furnished, '*nisi obstat res angusta domi.*'

'My lot forbids, nor circumscribes alone
My growing virtues, but my crimes confines.'

* For the letter above quoted and some others of Bruce to Arnot, the editor is indebted to the present proprietor of Portmoak, the grandson of the gentleman to whom they were addressed.

“Whether any virtues would have accompanied me in a more elevated station is uncertain, but that a number of vices, of which my sphere is incapable, would have its attendants, is unquestionable. The Supreme Wisdom has seen this meet, and the Supreme Wisdom cannot err.” At the end of each session, he returned home much exhausted by his application to study, but speedily recruited through the attentions of the proprietor of Portmoak, with whom, during the recess of College, he chiefly resided, although he was seldom in perfect health, complaining generally of headachs and depression of spirits. These, however, seldom hindered his paying court to the muse. Most of his time, during the summer months, was occupied either in reading or writing poetry. His productions during these periods must be brought under the reader’s notice, at a subsequent stage in our narration, and we shall not therefore stay to enumerate them at present.

28. A short time previous to the period of which we are writing, the Antiburgher Synod had opened a class in Alia, where their Divinity Hall was then kept, for the instruction of their students in moral philosophy, in consequence of the pernicious tenets, as they considered them, taught by the several professors of that science in the Universities. The synod required the students’ attendance upon this class, for two sessions of eight months each. No fee was demanded—the synod paying the professor’s salary. This circumstance induced Bruce to make application for admission to attend it. At the time of his doing so, he

was in the habit of accompanying his father to his place of worship in Milnathort, the minister of which, as already stated, had been ejected by the synod for preaching what was considered unsound doctrine. As yet, however, he was in communion with no church. The synod required that candidates for admission to their philosophical class should be either members or regular hearers in their body, and Bruce supposed himself belonging to this latter class ; but the presbytery to which he applied thought otherwise, and therefore decided that his application be not then received, but that he be encouraged to renew it at some future period. To this decision they probably came in the expectation that, before he renewed his application, he would withdraw from the ministry of Mr Mair, and connect himself with some of the congregations under the inspection of the synod.* This decision was a severe disappointment to Bruce, as he had calculated that he might support himself by teaching a school in Alloa or its neighbourhood ; and being exempted from the payment of class fees, might regard his chief difficulties in getting forward to the ministry as now ob-

* "I recollect having been told of Mr Michael Bruce having made application for admission to the philosophical class in our church. If it was so, I may suppose that his rejection was grounded on his not being attested as one in full communion, or not a regular hearer in our church. I will say nothing disrespectful of our worthy fathers, but it cannot be denied that a liberal spirit had not then descended on our church."—*Letter from the Rev. Dr Pringle, Perth, to the Editor.*

viated. His friend Arnot recommended him to study moral philosophy in the University, and furnished him with some money to prosecute this design, and with this view he again returned to Edinburgh.

29. Having paid a visit to his relations during the Christmas holidays, of this, his last session at college, a proposal was made to him, by some of the inhabitants of Gairney Bridge, a small hamlet about two miles south of Kinross, to open a school in that place. A very prosperous one had been raised there, some time before, by Mr John Brown, afterwards minister in Haddington, and Professor of Theology to the Associate Burgher Synod, but had been allowed to go down, after he left it to enter upon the ministry.* Respecting this proposal he was kept some time in suspense, as appears from a letter which he wrote after his return to Edinburgh. "March 27. dies natalis. 1765.—I am in great concern just now for a school. When I was over last, there was a proposal made by some people of these parts to keep one at Gairney Bridge. What it may turn out I cannot tell." Arrangements, however, were finally made, and he entered upon the situation at the end of the session.

30. About the same time that Bruce wrote the above letter to Mr Arnot, he wrote also the following

* Gairney Bridge is a memorable spot in the history of the Secession church, for it was there its founders met, and first constituted themselves into a presbytery, apart from the jurisdiction of the Establishment.

to another friend :—“ Last week I made a visit to Portmoak, the parish where I was born, and being accidentally at the funeral of an aged rustic, I was invited to partake of the usual entertainment before the interment. We were conducted into a large barn, and placed almost in a square,

When lo ! a mortal, bulky, grave, and dull,
 The mighty master of the sevenfold skull,
 Arose like Ajax. In the midst he stands—
 A well filled bicker loads his trembling hands.
 To one he comes, assumes a visage new—
 ‘ Come ask a blessing John?—’tis put on you.’
 ‘ Bid Mungo say,’ says John, with half a face,
 Famed for his length of beard and length of grace.
 Thus have I seen, beneath a hollow rock,
 A shepherd hunt his dogs among his flock —
 ‘ Run collie, Battie, Venture.’ Not one hears,
 Then rising, runs himself, and running swears.

In short, Sir, as I have not time to poetize, the grace is said, the drink goes round, the tobacco pipes are lighted, and, from a cloud of smoke, a hoary-headed rustic addressed the company thus :—‘ Weel John (*i. e.* the deceased), noo when he’s gone, was a good, sensible man, stout, and healthy, and hail ; and had the best hand for casting peats of onybody in this kintra side. A weel, Sirs, we maun a’ dee—Here’s to ye.’ I was struck with the speech of this honest man, especially with his heroic application of the glass, in dispelling the gloomy thoughts of death.” *

* This unseemly procedure which was once common at funerals in the country, but now happily falling into disuse,

31. Of Bruce's exercises at college we have not been able to trace a vestige, except a small book containing the greater part of Watt's Logic, rendered into question and answer; a task which he probably imposed upon himself, as a good method for mastering the science. All his tickets and testimonials are now lost, and we are not, therefore, able to determine either the order in which he pursued his studies, or how he approved himself to his several masters. As we do not choose to make averments, for the truth of which we have no evidence, we avail ourselves of the statements of Dr Anderson on this point; who, being acquainted with some of Bruce's contemporaries, was likely furnished by them with the information which he gives. "He applied himself," says he, "to the several branches of literature and philosophy, with remarkable assiduity and success. Of the Latin and Greek languages he acquired a masterly knowledge, and he made eminent progress in metaphysics, mathematics, and moral and natural philosophy. But the Belles Lettres was his favourite pursuit, and poetry his darling study."

seems to have strongly impressed the mind of our poet, for he introduces it also into his "Last Day," with implied disapprobation—

"To the dust
 We gave the dead. Then, moralizing, home
 The swains returned, *to drown in copious bowls*
 The labours of the day, and thoughts of death."

32. Having left college, Bruce immediately commenced his labours as a teacher, at Gairney Bridge. The school was kept in an old cottage which happened to be previously untenanted. A few deals laid on blocks of wood sufficed for forms, and an old table served as writing-desk. This latter article of furniture was so frail, that before the first month transpired, in which it had been so used, it was damaged beyond repair. Upon this disaster the poet addressed the following letter to Mr Flockhart, proprietor of the lands of Annafrech, who took the active management of the school:—

“ SIR,

“ GAIRNEY BRIDGE,
JUNE 1765.

The following will inform you that we are in a *tabeless* condition (if you will excuse the novelty of the word), which I desire you to take into consideration. I was about to say a great many fine things on the subject, but I find they are all slipt out of my head. To your wife and brother make the compliments of

Yours sincerely,

MICHAEL BRUCE.”

THE FALL OF THE TABLE.

“ Within this school a table once there stood—
It was not iron—No! ’twas rotten wood.
Four generations it on earth had seen—
A ship’s old planks composed the huge machine.

Perhaps that ship in which Columbus hurled
 Saw other stars rise on another world,—
 Or that which bore, along the dark profound,
 From pole to pole, the valiant Drake around.—
 Tho' miracles were said long since to cease,
 Three weeks—thrice seven long days—it stood in peace ;
 Upon the fourth, a warm debate arose,
 Managed by words and more emphatic blows ;
 The routed party to the table fled,
 Which seemed to offer a defensive shade.
 Thus, in the town, I've seen, when rains descend,
 When arched porticoes their shades extend,
 Papists and gifted Quakers, Tories, Whigs,
 Forget their feuds, and join to save their wigs—
 Men born in India, men in Europe bred,
 Commence acquaintance in a mason's shed.
 Thus they ensconced beneath the table lay,—
 With shouts the victors rush upon the prey,—
 Attacked the rampart where they shelter took.
 With firing battered, and with engines shook,
 It fell. The mighty ruins strew the ground.
 It fell! The mountains tremble at the sound.
 But to what end (say you) this trifling tale ?
 To tell you man as well as wood is frail.—
 Haste then, * since " life can little more supply,
 Than just to look about us and to die." †

33. All Bruce's friends knew him to be possessed of

* Pope's Essay on Man.

† The editor is indebted for the above letter to Henry Flockart, Esq. Annafrech, grandson of the gentleman to whom it was addressed. The original is still in his possession.

the qualities necessary for teaching, but most of them doubted his having those which are essential to the proper discipline of a school. Aware of his tendency to put the most favourable construction on every action, and knowing the gentleness of his disposition, they feared that he would seldom or never discover faults; and that though he did discover, he would not punish them. They endeavoured, therefore, to impress upon him that government was part of a master's duty, as well as instruction; for the one depended in a great measure upon the other; and that it was not enough that the well-deserving be rewarded, but that the ill-deserving be punished. Mr Dryburgh, upon this occasion, wrote him as follows:—"Now that you have taken up a school, I beg to remind you that you are a pedagogue—neither be too gentle nor too severe. The one treatment is as bad as the other, but if there be any difference, I think indulgence the worse of the two. But, on the other hand, there are many who, professing to whip blockheads, ought to undergo a similar punishment for being one themselves—to whom the words of Solomon, which Dean Swift once chose for his text, may be very well applied, 'Stripes are for the back of fools.'" These sentiments were still farther enforced in a letter sent him, about the same time, by his more experienced friend Arnot. "The energies of the young," says he, "will be sure to lie dormant, if they be not roused by those to whom their training is intrusted, as most soils are barren without cultivation. But there is much need

of prudence, for, as some ground requires the stronger plough, another plot may be managed by an easy hand. With some force must be used—forbearance must be employed towards others. You have the advantage of spurring them up by emulation, which seldom fails, but which, at the same time, does not always succeed. *By this common impulse I could not be affected.*" These hints, however, were thrown away upon Bruce. He loved his pupils with almost a paternal regard, and he assumed that each of them loved him with an equal affection in return. To the power of this principle he trusted to excite diligence, and secure obedience. When it failed, as he found it sometimes did, he discoursed to the culprit on the evils of indolence, or inculcated upon him the obligations expressed or implied in the fifth commandment, as the case might require ; and, because these considerations weighed with himself, he took it for granted that they could not fail to weigh with them. He accordingly regarded the rod as an unnecessary appendage, and abstained from its use.

34. From the above cause, or some other which we have not been able to learn, he did not succeed in raising a numerous school. We find from a letter written by Mr George Henderson to Mr Dryburgh, when on a visit to Gairney Bridge, that Bruce had only *twenty-eight scholars*, and we have not learned that he afterwards increased this number. The letter is dated about two months after our poet commenced the school. The following fragment of a dialogue

written by Bruce, shews that his fees were not only the merest trifle, but that also in some cases they were most grudgingly paid. “As I was about to enter on my labours for the week, an old fellow like a Quaker came up and addressed me thus:—*Q.* Peace be with you friend.—*M.* Be you also safe.—*Q.* I have brought my son Tobias to thee, that thou mayest instruct him in the way that he should go.—*M.* He is welcome.—*Q.* Our brother Jacob telleth me that thou shewest thyself a faithful workman, hearing thy scholars oftener in a day than others, because thou hast few.—*M.* I presume I do.—*Q.* Verily therein thou doest well, thou shalt not lose thy reward, it shall be given thee with the faithful in their day.—*M.* Aye, but, friend, I need somewhat in present possession.—*Q.* I understand you, thou wouldst have the prayers of the faithful.—*M.* Aye, and something more substantial; in short, my friend, I must have *two shillings per quarter* for teaching your son Tobias.—*Q.* Ah! friend, I perceive, thou lovest the mammon of unrighteousness—let me convince you of your sin.—*M.* Certainly, since thou seemest to be a most righteous man, who deemest the servant worthy of his hire.—*Q.* Harken unto my voice; Ezekiel, who was also called Holdfast, took but sixpence in the quarter, as thou callest it. He was a good man, but he sleepeth—the faithful mourned for him. He catechised the children seven times a day. He was one of the righteous, yea, he was upright in his day, save in the matter of

* * * * *—*M.* I still think that the la-

bour you expect me to bestow upon your son Tobias, is worth two shillings a quarter.—Q. Two shillings ! verily, friend, thou art an extortioner, yea, thou grindest the face of the poor, thou lovest filthy lucre. Thou hast respect unto this present world.”—*Cætera desunt.*

35. But although Bruce's emoluments at Gairney Bridge appear to have been only at the rate of L. 11 a-year ; yet he was in other respects comfortable. It had been agreed, by the few more wealthy persons, whose children he taught, to board the teacher by turns ; and he was accordingly received by Mr Grieve, farmer in Classlochie, by whom he was treated as one of the family, and who would not suffer him to remove from his house during the whole time he taught in this place. This gentleman had a daughter, younger than our poet by about a year, to whom he became most warmly attached. Magdalene Grieve, afterwards the wife of Mr David Low, proprietor of Cleish Mill and Wester Cleish, was a young woman of modest appearance and agreeable manners, with a large portion of natural good-sense. The poet's fancy, however, decked her out with fascinations sufficiently numerous and striking ; and had she been as he describes her, she must not only have been his, but every other person's favourite who saw her.

“ In the flower of her youth—in the bloom of eighteen,
Of Virtue the goddess—of Beauty the queen ;
One hour in her presence, an era excels
Amid courts, where ambition with misery dwells.

When in beauty she moves, by the brook of the plain,
You would call her a Venus new sprung from the main.
When she sings, and the woods with her echoes reply,
You would think that some angel was warbling on high."

Besides the "Pastoral Song," from which these verses are quoted, our poet has celebrated this lady by the name of "Eumelia," and "Peggy," in his "Lochleven," "Alexis," and "Lochleven No More." Were we to judge from some expressions which he has employed in these pieces, we would conclude that Miss Grieve received his addresses with coldness; but it is known from her own testimony, often and solemnly repeated, that he never declared his passion to herself. She was not so ignorant of Cupid's lore, but that she could read, in his sayings and doings, a language sufficiently intelligible to a girl of her age, but there was a reserve about him which she thought incompatible with real attachment, and her good sense would not permit her to impose a definite meaning upon a look or a word, when she was not certain such meaning was intended. She continued through life to cherish his memory with great fondness, and manifested a particular interest in any of his relatives who visited her. Whether if Bruce had been spared, and settled in the ministry, he would have chosen Magdalene Grieve for his wife, is a question which, of course, we cannot answer. We know that he continued his attachment to her till death, and we believe he was deterred from declaring his passion, partly from excessive modesty, and partly from a presentiment that it was not the will of hea-

ven that he should be either a pastor or a husband. He sung thus of her after he had left her father's house, and when the fell disease, which laid him prostrate in death, was preying upon his vitals.

“ Though from her far distant, to her I'll prove true,
 And still my fond heart keep her image in view.
 O ! could I obtain her, my griefs were all o'er—
 I would mourn the dear maid and Lochleven no more.

But if fate has decreed that it ne'er shall be so,
 Then grief shall attend me wherever I go,
 'Till from life's stormy sea, I reach death's silent shore.
 Then I'll think upon her and Lochleven no more.”

36. While at Gairney Bridge, with a view, if possible, to increase his finances, Bruce entertained the project of publishing a volume of his poems, but could not command courage to appear in the character of an author. His friends, confident of his success, urged him in vain to the execution of this design. An original letter addressed to him by his old schoolfellow Dun, who, as already stated, was the son of his parochial teacher, is now before the writer, in which he presses upon him the publication:—“ *Edinburgh, January 25. 1766.* I received yours,” says he, “and am surprised that you say you have nothing to write. Have the Muses forsaken you? Have the tuneful sisters withdrawn from the banks of Lochleven? It is impossible you can have offended them? No, they will yet exalt your name as high as ever they did Addison's or Pope's. My dear friend, I long to see you

appear in public. I hope I shall be freed from suspense ere long. *Do not fail to do it soon.*" But, if we are to regard the few pieces published after Bruce's death as all he ever wrote, it is manifest that, at the period to which this letter refers, he could not possibly have made up a volume, for the poem of "Lochleven," which occupies more than half of the book, small as it is, was not written for many months after. But it has been reported by persons who had opportunity of seeing his manuscripts, that he had composed several poems of considerable length besides, and a vast number of shorter pieces, before he became a student of divinity. This report is indirectly confirmed by two letters at present in our possession. The one is from Mr George Lawson to Bruce, and dated from Boghouse, Feb. 20. 1766, in which he says, "Pray inform me when Mr Swanston proposes to begin his course of lectures, and whether you design to attend them. I would have been glad to have seen your criticism on Moir's pamphlet, or *some of your new compositions, unless so large that they cannot be conveyed.*" The other is a letter from Bruce himself to his friend David Pearson, in which he had enclosed his beautiful ballad of "Sir James the Ross." "Let me see some of your papers—at least, a little more of something new, for really I cannot afford *such cart-loads of stuff as you have every day from me*, if it were to my brother, at the rate you return." But more of this at a subsequent stage in our narrative.

37. Bruce had now finished his literary course at

college, and was about to enter upon the study of divinity ; but, before he could do so, it behoved him to be in communion with the church. The question was therefore pressed upon him, with what body of Christians he should connect himself ? The clergyman upon whose ministrations he had hitherto attended was unconnected with any religious body, and he had no reason to expect he would succeed him in office. His predilections would naturally be in favour of the Anti-burgher section of the Secession Church, to which his father and Mr Mair had belonged previous to their ejection ; but it is probable, that the refusal of his application to be admitted to their philosophical class determined him, together with his approbation of the peculiarities that distinguished the one branch of the Secession from the other, in favour of the Burgher, or Associate Synod. He was accordingly admitted to the communion of the church by the Rev. John Swanston of Kinross, who had been recently appointed Professor of Theology by the Synod to which he belonged, and into whose class Bruce was afterwards enrolled as a student. It mattered not what difference in age, rank, or attainments, subsisted between Bruce and the persons with whom he came in contact. Love him they must, if they were capable of affection. Our poet had not been long known to his minister and professor till he was regarded by him with the feelings of a brother, and an intercourse was henceforth maintained between them, with a familiarity which most persons would deem inexpedient between a minister and a member

of his church, and especially between a professor and his pupil.

37. It is somewhat singular, that the first theological exercise, both of Logan* and of Bruce, in their respective Halls, should have disappointed the expectation of their professors and fellow-students. It was anticipated that our poet's homily would be characterized by floridness of style and amplitude of illustration, the common errors of minds of his cast, as illustrated in the cases of Thomson and Pollok, whereas there appeared to his critics a deficiency of both. That he was in ill health at the time appears from a letter addressed to him by his friend Dryburgh, which is now before the writer, dated Dysart, 1st April 1766:—"I was very sorry to learn from Mr George Henderson, who spent a night with us last week, that you thought yourself worse since you were here. Nothing, be assured, would be more agreeable to me than to hear of your recovery. I heard, also, that Mr Swanston has been advising you to give over your studies altogether. I really think it your duty to comply with this advice, at least, till you see how you are." This fact would at once account for his discourse being so different from what was anticipated, did we not know that the activity of his mind was never affected by his disease, and that he wrote "The Ode to Spring," one of the

* "The first theological exercise of Logan at the Hall was not such as his other literary exhibitions gave reason to expect."—*Life of Logan prefixed to his Poems.*

most beautiful poems in our language, in the last stage of consumption. The failure, if failure it was, arose, we presume, from Bruce's strict adherence to what, in the phraseology of Presbyteries, constitutes a homily; an exercise designed to shew the writer's capability of logically dividing and subdividing a text or subject; for the discourse was made up of a series of heads, with as many particulars, and as brief illustrations as possible. In our day, conformity with this definition is not so rigidly demanded; and the student, therefore, has a better opportunity of displaying the character of his mind.

38. In the time of Bruce, the number of students attending the Divinity Hall of the Burgher Synod was few compared with that now attending the Hall of the United Secession Church. In Mr Swanston's congregation there were a great number of persons who were proprietors of land, and in otherwise comfortable circumstances. These received the students into their houses in the character of friends, expecting no remuneration for their attention to them but what arose from the satisfaction of being serviceable to deserving men and the church. Bruce resided, during his attendance at the Hall, with Mr Henderson, proprietor of Turfhill, whose son had been his companion at college, and whom he afterwards celebrated in his poem of Lochleven, under the name of "Lelius."

39. Upon his settlement at Gairney Bridge, Bruce became acquainted with a young man of the name of Campbell, in whom he took a lively interest, in con-

sequence of his ardent desire for learning, and the poverty of his circumstances. Campbell was an open, sanguine, imaginative youth, and, by these qualities, attracted our poet to him, who thought him, at least moral, if not pious. His education had been neglected in his boyhood; but by the *gratuitous* labours of Bruce, and his own exertions, he more than remedied this neglect. From his master he also acquired a relish for poetry, and made numerous attempts in verse.* Several of his poetical epistles to Mr David Pearson are at present in our possession. They are characterized by smoothness of versification, and aptness of allusion. They are all of an *amorous* kind. Bruce employed this youth to teach for him during his attendance at the Divinity Hall. When about to return to

* It is perhaps necessary to inform the reader, in order to explain how so many persons in such very humble situations in life as have been mentioned in this narrative, should have been induced to write poetry, and engage in other literary exercises, that a society for mutual improvement had been instituted in Kinnesswood, and was kept up with spirit for a long series of years. A manuscript volume is at present in possession of the writer, containing an essay contributed by each member once a month, under the signatures of "Varro, Damon, Philo, Philenor, Lycidas, Theander," &c. &c., and in which such questions are discussed as "Who is the person who has best ground for joy? What are the characteristics of man as distinguished from the lower orders of creatures? What is it that makes an action good? How are the motions of the Holy Spirit to be distinguished from the suggestions of Satan," &c. &c. The members also often wrote poetical letters to one another, as well as other kinds of epistles.

Gairney Bridge at the end of the session, he found a scandalous report in circulation against Campbell, which turned out to be but too well founded. He felt so vexed on this account, that he resolved to abandon the school in that place, and endeavour to procure another elsewhere. One was offered him at Forrest Mill, a place about fifteen miles to the south-west of Kinross, which he immediately accepted.*

40. When on his way to this place, the horse upon which he rode stumbled in fording the Devon, and immersed him in the stream. He remounted, and rode forward to his intended lodgings with his clothes drenched. Upon his arrival he had to be put to bed, and from that time the symptoms of pulmonary consumption became every day more confirmed. The cottage in which he kept his school was most unfavourable to him as diseased. It was low-roofed, damp, and close. One of the daughters of the family with whom he lodged, whose name was Mill, "with that pity that dwells in womankind," took care that the school-room was sufficiently warmed every morning before he entered it, and that boards were laid where his feet rested to keep them from the cold earthen floor; but the destroyer laughed at her assiduities, for

* Campbell shewed contrition in after life for the criminal act of his youth, and regained some measure of respect, although he was never restored to the intimacy of Bruce. He became clerk to Mr Young, distiller in Hattonburn, and afterwards removed to a similar situation in Montrose, where he died, *unmarried*.

he had already secured his victim. Bruce did not seek to conceal his conviction of this mournful fact, either from himself or his friends. Writing to Mr David Pearson, he says, "The next letter you receive from me, *if ever you receive another*, will be dated 1767. *** I lead a melancholy kind of life in this place. I am not fond of company. But it is not good that man be still alone ; and here I have no company but what is worse than solitude. If I had not a lively imagination, I believe I should fall into a state of stupidity and delirium. I have some evening scholars, the attending on whom, though few, so fatigues me, that the rest of the night I am quite dull and low-spirited. Yet I have some lucid intervals, in the time of which I can study pretty well."

41. What expectations he had formed respecting the situation at Forrest Mill, we are unable to determine ; but whatever they were, it appears from the following letter addressed to Mr Arnot, that they were disappointed :—"It is an observation of some of our philosophers, that it is better for man to be ignorant of, than acquainted with, the future incidents of his life ; for, if he were apprized of the evils which awaited him, he would be as miserable, if not more so, in fearing as in suffering. When we are in expectation of any thing, we paint it to ourselves as most agreeable ; nor can we be convinced, but by experience, that every thing here is of a mixed nature. When this long-expected convenience arrives, we can scarce believe it is the thing we hoped for, and, in truth, soon

find it very different. Many a disappointment of this kind have I met with. What I enjoyed of any thing was always in the hope, not in the possession of it. I expected to be happy here, but I am not ; and my sanguine hope is the reason of my disappointment. The easiest part of my life is past, and I was never happy. I sometimes compare my condition with that of others, and imagine if I was in theirs it would be well. But is not every body thus? Perhaps he whom I envy thinks he would be glad to change with me, and yet neither would be better for the change. Since it is so, let us, my friend, moderate our hopes and fears, resign ourselves to the will of Him who doeth all things well, and who hath assured us that he careth for us.

“ Si res sola potest facere et servare beatum,
Hoc primus repetas opus, hoc postremus omitas.”

Things are not very well in this world, but they are pretty well. They might have been worse ; and, as they are, may please us who have but a few short days to use them. This scene of affairs, though a very perplexed, is a very short one, and in a little while all will be cleared up. Let us endeavour to please God, our fellow-creatures, and ourselves. In such a course of life we shall be as happy as we can expect in such a world as this. Thus, you who cultivate your farm with your own hands, and I who teach a dozen blockheads for bread, may be happier than he who,

having more than he can use, tortures his brain to invent new methods of killing himself with the superfluity." *

42. But besides poverty, disease, and the want of intercourse with congenial spirits, each of which was sufficient to have fretted most minds, there was a circumstance connected with this new situation by which he was peculiarly affected, and that was the total want of scenery on which his eye could rest with pleasure. "The sweet winding Devon," since rendered classical by the genius of the Ayrshire bard, ran, indeed, at no great distance; and "the lofty Ochil," as Bruce himself has styled the mountainous range, brought up the background of the view northwards; but a more dreary, sterile tract of country than that which lay in the immediate vicinity of his school, is not easily to be found. The place, even yet, is better known by the designation of "The *Thieves*," than by that of the "Forrest Mill," as having afforded, by its solitariness and wildness, a resort and hiding-place for the vagrant tribe, who choose rather to appropriate the fruits of other men's labours than to earn a supply for them-

* The latter part of this letter, as well as the whole of the preceding one, and another that is still to follow, have already appeared in Dr Anderson's Life of Bruce. As the originals are before us, we insert the part omitted by Dr A. in this epistle, which consists of the sentences preceding that beginning. "What I enjoyed of any thing," &c., and then from the acknowledgment, "I was never happy," down to "Things are not very well," &c.

selves. To this combination of unfavourable circumstances the poet himself most touchingly refers.

“ Thus sung the youth, amid unfertile wilds
 And nameless deserts, unpoetic ground,
 Far from his friends he strayed, recording thus
 The dear remembrance of his native fields
 To cheer the tedious night, while slow disease
 Preyed on his pining vitals, and the blasts
 Of dark December shook his humble cot.”

43. But the beauty which he could not find in the scenery around Forrest Mill, he found in his recollections of the landscape which had delighted his vision in boyhood, and thus he enlivened his feelings by recording his reminiscences of Lochleven, “ with all its wilds, and fertile fields, and glittering streams.” Of this poem he gives the following account in a letter to Mr Arnot :—“ I have written a few lines of a descriptive poem, *cui titulus est Lochleven*. You may remember you hinted such a thing to me, so I have set about it, and you may expect a dedication. I hope it will *soon* be finished, as I every week add two lines, blot out six, and alter eight. You shall hear of the plan when I know it myself.”

44. The general excellence of this poem may be judged of from the fact, that Campbell in his “ Specimens of the English Poets,” Drake in his “ Literary Hours,” Chambers in his “ Biographical Dictionary of Eminent Scotsmen,” and Forsyth in his “ Beauties of

Scotland," have each quoted different portions of it as beautiful passages, and in this way have nearly divided the whole poem amongst them. It is not our purpose to enter into a formal criticism of Bruce's poetry, either in whole or in part. This Dr Anderson has already done ; and to what he has advanced little can be added. We shall therefore avail ourselves of his remarks in their proper place. Meanwhile, we cannot avoid adverting to what we consider omissions in this poem ; and, after the high testimony to its excellence, implied in the fact which we have just stated, we think it can afford, without losing by it, that reference be made to them.

45. We have thought it somewhat singular, that, whilst Bruce calls his poem " Lochleven," the lake, properly considered, should come in for so small a share of his description. It might surely have been expected that a *poet* would have adverted to the variety of aspects in which Lochleven, in common with other lakes, presents itself ; as, for example, at break of day, when, as a more recent poet has sung of another lake,

" The summer's dawn-reflected hue
To purple changed Loch Katrine blue ;"

or, as when presaging a storm,

" _____ The clouds are met ;
The lowering scowl of heaven
An inky hue of lurid blue
To the deep lake was given ;"

er, as when the zephyrs play upon its bosom, and

“ Mildly soft the western breeze
 Just kissed the lake, just stirred the trees ;
 And the pleased lake, like maiden coy,
 Trembled, but dimpled not for joy.”

To those residing upon its banks, who are so familiar with its general appearance as to have their attention otherwise seldom called to it, these varieties of aspect impart all the interest which they come to feel in the scene. We mean not, by these illustrations, to institute a comparison between the author of “ The Lady of the Lake” and the author of “ Lochleven,” for we are well enough aware, that

“ Not alike to every mortal eye
 Is nature’s scene unveiled.”

And we know, too, that the poet, no more than the painter, “ can imitate motion, sound, the momentary variations of light and shade, and all those accidental circumstances which so greatly contribute to give picturesque effect to a landscape.”* But we do think there is a deficiency in the poem of Lochleven in these respects, and this is the more to be regretted, since the poet has shewn himself capable of giving such descriptions in a manner in which they have been seldom given. But we must not forget, that when Bruce wrote this poem

* Descriptive Views of the Northern Lakes.

he did not command an actual survey of his subject,—that he wrote from recollection, not inspection,—and that he was therefore led to describe it rather in its essential than its accidental—in its permanent than its varying aspects—rather as he had generally, than as he had occasionally, seen it. It will be allowed, by those who know the Vale of Kinross in all its details, that in this poem they not only have a poetical description, but an accurate topographical account of its localities; whilst those who do not know it otherwise than as a portion of a small county in Scotland, must acknowledge that Bruce has succeeded in an attempt in which most others have failed, that of making the description of local scenery interesting.

46. Another circumstance which appears to us as a still more striking omission than the varying aspects of the lake, is, that the poet should have adverted both to the past and present state,

“ Of high Lochleven Castle, famous once,
The abode of heroes of the Bruce’s line,”

without making the most remote allusion to the fact that it was the prison of the beautiful, but unfortunate, the imprudent, but ill-advised, Mary Queen of Scots. This is the more remarkable, seeing that when referring to the ruins of a Monastery, upon another island in the lake, he adverts to the nameless devotees of Popery who sought in it a retreat,

“ The world forgetting, and *by the world forgot.*”

Byron, whose works indicate a greater admiration of the beauties of nature than sympathy in human suffering, overlooks the loveliness of Geneva's Lake, and the grandeur of the Alps which surround it, when his attention was called to the Castle of Chillon rising from among its waters, and he was told it had been the prison-house of some who contended "for the faith once delivered to the saints."

"Chillon ! thy prison is a holy place,
And thy sad floor an altar—for 'twas trod
Until his very steps have left a trace
Worn, as if the cold pavement were a sod,
By Bonivard ! May none those marks efface,
For they appeal from tyranny to God."

But as to Bruce's motives for describing Lochleven Castle without deigning to take the least notice of its once royal prisoner, we will not venture a conjecture. It was certainly possible to have stated the fact, and even expressed some pity for her sufferings, without insinuating either censure or commendation of her character or conduct. Interesting as the poem of "Lochleven" is, it would have been still more so had the imprisonment of Mary in its castle been the subject, and the description of its scenery a part of its illustration and embellishment, and this plan might have been pursued under the same title with even more propriety than the one adopted.

46. The effort of mind which the composition of "Lochleven" had called forth seems to have been too much for Bruce's shattered frame, for he was compelled

almost immediately after it was finished to relinquish his school. Having intimated this necessity to his employers, he took farewell at once of Forrest Mill and his hopes of life. But even then he had sufficient strength remaining to walk home to Kinnesswood, a distance of nearly twenty miles, resting only for a brief space at Turfhill, the residence of his friend Henderson.* Whilst the cottage of his parents was no doubt the place of all others where he was likely to meet with those kind attentions so necessary to a consumptive invalid, yet from its locality it was one of the worst for a person labouring under his disease. The vapours which rise from the lake keep the atmosphere almost constantly moist, whilst in the mornings and evenings, especially of spring, the "Eastern Haars," as the fogs which come up from the sea are called by the inhabitants, come rolling down the hills, and hang suspended over Kinnesswood, like a dripping curtain. When writing his poem of Lochleven, he thought the descent of these vapours an incident worthy of notice in the scene.

"The twilight trembles o'er the misty hills
Trinkling with dew."

But as a consumptive patient, exquisitely sensitive to the variations of the atmosphere, he now felt them to be a serious inconvenience. Here, again, he was disappointed of that alleviation of distress which he

* Letter from John Henderson, Esq. Turfhill, to the Editor.

had expected from change of scene and release from labour.

47. It was under this disappointment that he sat down and wrote his "Ode to Spring," which, when finished, he addressed to his friend, Mr George Henderson,* with a view to apprise him that even his hopes of temporary relief were gone, and that in a shorter space than either of them had anticipated he should be at repose in the silent grave.

" Now spring returns, but not to me returns
 The vernal joy my better years have known ;
 Dim in my breast life's dying taper burns,
 And all the joys of life with health are flown.

Starting and shivering in the inconstant wind,
 Meagre and pale, the ghost of what I was,
 Beneath some blasted tree I lie reclined,
 And count the silent moments as they pass.

The winged moments, whose unstaying speed
 No art can stop, or in their course arrest ;
 Whose flight shall shortly count me with the dead,
 And lay me down in peace with those that rest."

48. Having intimated his persuasion of his approaching dissolution to his friend Henderson in verse, he hastened to do the same to his friend Pearson in prose, taking one of the verses of the same ode as his starting point.

* The original MS. of this beautiful poem is still in possession of this gentleman's family. *Letter from John Henderson, Esq. to the Editor.*

“ If morning dreams presage approaching fate,
And morning dreams, as poets tell, are true,
Led by pale ghosts, I enter death’s dark gate,
And bid this life and all the world adieu.

“ A few mornings ago as I was taking a walk on an eminence which commands a view of the Forth, with the vessels sailing along, I sat down, and taking out my Latin Bible, opened by accident at a place in the book of Job, ix. 23, ‘ Now my days are passed away as the swift ships.’ Shutting the book I fell a musing on this affecting comparison. Whether the following happened to me in a dream or waking reverie, I cannot tell ; but I fancied myself on the bank of a river or sea, the opposite side of which was hid from view, being involved in clouds of mist. On the shore stood a multitude, which no man could number, waiting for passage. I saw a great many ships taking in passengers, and several persons going about in the garb of pilots, offering their service. Being ignorant and curious to know what all these things meant, I applied to a grave old man, who stood by, giving instructions to the departing passengers. His name, I remember, was the *Genius of Human Life*. ‘ My son,’ said he, ‘ you stand on the banks of the stream of *Time*. All these people are bound for *Eternity*, that ‘ undiscovered country from whence no traveller ever returns.’ The country is very large, and divided into two parts, the one is called the Land of Glory, the other the Kingdom of Darkness. The names of these in the garb of pilots are *Religion, Virtue, Pleasure*. They who are so wise

as to choose Religion for their guide, have a safe though frequently a rough passage ; they are at last landed in the happy climes where sighing and sorrow for ever flee away ; they have likewise a secondary director, *Virtue*, but there is a spurious virtue who pretends to govern by himself ; but the wretches who trust to him, as well as those who have Pleasure for their pilot, are either shipwrecked, or are cast away on the kingdom of darkness. *But the vessel in which you must embark approaches, you must begone.* Remember what depends upon your conduct.' No sooner had he left me than I found myself surrounded by those pilots I mentioned before. Immediately I forgot all that the old man said to me, and seduced by the fair promises of *Pleasure*, chose him for my director. We weighed anchor with a fair gale. The sky serene, the sea calm. Innumerable little isles lifted their green heads around us, covered with trees in full blossom ; dissolved in stupid mirth, we were carried on, regardless of the past, of the future unmindful. On a sudden the sky was darkened, the winds roared, the seas raged ; red rose the sand from the bottom of the troubled deep. The angel of the waters lifted up his voice. At that instant a strong ship passed by ; I saw Religion at the helm. ' Come out from among these,' he cried. I and a few others threw ourselves out into his ship. The wretches we left were now tost on the swelling deep. The waters on every side poured through the riven vessel. They cursed the Lord ; when lo ! a fiend rose from the deep, and, in a voice like distant thunder, thus spoke—' I am

Abaddon, the first born of death ; ye are my prey, open thou abyss to receive them.' As he thus spoke they sunk, and the waves closed over their heads. The storm was turned into a calm, and we heard a voice saying, 'Fear not, I am with you. When you pass through the waters, they shall not overflow you.' Our hearts were filled with joy, I was engaged in discourse with one of my new companions, when one from the top of the mast cried out, 'Courage, my friends, I see the fair haven, the land that is yet afar off.' Looking up I found it was a certain friend who had mounted up for the benefit of contemplating the country before him. Upon seeing *you* I was so affected that I started and awaked. Farewell, my friend, farewell."*

49. With a view, as he confessed to his friends, to keep his thoughts fixed upon that dread tribunal before which he was shortly to stand, he abandoned writ-

* The germ of the above allegory is contained in the following fragment in Bruce's handwriting, now in our possession, to which we call the reader's special attention, as we purpose in the sequel to adduce it as evidence in favour of some claims to another piece published by his first Editor as his own.

"The hoar-frost glitters on the ground, the frequent leaf falls from the wood, and tosses to and fro down in the wind. The summer is gone with all his flowers ; summer ! the season of the Muses, yet not the more cease I to wander where the Muses haunt near spring or shadow grove, or sunny hill. It was on a calm morning while yet the darkness strove with the doubtful twilight, I rose and walked out under the opening eyelids of the morn. I bent my steps over the hill till I came to a place where an echo is given forth by a concave rock, and there began repeating Mark Antony's soliloquy.

ing upon other subjects, and confined himself to the improvement of his poem on the "Last Day," to which, it is known, he added a number of verses, the greater part of which, in its improved state, he transferred into his volume of MSS., but he was not allowed to finish it. His bodily strength was completely exhausted, and he was now almost wholly confined to bed. There he occupied himself in committing portions of Scripture to memory, which he would repeat and comment upon to the friends who visited him.

50. Mr George Lawson being called to preach as a candidate for the congregation of Mr Mair at Milnathort, which had joined the Burgher Synod after the death of their minister, hastened upon his arrival to Kinnesswood to see his friend Bruce. He found him in bed, as noticed above, with his countenance pale as death, while his eyes shone like lamps in a sepulchre. The poet was delighted to see him, and spoke with as much ease and freedom as if he had been in the most perfect health. Mr Lawson remarked to him that he was glad to see him so cheerful. "And why," said he, "should not a man be cheerful on the verge of heaven." "But," said Mr L. "you look so emaciated, I am afraid you cannot last long." "You remind me,"

over the murdered body of Cæsar, till I came to these words,

‘Thou art the ruins of the noblest man
That ever lived, *in the tide of time.*’

This metaphor had escaped me before."

he replied, "of the story of the Irishman, who was told that his hovel was about to fall, and I answer with him, Let it fall, it is not mine."*

51. This cheerfulness he maintained during his illness till his mother one morning announced to him just as he was awakening out of sleep, that Mr Swanston was dead. He looked at her with a ghastly stare as if stunned by the intelligence. Upon recovering from his surprise, he satisfied himself as to the accuracy of the statement, and was never again seen to smile.† He lingered on for a month longer, manifesting little interest in what was said or done by those around him, and on the 5th of July 1767, imperceptibly fell asleep in death, aged twenty-one years and three months. His Bible was found upon his pillow, marked down at Jer. xxii. 10. "Weep ye not for the dead, neither bemoan him," and on the blank leaf this verse was written,

"'Tis very vain for me to boast
How small a price my Bible cost,
The day of judgment will make clear
'Twas very cheap—or very dear."

He was buried in the churchyard of Portmoak, in the

* Letter from the daughter of the late Dr Lawson to the Editor.

† On Sabbath 7th June 1767, Mr Swanston was assisting at the celebration of the Lord's Supper at Perth, when he was seized after divine service in the evening with inflammation in the bowels. The distemper was so rapid that he could not be conveyed to his own family at Kinross. He died on the Friday following at the house of a relation in the city.

very centre of the scene which has been consecrated by his muse.

“ Hail and farewell, blest youth ! soon hast thou left
 This evil world. Fair was thy thread of life ;
 But quickly by the envious Sisters shorn.
 Thus have I seen a rose with rising morn
 Unfold its glowing bloom, sweet to the smell
 And lovely to the eye ; when a keen wind
 Hath tore its blushing leaves, and laid it low,
 Stripp'd of its sweets—Ah ! so,
 So DAPHNIS fell ! long ere his prime he fell !
 Nor left he on these plains his peer behind.”*

52. It has been supposed that an author's character may be always learned from his works, but the supposition is not well founded. Were we to judge of Bruce's feelings and temper from the prevailing tone of his printed compositions, we would conclude that he was hypochondriacal ; whereas it is well known that he was constitutionally cheerful, so much so, that his presence was eagerly desired by his friends as a never-failing source of animation. It is true, that, during the latter period of his life, he was subject to depression of spirits, but this was the effect of disease ; and, seeing he was conscious that his mortal existence was to be very brief, it is surprising that that depression was not greater than it appears to have been. It was chiefly when alone that he was sad. Whenever his thoughts were diverted

* Bruce's Monody to the memory of Mr Wm. Arnot.

from himself, his melancholy vanished. After he was relieved from suspense, and speedy dissolution seemed inevitable, his wonted sprightliness returned, and he conversed with his visitors as if he had been still in the heyday of health, and in the enjoyment of the brightest prospects which this life can afford. Had he been spared, he must have enjoyed existence, for he was largely furnished by nature with the elements of happiness ; but we are persuaded that, to afford him suitable gratification, he would have required more money than was likely to have fallen to his share. His fine perception of the beautiful, both in nature and in art, would have naturally led him to provide himself with things which minds less refined would have considered trifles ; and to embellish what he possessed in a manner which, by more ordinary men, would have been deemed extravagant.

53. Throughout Bruce's poetry every discerning reader perceives tenderness of sentiment, beauty of thought, and felicity of diction ; and, judging from these qualities in his compositions, he is likely to expect that the poet himself would be characterized by elegance of manner. But this was not the case. Not that Michael Bruce was either rude or coarse, but he was modest to excess, and he never improved his provincial pronunciation, a circumstance which conveyed to those not intimately acquainted with him an impression of rusticity. He had, besides, an unbounded love of truth ; and, consequently, would indulge in no praise or blame which was not fully called for. He

loathed affectation, and would not put forth even just claims to merit, lest he should be suspected of advancing unwarrantable pretensions. To this feeling the retention of his provincial dialect is, in all probability, to be ascribed, being afraid that his early companions, whom he continued to cherish with all the ardour of first love, might ascribe his correctness of speech to a desire of being thought the *fine gentleman*.

54. The constancy in friendship to which we have just adverted was a striking feature in our poet's character. He loved his friends with an intensity of feeling of which comparatively few are capable. The prominent place which he has given in his poems to his early companions, shews how sincere was the regard with which he cherished them. That he succeeded in awakening a reciprocal affection in them, if not in the same, at least in a more than usual degree, is evident from the fact, that all his associates with whom we have conversed continue to speak of his memory in strains almost rapturous. The vicissitudes of threescore years have not been able to obliterate him from their recollections, or alter the fondness with which they have always been disposed to speak of him. They appear to regard it as indicating coldness of heart, if their auditors do not listen with all the earnestness which they themselves feel in describing him; and the sure way to engage them in interesting conversation is to mention the name of Michael Bruce.

55. But of all our poet's characteristics, his piety

was the most distinguishing. Religion was obviously with him a matter of experience. His conduct and his conversation alike bespoke a regard for its sanctions, and a firm trust in its promises. His life and death were confirmations of the prophet's statement, "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed upon thee." His contentment under the greatest privations has been the admiration of all who are acquainted with his history; a contentment springing, not from stupid indifference, or from a necessity of yielding to what is unavoidable, but from an entire acquiescence in the will of God. Whatever befel him contrary to his expectations, or was continued in opposition to his hopes, he ascribed to the superintending agency of the All-wise God, and silenced every murmur in his breast with this sentiment, "The Supreme Wisdom hath seen this meet, and the Supreme Wisdom cannot err." He looked on death with the same undisturbed serenity as on the untoward events of life, and was as willing to enter "the swellings of Jordan" as to remain in the wilderness, when assured that such was the will of his Infallible Conductor.

" I hear the helpless wail, the shriek of wo ;
I see the muddy wave, the dreary shore,
The sluggish streams, that slowly creep below,
Which mortals visit, and return no more.

" Farewell, ye blooming fields ! ye cheerful plains !
Enough for me the churchyard's lonely mound,
Where melancholy with still silence reigns,
And the rank grass-waves o'er the cheerless ground.

“ There let me sleep forgotten in the clay,
 When death shall shut these weary aching eyes ;
 Rest in the hope of an eternal day,
 Till the long night is gone, and the last morn arise.”*

In short, we consider the character of Michael Bruce as one of the loveliest that has adorned humanity, and, as such, worthy to be held in everlasting remembrance.

“ Poet and saint to him are justly given,
 The two most sacred names of earth and heaven.”

56. It has been pertinently remarked by Chambers, in his Biographical Dictionary of Eminent Scotsmen, that “ perhaps Bruce’s fame as a poet has been injured by the sympathy which his premature death excited, and by the benevolent purpose which recommended the latest edition of his works to public patronage. Pity and benevolence are strong emotions ; and the mind is commonly content with one strong emotion at a time. He who purchased a book that he might promote the comfort of the author’s mother, procured for himself, in the mere payment of the price, a pleasure more substantial than could be derived from the contemplation of agreeable ideas ; and he would either be satisfied with it and go no farther, or carry it with him into the perusal of the book, the beauties of which would fail to produce the same effect as if they had

* Bruce’s Ode to Spring.

found his mind unoccupied." Another cause which has operated injuriously to the fame of our poet is the fact, that Logan, who edited the first edition of his works, afterwards claimed the authorship of several of the poems contained in the volume, and thus left a doubt upon the public mind how much of the book is to be ascribed to Bruce, and how much to his editor.* It is one object of the present publication to clear up this matter, and we expect to be able to place it beyond the need of further controversy, and to shew, that not only is Bruce entitled to the credit of all the pieces which have passed under his name, but also to many that Logan published as his own, as well as several which he never did publish; and that, consequently, the public are not competent to judge of the full extent of Bruce's talents, not being in possession of all his works.

57. It may be affirmed of Michael Bruce, with equal truth, what Lord Orford once said of his friend Gray, that "he was never a boy." His mind appears to

* In despite of all these disadvantages, the works of Bruce have kept their place amongst the classics, and been widely circulated. The present, to our knowledge, is the twelfth time they have been reprinted; and there may be many more editions of which we are not aware. "The reader who glances but casually into these poems, will be surprised to find how many of those familiar phrases, recommended to universal use by their beauty of thought and felicitous diction,—which every one quotes, while no one knows whence they are taken,—we owe to Michael Bruce."—*Chambers's Biographical Dictionary of Eminent Scotsmen*, Article M. BRUCE.

have reached maturity at once ; and his sentiments and imagery are such, as in after life he would have been almost certain to approve. Whether he would have accomplished any thing greater than what now constitutes his fame had longer years been assigned him, it were needless to conjecture. Akenside's "Pleasures of Imagination, published, as it was, at the age of twenty-three, raised expectations that were never afterwards very amply satisfied ;"* and such also might have been the case with the subsequent efforts of Michael Bruce. The well-sustained energy of all his pieces, however, would lead us to think otherwise.

58. Dr Anderson has, upon the whole, formed a very correct estimate of the merits of Bruce's several accredited poems, and we content ourselves with transcribing his criticisms, deeming it unnecessary on our part to make a new analysis of their beauties or blemishes. "As a poet," says he, "Bruce is characterized by elegance, simplicity, and tenderness, more than sublimity, invention, or enthusiasm. He has more judgment and feeling than genius or imagination. He is an elegant and pleasing, though not a very animated or original writer. His compositions are the production of a tender fancy, a cultivated taste, and a benevolent mind ; and are distinguished by an amiable delicacy, and simplicity of sentiment, and a graceful plainness of expression, free from the affectation of an inflated diction, and a profusion of imagery, so com-

* Johnson's Lives of the Poets.

mon in juvenile productions. His thoughts are often striking, sometimes new, and always just; and his versification, though not exquisitely polished, is commonly easy and harmonious.

59. "His 'Lochleven' is the longest and most elaborate of his poetical compositions. It is a descriptive poem, written in blank verse, the structure of which he seems to have particularly studied, as it exhibits a specimen of considerable strength and harmony in that measure. Though the nature of the subject approaches nearly to that of Thomson, of whom he was a great admirer, his style is very different, being wholly free from that unnatural swell and pomp of words, which too often disfigure the beautiful descriptions of Thomson. It represents an extensive and beautiful prospect in an animated and pleasing manner. It has much appropriate description and picturesque imagery; and it is rendered interesting by poetical fictions, historical allusions, and moral reflections. But it is not without defects; there is a redundance of thought in some instances, and a carelessness of language in others. He has, however, availed himself of every circumstance that could with propriety be introduced to decorate his poem.* The story of Lomond and Levina is happily introduced, and simply and pleasingly related. It is

* The reader has already been apprized that, in our opinion, there are some circumstances which he has omitted in the description of Lochleven that he might have introduced with propriety.

said to have been enlarged by Logan, and is perhaps too long. The picture of 'the man of sorrows new risen from the bed of pain' is natural and striking. 'Lochleven Castle,' the 'Inch,' the 'Limestone Quarries,' the rivers Po, Queech, Leven and Gairny, 'on whose banks he first tuned the Doric reed,' are graphically and poetically described. The compliment to Lælius is a pleasing digression, and the description of the character and dwelling of Agricola, towards the conclusion, has great merit. The poem is local; and though local description is far more adapted to the pencil than the pen, yet it will be perused with delight by poetical lovers of rural imagery; and must be peculiarly pleasing to those who are familiar with the picturesque scenery of Lochleven.

60. "His 'Daphnis' is an elegy on a deceased friend, written in the pastoral form, and, in general, well preserves the rural character. It has, however, but little of the bucolic cant, now so fashionable. If any trite rural topics occur, they are heightened and adorned with the graces of sentiment, and the most delicate touches of picturesque beauty. It may be considered as an effusion of mellowed sorrow, which can recapitulate past pleasures, in all their minutiae of circumstance and situation, and select such images as are proper to the kind of composition in which it chooses to convey itself. It is a professed imitation of Milton's 'Lycidas,' in which there is perhaps more poetry than sorrow; but the poetry is in such an exquisite strain, that he who desires to know whether he has true taste

for poetry or not, should consider whether he is highly delighted or not with the perusal of 'Lycidas.' Whether it should be considered as a model of composition, has been doubted. Some have supposed that the arbitrary disposition of the rhymes produces a wild melody, adapted to the expression of sorrow; and others have thought the couplet and tetrastic, with their stated returns of rhyme, preferable. To decide the point might be difficult; but if the enthusiasm and beauty of the poetry could not reconcile Dr Johnson to the 'uncertain rhymes' of 'Lycidas,' the common readers of poetry will probably incline to favour the regular form. With Milton in view, Bruce is not a servile imitator. He has an original manner of his own. Milton is his model for versification, and he sometimes copies his thoughts and his language. But his poem is not a perpetual tissue of the obsolete phraseology, Gothic combinations, remote allusions, obscure opinions, and mythological personages of 'Lycidas.' The poem, as it now stands, has several lines which are not in the copy sent to Mr Arnot; the result, probably, of a subsequent emendation.

61. "Of his 'Alexis,' the principal merit consists in the simplicity of the language, and the harmony of the versification. The images are not new, and the descriptions and sentiments are trite and common."

62. "His 'Sir James the Ross' is probably 'the poem in the Journal,' which was wrote, he tells Mr Pearson, 'in one afternoon, begun about four, and finished before I went to bed. I never tried any thing

which fell in with my inclination so. The 'Historical Ballad' is a species of writing by itself. The common people confound it with the 'Song,' but in truth they are widely different. A song should never be historical. It is founded generally on some one thought, which must be prosecuted and exhibited in every light, with a quickness and turn of expression peculiar to itself. The ballad, again, is founded on some passage of history, or (what suits its nature better) of tradition. Here the poet may use his liberty, and cut and carve as he has a mind. I think it a kind of writing remarkably adapted to the Scottish language.' The distinction is just, and beautifully exemplified. The historical ballad demands the nicest execution, and the most artful management. The simplicity that suits it is even unattainable by genius, without that chastised taste which seldom appears in poets of the highest class. It admits of magnificence of ideas, and of the sublime; but should be careful not to deviate from nature. The marvellous air, and the supernatural actors, which figure and please in the grandeur of the epic, would here be extravagant and disproportioned. The incidents should be striking, the situations important, and tending to forward the action, the design without perplexity, the parts in proper relation to it, and to each other, the sentiments delicate and noble. To these requisites 'Sir James the Ross' is, in general, conformable. Whether we consider the beautiful simplicity of the story, the delicacy of its situations, the pathos of its discoveries, the exact delineation of the

manners of the times to which it refers, the genuine strokes of nature and of passion, or the unremitting animation of the whole, we cannot but highly admire the mixture it exhibits of genius and of art. The story on which it is founded, though romantic, is interesting, and the more so, as there is reason to believe it is in some measure authentic. It is a tale of tenderness and distress ; and challenges a place with the ‘ Hardy-knute’ of his countrymen, Sir John Bruce of Kinross, the ‘ Owen of Carron’ of Langhorne, and other successful imitations of the ancient historical ballad. This exquisite ballad is said to have received some embellishments from Logan.

63. “His ‘ Danish Odes’ are compositions of a superior order. They possess, in an uncommon degree, the true fire of poetry, and harmony of versification. They appear to be modelled upon the ‘ Norse Odes’ of Gray, and, in their contexture and tone, are much in the wild and wizard strains of his Runic lyre. He probably thought this kind of minstrelsy best adapted to express the magic mysteries and romantic enthusiasm of the Gothic mythology. Assuming the fire and enthusiasm of the old Runic bards, he gives full scope to the wildness of a glowing imagination, and the energy of forcible conception. But his ideas of Scandinavian poetry seem to have risen no higher than the imitations of Gray, which are in all probability such as he alone was capable of making them. They are instinct with fire and poetical enthusiasm. They are in perfection the enthusiastic words—the words that burn—

of the muses. In sublimity of conception, grandeur of imagery, and magnificence of phraseology, he is inferior to Gray ; but he has more simplicity, perspicuity, and elegance. His first Ode, in particular, breathes the high spirit of lyric enthusiasm. It is truly Runic, and truly Grayan.

64. "His 'Elegy written in Spring,' is characterized by energy, simplicity, pathos, and melody, in the highest degree. From the circumstances in which it was written, the nature of its subject, and the merit of its execution, it has obtained an uncommon share of popularity. The influences and effects of Spring are expressed by a selection of such imagery as are adapted to strike the imagination by lively pictures. The manner in which he describes its effects upon himself, is so pathetically circumstantial, and so universally interesting, that it powerfully awakens all our tenderness.

————— but not to me returns

The vernal joy my better years have known ;

Dim in my breast life's dying taper burns,

And all the joys of life, with health are flown.

" 'A young man of genius,' says Lord Craig, 'in a deep consumption, at the age of twenty-one, feeling himself every moment going faster to decline, is an object sufficiently interesting ; but how much must every feeling on the occasion be heightened, when we know that this person possessed so much dignity and composure of mind, as not only to contemplate his approaching fate, but even to write a poem on the sub-

ject ! In the French language, there is a much admired poem of the Abbé de Chaulieu, written in expectation of his own death, to the Marquis de la Farre, lamenting his approaching separation from his friend. Michael Bruce, who, it is probable, never heard of the Abbé de Chaulieu, has also written a poem on his own approaching death, which cannot fail of touching the heart of every one who reads it.' "Several poets of our nation, in similar circumstances, have left compositions on the same subject ; and more than one poet has been ambitious of the fame of poetic composition, a few hours before the perils of an engagement, when the attention of most men would be naturally occupied by more important concerns, than the adjustment of syllables, or the modulation of a period. "Dorset, 'the grace of courts, the muse's pride,' on the day before the memorable sea-fight in 1665, is said to have composed the celebrated song, "To all you Ladies now at Land," with equal tranquillity of mind, and promptitude of wit. "The tender, the sentimental Abbé de Chaulieu, has left a poem on his approaching death, equally remarkable for elegance and feeling. Bruce must have heard of Dorset, and, it may be, of the Abbé de Chaulieu, as he was no stranger to the language in which he wrote ; but he is purely original in his thoughts. Nor can we deny to him the praise of collectedness and strength of mind in a superior degree. He views, without dismay, the insidious approaches of an incurable disease, which generally selects, for its prey, the fairest and most amiable victims ; and, without pretending to that

apathy, surely unnatural to man in such circumstances, he feels and acknowledges the gloominess of his prospects ; but turns his eyes in search of comfort to a world beyond the grave.

“There let me sleep, forgotten in the clay,
 When death shall shut these weary aching eyes ;
 Rest in the hopes of an eternal day,
 Till the long night is gone, and the last morn arise.”

65. “ His ludicrous pieces, the ‘ Mousiad,’ and ‘ Anacreontic to a Wasp,’ evince the versatility of his genius. They are not void of humour and pleasantry, but add little to his reputation. His Songs are tender and easy ; and well preserve the turn of the popular ballads which he imitates. His verses to Dr Millar, and Elegy on Mr M‘Ewen, have some effusions of sentiment and delineations of character that are not without merit ; but they require no distinct examination or particular criticism.

66. “ ‘ If images of nature,’ says Logan, ‘ that are beautiful and new ; if sentiments, warm from the heart, interesting and pathetic ; if a style, chaste with ornament, and elegant with simplicity ; if these, and many other beauties of nature and art, are allowed to constitute true poetic merit, the following poems will stand high in the judgment of men of taste.’ ”

67. “ The reader has been already apprized that Bruce died in the month of July 1767. In the autumn of the same year, Logan, then a tutor in the family of

Sir John Sinclair,* came to Kinnesswood and prevailed upon the friends of the poet to furnish him with his manuscripts, which he knew were in a state of preparation for the press; as also the letters written to and by him, and *particularly* those which he had himself addressed to him. In compliance with this request, every person who had ever been known to correspond with Bruce was importuned to furnish Logan with his letters, which was in every case done, and the few epistles which appear in these pages are merely those that escaped the search, or those of which duplicates had been taken. Before leaving Kinnesswood he assured the poet's parents that every paper with which they had entrusted him would be carefully returned, and that he had no doubt as to his being able to

* It is somewhat singular that in the recently published "Life and Correspondence of Sir John Sinclair, Bart.," by his son, no mention is made of Logan having been his tutor, and it would appear from the following letter that the worthy Baronet did not care to mention the fact to his family. "London, 25th February 1837.—REV. SIR, I regret that I cannot furnish you with any information on the subject to which you refer. As my father never happened, so far as I can recollect, to speak to me of his connection with Mr Logan, it of course is quite at your option to publish any statement of which you are in possession without in the slightest degree hurting my feelings, or as I think injuring the character of my family."—*Letter from the Right Hon. Sir George Sinclair, Bart. M. P., to the Editor.*

The writer deems it necessary to state here, that it was not till after the correspondence with the Right Honourable Baronet, he learned that Logan had left his father's house before sending the poems of Bruce to the press.

realize for them, by the publication of their son's poems, such a sum of money as should maintain them comfortably during the remaining part of their lives.

68. The second year had passed away after Logan's visit to Kinnesswood without any intimation having reached Bruce's relatives as to what progress had been made in the projected publication. Wearing out by delay, his father addressed a letter to Logan demanding that the manuscripts be either sent forthwith to the press, or returned. He received no answer. The first letter was followed by several others with the same effect. At length in 1770, three years after the papers had been delivered up for the purpose, a volume appeared containing *nineteen* poems, under the title ; " Poems, on several occasions, by Michael Bruce," but without the Editor's name appearing any where in the book, or any explanation being given as to how the manuscripts came into his hands, or what interest he had in the volume. Whilst the title-page bore that the poems were by Michael Bruce, it was stated in the preface that only a portion of them was written by him, without its being said who were entitled to the credit of the remainder. As this preface formed one of the grounds upon which a judgment was given by a Lord Ordinary of the Court of Session, in the case to which we are about to call the reader's attention, it is necessary we transcribe a part of it into these pages. " It was during the summer vacations of the College that he (Bruce) composed the following poems. * * *

To make up a miscellany, some poems wrote by different authors, are inserted ; all of them original, and none of them destitute of merit. The reader of taste will easily distinguish them from those of Mr Bruce, without these being particularized by any mark. Several of these poems have been approved by persons of the first taste in the kingdom, and the Editor publishes them to that small circle for whom they are intended, *not with solicitude and anxiety*, but with the pleasurable reflection that he is furnishing out a classical entertainment to every reader of refined taste.*

69. No reason is here assigned why the Editor was necessitated to have recourse to the works of others to make up a volume, but the reader is left to infer that the number of poems left by Bruce was inadequate to the purpose. But that there was no deficiency either in number or variety will appear from the fact that "The Last Day," which occupies a large portion of this volume, with the song, "Lochleven No More,"

* The conduct pursued by Logan, as described by himself in this preface, has been reprobated even by those who have regarded him as stating what was perfectly accordant with truth. "Had he been only as scrupulously just to the literary fame, as he has been liberal of praise to the personal character of Bruce, their names could never have been mentioned in conjunction but with undivided applause. As Editor of Bruce's works, however, he has been guilty of an infidelity, which, as it is of a sort which poisons the very wellsprings of literary history, cannot be too severely condemned."—*Lives of the Scottish Poets. Article, Logan.* 22. London. T. Boys. 1822.

“Elegy on the Death of Mr M'Ewan,”* and “Verses to Dr Miller,”† were omitted by him, besides the following pieces which have not been recovered :—“Sacred Metaphors,” a number of Scripture figures poetically illustrated ; Verses on a Wandering Idiot Boy belonging to the parish ; “The Dying Swan ;” an Elegy on the Death of Mrs White of Balgedie ; a Poetical Epistle to a Gentleman in Kinross ; Song on reading some Verses by David Pearson ; a Poem on the Immortality of the Soul ; “Verses on reading Erskine's Sonnets ; Paraphrase of David's Lamentation over Saul and Jonathan ;” Verses on the Tobacco Plant, of which the following were some of the lines :—

The sage beside his evening lamp reclined,
Revolving schemes and systems in his mind,
Thy power confesses ; whilst the Bard divine
The muse's inspiration helps with thine.

There was also a piece entitled “Fungus ;” and the

* Dr Anderson, in whose “Lives of the British Poets” these pieces first appeared, says, that they were not submitted to Logan, but on this point he has been misinformed. They were furnished to himself and Principal Baird by Mr Birrel, from some loose papers presented to him by the poet's father on his deathbed, who affirmed that he had personally recovered them from Logan. They are now in the possession of the present writer, and besides the pieces named above, contain the first draught of the poem on “Lochleven.”

† “It was from knowing Logan to be Michael's friend that I delivered up to him several pieces, among which was the poem to Dr Miller. What you have seen is only the preamble to it.”—*Letter from David Pearson to Dr Anderson.*

writer has reason to believe that there were a number of satires, for, on a slip of paper in his possession, there is this note in the poet's handwriting, "Add to Satire first;" and then these lines follow:—

Or shall we weep, or grow into the spleen,
Or shall we laugh at the fantastic scene,
To see a dull mechanic, in a fit,
Throw down his plane, and strive to be a wit.
Thus wrote De Foe, a tedious length of years,
And bravely lost his conscience and his ears,
To see a priest eke out the great design,
And tug with Latin points the halting line.
Who would not laugh, if two such men there were?
Such there have been—I don't say such there are.

There were also many other pieces, of which we have not been able to learn the titles or the subjects, but which were familiar to those who had an opportunity of seeing Bruce's manuscript volume, or of hearing them repeated, but of which they were not able to give a sufficient account, to enable their interrogators to designate them. There were also a number of Hymns, of which we must state the origin, in order that we may be able to identify them, for they have since been published under Logan's name.

70. But we must first observe, that it was matter of surprise to all Bruce's acquaintances when they read the volume published under his name, that there should be nothing in the book which bespoke the religious feelings of the poet, the peculiarity by which, in his intercourse with them, he was chiefly distinguished.

If the "Ode to Spring" had been left out, there would have scarcely been a line in the whole book indicating a mind impressed with pious sentiments; and the universal conclusion was, that either they had been deceived in Michael Bruce, or that the book did not contain the whole of his productions. Many of them, however, could repeat verses, breathing the most ardent devotion, which they knew to be written by our poet, not one of which had appeared, nor any explanation afforded, why they were withheld. When the volume was put into old Bruce's hands, he glanced over its contents, and, bursting into a flood of tears, exclaimed, "Where are my son's Gospel Sonnets." Such was the title by which he designated a number of poetical versions of Scripture composed by Michael, which he held in the highest admiration, but for which he knew no other name than that given by Ralph Erskine to similar productions.

71. The circumstance which first led our poet to write hymns has been rendered memorable in Kinnesswood, by its contributing, at the same time, to form a taste for sacred music among its inhabitants, for which they are still celebrated.* About the pe-

* Many of the churches in the surrounding district have long been supplied with precentors from the village of Kinnesswood. Upon one occasion, when some difficulty was found in procuring a person to conduct the psalmody of a congregation in a neighbouring town, one of the heritors suggested that they should send the beadle over to Portmoak,

riod to which our narrative refers, a farmer of the name of Gibson settled in the village with his family, all the members of which were fond of church music, and one of them, afterwards a preacher in connection with the Established Church, took delight in teaching this art to such of the villagers as would receive his instructions. Among the youths who benefited by his lessons, was one John Buchan, who, after residing in several towns with a view to improve himself in his profession as a mason, returned to his native village, where he taught church music, and introduced a number of new tunes which he had learned in the places he had visited. Till then, "the old eight,"* as they are now emphatically called, were considered the only tunes which it was lawful to sing in country congregations, and, consequently, were all that it was deemed necessary or proper to learn; but in town churches a few others had begun to be added to the number.† In the summer of 1764, Michael Bruce joined Buchan's class. At the time of his doing so, the following doggerel

and he would find one in the peat moss; meaning, that any of the workmen there would be competent for the office. During the last [spring two concerts,—one in Kinross, the other in Balgedie,—were conducted by the Kinnesswood Musical Society, at which sixty pounds were raised for charitable purposes.

* These were "French, Dundee, Stilt or York, Newton, Elgin, London, Martyrs, Abbey."

† Among these were "St David's, St Paul's, St Thomas's, St Ann's."

rhymes, among others, were sung by the pupils when practising in school:—

“ O mother, dear Jerusalem,
 When shall I come to thee ?
 When shall my sorrows have an end,
 Thy joys when shall I see ?”

“ The Martyrs’ tune, above the rest,
 Distinguish’d is by fame ;
 On their account I’ll sing this
 In honour of their name.”

“ Fair London town, where dwells the King,
 On his imperial throne,
 With all his court attending him,
 Still waiting him upon.”

Buchan, knowing Bruce to be both a poet and a scholar, requested him to furnish the class with verses which might be substituted for those we have quoted, which he considered as destitute of sentiment, and calculated to produce a ludicrous effect when sung to solemn airs. With this request Bruce complied, and wrote a number of hymns, several verses of which, in consequence of being often sung in these rehearsals, became familiar to the inhabitants of the parish. The following have been attested to the writer as among the number :—

“ O happy is the man who hears
 Instruction’s warning voice ;
 And who celestial wisdom makes
 His early, only choice.”

“ Few are thy days, and full of woe,
O man of woman born ;
Thy doom is written, Dust thou art,
And shalt to dust return.”

“ The beam that shines from Zion hill
Shall lighten every land ;
The King that reigns in Salem’s tow’rs
Shall all the world command.”

72. Logan published a volume of Poems in his own name eleven years after he had given those of Bruce to the world. In that volume there are nine hymns, which, with other two furnished by Logan, were adopted the same year by the General Assembly as part of an enlargement which they made to the collection of Paraphrases previously added to the psalmody of the Church. In the viii. xi. and xviii. of this collection, the verses above quoted occur, and we have inserted these hymns in this edition of Bruce’s poems ; holding, for the reasons already assigned, and for others which will be presently given, that they were written by our poet.* These are all which our

* These hymns, for more than half a century, have been assigned in our schools as tasks for exercising the memory ; and we observe that the “ Second Book of Lessons for the use of the Irish National Schools” also contains these paraphrases ; so that Michael Bruce, an obscure peasant when in life, is now exerting an influence in improving the mind, and forming the character of a whole nation. Nor is this influence confined to Scotland and Ireland, but is also in active operation in America, where these hymns are used in many of the churches and schools.

informants have been able to identify with certainty ; and we will not venture to claim any piece for Bruce when we have not satisfactory evidence that it really belonged to him. Others less scrupulous on this point might, with perfect propriety, have inserted the whole eleven ;* for it is almost conceded by one biographer of Logan, who boasts his personal intimacy with the subject of his eulogy, that “ Bruce might have left hymns in a more or less polished state, and these hymns might have been altered, embellished, and published by Logan as his own.† But it may be reasonably questioned if Bruce ever saw the Translations and Paraphrases which form the ground-work of no less than four of these Hymns ; and if he did, what motive could he have for trying to improve upon

* These are, as they stand in the Assembly’s collection of Paraphrases, the viii. ix. x. xi. xviii. xxiii. xxxi. xxxviii. xlvi. l. lvi. lxxviii. lxxxiii. lxxxviii. lxxxix. lxxxx.

† It is strange that a biographer could make this admission without any animadversion on the dishonourable conduct which he here supposes possible. Why did Logan not publish the hymns written by Bruce, which were the groundwork of these paraphrases ? Or why did he not state, in the preface to Bruce’s works, that certain hymns had come into his possession along with the other manuscripts, but that they were too imperfect for publication ? Or, assuming that he did so improve them as to make them in some measure his own, why did he not acknowledge that the crude materials were collected by the friend whose works he had edited ? This much he was bound in honour to do, as has been done in the case of the other paraphrases ; and for such omission he merits the severest reprobation.

them, when so many other passages of Scripture, equally suitable to his genius, opened an unoccupied field for displaying it? If these observations carry any weight in support of Logan's claims to the improvement of former hymns, they strengthen thereby the presumption of his being the author of the others; for both bear intrinsic and evident marks of coming from the same pen—they breathe the same spirit—they are executed in the same style. Here, as in the case of the Cuckoo, the probability is in his favour.”* We shall shew in the sequel, that the Cuckoo is no more Logan's than the hymns; and, if the authorship of the one establishes the authorship of the other, as this biographer would argue, the “probability” (the certainty) will not be in favour of Logan, but of Bruce.

73. The statements which we have made respecting the circumstance of Bruce's writing hymns, none of which appeared in his works as published by Logan, were confirmed by James, the poet's brother, who died in 1814. He was often interrogated upon the subject, and declared in the most solemn manner that all the paraphrases published in Logan's name were written by his brother Michael, that he had often read them, heard them often repeated, and frequently sung portions of them in Buchan's class long before the addition to the Assembly's collection was heard of; that he had good reason to remember them, for in consequence

* Life of Logan prefixed to his Poems. Bell and Bradfute, 1812.

of some pious people in the parish being greatly scandalized by such devotional sentiments as his brother had furnished being repeated either for amusement or improvement, he, with David Pearson and others, had strung together some uncouth rhymes, which had ever since continued to be sung by the youths in the village when practising church music. Mr Birrel taught psalmody in Kinnesswood after the death of Buchan, and had abundant opportunities of ascertaining the correctness of these averments, all of which he corroborated to the writer of this narrative.

74. When Dr Anderson was wishing information for his Life of Bruce, Mr Birrel referred him to David Pearson, who replied to the Doctor's letter in the following terms: "They may as well ascribe to Logan the framing of the universe as the writing of these poems. * * * There were many excellent poems in this book, a part of which furnishes Logan's own collection. I perfectly remember several lines. Thus in "The Complaint of Nature,"

"Who from the carments of the tomb
Can raise the human mold?"

Another hymn which Bruce wrote upon the Millennium Logan has copied what I remember perfectly,

"The beam that shines from Zion's hill
Shall lighten every land,
The King that reigns in Salem's tow'rs
Shall all the world command." *

* "I never heard any of the Scripture paraphrases attri-

“ These hymns as they stand in Logan’s works, are considerably altered. With many other excellent poems, Logan got them the same year Michael died, and it was not till three years after that any of them was printed, so that in the interval his friends might see them in his handwriting, but not sooner.”*

75. That Pearson was certain to know the fact of Bruce’s having written such hymns, has been rendered evident to the writer, not merely by his knowledge of the circumstance that Pearson attended Buchan’s class along with the poet, where he would hear portions of these hymns sung ; but also from his knowing that he wrote verses upon the same or kindred subjects with those which engaged Bruce’s muse ; and having his manuscripts at present in possession, the writer is able to state that they contain twenty-eight paraphrases upon Scripture passages. The book into which some of these were first transcribed, bears upon its title-page, to have been prepared for their reception on the 12th May 1774, so that they must have been written previous to that date. Several of the poems in this collection have been transcribed by Mr Birrel,

buted to Bruce except the xviii, which I have long admired for the peculiar melody which pervades it, and am inclined to consider it as an effusion of his genius.”—*Letter from Professor Davidson, Aberdeen, to the Editor.*

* Other parts of this letter will be quoted in those places where they bear upon the point under discussion. We prefer this method, to giving it all at once as more calculated to give force to the evidence.

who likely inserted them when he wrote the title-page, which he was probably requested to do as a good penman.

76. In order that the reader may judge from internal evidence whether or not the hymn published by Logan as his own, and entitled, "The Complaint of Nature,"* is Bruce's, as we affirm it to be, we place two of its stanzas in juxtaposition with the fragment which we have given as a foot-note in p. 76.

" When chill the blast of winter blows,
 Away the summer flies,
 The flowers resign their sunny robes,
 And all their beauty dies.

" Nipt by the year, the forest fades,
 And, shaking to the wind,
 The leaves toss to and fro, and streak
 The wilderness behind."

" The hoar-frost glitters on the ground, the frequent leaf falls from the wood and tosses to and fro down in the wind. The summer is gone with all his flowers ; summer ! the season of the muses, yet not the more cease I to wander where the muses haunt near spring or shadow grove, or sunny hill. It was on a calm morning, while yet the darkness strove with the doubtful twilight. I rose and walked out under the opening eyelids of the morn." Let the reader also compare the following stanzas of Bruce's "Ode to Spring," with the

* The viii. paraphrase in the Assembly's collection, somewhat altered.

hymn which Logan claims, and the fragment as above quoted, and he cannot fail, we think, to conclude that they are all the production of the same mind.

“ Loos’d from the bands of frost, the verdant ground
 Again puts on her robe of cheerful green,
 Again puts forth her flow’rs, and all around
 Smiling the cheerful face of Spring is seen.

* * * * *

Thus have I walk’d along the dewy lawn,
 My frequent foot the blooming wild hath worn;
 Before the lark I’ve sung the beauteous dawn,
 And gather’d health from all the gales of morn.

And, even when winter chilled the aged year,
 I wandered lonely o’er the hoary plain,
 Tho’ frosty Boreas warn’d me to forbear;
 Boreas with all his tempests, warn’d in vain.”*

77. The father of Bruce feeling indignant at the injustice which he considered had been done to his son’s memory, resolved upon recovering the MSS. from Logan and publishing them himself. With this view he collected a few shillings which were due him and set out for Edinburgh, where he was an entire stranger, never having been before in the metropolis. He found his way to the house of Sir John Sinclair, where he was informed that Logan had left the Baronet’s family some time before, but that he would either find him or hear of him at the house of Bailie Logan in Leith Wynd.

* These stanzas are the latter part of the fragment versified. Are not the stanzas in the paraphrase the first part ?

Thither he went. The object of his search was not within. Whilst strolling about in order to put off the time, he met him upon Leith Walk, and stated to him the reason of his coming to town, and accused him of having kept from the public the best part of his son's poems. Logan took him to his lodgings where he delivered to him a few loose papers containing the first draught of "Lochleven," "The Last Day," and "Lochleven No More," expecting he would be content with these. But the old man insisted upon having his son's manuscript volume, containing his collection of transcribed pieces. Logan professed not to be able to lay his hand upon this, but promised to make search for it. When Bruce returned the following day, Logan was not prepared to furnish the book, and expressed his fears *that the servants had singed fowls with it*. Bruce then demanded some account of the money derived from the publication, but on this point he received no satisfaction.

78. The old man returned home much dejected. From the shock which he had received by the death of his son he had not fully recovered, and this disappointment made his wound bleed afresh. He began shortly after to complain of great weakness. Whilst confined to bed, he was often visited by Mr Birrel, to whom he made the statements given above, and presented him with the few papers which he had recovered from Logan. It was then also that Mr Birrel learned that Logan had sent six copies of the volume which he had edited, to the poet's father, and one to

Mr Bruce of Arnot, who sent a present of a guinea to the poet's family, as an acknowledgment for the gift, and that the old man, in his last illness, having no money, sent one of the six copies which he had thus received, to Alexander Brown, a publican, in Scotlandwell, who let him have a pint of ale for the book, and that this was all the pecuniary benefit the family ever received from Logan's edition of Michael's poems. Alexander Bruce died on the 19th of July 1772, two years after his toilsome and disagreeable journey to Edinburgh.*

79. In 1781, as already stated, Logan published a volume of poems in his own name, and in this collection reprinted the "Ode to the Cuckoo," which had previously appeared in the volume of which he was editor, entitled "Poems on several occasions, by Michael Bruce." He did not condescend to explain how he came to appropriate this piece to himself, but left the public to infer that it was really his. The person who wrote his life, however, has not permitted Logan's right to this ode to be inferred merely from his insertion of it among his own pieces; for he makes the following statement:—"The only pieces which Logan himself ever acknowledged, in his conversations with the compiler of this biographical sketch, were the Story of Levina, the Ode to Paoli, and the Cuckoo.

* The worst thing that Alexander Bruce was ever heard to say of Logan on his deathbed was, that he deeply regretted he should have acted so dishonourable a part to him, but he freely forgave him, and hoped God would forgive him too.

The last was handed about and highly extolled among his literary acquaintances in East-Lothian, long before its publication, probably (though not certainly) in 1767,* as he did not reside there at all in 1768, and very little in 1769. This fact, and his inserting it as his own, in a small volume, eleven years afterwards, seem pretty decisive of his claims.† Mrs Hutcheson, wife of Mr John Hutcheson, merchant, Edinburgh, and cousin to Mr Logan, assured Dr Anderson that she saw the "Ode to the Cuckoo" in her relative's handwriting, before it was printed, respecting which statement that gentleman has remarked, that "If the testimonies of Dr Robertson and Mrs Hutcheson went the length of establishing the existence of the ode in Logan's handwriting in Bruce's lifetime, or before the

* The reader will remember that this is the year in which Bruce died, and in which Logan obtained his MSS.

† Life of Logan prefixed to his poems. This Life being anonymous, and therefore of disputable authority, the present editor was anxious to afford an opportunity to the writer of giving the weight of his name to his statement, and with this view addressed a note to the publishers, from whom he received the following reply:—

"SIR,

EDINBURGH, 7th January 1837.

In reply to your letter of the 2d, as to the author of Logan's Life, we think it was written by a Rev. Doctor of the Church of Scotland now deceased; but as we are not quite certain of this—excuse us for not mentioning his name.—We are, &c.

BELL & BRADFUTE."

The general belief is, that the Life of Logan, quoted above, was written by the Rev. Dr Robertson of Dalmeny, one of his executors; but we can hardly believe it to have been so, for it contains much eulogy on that gentleman.

MSS. came into Logan's possession, they might be considered decisive of the controversy. The suppression of Bruce's MSS., it must be owned, is a circumstance unfavourable to the pretensions of Logan."

80. Such are the claims put forward by Logan and his friends to the authorship of one of the most beautiful Lyrics in our language. It shall now be our business to shew that these claims are unfounded; and if common report, as it prevails in Bruce's birth-place, is to be allowed any weight, the controversy would be at once determined in favour of our poet; for it is there averred, that many of the young men who were Bruce's contemporaries, could repeat the "Ode to the Cuckoo," and that they learned it from copies furnished by himself. The circumstance is yet well remembered of one of the parishioners shooting a cuckoo—a thing of very rare occurrence—the bird being very shy, and, though often heard, seldom seen, when Ann Bruce, our poet's mother, went with a number of the villagers to see the wonder, remarking at the same time, "Will that be the bird our Michael made a sang about?" But we are aware that more satisfactory evidence than this is necessary to establish the point, although this ought, and no doubt will, form an element in the judgment of every mind capable of weighing evidence.

82. Aware that the Lord Chief Commissioner ADAM, who feels a deep interest in every matter which concerns the county of Kinross, had made some investigation into this question, we addressed a letter to his

Lordship, requesting him to state the amount of knowledge which he had gained by his inquiries, when he kindly replied as follows :—“ Dr Davidson of Aberdeen informed me that his father, Dr Davidson of Kinross, told him that he had seen a letter from Michael Bruce, in which he said, ‘ You will think me ill employed, for I am writing a poem about a gowk.’ ” * The date of this letter, as I understand, fell in with the period of Bruce’s being in the habit of writing his poems, and the style and sentiments of it were very similar to the ‘ Elegy to Spring ;’ and I have understood, that Logan never assumed to himself being the author of the Cuckoo. For better information you might write to Dr Davidson, Professor of Natural and Civil History, Marischal College, Aberdeen, and mention that you do it at my desire. * * * I ought to have mentioned that Mr Bennet of Gairny Bridge, the Seceding clergyman, told me that he believed, or *rather that he knew*, that Bruce was the author of the Cuckoo.” † In compliance with his Lordship’s suggestion, we addressed a letter to Dr Davidson, to whom, and to his Lordship, we beg leave to return our thanks, for their interesting and friendly communications. The following is that part of the Doctor’s let-

* Anglicè cuckoo.

† Mr Bennet was a fellow-student with Bruce, but not succeeding in obtaining a call to a congregation, betook himself to the cultivation of his paternal inheritance, the lands of Gairny, and, from these circumstances, may be supposed to have had ample opportunities of knowing the fact.

ter which bears upon the subject :—“ The information you have received from the Lord Chief Commissioner is in every respect correct ; but in addition to what my father told me (as stated in his Lordship’s letter), he also told me that the letter containing the poem was in the possession of a Mr Bickerton, residing either at Kinnesswood or Scotlandwell, but, at this distance of time, I cannot certainly recollect which. But soon after this, I was paying a visit to Colonel Douglas of Strathenry ; when passing through Kinnesswood, I met a Mr Birrel, an acquaintance of my father’s, who introduced me to Mr Bickerton, who shewed me the poem written upon a very small quarto page,* with a single line below it, nearly in the words as stated by the Lord Chief Commissioner, and signed Michael Bruce. The words were, as nearly as I can recall them, ‘ You will think I might have been better employed than writing about a gowk.’ If I recollect right, the word *Glasgow* was written on one corner of the paper, but no date. The handwriting was small and cramped,† and not very legible ; but as I had not seen Bruce’s handwriting, I could not positively say that the handwriting was his, although

* All Bruce’s letters which we have seen are written upon half a sheet of long paper, such as boys use for writing copies, doubled, which makes a small quarto page.

† Bruce’s handwriting was neat, but he was in the habit of introducing contractions into his words, and in his letters to Pearson often used shorthand characters, which Pearson also wrote. These circumstances gave his writing, at first sight, a cramped appearance.

Mr Bickerton assured me that it was. I cannot be perfectly certain in what year I saw the manuscript, but, from some circumstances which occurred about that period, I am inclined to believe that it was in the year 1786 or thereby. I may observe, that there were some slight differences between the manuscript which I saw and the copy published in Logan's poems. The word 'attendant' was used in place of 'companion,' and several other variations, but of no importance. I shall be most happy if what I have stated can be of any use to you in your projected edition, and if there are any dubious points in Bruce's life which would require to be cleared up, perhaps I might be able to give you some information, as my father and I had many conversations regarding him; and he had good opportunities of knowing him from being his medical attendant. You must not judge of my good will from the delay that has taken place in my answering your first application, but be assured that I shall do all I can in assisting you to illustrate the poems of that young and unfortunate genius, who does so much honour to Kinross-shire."*

* "When Logan's poems first made their appearance, and amongst them Bruce's beautiful ode to the Cuckoo, Dr Gray, at that time minister of Abernethy, being asked if he had read them and what he thought of them, replied "I kenna, I aye thought John Logan was a flichtering, fluttering fallow, but I never thought he was sae far gaen as to tak it in his head to flee round the warl hauding by the gowk's tail."—*Subsequent Letter from Professor Davidson to the Editor.*

83. We have already stated that Mr Birrel referred Dr Anderson to Mr David Pearson for information, when preparing his Life of Bruce. In consequence of this reference, a correspondence commenced between them, and we deem it necessary to give one of the Doctor's letters to Pearson, the original of which is now before us:—“ *Heriot's Green, Dec. 24. 1795.*—SIR, I duly received the favour of your letter, written so long ago, that I am ashamed to think how long it is. Be assured, that it was not from want of respect that I have delayed my thanks for it till now. The poetical compliment with which you conclude your letter was very grateful to me, as it was at once a proof of your veneration for the memory of Bruce, and a testimony of your approbation of my endeavours to do justice to his merit. I have since seen your account of Bruce, which, so far as it goes, is pleasing and interesting. I hope, however, you will do me the justice to cancel the sentence relating to me. I do not complain of its coldness, but of its unfairness. In my narrative, *I followed Dr Baird's authority* in ascribing the ‘Ode to the Cuckoo’ to Logan, who had indeed himself claimed it, and, till I saw Mr Birrel, I had no doubt of his being the indisputable author of it. In my Life of Logan, which Mr Birrel will shew you, I have fairly stated your claim for Bruce. Drs Robertson and Hardy oppose it, so that it is incumbent upon you to state the particular reasons you have for your opinion with respect to that ode, the hymns, and other pieces in question. Any additional information which

you may think proper to communicate to me shall be faithfully noticed in my 'Lives of the Poets,' corrected and enlarged, to be soon published separately."

84. The reader will observe that Dr Anderson, according to his own account, had assigned the "Ode to the Cuckoo" to Logan, upon Dr Baird's authority. Now it is necessary to inform him that, in the year following that in which he gave Dr Anderson the sanction of his authority for assigning this ode to Logan, Dr Baird published a new edition of Bruce's Poems in behoof of the poet's mother, in which he inserted the "Ode to the Cuckoo" without note or comment; thus awarding to Bruce, what he had formerly claimed for his friend Logan, and what he was aware Logan had claimed for himself. The reason for this apparent inconsistency, on the part of Dr Baird, in whose commendation we have yet much to say, is explained in a letter to Mr John Birrel, from Mr John Hervey, merchant, Stirling, with whose character, and connection with this publication, the reader will be made acquainted in a subsequent stage of this narrative. "He" (Dr Baird) "has found the Cuckoo to be Michael Bruce's, and has the original in his own handwriting."

85. In reply to Dr Anderson's enquiry as to his particular reason for supposing the ode in question to be Michael Bruce's, David Pearson wrote (we quote from the original letter), "When I came to visit his father a few days after Michael's death, he went and brought forth his poem book and read the 'Ode to the

Cuckoo.* and the ' Musiad,' at which the good old man was greatly overcome."

86. In the preceding paragraphs, we have been adducing evidence, and we purpose to advance still stronger proof, against Logan's claim to any portion of the poems published in Bruce's name; but we shall here digress for a moment to give the opinion of a learned gentleman, who has had more opportunity of examining the evidence in favour of Logan than of Bruce. Having been informed that Logan's MSS. had been in the hands of a son of the celebrated Henry Mackenzie, author of "The Man of Feeling," whence they passed into the hands of a Mr Miller, and not being aware that Mr Mackenzie had had more sons than the present Lord Mackenzie, one of the Judges of the Court of Session, we addressed a letter to his Lordship, requesting some account of Logan's papers, their contents, and their fate; and we are now called to ex-

* "The Cuckoo, one of the poems whose parentage is thus left in doubt, deserves to rank among the first productions of the English language. As Logan lived to establish a far higher literary and poetical character than Bruce, the world have seemed willing to regard him as the author; but it is worthy of remark that, when Logan published the Cuckoo as the production of his friend, he had little more than reached the age at which that friend died, and certainly there is no such disparity in poetical rank between them, as to make it less probable that Bruce, who, like the swan, might sing sweetest when dying, should have been the author of the poem, than that Logan should have written it while as yet in the infancy of his powers."—*Lives of the Scottish Poets, Article, M. Bruce. London: T. Boys, 1822.*

press our obligations to his Lordship for his very kind letter, of which the following is a part :—“ *Belmont, by Corstorphine, Edinburgh, 12th December 1836.* REVEREND SIR,—I am very willing to aid your inquiry as far as it is in my power. All I can say, however, is this : The Rev. Dr Donald Grant of London Street, London, was Logan’s executor. I was boarded for a short time in Dr Grant’s house about the year 1796, and I have a recollection of seeing some papers in the handwriting, as I understood, of *Logan*. One of these was the ‘Ode to the Cuckoo,’ but others were mere copies of pieces of poetry, extracted from the works, certainly not of Logan, but of other well-known authors ; so that he might have written out the Cuckoo, though written originally by Bruce, as he copied others.* Dr Grant never gave me papers, nor did I

* Lord Mackenzie has had good reason to attach little importance to the circumstance of a man’s laying claim to the authorship of a work, from the mere fact of a manuscript of that work being found in his handwriting, since the following incident occurred in his father’s history. “When in London, Mr Mackenzie sketched some part of his first and very popular work, the *Man of Feeling*, which was published in 1771, without his name, and was so much a favourite with the public as to become, in a few years, the occasion of a remarkable fraud. A Mr Eccles of Bath, observing the continued mystery as to the author, laid claim to the work as his own, and in order to support his pretensions, transcribed the whole with his own hand, with an appropriate allowance of blottings, interlineations, and corrections. So plausibly was this claim put forward, and so pertinaciously was it adhered to, that Messrs Cadell and Strachan, the publishers, found it necessary to undeceive the public by a formal contradiction.—*Chambers’s Biographical Dictionary of Eminent Scotsmen. Article, Henry Mackenzie.*

lodge any with Mr Miller. My brother Hugh, however, who has been dead for many years, was afterwards boarded in Dr Grant's house, remained with him much longer than I did, and had much more of his confidence. It is possible that he might have received delivery of some of Logan's papers, and have lodged them with Mr John Miller, King's Counsel, Lincoln's Inn, with whom he was well acquainted, to whom you can apply. He is still in Lincoln's Inn." In compliance with this suggestion, we addressed letters to Mr Miller, and are now called to acknowledge our obligations to that gentleman for the very friendly manner in which he answered our inquiries. The following extracts are all that are necessary to be given here:— "*No. 3, Stone Buildings, Lincoln's Inn, January 4. 1837.* REVEREND SIR,—I received your letter of the 27th ultimo only two days ago, and willingly give you all the information I possess on the points on which you desire it. Logan's papers came into my hands in the following manner:—The executor of Logan was Dr Grant. Mr Hugh Mackenzie became executor to Dr Grant, and I became executor to Mr Mackenzie on my valued friend's premature death about fifteen or sixteen years ago. The MS. book to which you allude was wholly in Logan's, not Bruce's handwriting, and the poetry which it contained was partly Logan's own, and partly that of other persons. I know Logan's handwriting well from having seen so much of it. That of Bruce I never saw, but there was not a scrap among

Logan's papers which could by possibility be traced by him. I speak from recollection, but positively, because I was well aware at the time of the *vexata quaestio* respecting the authorship of the 'Ode to the Cuckoo,' and there was nothing to be found either in the MS. book or the papers which in the slightest degree bore upon it. The point will probably never be conclusively settled, *but my own firm persuasion is, that the Ode is Bruce's*, though Logan may have changed some of the words or expressions." "March 21. 1837.—The whole of Logan's papers then existing came into my hands, where the few of them worth preserving still remain. My impression, from all the circumstances within my knowledge, is decidedly in favour of Bruce. The fact I mentioned of Logan having left behind him a book in his own handwriting, in which were contained various pieces of poetry, and among others the "Ode to the Cuckoo," is no evidence in his favour at all. He might have copied it from anybody as well as been the author of it himself. It would be of no use to you if I could recollect the other poems Logan had copied. It would lead you into useless discussion.*

* The reader has already been apprized, that among the MSS. which Logan received from our poet's friends, there were a number which he neither published in Bruce's name nor his own. At the time the Editor was in correspondence with Mr Miller he was unable to specify precisely the title or the subject of these pieces, and he had gone to press before being able to do so. It was then too late to prosecute his inquiries further. He wished to ascertain the contents of Logan's MSS., in order that, by the mention of them to those who had seen or

They were poems, as I apprehended, he had copied because he admired them, and wished to store them in his memory for improvement."

87. Of those pieces published under the name of Michael Bruce, in addition to the "Ode to the Cuckoo," Logan's biographer has claimed for him the episode of Levina in the poem of "Lochleven," the "Ode to Paoli," and the "Eclogue after the manner of Ossian," thus leaving to our poet almost nothing which has not either a personal or a local reference, as if it had been necessary to give Logan the credit of every thing which did not bear internal evidence of having been written by Bruce. These, however, Logan did not himself appropriate when he published a volume of poems in his own name, and the following reasons have been assigned by his biographer for his failing to do so. "Levina, though a beautiful tale, yet being incomplete in itself, and forming only an incident in a larger poem, could not with propriety have been introduced into that volume; and he probably thought the other poems which he contributed anonymously to the posthumous work of another, had too little merit to appear in a work professedly his own. For this reason he might be particularly solicitous of excluding the Eclogue in the manner of Ossian, al-

heard of Bruce's poems he might awaken their recollections whether such were not amongst the number. It is probable that a further investigation into this matter will lead to the discovery that some, if not all, the poems among Logan's papers are the compositions of Michael Bruce.

though there are strong reasons for ascribing it to his pen, notwithstanding its inferiority to his other compositions. For it is undeniable that his admiration of the Gaelic bard gave birth to many imitations still more puerile than the Eclogue."* Before advancing any claims in behalf of Bruce to these pieces, we beg to advert to internal evidence which seems to favour Logan. The only piece in his collection bearing any resemblance to the historical ballad in which Bruce is known to have excelled, is "A Tale," beginning, "Where pastoral Tweed renowned in Song," one stanza of which is as follows :

" The picture of her mother's youth
 Now sainted in the sky,
 She was the angel of his age
 And apple of his eye."

In the episode of Levina in Bruce's Lochleven these lines occur,

" The perfect picture of her mother's youth,
 His age's hope, the apple of his eye."

These are not accidental coincidences of thought. They are either the production of the same mind, or borrowed by one writer from another.† Our firm con-

* Life of Logan, prefixed to his Poems. Bell and Bradfute. 1812.

† Several other coincidences of this kind can be traced in the volumes that pass under the names of Logan and Bruce, but it would carry us beyond the limits which we have prescribed to ourselves to give them a place in our pages.

viction is, that both are the composition of Michael Bruce. The first draught of "Lochleven" is now before us, containing the germ of the episode claimed for Logan, and the only difference between it and the one in the printed edition is, that in the former Bruce makes his hero a giant, in the latter a hunter,* and expands

* The reader, who is familiar with the popular poetry of his country, will not fail to discern the striking similarity between the episode of Levina as altered, and published in the poem of "Lochleven," and Sir Walter Scott's "Lady of the Lake." We mean not to say that the Baronet borrowed the thought from Bruce, but only that his poem is a similar fiction with the episode, but expanded into a regular epic. How striking the coincidence is, may be seen by placing some of the verses of each together.

" Her, as she halted on a green hill top,
 A quiver'd hunter spy'd. Her flowing locks
 In golden ringlets, glitt'ring to the sun
 Upon her bosom play'd. Her mantle green
 Like thine, O Nature, to her rosy cheek
 Lent beauty new. The stranger's eye
 Was caught as with ethereal presence. Oft
 He look'd to heaven, and oft he met her eye
 In all the silent eloquence of love."

BRUCE.

" But scarce again his horn he wound,
 When lo! forth starting at the sound
 From underneath an aged oak
 That slanted from the islet rock
 A damsel, guider of its way,
 A little skiff shot to the bay.

" With head upraised, and look intent,
 And eye and ear attentive bent;
 And locks flung back, and lips apart
 Like monument of Grecian art.

the episode to a length disproportioned to the poem. In the original there are several verses of greater beauty than even in the supposed improved version. We shall place the opening stanzas of both in juxtaposition. The printed version begins as follows :

“ Low by the lake, as yet without a name,
 Fair bosom'd, in the bottom of the vale
 Arose a cottage, green with ancient turf,
 Half hid in hoary trees, and from the north
 Fenc'd by a wood, but open to the sun.
 Here dwelt a peasant, reverend with the locks
 Of age ; yet youth was ruddy on his cheek ;
 His farm, his only care, his sole delight
 To tend his daughter, beautiful and young ;
 To watch her paths ; to fill her lap with flow'r's ;
 To see her spread into the bloom of years,
 The perfect picture of her mother's youth.”

In the first draught the episode begins thus :

Low by the lake, as yet without a name,
 There rose a little cot, thatch'd o'er with reeds,
 The walls of turf—the dwelling of a swain,
 A simple artless man, who knew no more

A foot more light, a step more true,
 Ne'er from the heath-flow'r dash'd the dew ;
 E'en the slight harebell raised its head
 Elastic from her airy tread.”

* * * * *

At length, with Helen in a grove,
 He seemed to walk and speak of love.”

SCOTT.

Than barely to support against the wants
Of life, by sweeping up the scaly fry
Along the shelving shore, and guide his boat
A little voyage to the sister isles
That smile encircled by the crystal flood,
To search for eggs, and mend his homely fare.
Before his cottage lay a garden stor'd
With various kinds of roots, and herbs, and flow'rs.
His daughter fair Levina, often there
Tended the flow'rs—herself a sweeter flow'r.

We have quoted enough to shew that this episode was not a creation of Logan's imagination. If, because the printed version is somewhat different from the original draught, it is inferred that Logan altered it, then it must be inferred that he altered the whole poem; for it happens that there is as great a difference in the whole, as in this particular part. Many verses are omitted which are, and many verses are added which are not, in the first sketch. The writer has transposed the whole, having first taken Gairny Bridge, as the spot from which to make his survey, and afterwards the Lomond Hill, upon the opposite side of the lake, as affording him more scope, and the localities are accordingly described, as seen from this other and more elevated position, with such accuracy, as indicates that the poet, whoever he was, knew with perfect familiarity every rivulet and rill, every hill and knoll, every declivity and plain, in the whole scene. As to the Eclogue after the manner of Ossian, it seems Logan's biographer did not think it worth contending for, and

perhaps it is not. But whether good or bad, Logan was not the author of it, as the following extract from David Pearson's letter to Dr Anderson plainly shews :—“When he composed the Eclogue in the manner of Ossian, I remember that he told us who this Ossian was, and that his poems were much esteemed and rehearsed among the Highlanders.”

88. All the evidence which we have adduced in the preceding pages, together with the opinions of learned gentlemen, which we have quoted, appear to be overturned by the following statement in Logan's Life, as given by Chambers, in his “Biographical Dictionary of Eminent Scotsmen :”—“A painful charge rests against his memory, regarding the real authorship of some of those pieces, and also respecting the use he made of a copious manuscript of Bruce's poetry intrusted to him after the publication of the first volume. * Into this controversy, which is fully stated in Anderson's edition of the British Poets, we deem it unnecessary, in the present literary reputation of both men, to enter ; but we can state as a fact, not formerly known to the biographers of Logan, *that he asserted his innocence in a very decided manner*, after his removal to London, by ordering an Edinburgh agent to take out an interdict against an edition of Bruce's Poems, in which several of his own pieces had been appropriated under the supposition of their belonging to that poet.”

* Logan did not publish his own poems till fourteen years after he came into possession of Bruce's MSS.

89. Feeling confident that Mr Chambers must have been either misinformed, or wrong impressed by his informant's statement, we addressed a letter requesting him to state who was the agent employed by Logan? Who were the publishers interdicted? and, What was the ultimate result of the interdict? to which interrogatories he promptly and kindly replied, in several letters, from which the following are extracts:—“28 *Anne Street, Edinburgh, 19th December 1836.* Rev. Sir,—I have this day received your letter of the 17th instant, in answer to which I have to mention, that, to the best of my recollection, the statement alluded to was made upon the authority of Alexander Young, Esq. W. S., the agent employed by Logan, and who yet lives. From what you mention, I am inclined to fear that the statement goes little way to prove Logan's right to the beautiful Ode to the Cuckoo, and only proves his anxiety to sustain his reputation. But I shall have much pleasure in asking Mr Young for particulars, which I shall lose no time in transmitting to you.”—“*January 12. 1837.* Rev. Sir,—I have received yours of the 2d instant, which, I suppose, would scarcely have left your hands till you received a package from me, containing a series of letters from Mr Young, stating all he knew respecting Logan's prosecution of the Stirling publisher. Mr Young is, of course, an aged practitioner, since he transacted business in 1782. He is senior partner of the firm of Young, Ayton, and Rutherford, W. S., Edinburgh, one of the most respectable firms of the

kind in town. His address is 48 Queen Street. I now see reason to think I was either misled in some degree by Mr Young's oral statement, upon which the passage in the Dictionary is grounded, or had not given the matter sufficient consideration. The prosecution proves, as I said in my first, anxiety for reputation; but Bruce after all may have been the writer of the poems, though Logan, no doubt, would be pretty sure that no evidence to that effect was likely to be brought up in judgment against him. If Logan really was not the author, he must have felt himself obliged to *brazen out the lie* at all hazards. Frail as his character was, can we reasonably suppose that he would act in so profligate a manner? I should almost think not, and it must have been upon some such conclusion, that I brought forward the notice of the prosecution in support of his claims. You will, of course, judge of these matters as you think proper, and use your own discretion in making up this part of your narrative from the materials of all sorts now in your possession. I entertain the most friendly good wishes for your edition of Bruce, and will be very glad indeed if it be in my power to do any thing for the work. The Life of Bruce is one of the most beautiful and touching chapters in our literary history. If I can be of any use in the business of correcting the press, I shall be very happy to have sheets sent me.* The follow-

* For this very generous offer on the part of Mr Chambers the Editor knows not well how to express his obligations; for,

ing note is prefixed to the Ode to the Cuckoo, in the 'Poetic Wreath,' consisting of select passages from the works of the English poets from Chaucer to Wordsworth, London: Chapman and Hall, Strand, 1836. 'This beautiful ode first appeared in the Posthumous Poems of Michael Bruce, Edinburgh, 1770. It was, however, subsequently claimed by the editor of the volume, the Rev. John Logan, among whose poems it was afterwards printed. It is here unhesitatingly assigned to the author under whose name it was first given to the public on the following grounds:—First, No one of Logan's unquestioned pieces makes the slightest approach to it in beautiful simplicity. Second, Were such literary frauds to be tolerated, and editors of posthumous poems allowed to claim and possess without title the best pieces in such volumes, thus taking the benefit of their own *laches*, no posthumous work would appear without suspicion of being interpolated, and no author's fame, resting on such works, would be safe.' ” *

although the offer was not accepted, his obligations are still the same. Indeed, the whole of Mr Chambers's conduct in this investigation has been of the most gentlemanly kind; for notwithstanding that investigation has led to a refutation of his own statement, he is willing, for the sake of truth, that his statement be shewn to be inaccurate.

* This sheet was submitted to Mr Chambers when passing through the press, and we deem it proper to insert here the note by which it was accompanied when returned:—"I lose no time to return your sheets, on which I have only made two or three marks of little consequence your whole treatment of

91. The series of letters referred to in Mr Chambers's second communication, contained answers by Mr Young to questions put by Mr Chambers on the matter under discussion. These were more fully stated in a correspondence opened up between the Editor and Mr Young, in consequence of Mr Chambers's reference. The substance of them will be found in the following extracts, which, with Mr Young's cordial permission, we are permitted to give :*—"The Bill-Chamber is one of the offices of the Court of Session, in which the Ordinary Judges sit by rotation ; and, when steps are taken to investigate objections by a debtor to claims

the case, as far as I am concerned, appearing quite satisfactory, *or only too much so perhaps*. At page 83, however, you hurt my conscientiousness unwittingly by speaking with praise of a passage in the article Bruce in the Dictionary as my own. If it be not yet out of time I would wish it to be implied that the passage is only *from* that work, for it is not of my own writing. The article was written by my excellent friend and schoolfellow, Mr Robert Hogg, of Peebles-shire, a man who resembled Bruce not a little in his poetical talents and turn of mind, and also in his fate, for he died at the beginning of 1834 at an early age :

—— multis flebilis,
 Nullo flebilior quam mihi.

One of the most amiable human beings, certainly he was, I ever knew, and possessed of very considerable poetical talent, though his modesty was too great to allow him to do either it or himself justice. The article Blacklock in the Dictionary was also by him."

* The Editor takes this opportunity of thanking Mr Young for the great trouble he took in writing so frequently and so fully upon this point, and for the kind reception he gave the Editor when waiting upon him at his own house.

made upon him by a creditor, an application is made to the Court through the Bill-Chamber by what is termed a *Bill of Suspension* ; and, when his object is to remove an action against him in an inferior court, he applies by what is called a Bill of Advocation. In the same manner, *Interdicts and Sists* of all kinds originate in the Bill-Chamber, where, if passed by the Lord Ordinary, they bring the question before the Court in pleadings of counsel and other steps of process ; if refused, the matter is set at rest. In July 1782, I applied for an interdict, at Mr Logan's instance, against the publishers of Bruce's poems, and obtained what is called a *sist*, which was followed with answers for the printers, and other pleadings then called replies and duplies. I have laid my hand on my earliest letter-book, and beg to quote from it two letters on the subject. The one is from me to Mr Patrick Robb, messenger at Stirling, dated 26th July 1782, in which I say to him, ' I send you notarial copy of a Bill of Suspension and Interdict at the Rev. John Logan's instance against John Robertson, printer here, and William Anderson, bookseller in Stirling, which you will immediately intimate to Mr Anderson, either himself, or by leaving a copy within his house, and send me an execution to that purpose.' The other is from me to Mr Logan, of the same date : ' I am assured by C. Elliot and P. Anderson, booksellers, Parliament Close, that they will not sell a copy of Bruce's Poems till the interdict is removed. Any further prohibition will therefore be unnecessary ; but, if they do

not keep their promise, the remedy is easy. If Robertson does not desist you may raise an action of damages against him, or give in a complaint to the Court.' ”

92. The circumstances which led Mr Logan to apply for an interdict in this case were these : Mr, afterwards Provost Anderson, bookseller in Stirling, had resolved upon publishing a new edition of Bruce's Poems, purposing, of course, to reprint all the pieces which had previously appeared under the name of our poet ; and, with this view, employed Mr John Robertson, who had printed the first edition of the book, to print also the second. Mr Logan was apprised of the intention of the parties, by Mr Robertson waiting upon him to request a copy of Bruce's poems, from which to print the second edition ; but the impression was thrown off, and in course of being issued to the public, before Mr Logan proceeded to take steps to prevent its publication. This he did, by engaging Alexander Young, Esq., W. S., to apply to the Bill-Chamber for an interdict, and to act as his agent in the further prosecution of the case. Messrs Anderson and Robertson resolved to defend, and accordingly employed James Walker, Esq., as their agent. The whole pleadings in the case are now before us, having obtained them by ordering a search in the Register House ; together with the decision of the Lord Ordinary, extracted from the minute-book of the Bill-Chamber.* We shall

* The editor feels great pleasure in acknowledging his obli-

give the substance of the whole in the form of narrative, as the mode of stating the case with the greatest brevity.

93. The reasons assigned by Logan, or perhaps, lawyers would say, put forth for him by his agent, but which Mr Young affirms he advanced only as he was instructed,* were, that, in 1770, he employed Mr John Robertson to print a volume of poems under the name of Michael Bruce, an early acquaintance of his, *who had left his works to his charge, with additions by himself*, and another gentleman; that these poems were not intended for the public, never advertised for sale, never put into the hands of a bookseller, and never sold, but only distributed by him among his friends and acquaintances; that the copyright of the book was his, which, by the act of Queen Anne, he had power to retain for fourteen years,

gations to A. C. Dick, Esq., advocate, and James Peddie, Esq., W. S., and particularly to the latter gentleman, for the great trouble they took in procuring him these papers, and other documents he found it necessary to consult in the course of his investigation.

* Mr Young offered Mr Robert Chambers Logan's letters at the time he was preparing his Biographical Dictionary, but Mr C. was too far advanced in the life of Logan to be able to avail himself of any part of their contents, and therefore contented himself with merely stating the fact of an interdict being obtained, assuming, in all probability, that Mr Logan would never have taken this step unless he could make out his claims. Mr Young afterwards destroyed the letters, but, from this recent perusal of them, has a distinct recollection of their contents.

and that period was not yet expired ; that the book, as required, was entered in Stationers' Hall, and that therefore the copyright was his exclusive property ; that he was not willing to grant permission to any party to reprint the book in question ; and that therefore Messrs Robertson and Anderson should be ordered by the Court to desist from the prosecution of their design.* On these grounds, a *sist* was granted by Mr Veitch, Lord Eliack, 25th July 1782.

94. In the answers by the respondent, it was admitted that the whole impression of the first edition consisted only of 250 copies, and the expense of printing amounted only to nine pounds ; but it was contended that three shillings, the price charged, was extravagantly high for so small a book ; and the reason given for charging this enormous price was, that the profits were to go wholly to Bruce's parents, who were said to be in indigent circumstances ; that the book was not entered in Stationers' Hall ; that, so far from the printer supposing that Mr Logan had any interest in the copyright, he applied to him for a copy from which to print the new edition ; that Mr Anderson had made offer to give up the impression which he had caused to be thrown off, if Mr Logan would indemnify the expense, which he rejected ; that Mr Logan was not the heir-at-law to Michael Bruce, and had produced no legal right to the MSS., and, consequently, none to the copyright ; *that copies of the book were sold,*

* Bill of Suspension and Interdict.

in the usual manner, at the high price already mentioned ; that he understood that Bruce was the *author of the whole*, or, at least, the greatest part of the poems ; and that Mr Logan had never condescended to say which were his, or prove any right to the book from authorship, and had not shewn that he had acquired any right thereto, either from Mr Bruce or his heirs.*

95. In the replies to these answers, several of the former positions were reiterated ; and, in addition, it was argued that the preface to the first edition clearly shewed that the book was not printed for publication to the world, but for a small circle of the author's particular acquaintances ; that Mr Logan *was entrusted by Michael Bruce, previous to his death, with these very poems* ; that as proprietor, and indeed, in a great measure, the *author of the collection of the poems in question*, he had in view, some months before, to publish for sale an elegant edition of that work, and entered into a transaction with Mr Creech, bookseller, and Mr Robertson, by which he agreed to give the one the benefit of printing, and the other the advantage of selling the poems ; that Mr Robertson, instead of adhering to the bargain, had entered into a contract with one Anderson, a bookseller in Stirling, to print a mean edition of these poems ; and that, in order to bring the matter to a point, the suspender was willing

* Answers for John Robertson to the Bill of Suspension for the Rev. John Logan.

to enter into a submission with Anderson and Robertson relative to this matter.*

96. "The respondent" (we quote the precise words of the duplies) "is not a little astonished that the suspender should gravely aver that the poems in question were neither published nor sold, but were, in every respect, in the same situation as an unpublished manuscript; and that he should also say, that he is the author of most of the poems. He surely cannot condescend on one instance, where so many copies of a book were ever printed, except with a view to publication. Besides, the preface of the book affords convincing evidence that they were intended for the public. After mentioning that Mr Bruce had composed them during the vacation of the college, and that the sentiments were interesting and pathetic, the writer of the preface observes, that, 'if these and many other beauties of nature and art are allowed to constitute true poetic merit, the following poems will stand the judgment of men of taste;' and he concludes with mentioning, that he *publishes* the poems, not with solicitude and anxiety, but with the pleasurable reflection, that he is *furnishing out* a classical entertainment to *every reader of refined taste*. The respondent does not certainly know who wrote this preface. Probably the reverend suspender was the author of it. But whoever he was, your Lordship has here clear evidence,

* Replies for the Rev. Mr Logan to the Answers for John Robertson, 1782.

under the editor's own hand, that the book was *published*, and that it was meant for the use and entertainment of every reader of taste. *The book was sold*; and, if your Lordship shall think it material to have *this fact proved*, the respondent will instantly undertake to prove the same in the clearest manner. All the material facts on which the interdict was obtained are either disproved, or admitted not to be true. The preface proves that the book was published; and it is not now alleged that the same was entered in Stationers' Hall. No right has been produced from the author of the poems; and, so far was the suspender from alleging that he had the property thereof, that *a letter is herewith produced under his own hand, acknowledging that they are the property of two gentlemen in London.* The edition of the poems printed by Mr Anderson is thrown off on the finest writing-paper, and is in every respect superior to that printed for Mr Logan in 1770, though sold nearly one-half cheaper. The respondent never heard of the new edition proposed by Mr Logan till Mr Anderson's edition was well advanced; and he does not suppose the suspender had any other view in advertising this edition *than to knock Mr Anderson's on the head.** The respondent has no concern in Anderson's edition, except that he was employed to print the book, but still has an inte-

* It appears that Logan advertised a new and elegant edition of Bruce's works to be published by Mr Creech, but it was never heard of, save from the advertisement.

rest to have the interdict removed, in order that he may fulfil his engagement to his employer ; and it could serve no purpose, except to create expense and delay, to try the question over again in the name of Mr Anderson."

97. The reader may perhaps regard it as a circumstance in favour of Mr Logan, that he ordered only 250 copies of Bruce's poems to be printed. But he ought to bear in mind, that it was a number too large to be likely to be given in presents, especially by one who was not himself in affluent circumstances ; that it was a sufficient number for an experiment as to whether or not the book was likely to take with the public, which, if it did, after deducting expenses, allowing for bookseller's profits, and leaving the editor a goodly number to give away, would still have secured *twenty pounds* to the parents of the poet. This sum, considering their poverty, would have been to them a little fortune ; and more particularly so if, with the money, they had continued also to possess the copyright of the book. But it appears, from his own shewing, that Logan designed to print an elegant second edition for his own benefit, and that he continued to entertain this design at a time when the widowed mother of Bruce was in a state bordering upon starvation, and he in the receipt of a handsome permanent income ; and it may therefore be inferred that, in order to make the benefit as great as possible, he took care that the number of copies in the first edition should be very small. We have given the statements

advanced on both sides, and now leave the reader to account for Logan's prevarications, and reconcile his averments, as best he can, with the facts which we have stated in the narrative. It is not our design to act the part of a special pleader, and we therefore abstain from expatiating, as we might, on many things suggested by this affair, as it now presents itself. We choose simply to adduce evidence, and, on the ground of that evidence, we leave the public to give their verdict.

98. Before passing from this subject, we shall give a few extracts from the correspondence of Logan's law-agent with Mr Robert Chambers and the Editor, to which reference has been previously made. The statements occur in different letters from Mr Young, although put together in this paragraph. "I knew Mr Logan when I attended college, having been introduced to him by my brother-in-law Dr Thomas Hardy, afterwards one of the ministers of Edinburgh, and a professor in the University. I cannot say that I was well acquainted with him, but, after reading his Sermons and other works, I entertain a respect for his memory, which, I must say, would be diminished if it was made to appear that he borrowed Bruce's Ode as an introduction to his own poems. I cannot take it upon me to affirm that I ever heard my friend Dr Hardy, or Dr Robertson, assert that Logan was the author of the 'Ode to the Cuckoo.' *He certainly never said to me that he was.* When Mr Chambers first spoke to me on the subject, I looked out two or three

letters from Mr Logan relating to the interdict, which have since fallen aside, but they contained no such statement. *My present impression and belief, I own, is not favourable to Mr Logan's claims*, whether made by himself, or by others in his name. I must say, that it appears to me unaccountable why, after the interdict was applied for and obtained, he never brought it under discussion in the Court of Session. Mr Logan, I believe, went to London not long after;* and I never heard more from him on the subject. I see, from my letter-book, that I sent him my account for obtaining the suspension or interdict, with an abatement of my professional fees; but it was not paid till after his death, by Dr Robertson of Dalmeny, as his executor. I beg leave to return the book you sent me, and must say, that a perusal of some of the MSS. in it has made a strong impression upon my mind in favour of Bruce, particularly the letter from David Pearson to Dr Anderson. In short, I have a great curiosity to see what *you* can say on the subject, and beg you will make no scruple to employ me further if necessary."

99. The following is the decision given by the Lord Ordinary in the case, as extracted from the minute-book of the Bill-Chamber:—"21st August 1782. In respect no title from the author is produced, and that, from the preface and number of copies, it appears that

* The interdict was removed in August 1782. Mr Logan did not leave Leith for London till October 1786.

the book in question was printed for publication in the year 1770, and there being no evidence of its being entered at Stationers' Hall, therefore refuses the bill, and recalls the interdict, but finds no expenses due." (Signed) "THOMAS MILLER, *Lord Justice-Clerk.*"

100. From the popularity which Logan's Sermons have obtained, and the favour with which his Lectures on History were received when read by him in Edinburgh, it has been very generally inferred that he was a much more talented man than Bruce, and that therefore he is much more likely to have been the author of the poems in dispute. "It appears, however," (we quote from one of his biographers,) "he did not scruple to borrow occasionally from others. Besides the passages in the fourth and eleventh sermons of the first part, which Dr Anderson mentions as borrowed from Dr Seed, there is another in the sermon on Retirement, taken *verbatim* from Dr Blair's discourse on that subject; and there is a beautiful passage in the Evening Sermon after the Communion, taken from Bishop Sherlock's discourse on the Sufferings of Christ."* To these instances of his free use of other men's works, we have to add, that a great portion of the fourth sermon in volume 2d is copied *verbatim* from Zollikofer, which he did not even translate from the original German, but slavishly transcribed from Tooke's English trans-

* Life of Logan prefixed to the seventh edition of his Sermons, 1810.

lation of that author's works. Besides these, there are probably many others which we might detect, if we were disposed to search for them. It is true that "Logan's Sermons" were posthumous volumes, and he is not therefore responsible for their publication; but surely Dr Robertson, as his executor, would select what he thought the best discourses from amongst those which had come into his hand, else he was not worthy of the confidence which had been reposed in him.

101. As to Logan's lectures on the Philosophy of History, which brought him, when read to the public, some fame, we shall let another of his biographers speak. "A short while before his (Logan's) death, a View of Ancient History, vol. i., was published by Dr William Rutherford, who at that time conducted an academy at Uxbridge. Upon its arrival at Edinburgh, the more enlightened admirers of Logan instantly recognised in it those lectures to which they had listened with attention and delight, and which had made a lasting and a pleasing impression on their minds. *Yet Logan himself never claimed a work which soon obtained a high reputation and a rapid sale; and, among the papers which he left, no scrap has been found to afford the slightest information on the subject.* It seems therefore unfair to strip the living of laurels for the sake of strewing them upon the tomb of the dead. Dr Rutherford has since prefixed his name to a second volume, which is evidently executed

by the hand of the same master.”* In reference to this affair, another biographer remarks, “It is said, I know not with what truth, that these lectures were deposited by Mr Logan with the gentleman above named as a security for a loan of money.” † But it is not probable that Logan would have allowed his lectures to have been published under another name, if he had had the power to prevent it, he was alive, and could not but know of their publication, since they attained to such a speedy popularity, and such extensive circulation. If Logan stood in need of money, and the lectures were his own, he would have naturally published them himself, as he would have been certain to realise a handsome sum for the copyright, seeing he had already secured to himself considerable fame. Or, if he ever lodged his MSS. with this gentleman as a security for a loan of money, why did he not redeem them ; for at his death, which took place shortly after their publication, he bequeathed L. 600, besides other property, to his friends ? ‡

102. With respect to his pamphlet, the only other of his works which has been deemed of any importance, we shall let the biographer, whom we have already quoted, again speak. “In 1788 he was employ-

* Life of Logan prefixed to his Poems. Bell and Bradfute, 1812.

† Lives of the Scottish Poets. London, T. Boys, 1822.

‡ Life prefixed to the seventh edition of his Sermons.

ed to write a pamphlet entitled, 'A Review of the principal charges against Mr Warren Hastings,' which had the good fortune to give great offence to the leaders of the impeachment against that gentleman, who construed it into an infringement of their privileges, and went so far as to institute a prosecution against the publisher, Mr Stockdale. The jury, however, who sat on the cause found nothing libellous in it, and unanimously acquitted the defendant. In truth party fury alone could have discovered in this production any thing worthy of so much notice; for of all the political pamphlets which have made a noise in the world, Logan's review of the charges against Mr Hastings is one of the least calculated to gratify the curiosity of a reader who is free from the angry passions in which it had its rise. It is certainly the weakest of all Logan's productions.* Such are the testimonies borne to Logan's talents and character by those who have voluntarily undertaken to record his achievements and

* Lives of the Scottish Poets. London. T. Boys. 1822.

The following anecdote is related by Dr Bisset in his history of the reign of George III. "The late Mr Logan went to the House of Commons the day on which Warren Hastings was impeached. At the expiration of the first hour of Mr Sheridan's speech he said to a friend, "All this is declamation without proof." When the second was finished, "this is a most wonderful oration." At the third, "Mr Hastings acted most unjustifiably." At the fourth, "Mr Hastings is a most atrocious criminal." And at the last, "Of all the monsters of iniquity, the most atrocious is Warren Hastings." This I was told by Mr Peter Stewart, proprietor of the Oracle, who was present. The reader will remember that Mr Logan had previously written a defence of Warren Hastings.

his worth. We have brought them forward here as confirming in our opinion the charge which has been often brought against him, and which it is our object to substantiate,—that of having appropriated as his own, many of the best poems of Michael Bruce.

103. We know not what amount of pecuniary benefit Logan received from his edition of Bruce's poems ; but we are aware that his connexion with this publication, and his supposed authorship of some of the pieces it contained, were the means of establishing his reputation, and if not the chief, at least one of the principal, reasons why the Incorporated Trades of South Leith preferred him to other candidates as their minister ; and we know them to have been the sole cause of certain flattering marks of attention which were paid him by eminent literary men of his day, and among others by the Right Honourable Edmund Burke, who was constrained out of admiration for "The Ode to the Cuckoo," to search out Logan when upon a visit to Edinburgh, and compliment him as the author of the most beautiful lyric in our language.* Logan did not undeceive him, but the appropriation of the honour upon this occasion does not appear to have served him much, for we cannot learn that he was ever indebted to the statesman for any thing beyond the compliment. We have now done with this controversy, and after the proof we have led, cannot think

* Campbell's Specimens of the Poets.

it possible that any reflecting mind will regard Logan innocent of the dishonourable conduct which we have laid to his charge. We have no wish that the charge should continue to rest against him, and shall be pleased to find him successfully vindicated, and even to see the evidence which we ourselves have furnished made to tell in his favour.

104. It is probable that Bruce's poems did not command much popularity at their first publication. Their beauties were of a kind calculated to strike only such minds as can appreciate delicacy of thought and beautiful simplicity of language, qualities which do not commend themselves to the multitude. They happened, however, to come under the observation of a gentleman who had a nice perception of these proper beauties, and who, in addition to his taste, was capable of having his sympathies moved by the simple story of youthful genius and piety, dying amidst poverty and disease. That gentleman was Mr, afterwards Lord Craig, a title which he assumed upon being made one of the Judges of the Court of Session. In the 36th number of the *Mirror*,* published in 1779, he commended the poetry and gave the brief outlines of Michael Bruce's melan-

* "The poetry of Michael Bruce was brought into general notice by an essay in the *Mirror*, a well known periodical, begun at the suggestion, conducted by the judgment, adorned by the taste, and elevated to its high character, by the genius of the admired and revered HENRY MACKENZIE."—*Note to a proposed inscription for Bruce's monument, by Lord Chief Commissioner Adam.*

choly story, and that so touchingly as to render it worthy of being reprinted with every edition of Bruce's works. Part of the paper has been already quoted in these pages as a portion of Dr Anderson's remarks on the "Elegy to Spring." Passing over its introduction, we give the remaining paragraphs. "I have been led into these reflections, from the perusal of a small volume, which happens now to lie before me, which, though possessed of very considerable merit, and composed in this country, is, I believe, very little known. In a well written preface, the reader is told that most of them are the production of Michael Bruce ; that this Michael Bruce was born in a remote village in Kinross-shire, and descended from parents remarkable for nothing but the innocence and simplicity of their lives ; that in the 21st year of his age he was seized with a consumption, which put an end to his life. Nothing, methinks, has more the power of awakening benevolence, than the consideration of genius thus depressed by situation, suffered to pine in obscurity, and sometimes, as in the case of this unfortunate young man, to perish, it may be, for want of those comforts and conveniences which might have fostered a delicacy of frame or of mind ill calculated to bear the hardships which poverty lays upon both. For my own part, I never pass the place (a little hamlet, skirted with a circle of old ash trees, about two miles from Kinross) where Michael resided ; I never look on his dwelling (a small thatched house, distinguished from the cottages of the other inhabitants only by a sashed window

at the end, instead of a lattice, fringed with a honeysuckle plant, which the poor youth had trained around it); I never find myself on that spot but I stop my horse involuntarily, and looking on the window which the honeysuckle has now almost covered, in the dream of the moment I picture out a figure for the gentle tenant of the mansion. I wish, and my heart swells while I do so, that he were alive, and that I were a great man, to have the luxury of visiting him there, and of bidding him be happy. I cannot carry my readers thither, but that they may share some of my feelings, I will present them with an extract from the last poem,* in the little volume before me, which from the subject and the manner in which it is written cannot fail of touching the heart of every man who reads it."

105. In paragraph 84 incidental mention is made of Mr John Hervey, merchant in Stirling, as having been in some way connected with Dr Baird's edition of Bruce's poems. It is necessary that we now explain that connexion. Mr Hervey was, for a great part of his life, an invalid—suffering from an affection of the chest, which he mistook for consumption, and was then constantly apprehensive of dying prematurely. He survived, however, till past the meridian of life. "He was a man of deep piety, and refined mind."† The works of our poet having fallen into his hands, he read

* Elegy to Spring, the last in the first edition.

† Letter from the Rev. John Smart, Stirling, to the Editor.

the "Elegy to Spring" with an intensity of interest that no uninspired writer had ever before awakened in him. The poet had spoken every sentiment of his mind, and described every feeling of his soul. Piety and taste had their echoes within him, and they responded faithfully to the voice which they heard in the "Elegy." From that moment he was fired with the most enthusiastic admiration of the bard of Lochleven. Supposing that the pleasure which he himself had felt in the perusal of his works would be diffused by their circulation, and finding it difficult to procure copies of the book, he determined upon making every endeavour to get another edition published. With this view he waited upon his minister, the Rev. John Smart, Dr Doig,* Rector of the borough school, Mr William Telford, and Mr Thomas Beatson, bankers, and communicating his intention to them, got these gentlemen interested in his project. Desirous of furnishing a more detailed account of the poet than the preface to the first edition of his works afforded, he entered into a correspondence with Mr John Birrell, with whom the reader has already been made acquainted, and by whom, in addition to the information he desired, he was told that Anne Bruce, the poet's mother, was still

* Dr Doig is favourably known to the world as the author of an "Essay on the Savage State," and as contributor of several articles to the *Encyclopædia Britannica*. His name has been rendered still more familiar by Hector Macneil dedicating to him his volume of poems, containing the popular ballad of "Will and Jean, or the Waes o' War."

alive, but reduced through the infirmities of age to extreme poverty. This intelligence determined him to visit Kinnesswood, and converse with the surviving parent of that genius whose melancholy fate he so deeply deplored. He found her in a condition indicating the greatest penury, but finding comfort from a perusal of Willison's "Afflicted Man's Companion."* He resolved immediately to publish an edition of her son's poems by subscription for her benefit, and upon returning home, set himself to prepare a prospectus and subscription papers.

106. While Mr Hervey was thus engaged, the Rev. Dr Baird, on happening to pass through Kinross, stepped into the shop of Mr David Birrel, bookseller, brother to the gentleman above named, and made inquiries respecting the parentage, birth-place, and other circumstances in the history of Michael Bruce. Mr Birrel referred him for information to his brother in Kinnesswood, with whom accordingly he opened a correspondence. Dr Baird learning through this medium the destitute condition of the poet's mother, and the intention of Mr Hervey and his friends to publish a new edition of her son's poems for her benefit, which he had also projected, he addressed a letter to Mr Birrel, from which the following is an extract: "*Athol House, Dunkeld, 8th February 1790.*—I would like to correspond with the Stirling Society you mention, if they have any design to enter soon on a new edition.

* Letter from the Rev. John Smart, Stirling, to the Editor.

Will you, therefore, be kind enough to let me know as soon as convenient the names of any of the gentlemen who have so generously sent their donations to Mrs Bruce, and I will take an immediate opportunity of consulting with them, and of transmitting the manuscripts to them if necessary. In the mean time, be so good as give the enclosed guinea to Mrs Bruce from me, and inform her also that I design to send her the same sum regularly every year.* I will send it (if you give me notice in your reply to this when it is) upon the birthday of poor Michael, and long may the old woman be able to demand from me this trifling testimony of my regard for the memory of her son."

107. Upon learning Dr Baird's intention, the gentlemen in Stirling at once gave place to him, and became active co-operators in the prosecution of his design. In consequence of this deference, he solicited their approbation of the various steps he took to forward the publication, and hence Mr Hervey was able to state, as he did in the letter we have quoted, how Dr Baird came to insert the "Ode to the Cuckoo" in his edition of Bruce's poems.† As Mr Birrell had furnished the MSS. to which Dr Baird refers in the above letter, he of course became interested in their publica-

* In course of the eight years during which Anne Bruce survived the period when the above letter was written, Dr Baird occasionally doubled and trebled the sum named.

† The Editor addressed a letter to Dr Baird requesting him to give an account of the matter himself, but he received no reply.

tion; and as some time had elapsed, after sending them, without hearing any thing of the book, he wrote to Dr B. requesting to know what had become of them, when the Doctor replied: "Soon after I got them from your brother, I was a good deal discouraged, by some inquiries among the booksellers, who seemed to think that a new edition of Michael Bruce's poems could not be published without Mr Logan's consent, as he had prevented a second edition which had been proposed formerly.* I had, however, never totally given up my idea of promoting a new edition, and it was no longer ago than last week that I transcribed one of the little performances of Mr Bruce in my possession, and sent it to the publishers of one of the London newspapers, with a few remarks prefixed to it, in order to awaken the attention of the public to the merits of his poetry; and as there is a probability of my being soon in London again, my view was to have there entered into some terms with them for the benefit of Mrs Bruce."

108. All fears of trouble from Logan, if he ever had any, being now removed by his death, which took place in 1788, Dr Baird proceeded to make arrangements for his edition of Bruce's poems. With a view to give a fresh interest to the volume, he submitted the MSS. of the "Last Day" to Dr Blair, with a request

* It appears that Logan had carefully concealed the result of his attempt to prevent Anderson and Robertson's edition of Bruce's poems.

to write a critique upon it, as he had done upon Ossian's poems. We learn the result of his application from a letter written by Mr Hervey to Mr Birrel, in which he is giving reasons for the delay of the publication. "*Stirling, 2d February 1792.*—He was also unwilling to hurry Dr Blair, who has had the poem of the 'Last Day' a considerable time in his hands, and has written a long criticism upon it. The Doctor, it seems, finds fault with some passages, particularly the account of the 'Infernal Regions,' and as Mr Baird does not altogether agree with him, he is to submit the criticism, with an introductory account of Michael Bruce, written by himself, to the inspection of his friend Mr Josiah Walker." Whether the criticism was submitted to Mr Walker, we have not learned, but it appears from a letter of Dr Baird's to Mr Birrel, that he had rejected it on account of the unfavourable opinion which it expressed of the passage referred to. "But still," says he, "as a fragment, I am of opinion it will do no discredit to the memory of Michael Bruce."

109. Having thus declined the contribution of Dr Blair, Dr Baird bethought him of soliciting the aid of Robert Burns, and accordingly addressed to him the following letter: "*London, 8th February 1791.* SIR, —I trouble you with this letter to inform you that I am in hopes of being able very soon to bring to press a new edition (long since talked of) of *Michael Bruce's Poems*. The profits of the edition are to go to his mother, a woman of *eighty* years of age, poor and help-

less. The poems are to be published by subscription, and it may be possible to make out a 2s. 6d. or 3s. volume with the assistance of a few hitherto unpublished verses, which I have got from the mother of the poet. But the design I have in view in writing to you is not merely to inform you of these facts ; it is to solicit the aid of your name and pen in behalf of this scheme. The reputation of Bruce is already high with every reader of classical taste ; and I shall be anxious against tarnishing his character by allowing any new poems to appear that may lower it. For this purpose the MSS. I am in possession of have been submitted to the revision of some whose critical talents I can trust to, and mean still to submit them to others.

* * * * *
* * * * *

“ May I just add, that Michael Bruce is one in whose company, from his past appearance, you would not, I am convinced, blush to be found ; and as I would submit every line of his that should now be published to your own criticisms, you would be assured that nothing derogatory either to him or you would be admitted in that appearance he may make in future. You have already paid an honourable tribute to kindred genius in Ferguson. I fondly hope that the mother of Bruce will experience your patronage. I wish to have the subscription papers circulated by the 14th of March, Bruce’s birth-day ; which, I understand, some friends in Scotland talk this year of observing. At that time it will be resolved, I

imagine, to place a humble stone over his grave. This, at least, I trust you will agree to do,—to furnish in a few couplets an inscription for it.”

BURNS IN ANSWER.

“ Why did you, my dear Sir, write to me in such a hesitating style on the business of poor Bruce? Don't I know, and have I not felt, the many ills that poetic flesh is heir to? You shall have your choice of all the unpublished poems I have; and had your letter had my direction, so as to have reached me sooner (it only came to my hand this moment), I should directly put you out of suspense upon the subject. I only ask that some prefatory advertisement in the books, as well as the subscription bills, may bear, that the publication is solely for the benefit of the mother. I would not put it in the power of ignorance to surmise, or malice to insinuate, that I clubbed a share of the merit from mercenary motives. Nor need you give me credit for any remarkable generosity in my part of the business. I have such a host of peccadilloes, failings, follies, and backslidings (any body but myself would perhaps give them a worse appellation), that by way of some balance, however trifling, in the account, I am fain to do any good that occurs in my very limited power to a fellow-creature, just from the selfish purpose of clearing a little the vista of retrospection.”* * * * *

* This correspondence between Dr Baird and Robert Burns

110. The non-appearance of Burns's promised pieces, is thus accounted for, in a letter from Mr Hervey to Mr Birrel :—" Dr Blair and Dr Moore, (father of Sir John,) have opposed the insertion of Burns's pieces on account of their dissimilarity and other reasons. The name of Burns, I have observed, is a great inducement to some, and as great a hinderance to others, to become subscribers. I confess to you that the first intimation of this design surprised and alarmed me, but I acquiesced in it, knowing that Mr Baird intended only the success of the publication. From the moral tendency of Michael Bruce's poetry, I flattered myself that no piece would be admitted into the collection that would give the least pain to a virtuous mind. How great was my surprise to hear that he wishes to insert ' Alloway Kirk.' The admirable strokes of genius in that poem will not atone for the gross indelicacies of some lines ; besides, it has been repeatedly in print, and the subscribers have been made to believe that they were to be all originals, at least I thought so. If this, or similar pieces should be inserted, I dread the consequences. Dr Doig and other worthy friends are of the same opinion. To conclude the volume with such poems as ' Alloway Kirk' would be as great a violation of propriety, the Doctor says, as the exhibition of a farce after a tragedy. Cowper is certainly the first of the Moderns, and there is a

has already appeared in the Life of Bruce.—It is here reprinted from the Lives of the Scottish Poets. T. Boys, London, 1822.

greater similarity in his poetry. Had he been applied to, I am persuaded he would have been willing to do the publication a service."

111. Mr Hervey now found it necessary to apply to his friends for some assistance to the poet's mother, as there was no immediate prospect of the publication of this long projected edition of her son's poems. He accordingly addressed a letter to Mrs Keir of Rhynds, authoress of several novels, explaining how matters stood, from whom he received the following reply:—
“SIR, Your obliging letter enclosing those of Bruce, reached me in safety. Although many of those juvenile performances are too trifling to merit the attention of the public, they are so truly characteristical of our admired young poet that they cannot fail to yield his friends the most sincere satisfaction. One feature of the amiable picture they exhibit, I contemplated with peculiar delight; I mean that delicacy which originates from a pure heart and correct taste and a regulated imagination. Even in the most careless moments of youthful gaiety and boundless confidence, he never betrays a spark of that levity which too often marks the productions of early years, debases the poet, and scandalizes the Christian, and from exuberant merriment degenerates into licentiousness. This is the more admirable, that his path lay not along the sequestered vale of life, but the thorny wilderness, which is commonly fruitful in such noxious weeds. After you left me, I began to reflect on the means most likely to promote your benevolent plan. The

first that occurred was to offer you a loan of money to carry on the publication, but I recollected that your worthy coadjutor, Mr Baird, had mentioned the willingness of one of the London booksellers to undertake the task. Now, as I think the best way to honour the dead, is to be kind to the living, and fearing lest at eighty the good old woman may escape to heaven while we are scheming her comfort on earth, I beg you will be so good as send her the enclosed three guineas, for payment of which I shall trust to you and the other gentlemen concerned in the publication, if there should be an overplus ; if not, I shall consider it as bread cast upon the water, which, even on the surface of that uncertain element, can yield a rich increase.* I will use every lawful endeavour to obtain subscriptions, and when I return the letters† I shall let you know my success. Meanwhile, I heartily

* Mrs Bruce wished to repay the money advanced by Mrs Keir, out of the small sum she derived from the publication ; but Mrs Keir intimated her desire that it might be retained in the following note to Mr Hervey :—“ I admire the integrity of the good old woman, but it must not be allowed to frustrate my intention of serving her. To make her quite at ease, you may inform her, that Mr Andrew Bonar, banker, sent one guinea for her use, on perusing her son’s manuscripts. The other two may be kept in case of sickness, but I beg she may consider them as equally her own.”

† The letters here referred to are those which appear in this volume, and which Mr Hervey had handed about amongst such persons as he expected would become subscribers. When returning them to Mr Birrel, he wrote him thus :—“ Every person of taste must admire the neatness and simplicity of

wish the work set agoing whilst the impressions made by these letters are lively. If your plan is long delayed you will find the business and indolence of mankind a little inimical to its success." In addition to the three guineas from Mrs Keir, Mr Hervey received four pounds, which sums he remitted to Mr Birrel, almoner to Mrs Bruce. Seldom has a human heart been more grateful to God and the agents he employs in the diffusion of his bounties, than that of this old woman for these unexpected supplies. She was seen by an acquaintance, shortly after receiving them, going about the village with a basket on her arm, containing a number of small loaves. When asked what she was about, she replied, "When heaven is raining so plentifully upon me, I may ay let twa or three draps fa' on my puir neighbours."* When acknowledging the receipt of the money, Mr Birrel wrote to Mr Hervey thus:—"My brother-in-law has put up a stone chimney for Ann, and a *halland* of brick, which makes her little cot much more cleanly and comfortable than it was. She insists upon having a window cut out in the

his epistolary style, but this is not the only excellence of his letters. One of them, in particular, breathes a spirit of the most affectionate and sublime friendship. It is impossible to read the specimens you have procured us, without execrating the treachery of Logan, by which they were lost to their possessors, we may say to the world. A judicious selection of them would have been a valuable addition to his poems."

* Letter from the Rev. John Smart, Stirling, to the Editor.

south wall, in order that she may see Lochleven and Stirling, for, she says, that though she never saw either Mr Hervey or Mr Telford, yet she likes to see the airt they come frae; and this window must be cut out, though it should be at her own expense."

112. Whilst the papers were in circulation for subscribers' names to Dr Baird's edition of our poet's works, it was discovered that an impostor was going round the country, taking up names and receiving money for the book, under the pretended sanction of Mrs Bruce's authority. "We have been endeavouring," says Mr Hervey, in a letter to Mr Birrell, "to find out the parties concerned. The sum of our information is, that one Dowie, a student, at or near Kinross, is the principal agent in taking up subscriptions; that he has got four hundred; and, against next Assembly, by the exertions of some clergymen and others, he expects a thousand. We learn also that he has been making inquiries about the London edition—wishes to correspond with the conductors, and to *sell* them his subscriptions. What effrontery! Perhaps he is only wrong in the head, the tool of some mercenary designing bookseller." Whether he acted for himself, or was agent for another, he was the instrument of much mischief, as will be shewn presently, to an old, poor, and helpless widow.

113. Whilst Dr Baird delayed his publication, Dr Anderson was busily employed in preparing his "Lives of the British Poets," and had resolved to place the works of Bruce among the classics of his country. An-

xious to give the world as particular an account as possible of this interesting youth, he collected materials from all quarters; and, considering that he was a stranger to the locality in which our poet was born, and that he did not then visit it, and so could not know many of the circumstances which we have detailed as giving force to the evidence adduced in this volume, on the controverted subject of the authorship of the Cuckoo, and other poems, considering these things, we say, Dr Anderson has written a very excellent life of Michael Bruce. It was impossible, with his candour and kindness, that he could do otherwise. Some men may deserve more from their country for what they have done *to* its literature, but none for what they have done *for* it. There is reason to believe that some of the finest poems in our language, and amongst others, "The Pleasures of Hope," had never come before the public, but for his patronage and exertions. Our poet was now beyond the reach of his benevolence, but he did all for him that was in his power; he faithfully recorded his history, and accurately delineated his virtues, and if Anne Bruce did not derive very great benefit from her son's productions, it was not the fault of Dr Anderson; for he was singularly useful in procuring subscribers.* Bruce's life was inserted in the eleventh volume of the "Lives of the British Poets" which was published in 1795.

114. Whilst Dr Anderson was preparing his life of

* Letter from Mr Hervey to Mr Birrell.

Bruce, Dr Baird addressed to him the following note :—“ Dr Baird, with compliments to Dr Anderson, informs him that he will be able to send him a copy of some of Michael Bruce’s MSS. poems to-morrow, if they can be inserted in the ‘ British Poets.’ Dr B. hopes, at the same time, that Dr A. will have no objection to let the editor of the intended volume by subscription, prefix a few paragraphs to it, taken from the Life of Bruce by Dr A.” With this request Dr Anderson did not comply, and it was hardly to have been expected that he would. The “ Lives of the British Poets” was a very expensive undertaking, exposing their editor to immense risk ; and the appearance of any portion of them in the pages of a cheap publication was calculated to injure their sale. Besides, Dr Baird had better opportunities of preparing a Life of Bruce than Dr Anderson, seeing he had been furnished with the same materials, and had often visited the locality where information could be obtained. Thus defeated in his benevolent intentions, Dr B. desisted from further application to his literary friends, and contenting himself with merely reprinting Logan’s preface, and prefixing Lord Craig’s paper, part of which we have quoted in these pages, he brought out his new edition of Bruce’s Poems, six years after the subscription papers had been issued. He announced the circumstance to Mr Birrell in the following letter :—“ *Edinburgh, 17th February 1796.* SIR,—I am glad to be able to inform you, and I beg you may inform Mrs Bruce, that the long-talked-of edition of Poems is

at last printed off. The expense of the edition will amount to about L. 50 sterling. We have printed 1000 copies, so that, if there had been subscribers at 3s. each, for the whole number, we might have had L. 100 for Mrs Bruce ; but, as a considerable number must be sold cheaper than that price to the booksellers, who in general insist on a large deduction, we will not be able to realize for her so great a sum. Still, however, I have the confident hope of being able to obtain for her what may make the widow's heart rejoice. I request you may assure her of my good wishes for the health and comfort of her latter days. If she needs any small supply of cash at present let me know and I shall transmit it."

115. It had been ascertained that there were above eight hundred subscribers a few months after the subscription papers had been circulated,* but when the books were about to be delivered, many of their names could not be ascertained, several of the booksellers having burned their lists, supposing the scheme to be abandoned. Those persons who had given their names and their money to the impostor Dowie, would not pay a second time for the book. Some had changed their places of abode, and could not be found ; and others would not receive it, in consequence of the delay which had taken place since their subscribing for it. From these causes the benevolent scheme entertained by Dr

* Thomas Grahame, Esq. of Kinross alone, subscribed for 36 copies, besides giving a guinea as a donation to Mrs Bruce.

Baird, and those Stirling gentlemen whom we have named, turned out to be little short of a complete failure. Instead of a hundred pounds, as were expected, the overplus, after paying expenses, did not exceed seven or eight. These, however, with a few donations, procured by Mr Harvey, and Dr Grant, minister of the parish, and Dr Baird's annuity of a guinea, sufficed to procure for Ann Bruce the few necessaries of life which she required during the two remaining years of her earthly pilgrimage. By this time she was unable to move much about, but her neighbours were assiduous in their attentions to her. One of these had gone into her cottage one day to render her service, when she found her seated in an arm-chair with her head resting on its back, as if she were asleep—the Bible lay open on her knee, with her spectacles laid across it—her fingers held some snuff which she had been in the act of taking. Her neighbour stepped forward to awake her, but that was a work which was now only in the power of THE SON OF MAN. She was dead.

116. Dr Baird happening to arrive at Kinross the day after Mrs Bruce's death, Mr Birrell addressed a letter to him, inviting him to the funeral, to which he received the following reply:—“*6th August 1798.* Dr Baird was desirous to have been at Kinnesswood today, at Mrs Bruce's funeral, but finding it farther from Kinross than he supposed it had been, and being under the necessity of going forward with his family who are travelling northward, this was not in his power. He sends two pounds, which, as suggested by Mr Bir-

rell, will be sufficient, he presumes, for the funeral expenses."

117. Mrs Bruce had not been long dead, when Dr Drake, an English physician, published a series of Essays under the title of "Literary Hours." Among these there is one written with a view of recommending the works of Michael Bruce to the lovers of genuine poetry in England, as Lord Craig's paper in the Mirror had long before commended them to readers of taste in Scotland. The widowed mother of the poet was now beyond the reach of all human kindness, and we do not know for certain that Dr Drake had her benefit in view, when he wrote his beautiful and interesting paper on the character and talents of her son. But if the essay was too late to contribute in any way to the comfort of this poor but worthy woman—it served at least to increase the fame of our poet, and every man familiar with the literature of Britain is now disposed to admire both the bard of Lochleven and his English eulogist.

118. In 1812, an obelisk, about eight feet in height, was erected over our poet's grave in Portmoak churchyard, bearing as an inscription merely the words "Michael Bruce. Born March 27. 1746. Died 6th July 1767." A space has been left in the stone for the reception of a brass plate, which, however, was never provided, and on which it was proposed to inscribe the last verse of the "Elegy to Spring," the first line being altered from

"There let me sleep forgotten in the clay,"

“ There let me sleep, low mouldering in the clay,
 When death shall shut these weary, aching eyes.
 Rest in the hopes of an eternal day,
 ’Till the long night is gone, and the last morn arise.”

The alteration of the first line being necessary to prevent the evident absurdity of erecting a monument, and inscribing upon it the departed’s own wish to be allowed to “ sleep forgotten in the clay.” The erection of this obelisk, which is not well proportioned, and otherwise ill executed, cost fifteen pounds, which were paid by Dr Baird, with the exception of three guineas subscribed in sums of 10s. 6d. each, by the following gentlemen:—The Rev. William Dalling, Cleish; D. W. Arnot, Esq., Arlary; Thomas Bruce, Esq. of Arnot; John Young, Esq. of Cleish; Dr Coventry, Professor of Agriculture, and Mr Pearson, Secretary of Excise, together with a few shillings from the inhabitants of the parish. *Should any profits arise from the sale of this edition of Bruce’s Works, they will be devoted to the completion and embellishment of this monument.*

119. The following letter, which will sufficiently explain itself, and suggest our reason for inserting it here, was addressed by the Lord Chief Commissioner Adam to Mr Birrell:—“ April 2. 1830. Dear Sir, —Principal Baird mentions in a letter to me, that you and he had formerly corresponded on the subject of Bruce’s Poems. This leads me to mention what I proposed several years ago—the erecting a memorial to his genius and virtues at Gairny, where he taught

a school. This subject was not carried into effect at the time I proposed, from circumstances which I shall be glad to explain to you. But I have never relinquished the intention. I have prepared an inscription, and intend to give directions soon to prepare a stone for it. I wish to fix on the spot in the village, for which I should wish your assistance, as you probably know the house in which he taught, and as to which there is some doubt started; and the stone should be nearest it. I could also wish to have your aid to enable me to take the best course for letting the inhabitants join in a small subscription for this object, as more suitable and gratifying to their feelings, respecting so gifted a native of the county as Bruce, than making it an individual act." The sum of eight pounds was collected for this purpose, which was chiefly contributed by his Lordship's own family.*

The following is the inscription to which his Lordship refers, which has been printed and circulated in the county:—

* "I am afraid you will think that I have neglected that you wrote to me about Michael Bruce, but I was desirous to transmit to you a copy of the inscription which I have drawn up for the monument which is intended to be erected at Gairny Bridge—which I have not been able to find—when I do, it shall be transmitted to you. This I hope will still go on. But that is no reason why what is doing at Kinnesswood should not be assisted. I have therefore desired Mr Williamson to send you one pound as my subscription."—*Letter from the Lord Chief Commissioner Adam to the Editor.*

Michael Bruce,
 Born in 1747, at Kinnesswood,
 In the County of Kinross,
 Died at the age of Twenty-one.

In this brief space,
 Under the pressure of Indigence and Sickness,
 He displayed talents truly
 Poetical.

For his aged Mother's and his own support
 He taught a School here.
 The village was then skirted with old ash trees
 The cottage in which he dwelt
 Was distinguished by a honeysuckle,
 Which he had trained round its
 Sashed window.

Certain inhabitants of his native county,
 His admirers,
 Have erected this Stone
 To mark the abode
 of
 Genius and Virtue.

1834.

120. In detailing the Life of Michael Bruce, we have been called to tell a mournful tale of genius and piety struggling with poverty and disease; a circumstance of no uncommon occurrence, though it is rare to find these struggles so told as to excite the sympathies of mankind, engrossed as they are by other and more exciting themes.

“ Oh ! who can tell how hard it is to climb
 The steep where Fame’s proud temple shines afar ?
 Oh ! who can tell how many a soul sublime
 Has felt the influence of malignant star ;
 And waged with Fortune an eternal war ?
 Checked by the scoff of Pride, by Envy’s frown,
 And Poverty’s unconquerable bar,
 In life’s low vale remote has pined alone,
 Then dropt into the grave unpitied and unknown.”

Southey, a master in biographical writing, has succeeded in deeply interesting the public in the history of the ill-fated Henry Kirke White. But, with a better subject, we must trust to the preceding simple enumeration of facts for securing such a result, and if there be in the world any compassion for suffering virtue, any indignation at the infliction of injuries upon worth, any admiration of eminent talent, any respect for genuine piety, that result must now be secured. The feelings of that man are not to be envied who has read this narrative unmoved, and he may well doubt his capability of virtuous thought, or noble action, who is not constrained by it to admiration of its subject, and desire of imitation. But it is the persevering piety of Bruce that we chiefly wish our readers to emulate. This is within the reach of all ; his genius is bestowed on few. It was the former only that supported him amidst penury and disease, and without it he would have been a stranger to comfort. Then

“ Lament not ye, who humbly steal through life,
 That Genius visits not your lowly shed—
 For, ah ! what woes and sorrows, ever rife,
 Distract his hapless head !

For him awaits no balmy sleep ;
 He wakes all night, and wakes to weep,
 Or by his lonely lamp he sits
 At solemn midnight, when the peasant sleeps,
 In feverish study, and in moody fits,
 His mournful vigil keeps.

“ And, oh ! for what consumes his watchful oil ?
 For what does he thus waste life’s fleeting breath?
 ’Tis for neglect and penury he doth toil—
 ’Tis for untimely death.”

121. But not having learned the querulousness so common to poets and their biographers, we do not complain of the neglect experienced by Michael Bruce. Genius cannot expect encouragement unless its existence has been manifested—for amidst the many discoveries which science has made, it has never been able to discover latent ability. Bruce’s talents were duly appreciated in the little circle in which he moved, and if his acquaintances did not do for him, all which they might have done, the neglect is to be ascribed as much to his own modesty in concealing his wants, as to their coldness in failing to supply them. Had he published his poems himself, as did Pollok, whose premature death is now also deplored, we are persuaded the public would, in the one case, as in the other, have made an effort to soothe his sorrows and prolong his days.*

* “ Every thing that medical skill and generous friendship could do for Pollok was done before he left Slateford. A change of climate was the only expedient that gave the least hope of

The surest evidence of superior talent is, that it forces itself into notice in spite of adverse circumstances, and if the reader has followed us through the latter part of this narrative, he cannot fail, we think, to be surprised at the number of eminent literary men who have endeavoured to spread the fame of our poet, and promote the welfare of his relations.

“ Who would not sing for Lycidas ? he knew
Himself to sing, and build the lofty rhyme.”

But the services which ought to be chiefly commended are those of the Very Reverend Principal Baird, who from pure admiration of the poet's character and talents generously contributed to the support of his aged mother, defrayed her funeral expences, and erected a monument to the memory of her son. We have heard of other benevolent deeds performed by this venerable Father in the Church, but we think it probable that none of them will shed so bright a lustre upon his memory as his profound and practical respect for the genius of Michael Bruce.

his recovery. . . . The measure of his going to Italy and the subscription to defray the expense of it originated with my cousin. *One hundred and seventy pounds were collected ;* but on going to London, a consultation, previously concerted, took place. The medical men declared him unable to undertake such a long voyage, and sent him to Southampton. He died a month after he left my cousin's house.”—*Life and Correspondence of the late Henry Belfrage of Falkirk, by the Rev. John M'Kerrow, Bridge of Teith, and the Rev. John M'Farlane, Kincardine, recently published.*

122. We wish it had been in our power to say the same of Logan, for we would not be of those who have pleasure in awarding blame. In the preceding narrative we have related what he did, and left our readers to form their own opinions of his conduct. We imposed a restraint upon ourselves when adverting to his connection with the publication of Bruce's poems, for we felt our indignation kindled at the utter heartlessness manifested in the whole affair. We believe, however, that he suffered more from the consciousness of guilt when alive, than his memory is likely to suffer from any thing we can say now that he is dead. He has acquired a little fame, but it has been at an enormous expense, and if such a price must be paid for the world's applause, what honourable mind would not exclaim with the poet,

“ Then teach me, Heav'n, to scorn the guilty bays,
Drive from my breast that wretched lust of praise ;
Unblemished let me live, or die unknown,
Oh grant me honest fame, or grant me none !”

ENCOMIUMS ON BRUCE.

ELEGIAC VERSES ON HIS DEATH.

WHY vainly bid the animated bust,
 Why bid the monumental pile to rise?
 Too often genius, doom'd by fate unjust,
 Unnotic'd lives, unwept, unhonour'd dies!

Too oft the poet, in whose sacred breast
 With ardour glow the Muse's purest fires,
 Contemn'd by pride, by penury opprest,
 In anguish lives, and in neglect expires!

Too oft, alas! in some sequestered ground,
 Silent and cold the poet's ashes sleep;
 No pomp of funeral is seen around,
 No parasite to praise, no friend to weep!

Such, BRUCE, the feelings in my breast that rise,
 While guided by the Muse, I wander near,
 Mark the lone spot where youthful genius lies,
 And give thy fate the tribute of a tear.

Obscure thy birth, yet in thy early breast,
 How deep and ardent glow'd the Muse's flame!
 How strongly in thy bosom was imprest
 The poet's genius, and the poet's fame!

Such was thy fame ; but, ah ! upon thy frame
Disease relentless urg'd its growing way,
Fled was each joy of health, each hope of fame,
And thou, the victim of a slow decay.

Like some fair flower, that owes the desert birth,
Whose buds foretel the beauty of its prime,
But sinks unshelter'd, sinks unseen to earth,
Chill'd by the blast, or cropt before its time !

Perhaps thus blasted by unfriendly doom,
Thy genius foster'd in a milder air,
Matur'd by age in all the pride of bloom,
Had spread luxuriant, and had flourish'd fair.

But, ah ! no more the poet now remains ;
Cold is the breast that glow'd with sacred fire,
Mute is the tongue that flow'd in tuneful strains,
Check'd is the hand, and silent is the lyre !

For him, who now laments thy early tomb,
Like thee inspir'd with youthful love of lays,
Though now he mourns, he soon may share thy doom,
May soon require the tribute which he pays.

See Asylum of Fugitive Pieces.

VERSES ADDRESSED TO THE MOTHER OF MICHAEL BRUCE,
BY A LADY.

IN Life's fair-dawning, but deceitful morn,
By awful Heaven's inscrutable decree,
The tender scion from its parent torn,
Left to the storm the bending branchless tree.
Where, then, that heart which with devotion glow'd?
That fancy bright, by early genius fir'd?
Those candid virtues Heaven's own hand bestow'd?
Ah! where the towering hopes by these inspir'd?
Blasted they lay for many a dismal year;
Nought sooth'd thy grief, save memory of the past:
Now, virtue to reward and age to cheer,
Thy bounteous Maker sends relief at last.*
Though fourscore winters on thy blameless head,
With want, neglect, and hardship, in their train,
Relentless, have their baneful influence shed;
Yet consolation visits thee again.
Lo! sweet benevolence, a joy sincere,
Shall with thy Son's reviving fame impart;
Again his praise shall charm thy languid ear,
And warm with honest pride thy withering heart.
Ev'n when in shades conceal'd, obscure of birth,
Fame spoke his merits with no partial breath;
And aided now by generous kindred worth,
His genius triumphs over Time and Death.

* The profits which arose from the edition of 1796 were applied solely to the support of the poet's mother, then advanced to her 87th year, and living in indigence. A private subscription was also made at the same time in her behalf.

LOCHLEVEN.



The Lake described in the following Poem is situated in the county of Kinross, about twenty-seven miles north of Edinburgh, and seventeen south of Perth. In magnitude and grandeur it is inferior to Loch-Lomond and Loch Katrine, and in picturesque beauty to several of the Highland lakes. It is, nevertheless, a noble expanse of waters, of about ten miles circumference, variegated with several islands, and lying in the bosom of verdant hills, and in the midst of well-cultivated fields. Its great defect as a scene is the want of wood, being wholly without plantations except on the side towards the west. This defect, however, Sir James Montgomery, the proprietor, is in course of remedying, by putting down patches of trees on portions of the land gained by a partial draining of the lake.

The western quarter is by much the most picturesque, and is accordingly the portion generally chosen by the artist as the proper subject for the pencil. It besides contains the Castle, from which, as once having been the prison of Mary Queen of Scots, the lake chiefly derives its celebrity. This view we have given as the frontispiece to this volume. It is taken from Gairny Bridge, where Bruce once taught a school, and from which he first designed to describe the scene; but he afterwards made choice of the Lomond Hill, on the opposite side of the lake, which forms the back-ground of the picture.

Lochleven is famed for its trout, the high flavour and the bright colour of which are said to arise chiefly from small red shell-fish, which abound in the lake, and constitute their food. Its chief celebrity, however, as already hinted, arises from its historical associations; and this Sir Walter Scott, by his novel of *The Abbot*, has tended

greatly to increase. Some of these associations are alluded to in the poem, and are now more amply detailed in the Notes. It is to be borne in mind, that the writer of this poem is describing the scene as it presented itself to him seventy years ago, and that, although in all its essential elements it is still the same, yet in several of its characteristics it is considerably changed, the lake itself having been reduced in size, and the adjoining lands greatly improved.

This Lake is to be distinguished from another of the same name situated on the western coast of Scotland, which is an arm of the sea, in the vicinity of the far-famed Glencoe, separating the county of Argyle on the south from Inverness-shire on the north. That this latter lake has sometimes been mistaken for the former, is shéwn by MacCulloch, as quoted by Chambers: "I was much amused," says he, "by meeting here with an antiquary and virtuoso, who asked me where he should find Lochleven Castle. He had been inquiring among the Highlanders, and was very wrathful that he could obtain no answer. I was a little at a loss myself at first, but soon guessed the nature of the blunder. He had been crazing himself with Whittaker and Tytler, and Robertson and Chalmers, like an old friend of mine, who used to sleep with the controversies under his pillow, and had come all the way from England to worship at the shrine of Mary, stumbling, by some obliquity of vision, on the wrong Lochleven."

LOCHLEVEN.*

A POEM.

HAIL, native land ! where, on the flowery banks
Of Leven, Beauty ever-blooming dwells.
A wreath of roses, dropping with the dews
Of morning, circles her ambrosial locks
Loose-waving o'er her shoulders : where she treads,
Attendant on her steps, the blushing Spring
And Summer wait, to raise the various flowers
Beneath her footsteps ; while the cheerful birds
Carol their joy, and hail her as she comes,
Inspiring vernal love and vernal joy.

Attend, Agricola ! † who to the noise
Of public life prefer'st the calmer scenes
Of solitude, and sweet domestic bliss ;
Joys all thine own ! Attend thy poet's strain,
Who triumphs in thy friendship, while he paints
The pastoral mountains, the poetic streams,
Where raptur'd Contemplation leads thy walk,
While silent Evening on the plain descends.

* For the occasion of this Poem, see ¶ 43, Life of Bruce.

† Mr David Arnot. See ¶ 16, Life of Bruce.

Between two mountains, whose o'erwhelming tops,
 In their swift course, arrest the bellying clouds,
 A pleasant valley lies. Upon the south
 A narrow opening parts the craggy hills,
 Through which the lake, that beautifies the vale,
 Pours out its ample waters. Spreading on,
 And widening by degrees, it stretches north
 To the high Ochil, from whose snowy top
 The streams that feed the lake flow thundering down.

The twilight trembles o'er the misty hills,
 Trinkling with dews: and whilst the bird of day
 Tunes his ethereal note, and wakes the wood—
 Bright from the crimson curtains of the morn,
 The Sun, appearing in his glory, throws
 New robes of beauty over heaven and earth.

O now, while Nature smiles in all her works,
 Oft let me trace thy cowslip-cover'd banks,
 O Leven! and the landscape measure round.
 From gay Kinross, whose stately-tufted groves
 Nod o'er the lake, transported let mine eye
 Wander o'er all the various chequer'd scene
 Of wilds, and fertile fields, and glittering streams,
 To ruin'd Arnot;* or ascend the height

* The ruins of a castle on the Lomond Hills, and which appears to have been at one time at the eastern extremity of the Lochleven as Kinross is at the western. Its position in this respect has been altered by the reduction of the lake. Kinross and Arnot are mentioned by the poet to define the limits of the scene he intends to describe.

Of rocky Lomond, * where a rivulet pure
 Bursts from the ground, and through the crumbled crags
 Tinkles amusive. From the mountain's top,
 Around me spread, I see the goodly scene.
 Inclosures green, that promise to the swain
 The future harvest ; many colour'd meads ;
 Irriguous vales, where cattle lowe ; and sheep,
 That whiten half the hills ; sweet rural farms
 Oft interspers'd, the seats of pastoral love
 And innocence ; with many a spiry dome
 Sacred to heav'n, around whose hallow'd walls
 Our fathers slumber in the narrow house.
 Gay, beauteous villas, bosom'd in the woods,
 Like constellations in the starry sky,
 Complete the scene. The vales, the vocal hills,
 The woods, the waters, and the heart of man,
 Send out a general song : 'tis beauty all
 To poet's eye, and music to his ear.†

* The range of hills which rises behind Kinnesswood, affording the best view of the lake. Lieutenant-Colonel Miller of Upper Urquhart, has lately attempted to shew, and with great plausibility, that the Lomond hills are the *Mons Grampius* of Tacitus. See *Transactions of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland*, Part I. vol. iv. 1830.

† ————— “ Not content
 With every food of life to nourish man,
 By kind illusions of the wondering sense
 Thou makest all nature *beauty to his eye,*
Or music to his ear.”

AKENSIDE'S *Pleasures of Imagination.*

It is to be remembered that “Bruce's Poems” was a posthumous publication, and that, in pointing out this and other

Nor is the shepherd silent on his hill,
 His flocks around ; nor school-boys, as they creep,
 Slow-pac'd, tow'rd school ; intent, with oaten pipe
 They wake by turns wild music on the way.

Behold the man of sorrows hail the light !
 New risen from the bed of pain ; where late,
 Toss'd to and fro upon a couch of thorns,*
 He wak'd the long dark night, and wish'd-for morn.
 Soon as he feels the quickening beam of Heav'n,
 And balmy breath of May, among the fields
 And flowers he takes his morning walk : his heart
 Beats with new life ; his eye is bright and blithe ;
 Health strews her roses o'er his cheek, renew'd
 In youth and beauty ; his unbidden tongue
 Pours native harmony, and sings to Heav'n.

In ancient times, as ancient bards have sung,
 This was a forest. Here the mountain-oak
 Hung o'er the craggy cliff, while from its top
 The eagle mark'd his prey ; the stately ash
 Rear'd high his nervous statue, while below
 The twining alders darken'd all the scene.†

appropriations, we are only doing what in all probability the poet himself would have done had he lived to superintend the press.

* " See the wretch that long has tost
 On the thorny bed of pain,
 At length repair his vigour lost,
 And breathe and walk again."

GRAY'S *Ode to Vicissitude*.

† In the first draught of the poem the following lines

Safe in the shade, the tenants of the wood
 Assembled, bird and beast. The turtle-dove
 Coo'd, amorous, all the live-long summer's day.
 Lover of men, the piteous redbreast plain'd,
 Sole-sitting on the bough. Blithe on the bush,
 The blackbird, sweetest of the woodland-choir,
 Warbled his liquid lay ; to shepherd-swain
 Mellifluous music, as his master's flock,
 With his fair mistress and his faithful dog,
 He tended in the vale : while leverets round,
 In sportive races, through the forest flew
 With feet of wind ; and, venturing from the rock,
 The snow-white cony sought his ev'ning meal.—
 Here, too, the poet, as inspir'd at eve
 He roam'd the dusky wood, or fabled brook,
 That piecemeal printed ruins in the rock,
 Beheld the blue-eyed sisters of the stream,
 And heard the wild note of the fairy throng

which we think more beautiful than some that have been retained, were added to this part of the description :—

“ Beneath their covert slept the ruffian wolf
 And fox invidious, with the lesser brood
 That feed on life, or o'er the frighted wild
 Pursue the trembling prey. Here, too, unscathed
 By man, the graceful deer trip'd o'er the lawn,
 Nor heard the barking of the deep-mouth'd hound
 Nor sounding horn, nor fear'd the guileful net.”

The next twenty lines in the printed text are not in the original draught, and ought to have been claimed for Logan, since his friends have been disposed to claim all the alterations and improvements in the poem for him.

That charm'd the queen of heav'n ; as round the tree
 Time-hallow'd, hand in hand they led the dance,
 With sky-blue mantles glittering in her beam.

Low by the lake, as yet without a name,
 Fair bosom'd in the bottom of the vale,
 Arose a cottage, green with ancient turf,
 Half hid in hoary trees, and from the north
 Fenc'd by a wood, but open to the sun.
 Here dwelt a peasant, reverend with the locks
 Of age ; yet youth was ruddy on his cheek :
 His farm his only care : his sole delight,
 To tend his daughter, beautiful and young ;
 To watch her paths ; to fill her lap with flow'rs ;
 To see her spread into the bloom of years,
 The perfect picture of her mother's youth.
 His age's hope, the apple of his eye,
 Belov'd of Heav'n, his fair Levina grew,
 In youth and grace, the Naiad of the vale.
 Fresh as the flow'r amid the sunny show'rs
 Of May, and blither than the bird of dawn,
 But roses' bloom gave beauty to her cheek,
 Soft temper'd with a smile. The light of heav'n,
 And innocence, illum'd her virgin eye,
 Lucid and lovely as the morning star.*
 Her breast was fairer than the vernal bloom
 Of valley-lily, opening in a show'r ;—†

* “ And her eye is brighter far
 Than the beamy morning star.”—PHILIPS.

† “ Not fairer grows the lily of the vale,
 Whose bosom opens to the vernal gale”.—FALCONER.

Fair as the morn, and beautiful as May,
 The glory of the year, when first she comes
 Array'd, all beauteous with the robes of heaven ;
 And, breathing summer breezes, from her locks
 Shakes genial dews, and from her lap the flow'rs.—
 Thus beautiful she look'd ; yet something more,
 And better far than beauty, in her looks
 Appear'd : the maiden blush of modesty ;
 The smile of cheerfulness, and sweet content ;
 Health's freshest rose, the sunshine of the soul ;
 Each heightening each, effus'd o'er all her form
 A nameless grace, the Beauty of the Mind.

Thus finish'd fair above her peers, she drew
 The eyes of all the village, and inflam'd
 The rival shepherds of the neighb'ring dale,
 Who laid the spoils of Summer at her feet,
 And made the woods enamour'd of her name.
 But pure as buds before they blow, and still
 A virgin in her heart, she knew not love :
 But all alone, amid her garden fair,
 From morn to noon, from noon to dewy eve,*
 She spent her days : her pleasing task to tend
 The flow'rs ; to lave them for the water-spring ;

* “—————In Ausonian land
 They call him Mulciber, and how he fell
 From heaven, the fabled—thrown by angry Jove,
 Sheer o'er the crystal battlements, *from morn
 To noon, from noon to dewy eve, a summer's day*”.

To ope the buds with her enamoured breath ;
Rank the gay tribes, and rear them in the sun.—
In youth, the index of maturer years,
Left by her school-companions at their play,
She'd often wander in the wood, or roam
The wilderness in quest of curious flower,
Or nest of bird unknown, till eve approach'd,
And hemm'd her in the shade. To obvious swain,
Or woodman chanting in the greenwood glen,
She'd bring the beauteous spoils, and ask their names.
Thus plied assiduous her delightful task,
Day after day, till every herb she nam'd
That paints the robe of Spring, and knew the voice
Of ev'ry warbler in the vernal wood.

Her garden stretch'd along the river side,
High up a sunny bank: on either side,
A hedge forbade the vagrant foot ; above,
An ancient forest screen'd the green recess.
Transplanted here, by her creative hand,
Each herb of Nature, full of fragrant sweets,
That scents the breath of Summer ; ev'ry flow'r
Pride of the plain that blooms on festal days
In shepherd's garland, and adorns the year,
In beauteous clusters flourish'd: Nature's work,
And order, finish'd by the hand of Art.
Here gowans, natives of the village green,
To daisies grew. The lilies of the field
Put on the robe they neither sew'd nor spun.
Sweet-smelling shrubs and cheerful spreading trees,
Unfrequent scatter'd, as by Nature's hand,

Shaded the flow'rs ; and to her Eden drew
The earliest concerts of the Spring, and all
The various music of the vocal year.

Retreat romantic ! Thus, from early youth,
Her life she led : one summer's day, serene
And fair without a cloud ! like poet's dreams
Of vernal landscapes, of Elysian vales,
And islands of the blest ; where hand in hand,
Eternal Spring and Autumn rule the year
And Love and Joy lead on immortal youth !

'Twas on a summer's day, when early show'rs
Had waked the various vegetable race
To life and beauty, fair Levina stray'd.
Far in the blooming wilderness she stray'd,
To gather herbs, and the fair race of flow'rs,
That Nature's hand creative pours at will,
Beauty unbounded, over Earth's green lap,
Gay without number, in the day of rain.
O'er valleys gay, o'er hillocks green she walk'd,
Sweet as the season ; and at times awak'd
The echoes of the vale, with native notes
Of heart-felt joy, in numbers heavenly sweet—
Sweet as th' hosannahs of a form of light,
A sweet-tongued Seraph in the bowers of bliss.

Her, as she halted on a green hill-top,
A quiver'd hunter spied. Her flowing locks,
In golden ringlets glittering to the sun,
Upon her bosom played : her mantle green,
Like thine, O Nature ! to her rosy cheek
Lent beauty new ; as from the verdant leaf

The rose-bud blushes with a deeper bloom,
Amid the walks of May. The stranger's eye
Was caught as with ethereal presence. Oft
He looked to heaven, and oft he met her eye
In all the silent eloquence of love ;
Then, waked from wonder, with a smile began :
“ Fair wanderer of the wood ! what heavenly power,
Or providence, conducts thy wandering steps
To this wild forest, from thy native seat
And parents, happy in a child so fair ?
A shepherdess, or virgin of the vale,
Thy dress bespeaks ; but thy majestic mien,
And eye bright as the morning star, confess
Superior birth and beauty—born to rule :
As from the stormy cloud of night, that veils
Her virgin orb, appears the queen of heaven,
And with full beauty gilds the face of night.
Whom shall I call the fairest of her sex,
And charmer of my soul ? In yonder vale,
Come, let us crop the roses of the brook,
And wildings of the wood : soft under shade
Let us recline by mossy fountain-side,
While the wood suffers in the beam of noon.
I'll bring, my love, the choice of all the shades ;
First fruits ; the apple ruddy from the rock ;
And clustering nuts, that burnish in the beam.
O wilt thou bless my dwelling, and become
The owner of these fields ? I'll give thee all
That I possess ; and all thou seest is mine.”

Thus spoke the youth, with rapture in his eye ;

And thus the maiden, with a blush, began :
“ Beyond the shadow of these mountains green
Deep-bosomed in the vale, a cottage stands,
The dwelling of my sire, a peaceful swain ;
Yet at his frugal board Health sits a guest,
And fair Contentment crowns his hoary hairs,
The patriarch of the plains : ne'er by his door
The needy passed, or the way-faring man.
His only daughter and his only joy,
I feed my father's flock ; and, while they rest,
At times retiring, lose me in the wood,
Skill'd in the virtues of each secret herb
That opes its virgin bosom to the moon.—
No flower amid the garden fairer grows
Than the sweet lily of the lowly vale,
The queen of flowers—But sooner might the weed
That blooms and dies, the being of a day,
Presume to match with yonder mountain-oak,
That stands the tempest and the bolt of Heaven,
From age to age the monarch of the wood——
O! had you been a shepherd of the dale,
To feed your flock beside me, and to rest
With me at noon in these delightful shades,
I might have listened to the voice of love,
Nothing reluctant ; might with you have walked
Whole summer suns away. At even-tide,
When heaven and earth in all their glory shine
With the last smiles of the departing sun ;
When the sweet breath of Summer feasts the sense,
And secret pleasure thrills the heart of man ;

We might have walked alone, in converse sweet,
Along the quiet vale, and woo'd the moon
To hear the music of true lovers' vows.
But Fate forbids ; and Fortune's potent frown,
And Honour, inmate of the noble breast.
Ne'er can this hand in wedlock join with thine.
Cease, beauteous stranger ! cease, beloved youth !
To vex a heart that never can be yours."

Thus spoke the maid, deceitful : but her eyes,
Beyond the partial purpose of her tongue,
Persuasion gained. The deep-enamoured youth
Stood gazing on her charms, and all his soul
Was lost in love. He grasped her trembling hand,
And breathed the softest, the sincerest vows
Of love : " O virgin ! fairest of the fair !
My one beloved ! were the Scottish throne
To me transmitted thro' a scepter'd line
Of ancestors, thou, thou should'st be my queen,
And Caledonia's diadems adorn
A fairer head than ever wore a crown !"

She reddened like the morning, under veil
Of her own golden hair. The woods among
They wandered up and down with fond delay,
Nor marked the fall of ev'ning : parted, then,
The happiest pair on whom the sun declined.

Next day he found her on a flowery bank,
Half under shade of willows, by a spring,
The mirror of the swains, that o'er the meads,
Slow-winding, scattered flowerets in its way.
Thro' many a winding walk and alley green,

She led him to her garden. Wonder struck,
He gazed, all eye, o'er th' enchanting scene:
And much he praised the walks, the groves, the flowers,
Her beautiful creation : much he praised
The beautiful creatress ; and awaked
The echo in her praise. Like the first pair,
Adam and Eve, in Eden's blissful bowers,
When newly come from their Creator's hand,
Our lovers lived in joy. Here, day by day,
In fond endearments, in embraces sweet,
That lovers only know, they lived, they loved,
And found the paradise that Adam lost.—
Nor did the virgin, with false modest pride,
Retard the nuptial morn : she fixed the day
That blessed the youth, and opened to his eyes
An age of gold, the heaven of happiness
That lovers in their lucid moments dream.

And now the morning, like a rosy bride
Adorned on her day, put on her robes,
Her beauteous robes of light : the Naiad streams,
Sweet as the cadence of a poet's song,
Flowed down the dale ; the voices of the grove,
And every winged warbler of the air,
Sung over head ; and there was joy in heaven.
Ris'n with the dawn, the bride and bridal-maids
Strayed thro' the woods, and o'er the vales, in quest
Of flowers and garlands, and sweet-smelling herbs,
To strew the bridegroom's way, and deck his bed.

Fair in the bosom of the level lake
Rose a green island, covered with a spring

Of flowers perpetual, goodly to the eye,
And blooming from afar. High in the midst,
Between two fountains, an enchanted tree
Grew ever green, and every month renewed
Its blooms and apples of Hesperian gold.
Here every bride (as ancient poets sing)
Two golden apples gathered from the bough,
To give the bridegroom in the bed of love,
The pledge of nuptial concord and delight
For many a coming year. Levina now
Had reached the isle, with an attendant maid,
And pulled the mystic apples, pulled the fruit ;
But wished and longed for the enchanted tree.
Not fonder sought the first created fair
The fruit forbidden of the mortal tree,
The source of human woe. Two plants arose
Fair by the mother's side, with fruits and flowers
In miniature. One, with audacious hand,
In evil hour she rooted from the ground.
At once the island shook, and shrieks of woe
At times were heard, amid the troubled air.*
Her whole frame shook, the blood forsook her face,
Her knees knocked, and her heart within her died.
Trembling and pale, and boding woes to come,
They seized the boat, and hurried from the isle.

* " So saying, her rash hand, in evil hour,
Forth reaching to the fruit, she plucked, she ate !
Earth felt the wound, and Nature, from her seat,
Sighing thro' all her works, gave signs of woe
That all was lost."—MILTON.

And now they gained the middle of the lake,
And saw th' approaching land: now, wild with joy,
They rowed, they flew. When lo! at once effused,
Sent by the angry demon of the isle,
A whirlwind rose: it lashed the furious lake
To tempest, overturned the boat, and sunk
The fair Levina to a watery tomb.
Her sad companions, bending from a rock,
Thrice saw her head, and supplicating hands
Held up to Heaven, and heard the shriek of death:
Then overhead the parting billow closed,
And op'd no more. Her fate in mournful lays
The Muse relates; and sure each tender maid
For her shall heave the sympathetic sigh.
And haply my Eumelia * (for her soul
Is pity's self), as, void of household cares,
Her evening walk she bends beside the lake,
Which yet retains her name,† shall sadly drop
A tear, in memory of the hapless maid;
And mourn with me the sorrows of the youth,
Whom from his mistress death did not divide.
Robbed of the calm possession of his mind,
All night he wandered by the sounding shore,
Long looking o'er the lake; and saw at times
The dear, the dreary ghost of her he loved:
Till love and grief subdued his manly prime,
And brought his youth with sorrow to the grave.—
I knew an aged swain, whose hoary head

* See ¶ 35, Life of Bruce.

† See Note (1) end of poem.

Was bent with years, the village-chronicle,
Who much had seen, and from the former times
Much had received. He, hanging o'er the hearth,
In winter evenings, to the gaping swains,
And children circling round the fire, would tell
Stories of old, and tales of other times.
Of Lomond and Levina he would talk ;
And how of old, in Britain's evil days,
When brothers against brothers drew the sword
Of civil rage, the hostile hand of war
Ravaged the land, gave cities to the sword,
And all the country to devouring fire.
Then these fair forests and Elysian scenes,
In one great conflagration, flamed to heaven.
Barren and black, by swift degrees arose
A moorish fen ; and hence the lab'ring hind,
Digging for fuel, meets the mouldering trunks
Of oaks, and branchy antlers of the deer.

Now sober Industry, illustrious power !
Hath raised the peaceful cottage, calm abode
Of innocence and joy : now, sweating, guides
The shining ploughshare ; tames the stubborn soil ;
Leads the long drain along th' unfertile marsh ;
Bids the bleak hill with vernal verdure bloom,
The haunt of flocks ; and clothes the barren heath
With waving harvests, and the golden grain.

Fair from his hand behold the village rise,
In rural pride, 'mong intermingled trees !
Above whose aged tops the joyful swains,
At even-tide descending from the hill,
With eye enamoured, mark the many wreaths

Of pillared smoke, high-curling to the clouds.
The streets resound with Labour's various voice,
Who whistles at his work. Gay on the green,
Young blooming boys, and girls with golden hair,
Trip nimble-footed, wanton in their play,
The village hope. All in a reverend row,
Their grey-haired grandsires, sitting in the sun,
Before the gate, and leaning on the staff,
The well-remembered stories of their youth
Recount, and shake their aged locks with joy.

How fair a prospect rises to the eye,
Where Beauty vies in all her vernal forms,
For ever pleasant, and for ever new !
Swells the exulting thought, expands the soul,
Drowning each ruder care : a blooming train
Of bright ideas rushes on the mind.
Imagination rouses at the scene ;
And backward, through the gloom of ages past,
Beholds Arcadia, like a rural queen,
Encircled with her swains and rosy nymphs,
The mazy dance conducting on the green.
Nor yield to old Arcadia's blissful vales
Thine, gentle Leven ! Green on either hand
Thy meadows spread, unbroken of the plough,
With beauty all their own. Thy fields rejoice
With all the riches of the golden year.
Fat on the plain, and mountain's sunny side,
Large droves of oxen, and the fleecy flocks,
Feed undisturb'd ; and fill the echoing air
With music, grateful to the master's ear.

The traveller stops, and gazes round and round
 O'er all the scenes, that animate his heart
 With mirth and music. Ev'n the mendicant,
 Bowbent with age, that on the old grey stone,
 Sole sitting, suns him in the public way,
 Feels his heart leap, and to himself he sings.

How beautiful around the lake outspreads
 Its wealth of waters, the surrounding vales
 Renews, and holds a mirror to the sky,
 Perpetual fed by many sister-streams,
 Haunts of the angler! First, the gulfy Po,
 That through the quaking marsh and waving reeds
 Creeps slow and silent on. The rapid Queech,
 Whose foaming torrents o'er the broken steep
 Burst down impetuous, with the placid wave
 Of flowery Leven, for the canine pike
 And silver eel renown'd. But chief thy stream,
 O Gairny! sweetly winding, claims the song.
 First on thy banks the Doric reed I tun'd,*
 Stretch'd on the verdant grass: while twilight meek,
 Enrob'd in mist, slow-sailing through the air,
 Silent and still, on every closed flower
 Shed drops nectareous; and around the fields
 No noise was heard, save where the whispering reeds
 Wav'd to the breeze, or in the dusky air
 The slow-wing'd crane mov'd heavily o'er the lee,
 And shrilly clamour'd as he sought his nest.
 There would I sit, and tune some youthful lay;

* See ¶ 19 and ¶ 35, Life of Bruce.

Or watch the motion of the living fires,
That day and night their never-ceasing course
Wheel round th' eternal poles ; and bend the knee
To Him the Maker of yon starry sky,
Omnipotent ! who, thron'd above all heavens,
Yet ever present through the peopled space
Of vast Creation's infinite extent,
Pours life, and bliss, and beauty, pours Himself,
His own essential goodness, o'er the minds
Of happy beings, through ten thousand worlds.

Nor shall the Muse forget thy friendly heart,
O Lælius !* partner of my youthful hours.
How often, rising from the bed of peace,
We would walk forth to meet the summer morn,
Inhaling health and harmony of mind ;
Philosophers and friends ; while science beam'd,
With ray divine, as lovely on our minds
As yonder orient sun, whose welcome light
Reveal'd the vernal landscape to the view.
Yet oft, unbending from more serious thought,
Much of the looser follies of mankind,
Humorous and gay, we'd talk, and much would laugh ;
While, ever and anon, their foibles vain
Imagination offer'd to our view.

Fronting where Gairny pours his silent urn
Into the lake, an island lifts its head,†

* See Note (2), end of Poem.

† See Note (3), end of Poem.

Grassy and wild, with ancient ruin heap'd
 Of cells ; where from the noisy world retir'd
 Of old, as fame reports, Religion dwelt
 Safe from the insults of the darken'd crowd
 That bow'd the knee to Odin ; and in times
 Of ignorance, when Caledonia's sons
 (Before the triple-crowned giant fell)
 Exchang'd their simple faith for Rome's deceits.
 Here Superstition for her cloister'd sons
 A dwelling rear'd, with many an arched vault ;
 Where her pale votaries at the midnight hour,
 In many a mournful strain of melancholy,
 Chanted their orisons to the cold moon.
 It now resounds with the wild-skrieking gull,
 The crested lapwing, and the clamorous mew,
 The patient heron, and the bittern dull,
 Deep-sounding in the base, with all the tribe
 That by the water seek th' appointed meal.

From hence the shepherd in the fenced fold,
 'Tis said, has heard strange sounds, and music wild ;
 Such as in Selma,* by the burning oak,
 Of hero fallen, or of battle lost,
 Warn'd Fingal's mighty son, from trembling chords

* "Selma," according to the expositors of Ossian, was the capital of Morven ; and Morven, or Mor Bean, signifies the hill country or highlands. "I beheld thy towers, O Selma, the oaks of thy shaded wall."—See *Ossian's Poems, The War of Inis-thona*.

Of untouch'd harp, self-sounding in the night ;
Perhaps, th' afflicted genius of the lake,
That leaves the wat'ry grot each night, to mourn
The waste of time, his desolated isles,
And temples in the dust : his plaintive voice
Is heard resounding through the dreary courts
Of high Lochleven Castle,* famous once,
Th' abode of heroes of the Bruce's line.
Gothic the pile, and high the solid walls,
With warlike ramparts, and the strong defence
Of jutting battlements : an age's toil !
No more its arches echo to the noise
Of joy and festive mirth. No more the glance
Of blazing taper through its windows beams,
And quivers on the undulating wave :
But naked stand the melancholy walls,
Lash'd by the wintry tempests, cold and bleak,
That whistle mournful through the empty halls,
And piecemeal crumble down the towers to dust.
Perhaps in some lone, dreary, desert tow'r,
That time has spar'd, forth from the window looks,
Half hid in grass, the solitary fox :†

* See Note (4), end of Poem.

† “ I have seen the walls of Balclutha, but they were desolate. The fire had resounded in the halls, and the voice of the people is heard no more. The stream of Clutha was removed from its place by the fall of the walls. The thistle shook there its lonely head. The moss whistled to the wind. The fox looked out of the windows; the rank grass of the

While from above, the owl, musician dire !
Screams hideous, harsh, and grating to the ear.

Equal in age, and sharers of its fate,
A row of moss-grown trees around it stand.
Scarce here and there, upon their blasted tops,
A shrivell'd leaf distinguishes the year :
Emblem of hoary age, the eve of life,
When man draws nigh his everlasting home,
Within a step of the devouring grave ;
When all his views and towering hopes are gone,
And ev'ry appetite, before him, dead.

Bright shines the morn, while in the ruddy east
The sun hangs hovering o'er th' Atlantic wave.
Apart on yonder green hill's sunny side,
Seren'd with all the music of the morn,
Attentive let me sit : while from the rock,
The swains, laborious, roll the limestone huge,
Bounding elastic from th' indented grass ;
At every fall it springs, and thundering shoots
O'er rocks and precipices to the plain.—
And let the shepherd careful tend his flock
Far from the dangerous steep ; nor, O ye swains !
Stray heedless of its rage. Behold the tears
Yon wretched widow o'er the mangled corpse
Of her dead husband pours : who, hapless man !
Cheerful and strong, went forth at rising morn

wall waved round its head. Desolate is the dwelling of
Moina ; silence is in the house of her fathers."—*Ossian's
Poems, Carthon.*

To usual toil ; but, ere the evening hour,
His sad companions bear him lifeless home.
Urged from the hill's high top, with progress swift,
A weighty stone, resistless, rapid came ;
Seen by the fated wretch, who stood unmov'd,
Nor turn'd to fly, till flight had been in vain ;
When now arriv'd the instrument of death,
And fell'd him to the ground. The thirsty land
Drank up his blood : such was the will of Heav'n !

How wide the landscape opens to the view !
Still as I mount the lessening hills decline,
Till high above them northern Grampius lifts
His hoary head, bending beneath a load
Of everlasting snow. O'er southern fields
I see the Cheviot hills, the ancient bounds
Of two contending kingdoms. There in fight
Brave Percy and the gallant Douglas bled ;
The house of heroes, and the death of hosts !
Watering the fertile fields, majestic Forth,
Full, deep, and wide, rolls placid to the sea,
With many a vessel trim and oared bark,
In rich profusion cover'd, wafting o'er
The wealth and produce of far-distant lands.

But chief mine eye on the subjected vale
Of Leven pleas'd looks down ; while o'er the trees,
That shield the hamlet with the shade of years,
The towering smoke of early fire ascends,
And the shrill cock proclaims the advanced morn.

How blest the man ! who, in these peaceful plains,
Ploughs his paternal field ; far from the noise,

The care, and bustle of a busy world ! *
 All in the sacred, sweet, sequester'd vale,
 Of solitude, the secret primrose-path
 Of rural life, he dwells ; and with him dwells
 Peace and Content, twins of the sylvan shade,
 And all the Graces of the golden age.—
 Such is Agricola, the wise, the good ;
 By nature formed for the calm retreat,
 The silent path of life. Learn'd, but not fraught
 With self-importance, as the starched fool,
 Who challenges respect by solemn face,
 By studied accent, and high-sounding phrase.
 Enamour'd of the shade, but not morose.
 Politeness, rais'd in courts by frigid rules,
 With him spontaneous grows. Not books alone,
 But man his study, and the better part ;
 To tread the ways of virtue, and to act.
 The various scenes of life with God's applause.
 Deep in the bottom of the flowery vale,
 With blooming shallows and the leafy twine

* “ *Beatus ille, qui procul negotiis,
 Ut prisca gens mortalium,
 Paterna rura bobus exercet suis
 Solutus omni fœnore.*”

Horace, Epon. ii. Ode 2.

“ Like the first mortals, blest is he,
 From debts, and mortgages, and business free ;
 With his own team who ploughs the soil,
 Which grateful once, confest his father's toil.”

Francis' Translation.

Of verdant alders fenc'd, his dwelling stands
Complete in rural elegance. The door,
By which the poor or pilgrim never pass'd,
Still open, speaks the master's bounteous heart.
There, O how sweet ! amid the fragrant shrubs,
At evening cool to sit ; while, on their boughs,
The nested songsters twitter o'er their young ;
And the hoarse low of folded cattle breaks
The silence, wafted o'er the sleeping lake,
Whose waters glow beneath the purple tinge
Of western cloud ; while converse sweet deceives
The stealing foot of time ! Or where the ground,
Mounded irregular, points out the graves
Of our forefathers, and the hallow'd fane,
Where swains assembling worship, let us walk,
In softly-soothing melancholy thought,
As Night's seraphic bard, immortal Young,
Or sweet-complaining Gray ; there see the goal
Of human life, where drooping, faint, and tir'd,
Oft miss'd the prize, the weary racer rests.—

Thus sung the youth, amid unfertile wilds
And nameless deserts, unpoetic ground !
Far from his friends he stray'd, recording thus
The dear remembrance of his native fields,
To cheer the tedious night ; while slow disease
Prey'd on his pining vitals, and the blasts
Of dark December shook his humble cot.*

* See ¶ 42, Life of Bruce.

NOTES.

Note (1), page 195.

————— “ *Beside the lake*
Which yet retains her name.”

The poet here insinuates, that *Lochleven* is an abbreviation of *Lochlevina*, which is about as probable as another derivation given by some of the inhabitants around the lake, that *Lochleven* is an abbreviation of *Locheleven*; and they account for this appellation by affirming, that it was once fed by eleven streams, surrounded by eleven proprietors' lands, was eleven miles in circumference, was studded by eleven islands, seen from eleven parishes, inhabited by eleven kinds of fish, and so forth, to the number of eleven elevens, not one of which peculiarities, so far as we can learn, ever belonged to it. It is, however, a striking circumstance, that the only two hills in Scotland named *Lomond*, should each have a lake at its base called *Leven*, for so *Loch-Lomond* was anciently called, as the stream by which it empties itself into the *Clyde* is still named, and by which name it has been celebrated by *Smollet*, in the famous *Ode* beginning—

“ On *Leven's* banks, while free to rove,
And tune the rural pipe to love.”

The word *Leven* is held to be of Saxon origin, and by some it is understood to mean clear, by others smooth. The former interpretation seems the more probable, from

the fact, that this property is a characteristic of all the waters to which the name is applied ; of which in Britain, besides those already named, there is the river Leven in Westmoreland, the stream by which the lake Windermere empties itself into the sea ; and there are also the " Black" and " White" Leven, two streams in Cumberland.

Note (2), page 199.

*" Nor shall the Muse forget thy friendly heart,
O Lælius !"*

In the first draught of the poem the following verses preceded those in the text :—

“ And oft would join
My walk the good Philologus, whose mind,
Superior to the world, with scorn looks down
And pity, on the low pursuits of men ;
And, far above the mists which little pride
And erring passions raise, his piercing eye
Roves through the spacious intellectual world.”

By Philologus and Lælius our poet is known to intend his early friend Mr George Henderson, son of the proprietor of Turfhill, afterwards assistant to the Rev. James Fisher, of the Secession Church, Glasgow. This gentleman was suddenly cut off in the midst of his usefulness. He preached in his usual health on Sabbath, and died on the Thursday following, in the thirty-sixth year of his age, and fourteenth of his ministry. His widow survived till within the last few months.

The name Philologus was changed into that of Lælius, as expressive of the friendship that subsisted between Bruce and Henderson, in allusion to the intimacy between Lælius the Roman consul and Africanus the younger, an

intimacy so great, that Cicero, in his treatise *De Amicitia*, adduces it in illustration of the real nature of friendship, with its attendant pleasures.

Note (3), page 199.

“ *Fronting where Gairny pours his silent urn
Into the lake, an island lifts its head,
Grassy and wild, with ancient ruin heap’d
Of cells.*”

This island, the largest of the four which embellish Lochleven, has been increased, by the partial draining of the lake, from thirty-two to eighty acres. It is named St Serf’s Isle, as having been the site of a priory dedicated to St Serf or Servanus, who is reported to have been a pilgrim from Canaan, and in whose honour Bondeus, a Pictish king, founded the place, and gave the isle to his Culdees. David I. annexed it to the priory of St Andrews. Andrew Winton was prior of this place, and wrote in it his *History of the World*, beginning with the Creation, and ending with the Captivity of James I., in whose reign he died. This history is still extant in the Advocates’ Library. The island has been recently brought under the plough, and the ruins of the priory converted into a stable, which Sir James Montgomery is about to shade with some trees from his neighbouring plantations, and so remove in part the present naked appearance of the scenery in that portion of the lake.—See *Chambers’ Gazetteer*, *Sibbald’s Fife*, and *Forsyth’s Beauties of Scotland*.

Note (4), page 201.

*Of high Lochleven Castle, famous once ;
The abode of heroes of the Bruce’s line.”*

Lochleven Castle is of unknown antiquity. It is said

to have been founded by Congal, son of Dongart, king of the Picts. It occurs in history as early as 1334, when an unsuccessful siege was laid to it by John de Strevelin, an English officer. It was anciently a royal castle, and occasionally the residence of the Pictish and Scottish kings. Alexander III. lived some time in it after his return from an interview with Henry III. of England. It was granted by Robert III. to a branch of the Douglas family, but it seems to have reverted again to the Crown. Sir Robert Douglas, in 1542, received from James V. grants of the baronies of Dalkeith and Kinross, with the lake and castle of Lochleven, which title the family still enjoys, together with that of Morton, to which earldom they afterwards succeeded.

Lochleven Castle has been repeatedly used as a state-prison. Patrick Graham, Archbishop of St Andrews, and grandson of King Robert III., after an unsuccessful attempt to reform the lives of the Catholic clergy, was, through their influence at Court, arrested, confined in different monasteries, and at last died a prisoner in Lochleven Castle in 1478. After Mary Queen of Scots had parted with Bothwell at Carberry, and surrendered herself a prisoner to the Confederate Lords, she was conveyed to this Castle, and shut up, June 16. 1567, under charge of the wife of Douglas of Lochleven, the mother of Murray, afterwards Regent of Scotland. On the ensuing 24th of July she was compelled, by a party of those statesmen, to sign an instrument, resigning the Crown to her infant son, who was accordingly inaugurated a few days after at Stirling, under the title of James VI. Several attempts had been made to rescue her from her place of confinement, which the vigilance of her keeper rendered abortive; but Mary had captivated the heart of George Douglas, her keeper's brother, a youth of eighteen, who, on May 2. 1568, conveyed her from the Castle in a boat to the

shore, an accomplice having found means to steal the keys and open the gates. The keys were thrown into the lake, and were recently found by a young man belonging to Kinross, who presented them to the Earl of Morton, in whose possession they now are. The Earl of Northumberland, after his rebellion in England, was seized in Scotland, and confined in Lochleven Castle from 1569 to 1572, when he was delivered up to Queen Elizabeth and executed. The square tower, and a portion of the rampart which surrounded the building, are all that now remain of this famous place, and which Sir James Montgomery is in the act of securing from further dilapidation.—See *Noble's Genealogical History of the Stuarts*, *Chambers' Gazetteer*, *Maitland's History of Scotland*, and *Forsyth's Beauties of Scotland*.

THE
LAST DAY.



THE
LAST DAY.*

A POEM.

HIS second coming, who at first appear'd
To save the world, but now to judge mankind
According to their works ;—the trumpet's sound—
The dead arising,—the wide world in flames,—
The mansions of the blest,—and the dire pit
Of Satan and of woe,——O Muse ! unfold.

O Thou ! whose eye the future and the past
In one broad view beholdest—from the first
Of days, when o'er this rude unformed mass
Light, first-born of existence, † smiling rose,
Down to that latest moment, when thy voice
Shall bid the sun be darkness, when thy hand
Shall blot creation out,—assist my song !
Thou only know'st, who gav'st these orbs to roll

* For occasion of this poem, see ¶ 24, Life of Bruce.

† “ Hail holy light, offspring of Heaven first born.”

Their destin'd circles, when their course shall set ;
When ruin and destruction fierce shall ride
In triumph o'er creation. This is hid,
In kindness unto man. Thou giv'st to know
The event certain : angels know not when.*

'Twas on an autumn's eve, serene and calm,
I walk'd, attendant on the funeral
Of an old swain : around, the village crowd
Loquacious chatted, till we reach'd the place
Where, shrouded up, the sons of other years
Lie silent in the grave. The sexton there
Had digg'd the bed of death, the narrow house
For all that live appointed. To the dust
We gave the dead. Then moralizing, home
The swains return'd, to drown in copious bowls
The labours of the day, and thoughts of death.

The sun now trembled at the western gate ;
His yellow rays stream'd in the fleecy clouds.
I sat me down upon a broad flat stone ;
And much I mused on the changeful state
Of sublunary things. The joys of life,
How frail, how short, how passing! As the sea,
Now flowing, thunders on the rocky shore ;
Now lowly ebbing, leaves a tract of sand,
Waste, wide, and dreary : so, in this vain world,
Through every varying state of life, we toss
In endless fluctuation ; till, tir'd out
With sad variety of bad and worse,

* Matthew xxiv. 36.

We reach life's period, reach the blissful port,
Where change affects not, and the weary rest.

Then sure the sun which lights us to our shroud,
Than that which gave us first to see the light,
Is happier far. As he who, hopeless, long
Hath rode th' Atlantic billow, from the mast,
Skirting the blue horizon, sees the land,
His native land approach ; joy fills his heart,
And swells each throbbing vein : so, here confin'd,
We weary tread life's long long toilsome maze ;
Still hoping, vainly hoping, for relief,
And rest from labour. Ah ! mistaken thought :
To seek in life what only death can give.
But what is death ? Is it an endless sleep,
Unconscious of the present and the past,
And never to be waken'd ? Sleeps the soul ;
Nor wakes ev'n in a dream ? If it is so,
Happy the sons of pleasure ; they have liv'd
And made the most of life : and foolish he,
The sage, who, dreaming of hereafter, grudg'd
Himself the tasting of the sweets of life,
And call'd it temperance ; and hop'd for joys
More durable and sweet, beyond the grave.
Vain is the poet's song, the soldier's toil !
Vain is the sculptur'd marble and the bust !
How vain to hope for never-dying fame,
If souls can die ! But that they never die,
This thirst of glory whispers. Wherefore gave
The great Creator such a strong desire
He never meant to satisfy ? These stones,

Memorials of the dead, with rustic art
 And rude inscription cut, declare the soul
 Immortal. Man, form'd for eternity,
 Abhors annihilation, and the thought
 Of dark oblivion. Hence, with ardent wish
 And vigorous effort, each would fondly raise
 Some lasting monument, to save his name
 Safe from the waste of years. Hence Cæsar fought ;
 Hence Raphael painted ; and hence Milton sung.

Thus musing, sleep oppress'd my drowsy sense,
 And wrapt me into rest. Before mine eyes,
 Fair as the morn, when up the flaming east
 The sun ascends, a radiant seraph stood,
 Crown'd with a wreath of palm : his golden hair
 Wav'd on his shoulders, girt with shining plumes ;
 From which, down to the ground, loose-floating trail'd,
 In graceful negligence, his heavenly robe :
 Upon his face, flush'd with immortal youth,
 Unfading beauty bloom'd ; and thus he spake :

“ Well hast thou judg'd ; the soul must be immortal !
 And that it is, this awful day declares ;
 This day, the last that e'er the sun shall gild :
 Arrested by Omnipotence, no more
 Shall he describe the year : the moon no more
 Shall shed her borrow'd light. This is the day
 Seal'd in the rolls of Fate, when o'er the dead
 Almighty Power shall wake and raise to life
 The sleeping myriads. Now shall be approv'd
 The ways of God to man, and all the clouds

Of Providence be clear'd :* now shall be disclos'd
 Why vice in purple oft upon a throne
 Exalted sat, and shook her iron scourge
 O'er Virtue, lowly seated on the ground :
 Now deeds committed in the sable shade
 Of eyeless darkness, shall be brought to light ;
 And every act shall meet its just reward."

As thus he spake, the morn arose ; and sure
 Methought ne'er rose a fairer. Not a cloud
 Spotted the blue expanse ; and not a gale
 Breath'd o'er the surface of the dewy earth.
 Twinkling with yellow lustre, the gay birds
 On every blooming spray sung their sweet lays,
 And prais'd their great Creator : through the fields
 The lowing cattle graz'd ; and all around
 Was beauty, happiness, and mirth, and love.—

" All these thou seest (resum'd the angelic power)
 No more shall give thee pleasure. Thou must leave
 This world ; of which now come and see the end."

This said, he touch'd me, and such strength infus'd,
 That as he soared up the pathless air,
 I lightly followed. On the awful peak
 Of an eternal rock, against whose base
 The sounding billows beat, he set me down.
 I heard a noise, loud as a rushing stream,

* " I may assert Eternal Providence,
 And justify the ways of God to men."

MILTON.

" And vindicate the ways of God to man."—POPE.

When o'er the rugged precipice it roars,
And foaming, thunders on the rocks below.
Astonished, I gaz'd around ; when lo !
I saw an angel down from Heaven descend.
His face was as the sun ; his dreadful height
Such as the statue, by the Grecian plan'd,
Of Philip's son, Athos, with all his rocks,
Moulded into a man :* One foot on earth,
And one upon the rolling sea, he fix'd.
As when, at setting sun, the rainbow shines
Refulgent, meting out the half of Heav'n—
So stood he ; and, in act to speak he rais'd
His shining hand. His voice was as the sound
Of many waters, or the deep-mouth'd roar
Of thunder, when it bursts the riven cloud,
And bellows through the ether. Nature stood
Silent, in all her works : while thus he spake :—
“ Hear, thou that roll'st above, thou radiant sun !

* “ Athos. a mountain of Macedonia, 150 miles in circumference, projecting into the Ægean Sea, like a promontory. It is so high that it overshadows the island of Lemnos, though at the distance of 87 miles. A sculptor, called Dinocrates, offered Alexander to cut Mount Athos, and to make with it a statue of the King holding a town in his left hand, and in the right a spacious basin to receive all the waters which flowed into it. Alexander greatly admired the plan, but objected to the place ; and he observed, that the neighbouring country was not sufficiently fruitful to produce corn and provisions for the inhabitants, which were to dwell in the city, in the hand of the statue.”—*Lempriere's Classical Dictionary, Article, Athos.*

Ye heavens and earth, attend ! while I declare
The will of the Eternal. By his name
Who lives, and shall for ever live, I swear
That time shall be no longer.”*

He disappear'd. Fix'd in deep thought I stood,
At what would follow. Straight another sound ;
To which the Nile, o'er Ethiopia's rocks
Rushing in one broad cataract, were nought.
It seem'd as if the pillars that upheld
The universe, had fall'n ; and all its worlds,
Unhing'd, had strove together for the way,
In cumbrous crashing ruin. Such the roar !
A sound that might be felt ! It pierc'd beyond
The limits of creation. Chaos roar'd ;
And heav'n and earth return'd the mighty noise.—
“ Thou hear'st,” said then my heav'nly guide, “ the
sound
Of the last trumpet. See, where from the clouds
Th' archangel Michael, one of the seven
That minister before the throne of God,
Leans forward ; and the sonorous tube inspires
With breath immortal. By his side the sword
Which, like a meteor, o'er the vanquish'd head
Of Satan hung, when he rebellious rais'd
War, and embroil'd the happy fields above.”

A pause ensued. The fainting sun grew pale,
And seem'd to struggle through a sky of blood ;

* Revelations x. 5, 6.

While dim eclipse impair'd his beam : the earth
 Shook to her deepest centre : Ocean rag'd,
 And dash'd his billows on the frighted shore.
 All was confusion. Heartless, helpless, wild,
 As flocks of timid sheep, or driven deer,
 Wandering, th' inhabitants of earth appear'd :
 Terror in every look, and pale affright
 Sat in each eye ;* amazed at the past,
 And for the future trembling. All call'd great,
 Or deem'd illustrious, by erring man,
 Was now no more. The hero and the prince,
 Their grandeur lost, now mingled with the crowd ;
 And all distinctions, those except from faith
 And virtue flowing : these upheld the soul,
 As rib'd with triple steel. All else were lost !

Now, vain is greatness ! as the morning clouds,
 That, rising, promise rain : condens'd they stand,
 Till, touch'd by winds, they vanish into air.
 The farmer mourns : so mourns the helpless wretch,
 Who, cast by fortune from some envied height,
 Finds nought within him to support his fall.
 High as his hopes had rais'd him, low he sinks
 Below his fate, in comfortless despair.—

* “ The overthrown he raised, and as a herd
 Of goats and timorous flock together throng'd,
 Drove him before him thunderstruck, pursued
 With terrors and with furies to the bounds
 And crystal wall of heaven.”

“ Horror rose fierce, rage and pale affright
 Varied each face.”

Who would not laugh at an attempt to build
 A lasting structure on the rapid stream
 Of foaming Tigris,* the foundations laid
 Upon the glassy surface? Such the hopes
 Of him whose views are bounded to this world :
 Immers'd in his own labour'd work, he dreams
 Himself secure ; when, on a sudden down,
 Torn from its sandy ground, the fabric falls !
 He starts, and, waking, finds himself undone.†

Not so the man who on religion's base
 His hope and virtue founds. Firm on the Rock
 Of ages his foundation laid, remains,
 Above the frowns of fortune or her smiles ;
 In every varying state of life, the same.
 Nought fears he from the world, and nothing hopes.
 With unassuming courage, inward strength
 Endu'd, resign'd to Heaven, he leads a life
 Superior to the common herd of men,
 Whose joys, connected with the changeful flood
 Of fickle fortune, ebb and flow with it.

Nor is religion a chimera : Sure
 'Tis something real. Virtue cannot live,
 Divided from it. As a sever'd branch
 It withers, pines, and dies. Who loves not God,
 That made him, and preserv'd, nay more—redeem'd.

* The river Tigris (i. e. Sagitta) is so called from its rapidity.

† Matthew viii. 24.

Is dangerous. Can ever gratitude
 Bind him who spurns at these most sacred ties?
 Say, can he, in the silent scenes of life,
 Be sociable? Can he be a friend?
 At best, he must but feign. The worst of brutes
 An atheist is; for beasts acknowledge God.
 The lion, with the terrors of his mouth,
 Pays homage to his Maker; the grim wolf,
 At midnight, howling, seeks his meat from God.

Again th' archangel rais'd his dreadful voice.
 Earth trembled at the sound. "Awake, ye dead!
 And come to judgment." At the mighty call,
 As armies issue at the trumpet's sound,
 So rose the dead. A shaking first I heard,*
 And bone together came unto his bone,
 Though sever'd by wide seas and distant lands.
 A spirit liv'd within them.† He who made,
 Wound up, and set in motion, the machine,
 To run unhurt the length of fourscore years,
 Who knows the structure of each secret spring;
 Can He not join again the sever'd parts,
 And join them with advantage? This to man
 Hard and impossible may seem; to God
 Is easy. Now, through all the darken'd air,
 The living atoms flew, each to his place,
 And nought was missing in the great account,
 Down from the dust of him whom Cain first slew,

* Ezekiel xxxvii. 7.

† Spiritus intus olit.—Hor.

To him who yesterday was laid in earth,
And scarce had seen corruption ; whether in
The bladed grass they cloth'd the verdant plain,
Or smil'd in opening flowers ; or, in the sea,
Became the food of monsters of the deep,
Or pass'd in transmigrations infinite
Through ev'ry kind of being. None mistakes
His kindred matter ; but, by sympathy
Combining, rather by Almighty Pow'r
Led on, they closely mingle and unite
But chang'd : for subject to decay no more,
Or dissolution, deathless as the soul,
The body is ; and fitted to enjoy
Eternal bliss, or bear eternal pain.

As when in spring the sun's prolific beams
Have wak'd to life the insect tribes, that sport
And wanton in his rays at ev'ning mild,
Proud of their new existence, up the air,
In devious circles wheeling, they ascend,
Innumerable ; the whole air is dark :
So, by the trumpet rous'd, the sons of men,
In countless numbers, cover'd all the ground,
From frozen Greenland to the southern pole ;
All who ere liv'd on earth. See Lapland's sons,
Whose zenith is the pole ; a barb'rous race !
Rough as their storms, and savage as their clime,
Unpolish'd as their bears, and but in shape
Distinguish'd from them : Reason's dying lamp
Scarce brighter burns than instinct in their breast.
With wand'ring Russians, and all those who dwelt

In Scandinavia, by the Baltic Sea ;
The rugged Pole, with Prussia's warlike race :
Germania pours her numbers, where the Rhine
And mighty Danube pour their flowing urns.

Behold thy children, Britain ! hail the light :
A manly race, whose business was arms,
And long uncivilized ; yet, train'd to deeds
Of virtue, they withstood the Roman power,
And made their eagles droop. On Morven's coast,
A race of heroes and of bards arise ;
The mighty Fingal, and his mighty son,
Who launch'd the spear, and touch'd the tuneful harp ;
With Scotia's chiefs, the sons of later years,
Her Kenneths and her Malcoms, warriors fam'd ;
Her generous Wallace, and her gallant Bruce.
See, in her pathless wilds, where the grey stones
Are rais'd in memory of the mighty dead.
Armies arise of English, Scots, and Picts ;
And giant Danes, who, from bleak Norway's coast,
Ambitious, came to conquer her fair fields,
And chain her sons : But Scotia gave them graves !—
Behold the kings that fill'd the English throne !
Edwards and Henries, names of deathless fame,
Start from the tomb. Immortal William ! see,
Surrounding angels point him from the rest,
Who sav'd the state from tyranny and Rome.
Behold her poets ! Shakspeare, fancy's child ;
Spenser, who, through his smooth and moral tale,
Y-points fair virtue out ; with *him* who sung
Of man's first disobedience. Young lifts up

His awful head, and joys to see the day,
The great, th' important day, of which he sung.

See where imperial Rome exalts her height !
Her senators and gowned fathers rise ;
Her consuls, who, as ants without a king,
Went forth to conquer kings ; and at their wheels
In triumph led the chiefs of distant lands.
Behold, in Cannæ's field, what hostile swarms
Burst from th' ensanguin'd ground, where Hannibal
Shook Rome through all her legions : Italy
Trembled unto the Capitol. If fate
Had not withstood th' attempt, she now had bow'd
Her head to Carthage. See, Pharsalia pours
Her murder'd thousands ! who, in the last strife
Of Rome for dying liberty, were slain,
To make a man the master of the world.

All Europe's sons throng forward ; numbers vast !
Imagination fails beneath the weight.
What numbers yet remain ! Th' enervate race
Of Asia, from where Tanais rolls
O'er rocks and dreary wastes his foaming stream,
To where the Eastern Ocean thunders round
The spicy Java ; with the tawny race
That dwelt in Afric, from the Red Sea, north,
To the Cape, south, where the rude Hottentot
Sinks into brute ; with those, who long unknown
Till by Columbus found, a naked race !
And only skill'd to urge the sylvan war,
That peopled the wide continent that spreads
From rocky Zembla, whiten'd with the snow

Of twice three thousand years, south to the Straits
Nam'd from Magellan, where the ocean roars
Round earth's remotest bounds. Now, had not He,
The great Creator of the universe,
Enlarg'd the wide foundations of the world,
Room had been wanting to the mighty crowds
That pour'd from every quarter. At his word,
Obedient angels stretch'd an ample plain,
Where dwelt his people in the Holy Land,
Fit to contain the whole of human race——
As when the autumn, yellow on the fields,
Invites the sickle, forth the farmer sends
His servants to cut down and gather in
The bearded grain : so, by Jehovah sent,
His angels, from all corners of the world,
Led on the living and awaken'd dead
To judgment ; as, in th' Apocalypse,
John, gather'd, saw the people of the earth,
And kings, to Armageddon.—Now look round
Thou whose ambitious heart for glory beats !
See all the wretched things on earth call'd great,
And lifted up to gods ! How little now
Seems all their grandeur ! See the conqueror,
Mad Alexander, who his victor arms
Bore o'er the then known globe, then sat him down
And wept, because he had no other world
To give to desolation ; * how he droops !

* “ Where the hot brain'd youth
Who the tiara at his pleasure tore

He knew not, hapless wretch ! he never learn'd
 The harder conquest—to subdue himself.
 Now is the Christian's triumph, now he lifts
 His head on high ; while down the dying hearts
 Of sinners helpless sink : black guilt distracts
 And wrings their tortur'd souls ; while every thought
 Is big with keen remorse, or dark despair.

But now a nobler subject claims the song.
 My mind recoils at the amazing theme :
 For how shall finite speak of infinite ?
 How shall a stripling, by the Muse untaught,
 Sing Heaven's Almighty, prostrate at whose feet
 Archangels fall. Unequal to the task,
 I dare the bold attempt : assist me Heaven !
 From Thee begun, with Thee shall end my song !

Now, down from th' opening firmament,
 Seated upon a sapphire throne, high rais'd
 Upon an azure ground, upheld by wheels
 Of emblematic structure, as a wheel
 Had been within a wheel, studded with eyes
 Of flaming fire, and by four cherubs led ;
 I saw the Judge descend. Around Him came
 By thousands and by millions, Heaven's bright host.
 About him blaz'd insufferable light,
 Invisible as darkness to the eye.

From kings of all the then discover'd globe
 And cried, forsooth, because his arm was hampered
 And had not room enough to do its work."

BLAIR'S *Grave*.

His car above the mount of Olives stay'd
Where last with his disciples He convers'd,
And left them gazing as He soar'd aloft.
He darkness as a curtain drew around ;
On which the colour of the rainbow shone,
Various and bright ; and from within was heard
A voice, as deep-mouth'd thunder, speaking thus :
“ Go, Raphael, and from these reprobate
Divide my chosen saints ; go separate
My people from among them, as the wheat
Is in the harvest sever'd from the tares :
Set them upon the right, and on the left
Leave these ungodly. Thou, Michael, choose,
From forth th' angelic host, a chosen band,
And Satan with his legions hither bring
To judgment, from Hell's caverns ; whither fled,
They think to hide from my awaken'd wrath,
Which chas'd them out of Heaven, and which they dread
More than the horrors of the pit, which now
Shall be redoubled sevenfold on their heads.”

Swift as conception, at his bidding flew
His ministers, obedient to his word.
And, as a shepherd, who all day hath fed
His sheep and goats promiscuous, but at eve
Dividing, shuts them up in different folds :
So now the good were parted from the bad ;
For ever parted ; never more to join
And mingle as on earth, where often past
For other each ; ev'n close Hypocrisy
Escapes not, but, unmask'd, alike the scorn

Of vice and virtue stands. Now separate,
Upon the right appear'd a dauntless, firm,
Composed number: joyful at the thought
Of immortality, they forward look'd
With hope unto the future ; conscience, pleas'd,
Smiling, reflects upon a well-spent life ;
Heaven dawns within their breasts. The other crew,
Pale and dejected, scarcely lift their heads
To view the hated light : his trembling hand
Each lays upon his guilty face ; and now,
In gnawings of the never-dying worm,
Begins a hell that never shall be quench'd.

But now the enemy of God and man,
Cursing his fate, comes forward, led in chains,
Infrangible, of burning adamant,
Hewn from the rocks of Hell ; now too the bands
Of rebel angels, who long time had walk'd
The world, and by their oracles deceiv'd
The blinded nations, or by secret guile
Wrought men to vice, came on, raging in vain,
And struggling with their fetters, which, as fate,
Compell'd them fast. They wait their dreadful doom.

Now from his lofty throne, with eyes that blaz'd
Intolerable day, th' Almighty Judge
Look'd down awhile upon the subject crowd.
As when a caravan of merchants, led
By thirst of gain to travel the parch'd sands
Of waste Arabia, hears a lion roar,
The wicked trembled at his view ; upon
The ground they roll'd, in pangs of wild despair,

To hide their faces, which not blushes mark'd
But livid horror. Conscience, who asleep
Long time had lain, now lifts her snaky head,
And frights them into madness ; while the list
Of all their sins she offers to their view :
For she had power to hurt them, and her sting
Was as a scorpion's. He who never knew
Its wound is happy, though a fetter'd slave,
Chain'd to the oar, or to the dark damp mine
Confin'd ; while he who sits upon a throne,
Under her frown, is wretched. But the damn'd
Alone can tell what 'tis to feel her scourge
In all its horrors, with her poison'd sting
Fix'd in their hearts. This is the Second Death.

Upon the Book of Life He laid his hand,
Clos'd with the seal of Heaven ; which op'd, he read
The names of the Elect. God knows his own.*
“ Come (looking on the right, he mildly said),
Ye of my Father blessed, ere the world
Was moulded out of chaos—ere the sons
Of God, exulting, sung at Nature's birth :
For you I left my throne, my glory left,
And, shrouded up in clay, I weary walk'd
Your world, and many miseries endur'd :
Death was the last. For you I died, that you
Might live with me for ever, and in Heav'n sit
On thrones, and as the sun in brightness, shine
For ever in my kingdom. Faithfully

* 2 Timothy, ii. 19.

Have ye approv'd yourselves. I hungry was,
And thirsty, and ye gave me meat and drink ;
Ye clothed me, naked ; when I fainting lay
In all the sad variety of pain,
Ye cheer'd me with the tenderness of friends ;
In sickness and in prison, me reliev'd.
Nay, marvel not that thus I speak : whene'er,
Led by the dictates of fair charity,
Ye help'd the man on whom keen poverty
And wretchedness had laid their meagre hands,
And for my sake, ye did it unto me."*

They heard with joy, and, shouting, rais'd their voice
In praise of their Redeemer ! Loos'd from earth,
They soar'd triumphant, and at the right hand
Of the great Judge sat down ; who on the left
Now looking stern, with fury in his eyes,
Blasted their spirits, while his arrows fix'd
Deep in their hearts, in agonizing pain
Scorched their vitals, thus their dreadful doom
(More dreadful from those lips which us'd to bless)
He awfully pronounc'd. Earth at his frown
Convulsive trembled ; while the raging deep
Hush'd in a horrid calm his waves. " Depart,
(These, for I heard them, were his awful words !)
" Depart from me, ye cursed ! Oft have I strove,
In tenderness and pity, to subdue
Your rebel hearts ; as a fond parent bird,
When danger threatens, flutters round her young,

* Matthew xxv. 41-45.

Nature's strong impulse beating in her breast.
Thus ardent did I strive: But all in vain.
Now will I laugh at your calamity,
And mock your fears: as oft, in stupid mirth,
Harden'd in wickedness, ye pointed out
The man who labour'd up the steep ascent
Of virtue, to reproach. Depart to fire
Kindled in Tophet for th' arch enemy,
For Satan and his angels, who, by pride,
Fell into condemnation; blown up now
To sevenfold fury by th' Almighty breath.
There, in that dreary mansion, where the light
Is solid gloom, darkness that may be felt,*
Where hope, the lenient of the ills of life,
For ever dies; there shall ye seek for death,
And shall not find it: for your greatest curse
Is immortality. Omnipotence
Eternally shall punish and preserve."

So said he; and, his hand high lifting, hurl'd
The flashing lightning, and the flaming bolt,
Full on the wicked: kindling in a blaze
The scorched earth. Behind, before, around,
The trembling wretches burst the quiv'ring flames.
They turn'd to fly; but wrath divine pursu'd
To where, beyond creation's utmost bound,
Where never glimpse of cheerful light arriv'd,

* "Stretch out thine hand toward heaven that there may be darkness over the land of Egypt, even darkness which may be felt."—Exodus x. 21.

Where scarce e'en thought can travel, but, absorb'd,
Falls headlong down th' immeasurable gulf
Of Chaos—wide and wild, their prison stood
Of utter darkness, as the horrid shade
That clouds the brow of death. Its op'ned mouth
Belch'd sheets of livid flame and pitchy smoke.
Infernal thunders, with explosion dire,
Roar'd through the fiery concave ; while the waves
Of liquid sulphur beat the burning shore,
In endless ferment. O'er the dizzy steep
Suspended, wrapt in suffocating gloom,
The sons of black damnation shrieking hung.
Curses unutterable fill'd their mouths,
Hideous to hear ; their eyes rain'd bitter tears
Of agonizing madness, for their day
Was past, and from their eye repentance hid
For ever ! Round their heads their hissing brands
The Furies wav'd, and o'er the whelming brink
Impetuous urg'd them. In the boiling surge
They headlong fell. The flashing billows roar'd ;
And hell from all her caves return'd the sound.
The gates of flint, and tenfold adamant,
With bars of steel, impenetrably firm,
Were shut for ever : The decree of fate,
Immutable, made fast the pond'rous door.

“ Now turn thine eyes,” my bright conductor said :
“ Behold the world in flames ! so sore the bolts
Of thunder, launch'd by the Almighty arm,
Hath smote upon it. Up the blacken'd air

Ascend the curling flames, and billowy smoke ;
And hideous crackling blot the face of day
With foul eruption. From their inmost beds
The hissing waters rise. Whatever drew
The vital air, or in the spacious deep
Wanton'd at large, expires. Heard'st thou that crash ?
There fell the tow'ring Alps, and, dashing down,
Lay bare their centre. See, the flaming mines
Expand their treasures ! no rapacious hand
To seize the precious bane. Now look around :
Say, Canst thou tell where stood imperial Rome,
The wonder of the world ; or where, the boast
Of Europe, fair Britannia, stretch'd her plain,
Encircled by the ocean ? All is wrapt
In darkness : as (if great may be compar'd
With small) when, on Gomorrah's fated field,
The flaming sulphur, by Jehovah rain'd,
Sent up a pitchy cloud, killing to life,
And tainting all the air. Another groan !
'Twas Nature's last : and see ! th' extinguish'd sun
Falls devious through the void ; and the fair face
Of Nature is no more ! With sullen joy
Old Chaos views the havoc, and expects
To stretch his sable sceptre o'er the blank
Where once Creation smil'd : o'er which, perhaps
Creative energy again shall wake,
And into being call a brighter sun,
And fairer worlds ; which, for delightful change,
The saints, descending from the happy seats

Of bliss, shall visit. And, behold ! they rise,
And seek their native land : around them move,
In radiant files, Heaven's host. Immortal wreaths
Of amaranth and roses crown their heads ;
And each a branch of ever-blooming palm
Triumphant holds. In robes of dazzling white,
Fairer than that by wintry tempests shed
Upon the frozen ground, array'd, they shine,
Fair as the sun, when up the steep of Heav'n
He rides in all the majesty of light.

But who can tell, or if an angel could,
Thou couldst not hear, the glories of the place
For their abode prepar'd ? Though oft on earth
They struggled hard against the stormy tide
Of adverse fortune, and the bitter scorn
Of harden'd villany—their life a course
Of warfare upon earth ; these toils, when view'd
With the reward, seem nought. The LORD shall guide
Their steps to living fountains, and shall wipe
All tears from ev'ry eye. The wintry clouds
That frown'd on life, rack up. A glorious sun,
That ne'er shall set, arises in a sky
Unclouded and serene. Their joy is full :
And sickness, pain, and death, shall be no more.

Dost thou desire to follow ? does thy heart
Beat ardent for the prize ? Then tread the path
Religion points to man. What thou hast seen,
Fix'd in thy heart retain : For, be assur'd,
In that last moment—in the closing act

Of Nature's drama, e'er the hand of fate
Drop the black curtain, thou must bear thy part,
And stand in thine own lot—— *

This said, he stretch d
His wings, and in a moment left my sight.

* Daniel xii. 13.

ODES AND HYMNS.



TO THE CUCKOO.

HAIL, beauteous stranger of the grove !
 Thou messenger of Spring !
 Now Heav'n repairs thy rural seat,
 And woods thy welcome sing.

Soon as the daisy decks the green,
 Thy certain voice we hear.
 Hast thou a star to guide thy path,
 Or mark the rolling year?

Delightful visitant ! with thee
 I hail the time of flow'rs,
 And hear the sound of music sweet
 From birds among the bow'rs.

The school-boy, wand'ring through the wood *
 To pull the primrose gay,

* Wordsworth seems to have had this stanza present to his mind when writing the following verses in his "Ode to the Cuckoo;" but it will not be allowed, we think, that he has equalled it :

" Thrice welcome, darling of the Spring,
 E'en yet thou art to me.
 No bird ; but an invisible thing,
 A voice, a mystery !

" The same which in my school-boy days
 I listened to ; that cry
 Which made me look a thousand ways,
 In bush, and tree, and sky.

Starts thy curious voice to hear,*
And imitates thy lay.

What time the pea puts on the bloom,
Thou fly'st thy vocal vale,†
An annual guest, in other lands,
Another Spring to hail.

* The common reading of this line is

“Starts the new voice of Spring to hear.”

It is altered in the text in compliance with the following suggestion:—“Will you allow me to suggest that when you republish the Ode to the Cuckoo, you should consider whether the original reading of the line ought not to be restored, namely,

“Starts thy curious voice to hear,”

instead of

“Starts the new voice of Spring to hear.”

“Curious” may be a Scotticism, but it is felicitous. It marks the unusual resemblance of the note of the Cuckoo to the human voice, the cause of the *start* and *imitation* which follow. Whereas the “new voice of Spring” is not true; for many voices in Spring precede that of the Cuckoo, and it is not peculiar or striking, nor does it connect either with the *start* or *imitation*. So the matter strikes me; and I submit it to your judgment, to which perhaps it has occurred before.”
—*Letter from Lord Mackenzie to the Editor.*

† “The cry, which is the note of the male, ceases about the close of June. The female makes only occasionally a chattering noise, which bears some resemblance to the cry of the dabchick. From the silence of the male, it had been supposed that the old birds directed their course southward early in July; but their silence is occasioned by the approach of their moulting; and most of them take their departure between the 1st and 15th September.—*Encyc. Brit. Art. Ornithology.*”

Sweet bird ! thy bow'r is ever green,
Thy sky is ever clear ;
Thou hast no sorrow in thy song,
No winter in thy year !

O could I fly, I'd fly with thee !
We'd make, with joyful wing,
Our annual visit o'er the globe,
Attendants on the spring.*

* A very beautiful Ode to the Cuckoo appeared in Riddiman's Magazine, Thursday, May 22. 1777. The piece is anonymous, but the writer seems to have been familiar with Bruce's Ode, and has borrowed the thought contained in this stanza in the following verse :—

Oh ! like thee, the bird I love,
I on every new remove
Fresh scenes of joy would know.
And where gath'ring storms appear
(Left the baneful hemisphere),
To kinder regions go.

TO A FOUNTAIN.

O FOUNTAIN of the wood ! whose glassy wave,
 Slow-swelling from the rock of years,
 Holds to heav'n a mirror blue,
 And bright as Anna's eye,

With whom I've sported on the margin green :
 My hand with leaves, with lilies white,
 Gaily deck'd her golden hair,
 Young Naiad of the vale.

Fount of my native wood ! thy murmurs greet
 My ear, like poet's heavenly strain ;
 Fancy pictures in a dream
 The golden days of youth.

O state of innocence ! O paradise !
 In Hope's gay garden, Fancy views
 Golden blossoms, golden fruits,
 And Eden ever green.

Where now, ye dear companions of my youth !
 Ye brothers of my bosom ! where
 Do ye tread the walks of life,
 Wide scatter'd o'er the world ?

Thus winged larks forsake their native nest,
The merry minstrels of the morn :
New to Heaven they mount away,
And meet again no more.

All things decay ;—the forest like the leaf ;
Great kingdoms fall ; the peopled globe,
Planet-struck, shall pass away ;
Heavens with their hosts expire :

But Hope's fair visions, and the beams of joy,
Shall cheer my bosom : I will sing
Nature's beauty, Nature's birth,
And heroes, on the lyre.

Ye Naiads ! blue-eyed sisters of the wood !
Who by old oak, or storied stream,
Nightly tread your mystic maze,
And charm the wand'ring moon,

Beheld by poet's eye ; inspire my dreams
With visions like the landscape fair
Of heaven's bliss, to dying saints
By guardian angels drawn.

Fount of the forest ! in thy poet's lays
Thy waves shall flow : this wreath of flow'rs,
Gather'd by Anna's hand,
I ask to bind my brow.

DANISH ODE.

THE great, the glorious deed is done !
The foe is fled ! the field is won !
Prepare the feast, the heroes call ;
Let joy, let triumph fill the hall !

The raven claps his sable wings ;
The bard his chosen timbrel brings ;
Six virgins round, a select choir,
Sing to the music of his lyre.

With mighty ale the goblet crown ;
With mighty ale your sorrows drown :
To-day, to mirth and joy we yield ;
To-morrow, face the bloody field.

From danger's front, at battle's eve,
Sweet comes the banquet to the brave :
Joy shines with genial beam on all,
The joy that dwells in Odin's hall.

The song bursts living from the lyre,
Like dreams that guardian ghosts inspire ;
When mimic shrieks the heroes hear,
And whirl the visionary spear.

Music's the med'cine of the mind ;
The cloud of care give to the wind.
Be ev'ry brow with garlands bound,
And let the cup of joy go round.

The cloud comes o'er the beam of light ;
We're guests that tarry but a night :
In the dark house, together pressed,
The princes and the people rest.

Send round the shell ;* the feast prolong,
And send away the night in song.
Be blest below, as those above
With Odin's and the friends they love.

* The ancient Danes and Scots drank in shells. "To rejoice in the shell," is a phrase used in Ossian for drinking freely.

DANISH ODE.

In deeds of arms, our fathers rise,
 Illustrious in their offspring's eyes :
 They fearless rushed through ocean's storms,
 And dar'd grim death in all its forms :
 Each youth assum'd the sword and shield,
 And grew a hero in the field.

Shall we degenerate from our race,
 Inglorious in the mountain chase ?
 Arm, arm in fallen Hubba's right ;
 Place your forefathers in your sight.
 To fame, to glory, fight your way,
 And teach the nations to obey.

Assume the oars, unbind the sails ;
 Send, Odin ! send propitious gales.
 At Loda's stone, we will adore
 Thy name with songs, upon the shore ;
 And, full of thee, undaunted dare
 The foe, and dart the bolts of war.

No feast of shells, no dance by night,
 Are glorious Odin's dear delight.

He, king of men, his armies led
Where heroes strove, where battles bled,
Now reigns above the morning star,
The God of thunder and of war.

Bless'd who in battle bravely fall !
They mount on wings to Odin's hall !
To music's sound, in cups of gold,
They drink new wine with chiefs of old ;
The song of bards records their name,
And future times shall speak their fame.

Hark ! Odin thunders ! haste on board ;
Illustrious Canute !* give the word.
On wings of wind we pass the seas,
To conquer realms, if Odin please ;
With Odin's spirit in our soul,
We'll gain the globe from pole to pole.

* Canute, surnamed the Great, King of Denmark, and upon the death of Edmund, proclaimed King of England, A. D. 1017.

TO PAOLI.

“ Paoli’s father was one of the patriots who effected their escape from Corsica when the French reduced it to obedience. He retired to Naples, and brought up this, his youngest son, in the Neapolitan service. The Corsicans heard of young Paoli’s abilities, and solicited him to come over to his native country and take the command. He found all things in confusion: he formed a democratical government, of which he was chosen chief, and took such measures both for repressing abuses and moulding the rising generation, that if France had not interfered, Corsica might, at this day, have been as free and flourishing and happy a commonwealth as any of the Grecian States in the days of their prosperity. A desperate struggle was made to the French usurpation. They offered to confirm Paoli in the supreme government, only on condition that he would hold it under their government. This he refused. They then set a price upon his head. During two campaigns he kept them at bay; they overpowered him at length; he was driven to the shore, and having escaped on shipboard, took refuge in England.—SOUTHEY’S *Life of Nelson*.

WHAT man, what hero shall the Muses sing.
On classic lyre, or Caledonian string,*

Whose name shall fill th’ immortal page;

* “ Quem virum, aut heroa, lyra vel acri
Tibia sumis celebrare, Clio?”

HORACE, *Carcin.* I. Ode xii.

Who, fired from heaven with energy divine,
 In sun-bright glory bids his actions shine
 First in the annals of the age?
 Ceas'd are the golden times of yore;
 The age of heroes is no more:
 Rare, in these latter times, arise to fame
 The poet's strain inspired, or hero's heavenly flame.

What star arising in the southern sky,
 New to the heavens, attracting Europe's eye,
 With beams unborrowed shines afar?
 Who comes with thousands marching in his rear,
 Shining in arms, shaking his bloody spear,
 Like the red comet, sign of war?
 Paoli! sent of heaven, to save
 A rising nation of the brave;
 Whose firm right hand his angels arm, to bear
 A shield before his host, and dart the bolts of war.

He comes! he comes! the saviour of the land!
 His drawn sword flames in his uplifted hand,
 Enthusiast in his country's cause;
 Whose firm resolve obeys a nation's call,
 To rise deliv'rer, or a martyr fall
 To Liberty, to dying laws.
 Ye sons of Freedom, sing his praise!
 Ye poets, bind his brows with bays!

“What man, what hero, on the tuneful lyre,
 Or sharp-ton'd flute, will Clio choose to raise
 Deathless to fame?”

FRANCIS, *Translation.*

Ye scepter'd shadows cast your honours down,
And bow before the head that never wore a crown !

Who to the hero can the palm refuse ?
Great Alexander still the world subdues,
 The heir of everlasting praise.
But when the hero's flame, the patriot's light ;
When virtues human and divine unite ;
 When olives twine among the bays ;
 And mutual, both Minerva's shine :
 A constellation so divine,
A wondering world behold, admire, and love,
And his best image here th' Almighty marks above.

As the lone shepherd hides him in the rocks,
When high heaven thunders ; as the tim'rous flocks
 From the descending torrent flee :
So flies a world of slaves at war's alarms,
When zeal on flame, and Liberty in arms,
 Leads on the fearless and the free,
 Resistless ; as the torrent flood,
 Horn'd like the moon, uproots the wood,
Sweeps flocks, and herds, and harvests from their base,*
And moves th' eternal hills from their appointed place.

* " Red, from the hills, innumerable streams
Tumultuous roar ; and, high above its banks,
The river left ; before whose rushing tide
Herds, flocks, and harvests, cottages and swains,
Roll mingled down."

Long hast thou laboured in the glorious strife.
 O land of Liberty ! profuse of life,
 And prodigal of priceless blood.
 Where heroes bought with blood the martyr's crown,
 A race arose, heirs of their high renown,
 Who dar'd their fate thro' fire and flood :
 And Gaffori the great arose,
 Whose words of power disarmed his foes ;
 And where the filial image smiled afar,
 The sire turned not aside the thunders of the war.*

O Liberty ! to man a guardian given,
 Thou best and brightest attribute of Heaven !

* " Gaffori was a hero worthy of old times. His eloquence was long remembered with admiration. A band of assassins was once advancing against him. He heard of their approach, went out to meet them, and with a serene dignity which overawed them, requested them to hear him. He then spoke to them so forcibly of the distresses of their country, her intolerable wrongs, and the hopes and views of their brethren in arms, that the very men who had been hired to murder him fell at his feet, implored his forgiveness, and joined his banners. While he was besieging the Genoese in Corte, a part of the garrison perceiving the nurse with his eldest son, then an infant in arms, straying at a little distance from the camp, suddenly sallied, and seized them. The use they made of their persons was in conformity to their usual execrable conduct. When Gaffori advanced to batter the walls, they held up the child directly over that part of the wall at which the guns were pointed. The Corsicans stopt ; but Gaffori stood at their head, and ordered them to continue the fire. Providentially, the child escaped, and lived to relate, with becoming feeling, a fact so honourable to his father."—SOUTHEY'S *Life of Nelson*.

From whom descending, thee we sing.
 By nature wild, or by the arts refined,
 We feel thy power essential to our mind ;
 Each son of Freedom is a king.
 Thy praise the happy world proclaim,
 And Britain worships at thy name,
 Thou guardian angel of Britannia's isle !
 And God and man rejoice in thy immortal smile !

Island of beauty, lift thy head on high !
 Sing a new song of triumph to the sky !

The day of thy deliv'rance springs—
 The day of vengeance to thy ancient foe !
 Thy sons shall lay the proud oppressor low,
 And break the head of tyrant kings.

Paoli ! mighty man of war !

All bright in arms, thy conquering car
 Ascend ; thy people from the foe redeem,
 Thou delegate of Heaven, and son of the Supreme !

Ruled by th' eternal laws, supreme o'er all,
 Kingdoms, like kings, successive rise and fall.

When Cæsar conquered half the earth,
 And spread his eagles in Britannia's sun ;
 Did Cæsar dream the savage huts he won
 Should give a far-famed kingdom birth ?

That here should Roman freedom light ;
 The western Muses wing their flight ;
 The Arts, the Graces find their fav'rite home ;
 Our armies awe the globe, and Britain rival Rome ?

Thus, if th' Almighty say, "Let Freedom be,"
 Thou, Corsica, thy golden age shalt see!

Rejoice with songs, rejoice with smiles!

Worlds yet unfound, and ages yet unborn,
 Shall hail a new Britannia in her morn,

The queen of arts, the queen of isles:

The Arts, the beauteous train of Peace,

Shall rise and rival Rome and Greece;

A Newton Nature's book unfold sublime;

A Milton sing to Heav'n, and charm the ear of Time!*

* Milton uses language very similar to this of himself.
 "Then, amidst the hymns and hallelujahs of saints, *some one*
may perhaps be heard offering at high strains, in new and
 lofty measures, *to sing and celebrate* thy divine mercies and
 marvellous judgments in this land throughout all ages."—
 MILTON'S *Reformation in England*.

THE COMPLAINT OF NATURE.

Few are thy days and full of woe,
 O man of woman born !
 Thy doom is written, "Dust thou art,
 And shalt to dust return."

Determin'd are the days that fly
 Successive o'er thy head ;
 The number'd hour is on the wing,
 That lays thee with the dead.

Alas ! the little day of life
 Is shorter than a span ;
 Yet black with thousand hidden ills
 To miserable man.

Gay is thy morning ; flattering hope
 Thy sprightly step attends ;
 But soon the tempest howls behind
 And the dark night descends.

Before its splendid hour the cloud
 Comes o'er the beam of light ;
 A pilgrim in a weary land,
 Man tarries but a night.

Behold ! sad emblem of thy state,
The flowers that paint the field ;
Or trees, that crown the mountain's brow,
And boughs and blossoms yield.

When chill the blast of winter blows,
Away the summer flies,
The flowers resign their sunny robes,
And all their beauty dies.

Nipt by the year, the forest fades ;
And, shaking to the wind,
The leaves toss to and fro and streak
The wilderness behind.

The winter past, reviving flowers
Anew shall paint the plain ;
The woods shall hear the voice of spring,
And flourish green again :

But man departs this earthly scene,
Ah ! never to return !
No second spring shall e'er revive
The ashes of the urn.

Th' inexorable doors of death
What hand can e'er unfold ?
Who from the cerements of the tomb
Can raise the human mold ?

The mighty flood that rolls along
Its torrents to the main,
The waters lost can ne'er recal
From that abyss again,

The days, the years, the ages, dark
Descending down to night,
Can never, never be redeem'd
Back to the gates of light.

So man departs the living scene,
To night's perpetual gloom ;
The voice of morning ne'er shall break
The slumbers of the tomb.

Where are our fathers ? Whither gone
The mighty men of old ?
The patriarchs, prophets, princes, kings,
In sacred books enroll'd ?—

“ Gone to the resting-place of man,
The everlasting home,
Where ages past have gone before,
Where future ages come.”

Thus Nature pour'd the wail of woe,
And urg'd her earnest cry ;
Her voice in agony extreme
Ascended to the sky.

The Almighty heard them from his throne,
In majesty he rose,
And from the heaven, that open'd wide,
His voice in mercy flows.

When mortal man resigns his breath
And falls a clod of clay,
The soul immortal wings its flight
To never-setting day.

Prepar'd of old for wicked men
The bed of torment lies,
The just shall enter into bliss
Immortal in the skies.

HEAVENLY WISDOM.

O HAPPY is the man who hears
Instruction's warning voice,
And who celestial Wisdom makes
His early only choice.

For she has treasures greater far
Than East or West unfold,
And her reward is more secure
Than is the gain of gold.

In her right hand she holds to view
A length of happy years;
And in her left the prize of fame
And honour bright appears.

She guides the young with innocence
In pleasure's path to tread,
A crown of glory she bestows
Upon the hoary head.

According as her labours rise,
So her rewards increase,
Her ways are ways of pleasantness,
And all her paths are peace.

THE MILLENNIUM.

BEHOLD! the mountain of the Lord,
 In latter days shall rise,
 On mountain tops above the hills
 And draw the wondering eyes.

To this the joyful nations round,
 All tribes and tongues shall flow ;
 Up to the hill of God, they'll say,
 And to his house we'll go.

The beam that shines from Zion hill
 Shall lighten every land ;
 The King who reigns in Salem's tow'r's
 Shall all the world command.

No strife shall vex Messiah's reign,
 Or mar the peaceful years ;
 To ploughshares men shall beat their swords,
 To pruning-hooks their spears.

No longer hosts encountering hosts
 Their millions slain deplore,
 They hang the trumpet in the hall
 And study war no more.

Come, then—O come from every land
To worship at his shrine,
And, walking in the light of God,
With holy beauties shine.

MISCELLANIES.

THE END OF THE WORLD

ALEXIS.*

A PASTORAL.

UPON a bank with cowslips covered o'er,
 Where Leven's waters break against the shore ;
 What time the village sires in circles talk,
 And youths and maidens take their evening walk ;
 Among the yellow broom Alexis lay,
 And viewed the beauties of the setting day.

Full well you might observe some inward smart,
 Some secret grief hung heavy at his heart.
 While round the field his sportive lambkins played,
 He raised his plaintive voice, and thus he said :

“ Begin, my pipe ! a softly mournful strain.
 The parting sun shines yellow on the plain ;
 The balmy west wind breathes along the ground ;
 Their evening sweets the flowers dispense around ;
 The flocks stray bleating o'er the mountain's brow,
 And from the plain the answering cattle low ;
 Sweet chant the feathered tribes on every tree,
 And all things feel the joys of love—but me.

* By Alexis the poet intends himself.

“ Begin, my pipe ! begin the mournful strain.
Eumelia meets my kindness with disdain.*
Oft have I tried her stubborn heart to move,
And in her icy bosom kindle love ;
But all in vain. E'er I my love declared,
With other youths her company I shared ;
But now she shuns me, hopeless and forlorn,
And pays my constant passion with her scorn.

“ Begin, my pipe ! the sadly-soothing strain,
And bring the days of innocence again.
Well I remember, in the sunny scene
We ran, we played together on the green.
Fair in our youth, and wanton in our play,
We toyed, we sported, the long summer's day.
For her I spoiled the gardens of the Spring,
And taught the goldfinch on her hand to sing.
We sat and sung beneath the lovers' tree ;
One was her look, and it was fixed on me.

“ Begin, my pipe ! a melancholy strain.
A holiday was kept on yonder plain ;
The feast was spread upon the flowery mead,
And skilful Thyrasis tuned his vocal reed ;
Each for the dance selects the nymph he loves,
And every nymph with smiles her swain approves :
The setting sun beheld their mirthful glee,
And left all happy in their love—but me.

* See ¶ 35, Life of Bruce.

" Begin, my pipe ! a softly mournful strain.
 O cruel nymph ! O most unhappy swain !
 To climb the steepy rock's tremendous height,
 And crop its herbage, is the goat's delight ;
 The flowery thyme delights the humming bees,
 And blooming wilds the bleating lambkins please ;
 Daphnis courts Chloe under every tree :
 Eumelia ! you alone have joys for me !

" Now cease, my pipe ! now cease the mournful strain,
 Lo, yonder comes Eumelia o'er the plain !
 Till she approach, I'll lurk behind the shade,
 Then try, with all my art, the stubborn maid :
 Though to her lover cruel and unkind,
 Yet time may change the purpose of her mind.—
 But vain these pleasing hopes ! already, see,
 She hath observ'd, and now she flies from me !

" Then cease, my pipe ! the unavailing strain.
 Apollo aids, the Nine inspire, in vain ;
 You, cruel maid ! refuse to lend an ear ;
 No more I sing, since you disdain to hear.
 This pipe Amyntas gave, on which he play'd :
 " Be thou its second lord," the dying shepherd said,*

* " Est mihi disparibus septem compacta cicutis
 Fistula, Damœtas dono mihi quam dedit olim
 Et dixit moriens ; Te nunc habet ista secundum."

VIRGIL, *Bucolicon* ii.

" Of seven smooth joints a mellow pipe I have,
 Which, with his dying breath, Damœtas" gave,

No more I play—now silent let it be :
Nor pipe, nor song, can e'er give joy to me."

AN EPIGRAM.

WITH Celia talking, Pray, says I,
Think you, you could a husband want,
Or would you rather choose to die
If Heav'n the blessing should not grant ?

Awhile the beauteous maid look'd down,
Then with a blush she thus began :
" Life is a precious thing I own,
But what is life—without a man."

And said, ' This, Corydon, I leave to thee,
For only thou deserv'st it after me.' "

DRYDEN'S Translation.

DAMON, MENALCAS, AND MELIBŒUS.

AN ECLOGUE.

DAMON.

MILD from the show'r, the morning's rosy light
 Unfolds the beauteous season to the sight:
 The landscape rises verdant on the view;
 The little hills uplift their heads in dew,
 The sunny stream rejoices in the vale;
 The woods with songs approaching summer hail:
 The boy comes forth among the flow'rs to play;
 His fair hair glitters in the yellow ray——
 Shepherds, begin the song! while, o'er the mead,
 Your flocks at will on dewy pastures feed.
 Behold fair Nature, and begin the song!
 The songs of Nature to the swain belong.
 Who equals Cona's bard in sylvan strains,*
 To him his harp an equal prize remains:
 His harp, which sounds on all its sacred strings
 The loves of hunters, and the wars of kings.

* Ossian frequently styles himself the "Voice of Cona," and his harp sounds little else than "The loves of hunters and the wars of kings." Cona, from which the Son of Fingal probably took his name, is a small stream running through Glencoe in Argyleshire. "The streams of Cona answer to the voice of Ossian."

MENALCAS.

Now fleecy clouds in clearer skies are seen ;
 The air is genial, and the earth is green :
 O'er hill and dale the flowers spontaneous spring ;
 And blackbirds singing, now invite to sing.

MELIBŒUS.

Now milky showers rejoice the springing grain ;
 New-opening pea-blooms purple all the plain ;
 The hedges blossom white on every hand ;
 Already harvest seems to clothe the land.

MENALCAS.

White o'er the hill my snowy sheep appear.
 Each with her lamb ; their shepherd's name they bear.
 I love to lead them where the daisies spring,
 And on the sunny hill to sit and sing.

MELIBŒUS.

My fields are green with clover and with corn ;
 My flocks the hills, and herds the vales adorn.
 I teach the stream, I teach the vocal shore,
 And woods, to echo—that " I want no more."

MENALCAS.

To me the bees their annual nectar yield ;
 Peace cheers my hut, and plenty clothes my field.
 I fear no loss : I give to Ocean's wind
 All care away ;—a monarch in my mind !

MELIBŒUS.

My mind is cheerful as the linnet's lays ;
Heaven daily hears a shepherd's simple praise,
What time I shear my flock, I send a fleece
To aged Mopsa, and her orphan niece.

MENALCAS.

Lavinia, come ! here primroses upspring ;
Here choirs of linnets, here yourself may sing ;
Here meadows worthy of thy foot appear :
O come, Lavinia ! let us wander here !

MELIBŒUS.

Rosella, come ! here flow'rs the heath adorn ;
Here ruddy roses open on the thorn ;
Here willows by the brook a shadow give :
O here, Rosella ! let us love to live !

MENALCAS.

Lavinia's fairer than the flow'rs of May,
Or autumn apples, ruddy in the ray :
For her my flow'rs are in a garland wove ;
And all my apples ripen for my love.

MELIBŒUS.

Prince of the wood, the oak majestic tow'rs ;*
The lily of the vale is queen of flow'rs :

* " Here stands the oak, the monarch of the wood."

Above the maids Rosella's charms prevail,
As oaks in woods, and lilies in the vale !*

MENALCAS.

Resound, ye rocks ! ye little hills rejoice !
Assenting woods, to Heav'n uplift your voice !
Let Spring and Summer enter hand in hand !
Lavinia comes ! the glory of our land !

MELIBŒUS.

Whene'er my love appears upon the plain,
To her the wond'ring shepherds tune the strain :
" Who comes in beauty like the vernal morn,
When yellow robes of light all heav'n and earth adorn."⁵³

MENALCAS.

Rosella's mine, by all the pow'rs above !
Each star in heav'n is witness to our love.
Among the lilies she abides all day ;
Herself as lovely, and as sweet as they.

MELIBŒUS.

By Tweed Lavinia feeds her fleecy care,
And in the sunshine combs her yellow hair.
Be thine the peace of Heav'n, unknown to kings !
And o'er thee angels spread their guardian wings !

* " As the lily among the thorns, so is my love among the daughters : as the apple-tree among the trees of the wood, so is my beloved among the sons."—*Canticles* iii. 23.

MENALCAS.

I follow'd Nature, and was fond of praise ;
Thrice noble Varo has approv'd my lays :
If he approves, superior to my peers,
I join th' immortal choir, and sing to other years.

MELIBŒUS.

My mistress is my muse : the banks of Tyne
Resound with Nature's music, and with mine.
Helen the fair, the beauty of our green,
To me adjudg'd the prize, when chosen queen.

DAMON.

Now cease your songs : the flocks to shelter fly,
And the high sun has gain'd the middle sky.
To both alike the poet's bays belong ;
Chiefs of the choir, and masters of the song.
Thus let your pipes contend, with rival strife,
To sing the praises of the pastoral life,
Sing Nature's scenes, with Nature's beauties fir'd ;
Where poets dream'd, where prophets lay inspir'd.
Ev'n Caledonian queens have trod the meads,
And scepter'd kings assum'd the shepherd's weeds :
Th' angelic choirs, that guard the throne of God,
Have sat with shepherds on the humble sod.
With us renew'd, the golden times remain,
And long-lost innocence is found again.

PASTORAL SONG.

To the Tune of "The Yellow-hair'd Laddie."

IN May when the gowans appear on the green,
 And flowers in the field and the forest are seen ;
 Where lilies bloom'd bonny, and hawthorns upsprung,
 The yellow-hair'd laddie oft whistled and sung.

But neither the shades, nor the sweets of the flow'rs,
 Nor the blackbirds that warbled on blossoming bow'rs,
 Could pleasure his eye, or his ear entertain ;
 For love was his pleasure, and love was his pain.

The shepherd thus sung ; while his flocks all around
 Drew nearer and nearer, and sigh'd to the sound :
 Around, as in chains, lay the beasts of the wood,
 With pity disarmed, with music subdued.

" Young Jessy is fair as the Spring's early flower,
 And Mary sings sweet as the bird in the bow'r :
 But Peggy is fairer and sweeter than they ;
 With looks like the morning, with smiles like the day.

" In the flower of her youth, in the bloom of eighteen ;
 Of virtue the goddess, of beauty the queen :
 One hour in her presence an era excels
 Amid courts, where ambition with misery dwells.

“ Fair to the shepherd the new-springing flow’rs,
When May and when morning lead on the gay hours :
But Peggy is brighter and fairer than they ;
She’s fair as the morning, and lovely as May.

“ Sweet to the shepherd the wild woodland sound,
When larks sing above him, and lambs bleat around :
But Peggy far sweeter can speak and can sing,
Than the notes of the warblers that welcome the Spring.

“ When in beauty she moves by the brook of the plain,
You would call her a Venus new sprung from the main :
When she sings, and the woods with their echoes reply,
You would think that an angel was warbling on high.

“ Ye pow’rs that preside over mortal estate !
Whose nod ruleth nature, whose pleasure is fate !
O grant me, O grant me, the heav’n of her charms !
May I live in her presence, and die in her arms !”

LOCHLEVEN NO MORE.*

To the Tune of "Lochaber no More."

FAREWELL to Lochleven and Gairny's fair stream,
How sweet, on its banks, of my Peggy to dream ;
But now I must go to a far distant shore,
And I'll may-be return to Lochleven no more.

No more in the Spring shall I walk with my dear,
Where gowans bloom bonny, and Gairny runs clear ;
Far hence must I wander, my pleasures are o'er,
Since I'll see my dear maid and Lochleven no more.

No more do I sing, since far from my delight,
But in sighs spend the day, and in tears the long night ;
By Devon's dull current stretch'd mourning I'll lie,
While the hills and the woods to my mourning reply-

But wherever I wander, by night or by day,
True love to my Peggy still with me shall stay ;
And ever and aye my loss I'll deplore,
Till the woodlands re-echo Lochleven no more.

* See ¶ 35, Life of Bruce.

Though from her far distant, to her I'll be true,
And still my fond heart keep her image in view :
O could I obtain her, my griefs were all o'er,
I would mourn the dear maid and Lochleven no more.

But if Fate has decreed that it ne'er shall be so,
Then grief shall attend me wherever I go ;
Till from life's stormy sea I reach death's silent shore,
Then I'll think upon her and Lochleven no more.

SIR JAMES THE ROSS.*

AN HISTORICAL BALLAD.

Of all the Scottish northern chiefs,
 Of high and mighty name,
 The bravest was Sir James the Ross,
 A knight of meikle fame.

* This very beautiful ballad was written upon the story of an old one of the same name, which is given, as follows, in "Gleanings of Scarce Old Ballads, Peterhead, 1825." It is here reprinted from Chambers's Scottish Ballads, 1829.

"O heard ye o' Sir James the Rose,
 The young heir o' Buleichan,
 For he has killed a gallant squire,
 Whase friends are out to tak him.

"Now he's gane to the house o' Mar,
 Whar nane might seek to find him;
 To see his dear he did repair,
 Weening she might befriend him.

"Whar are ye gaun, Sir James?" she said,
 'O wharawa are ye riding?'
 'I maun be bound to a foreign land,
 And now I'm under hiding.

"Whar sall I gae, whar sall I rin,
 Whar sall I rin to stay me?
 For I hae killed a gallant squire,
 And his friends seek to slay me."

His growth was like a youthful oak,
 That crowns the mountain's brow,
 And, waving o'er his shoulders broad,
 His locks of yellow flew.

Wide were his fields ; his herds were large ;
 And large his flocks of sheep ;
 And numerous were his goats and deer
 Upon the mountain-steep.

“ ‘ O gae ye doun to yon laigh house ;
 I sall pay there your lawin ;
 And as I am your leman true,
 I'll meet you at the dawing.’ ”

“ He turned him richt and round about,
 And rowed him in his brechan ;
 And laid him doun to tak a sleep,
 In the lawlands o' Buleichan.

“ He wasna weel gane out o' sicht,
 Nor was he past Milstrethen,
 When four and twenty beltit knights
 Cam riding ower the Lethan.

“ ‘ O hae ye seen Sir James the Rose,
 The young heir o' Buleichan ?
 For he has killed a gallant squire,
 And we are sent to tak him.’ ”

“ ‘ Yes, I hae seen Sir James,’ she said ;
 ‘ He passed by here on Monday ;
 Gin the steed be swift that he rides on,
 He's past the Heichts o' Lundie.’ ”

“ But as wi' speed they rode away,
 She loudly cried behind them,
 ‘ Gin ye'll gie me a worthy meed,
 I'll tell ye whar to find him.’ ”

The chieftain of the good Clan Ross,
 A firm and warlike band :
 Five hundred warriors drew the sword
 Beneath his high command.

In bloody fight thrice had he stood
 Against the English keen,
 Ere two and twenty opening springs
 The blooming youth had seen.

“ O tell, fair maid, and, on our band,
 Ye’se get his purse and brechan.’
 ‘ He’s in the bank abune the mill,
 In the lawlands o’ Buleichan.’

“ Then out and spak Sir John the Græme,
 Wha had the charge a-keeping,
 ‘ It’s ne’er be said, my stalwart ferres,
 We killed him when a-sleeping.’

“ They seized his braidsword and his targe,
 And closely him surrounded :
 ‘ O mercy, mercy, gentlemen !’
 He then fu’ loudly sounded.

“ Sic as ye gae, sic ye sall hae ;
 On nathing less we reckon.’
 ‘ Donald, my man, wait till I fa’,
 And ye sall get my brechan :
 Ye’ll get my purse, though fu’ o’ gowd,
 To tak me to Loch Lagan.’

“ Syne they took out his bleeding heart,
 And set it on a speir ;
 Then took it to the house o’ Mar,
 And showed it to his deir.

“ We couldna gie ye Sir James’s purse,
 Nor yet could we his brechan ;

The fair Matilda dear he lov'd,
 A maid of beauty rare ;
 Ev'n Margaret on the Scottish throne
 Was never half so fair.

Long had he woo'd ; long she refused
 With seeming scorn and pride ;
 Yet oft her eyes confess'd the love
 Her fearful words denied.

At length she bless'd his well-tryed love,
 Allow'd his tender claim :
 She vow'd to him her virgin heart,
 And own'd an equal flame.

Her father, Buchan's cruel lord,
 Their passion disapprov'd :
 He bade her wed Sir John the Græme,
 And leave the youth she lov'd.—

' But ye sall hae his bleeding heart,
 But and his bloody tartan.'

" ' Sir James the Rose, Oh, for thy sake,
 My heart is now a-breaking ;
 Cursed be the day I wrocht thy wae,
 Thou brave heir o' Buleichan.'

" Then up she rase, and furth she gaes ;
 And, in that hour o' tein,*
 She wandered to the dowie glen,
 And never mair was seen."

* Excessive Grief.

One night they met, as they were wont,
Deep in a shady wood ;
Where on the bank, beside the burn,
A blooming saugh-tree stood.

Conceal'd among the underwood
The crafty Donald lay,
The brother of Sir John the Græme,
To watch what they might say.

When thus the maid began : “ My sire
Our passion disapproves,
He bids me wed Sir John the Græme ;
So here must end our loves.

“ My father's will must be obey'd,
Nought boots me to withstand :
Some fairer maid, in beauty's bloom,
Shall bless thee with her hand.

“ Soon will Matilda be forgot
And from thy mind effac'd ;
But may that happiness be thine,
Which I can never taste !” —

“ What do I hear ? Is this thy vow ?”
(Sir James the Ross replied)

“ And will Matilda wed the Græme,
Though sworn to be my bride ?

“ His sword shall sooner pierce my heart,
Than 'reave me of thy charms”—
And clasp'd her to his throbbing breast,
Fast lock'd within her arms.

“ I spoke to try thy love,” she said ;
“ I'll ne'er wed man but thee :
The grave shall be my bridal bed,
If Græme my husband be.

“ Take then, dear youth ! this faithful kiss,
In witness of my troth ;
And every plague become my lot
That day I break my oath.”——

They parted thus—the sun was set :
Up hasty Donald flies ;
And, “ Turn thee, turn thee, beardless youth !”
He loud insulting cries.

Soon turn'd about the fearless chief,
And soon his sword he drew ;
For Donald's blade before his breast
Had pierc'd his tartans through.

“ This for my brother's slighted love ;
His wrongs sit on my arm.”——
Three paces back the youth retired,
And saved himself from harm.

Returning swift, his sword he rear'd
Fierce Donald's head above :
And through the brain and crashing bone
The furious weapon drove.

Life issued at the wound ; he fell
A lump of lifeless clay :
“ So fall my foes,” quoth valiant Ross,
And stately strode away.

Through the green wood in haste he pass'd
Unto Lord Buchan's hall :
Beneath Matilda's windows stood,
And thus on her did call :

“ Art thou asleep, Matilda fair !
Awake, my love ! awake :
Behold thy lover waits without,
A long farewell to take.

“ For I have slain fierce Donald Græme,
His blood is on my sword :
And far, far distant are my men,
Nor can defend their lord.

“ To Skye I will direct my flight,
Where my brave brothers bide ;
And raise the mighty of the Isles
To combat on my side.”—

“ O do not so,” the maid replied,
“ With me till morning stay ;
For dark and dreary is the night,
And dangerous is the way.

“ All night I’ll watch thee in the park ;
My faithful page I’ll send
In haste to raise the brave Clan Ross,
Their master to defend.”

He laid him down beneath a bush,
And wrapp’d him in his plaid ;
While, trembling for her lover’s fate,
At distance stood the maid.—

Swift ran the page o’er hill and dale,
Till, in a lowly glen,
He met the furious Sir John Græme,
With twenty of his men.

“ Where goest thou, little page ?” he said,
“ So late who did thee send ?” —
“ I go to raise the brave Clan Ross,
Their master to defend.

“ For he has slain fierce Donald Græme,
His blood is on his sword ;
And far, far distant are his men,
Nor can assist their lord.” —

“ And has he slain my brother dear ?”

The furious chief replies :

Dishonour blast my name, but he

By me ere morning dies.

“ Say, page ! where is Sir James the Ross ?

I will thee well reward.”—

“ He sleeps into Lord Buchan’s park ;

Matilda is his guard.”—

They spurr’d their steeds, and furious flew,

Like light’ning, o’er the lea :

They reached Lord Buchan’s lofty towers

By dawning of the day.

Matilda stood without the gate,

Upon a rising ground,

And watch’d each object in the dawn,

All ear to every sound.

“ Where sleeps the Ross ?” began the Græme,

“ Or has the felon fled ?

This hand shall lay the wretch on earth

By whom my brother bled.”

And now the valiant knight awoke,

The virgin shrieking heard :

Straight up he rose, and drew his sword,

When the fierce band appear’d.

“ Your sword last night my brother slew,
His blood yet dims its shine ;
And, ere the sun shall gild the morn,
Your blood shall reek on mine.”

“ Your words are brave,” the chief return’d ;
But deeds approve the man :
Set by your men, and hand to hand
We’ll try what valour can.”

With dauntless step he forward strode,
And dar’d him to the fight :
The Græme gave back, and fear’d his arm,
For well he knew his might.

Four of his men, the bravest four,
Sunk down beneath his sword ;
But still he scorn’d the poor revenge,
And sought their haughty lord.

Behind him basely came the Græme,
And pierc’d him in the side :
Out spouting came the purple stream,
And all his tartans dy’d.

But yet his hand not dropp’d the sword,
Nor sunk he to the ground,
Till through his enemy’s heart his steel
Had forc’d a mortal wound.

Græme, like a tree by winds o'erthrown,
Fell breathless on the clay ;
And down beside him sunk the Ross,
And faint and dying lay.

Matilda saw, and fast she ran :
“ O spare his life,” she cried ;
“ Lord Buchan's daughter begs his life,
Let her not be denied.”

Her well-known voice the hero heard ;
He rais'd his death-closed eyes ;
He fix'd them on the weeping maid,
And weakly thus replies :

“ In vain Matilda begs a life
By death's arrest denied ;
My race is run—adieu, my love !”
Then closed his eyes, and died.

The sword, yet warm, from his left side,
With frantic hand she drew :
“ I come, Sir James the Ross,” she cried,
“ I come to follow you.”

The hilt she lean'd against the ground,
And bared her snowy breast ;
Then fell upon her lover's face,
And sunk to endless rest.

THE EAGLE, CROW, AND SHEPHERD.*

A FABLE.

BENEATH the horror of a rock,
 A shepherd careless fed his flock.
 Souse from its top an eagle came,
 And seiz'd upon a sporting lamb ;
 Its tender sides its talons tear,
 And bear it bleating through the air.

This was discover'd by a crow,
 Who hopt upon the plain below.
 " Yon ram," says he, " becomes my prey ;"
 And, mounting, hastens to the fray ;
 Lights on his back—when lo, ill-luck !
 He in the fleece entangled stuck :
 He spreads his wings, but can't get free,
 Struggling in vain for liberty.

The shepherd soon the captive spies,
 And soon he seizes on the prize.
 His children, curious, crowd around,
 And ask what strange fowl he has found ?
 " My sons," said he, " warn'd by this wretch,
 Attempt no deed above your reach :
 An eagle not an hour ago,
 He's now content to be a crow."

* For the occasion of this Fable, see ¶ 25, Life of Bruce.

THE MUSIAD :

A MINOR EPIC POEM.

A Fragment. In the manner of Homer.

IN ancient times, ere traps were framed,
 Or cats in Britain's isle were known ;
 A mouse, for power and valour famed,
 Possessed in peace the regal throne.

A farmer's house he nightly stormed ;
 (In vain were bolts, in vain were keys) ;
 The milk's fair surface he deformed,
 And digged entrenchments in the cheese.

In vain the farmer watched by night,
 In vain he spread the poisoned bacon ;
 The mouse was wise, as well as wight,
 Nor could by force or fraud be taken.

His subjects followed where he led,
 And dealt destruction all around ;
 His people, shepherd-like, he fed :
 Such mice are rarely to be found !—

But evil fortune had decreed
 (The foe of mice as well as men)
The royal mouse at last should bleed ;
 Should fall—ne'er to arise again.

Upon a night, as authors say,
 A luckless scent our hero drew,
Upon forbidden ground to stray,
 And pass a narrow cranny thro'.

That night a feast the farmer made,
 And joy unbounded filled the house ;
The fragments in the pantry spread
 Afforded business to the mouse.

He ate his fill, and back again
 Returned : but access was denied.
He searched each corner ; but in vain :
 He found it close on every side.

Let none our hero's fears deride ;
 He roared (ten mice of modern days,
As mice are dwindled and decayed,
 So great a voice could scarcely raise.)

Roused at the voice, the farmer ran,
 And seized upon his hapless prey.
With entreaties the mouse began,
 And prayers, his anger to allay.

“ O spare my life !” he trembling cries :
 “ My subjects will a ransom give,
 “ Large as thy wishes can devise,
 “ Soon as it shall be heard I live.”

“ No, wretch !” the farmer says in wrath ;
 “ Thou diest : no ransom I’ll receive.” —
 “ My subjects will revenge my death,”
 He said : “ This dying charge I leave.”

The farmer lifts his armed hand,
 And on the mouse inflicts a wound.
 What mouse could such a blow withstand ?
 He fell and dying bit the ground.

Thus Lambris fell, who flourished long
 (I half forgot to tell his name) ;
 But his renown lives in the song,
 And future times shall speak his fame.—

A mouse, who walked about at large
 In safety, heard his mournful cries ;
 He heard him give his dying charge,
 And to the rest he frantic flies.

Thrice he essayed to speak, and thrice
 Tears, such as mice may shed, fell down :
 “ Revenge your monarch’s death,” he cries :
 His voice half-stifled with a groan.

But having re-assumed his senses
And reason, such as mice may have,
He told out all the circumstances,
With many a strain and broken heave.

Chilled with sad grief the assembly heard ;
Each dropped a tear, and bowed the head :
But symptoms soon of rage appeared,
And vengeance, for their royal dead.

Long sat they mute : at last uprose
The great Hypenor, blameless sage !
A hero born to many woes ;
His head was silvered o'er with age.

His bulk so large, his joints so strong,
Though worn with grief, and past his prime,
Few rats could equal him, 'tis sung,
As rats are in these dregs of time.

Two sons, in battle brave, he had,
Sprung from fair Lalage's embrace :
Short time they graced his nuptial bed,
By dogs destroyed in cruel chase.

Their timeless fate the mother wailed,
And pined with heart-corroding grief :
O'er every comfort it prevailed,
Till death advancing brought relief.

Now he's the last of all his race,
A prey to woe, he inly pined :
Grief pictured sat upon his face ;
Upon his breast his head reclined.

And, " O my fellow-mice !" he said,
" These eyes ne'er saw a day so dire,
" Save when my gallant children bled :
" O wretched sons ! O wretched sire !

" But now a general cause demands
" Our grief, and claims our tears alone ;
" Our monarch, slain by wicked hands :
" No issue left to fill the throne.

" Yet, tho' by hostile man much wronged,
" My counsel is, from arms forbear,
" That so your days may be prolonged ;
" For man is heaven's peculiar care."

ANACREONTIC:

TO A WASP.

*The following is a ludicrous imitation of the usual Anacreontics ;
the spirit of composing which was raging, a few years ago,
among all the sweet singers of Great Britain.*

Winged wanderer of the sky !
 Inhabitant of heaven high !
 Dreadful with thy dragon-tail,
 Hydra-head, and coat of mail !
 Why dost thou my peace molest ?
 Why dost thou disturb my rest ?——
 When in May the meads are seen,
 Sweet enamel ! white and green ;
 And the gardens, and the bowers,
 And the forests, and the flowers,
 Don their robes of curious dye ;
 Fine confusion to the eye !
 Did I——chase thee in thy flight ?
 Did I——put thee in a fright ?
 Did I——spoil thy treasure hid ?
 Never——never——never——did.
 Envious nothing ! pray beware ;
 Tempt mine anger if you dare.

Trust not in thy strength of wing ;
 Trust not in thy length of sting.
 Heaven nor earth shall thee defend ;
 I thy buzzing soon will end.
 Take my counsel while you may ;
 Devil take you if you stay.
 Wilt—thou—dare—my—face—to—wound ?
 Thus, I fell thee to the ground.
 Down amongst the dead men, now,
 Thou shalt forget thou ere wast thou.—
 Anacreontic bards beneath,
 Thus shall wail thee after death :

CHORUS OF ELYSIAN BARDS.

“ A wasp for a wonder,
 To paradise under
 Descends ! See, he wanders
 By Styx’s meanders !
 Behold how he glows
 Amidst Rhodope’s snows ! *
 He sweats, in a trice,
 In the regions of ice !
 Lo ! he cools, by God’s ire,
 Amidst brimstone and fire !
 He goes to our king,
 And he shews him his sting.

* “ Now with furies surrounded,
 Despairing, confounded ;
 He trembles, he glows,
 Amidst Rhodope’s snows.”

(Good Pluto loves satire,
 As women love attire) ;
 Our king sets him free,
 Like fam'd Euridice.—
 Thus a wasp could prevail
 O'er the Devil and hell,
 A conquest both hard and laborious !
 Tho' hell had fast bound him,
 And the Devil did confound him,
 Yet his sting and his wing were victorious."*

* " Thus song could prevail
 O'er death and o'er hell ;
 A conquest how hard and how glorious !
 Though Fate had fast bound her
 With Styx nine times round her,
 Yet Music and Love were victorious."

POPE'S *Ode to St Cecilia's Day*.

TO

JOHN MILLAR, M. D.*

ON RECOVERY FROM A DANGEROUS FIT OF ILLNESS.

(Written in the name of Mr David Pearson.)

A RUSTIC youth (he seeks no better name)
 Alike unknown to fortune and to fame,
 Acknowledging a debt he ne'er can pay,
 For thee, O Millar ! frames the artless lay :

* Dr Millar was a surgeon in Kirkaldy, twelve miles from Kinnesswood, whence he had come repeatedly to visit David Pearson, who had an ulcer in his leg, and whose poverty prevented him from giving this skilful physician his well-earned remuneration. Pearson applied to his friend Bruce to express his acknowledgments in verse, which he did. The above is only a small part of the letter of thanks taken down by Mr Birrel, according as Pearson was able to repeat it. The original was given by Pearson into Logan's own hand. It ended with the following lines :—

“ For tuneful Garth is gone, and mighty Mead,
 Pope's Arbuthnot lies slumbering with the dead ;
 And when at last (far distant be the day)
 Remorseless death shall mark thee for his prey,
 May thy free spirit mount the climes above,
 And join thy consort in the land of love.”

That yet he lives, that vital warmth remains,
And life's red tide bounds briskly thro' his veins ;
To thee he owes. His grateful heart believe,
And take his thanks sincere, 'tis all he has to give.
Let traders brave the flood in thirst of gain,
Kept with disquietude as got with pain ;
Let heroes, tempted by a sounding name,
Pursue bright honour in the fields of fame.
Can wealth or fame a moment's ease command
To him, who sinks beneath affliction's hand ?
Upon the wither'd limbs fresh beauty shed ;
Or cheer the dark, dark mansions of the dead ?

VERSES

ON THE DEATH OF THE REV. WM. M'EWEN.*

M'EWEN gone ! and shall the mournful Muse
 A tear unto his memory refuse ?
 Forbid it all ye powers that guard the just,
 Your care his actions, and his life your trust.
 The righteous perish ! is M'Ewen dead ?
 In him Religion, Virtue's friend, is fled.
 Modest in strife, bold in religion's cause,
 He sought true honour in his God's applause.
 What manly beauties in his works appear,
 Close without straining, and concise though clear.
 Though short his life, † not so his deathless fame,
 Succeeding ages shall revere his name.
 Hail, blest immortal, hail ! while we are tost,
 Thy happy soul is landed on the coast,
 That land of bliss, where on the peaceful shore
 Thou view'st with pleasure, all thy dangers o'er ;
 Laid in the silent grave, thy honour'd dust
 Expects the resurrection of the just.

* Author of "A Treatise on the Scripture Types, Figures, and Allegories," and "Essays on various subjects."

† Mr M'Ewen died suddenly at Leith, in the 28th year of his age, and 7th of his ministry.

PHILOCLES:*

AN ELEGY, ON THE DEATH OF MR WILLIAM DRYBURGH.

WAILING, I sit on Leven's sandy shore,
 And sadly tune the reed to sounds of woe ;
 Once more I call Melpomene ! once more
 Spontaneous teach the weeping verse to flow !

The weeping verse shall flow in friendship's name,
 Which friendship asks, and friendship fain would pay ;
 The weeping verse, which worth and genius claim.
 Begin then, Muse ! begin thy mournful lay.

Aided by thee, I'll twine a rustic wreath
 Of fairest flow'rs, to deck the grass-grown grave
 Of Philocles, cold in the bed of death,
 And mourn the gentle youth I could not save.

Where lordly Forth divides the fertile plains,
 With ample sweep, a sea from side to side,
 A rocky bound his raging course restrains,
 For ever lashed by the resounding tide.

* See ¶ 23, Life of Bruce.

There stands his tomb upon the sea-beat shore,*
 Afar discerned by the rough sailor's eye,
 Who, passing, weeps, and stops the sounding oar,
 And points where piety and virtue lie.

Like the gay palm on Rabbah's fair domains,
 Or cedar shadowing Carmel's flowery side ;
 Or, like the upright ash on Britain's plains,
 Which waves its stately arms in youthful pride :

So flourished Philocles : and as the hand
 Of ruthless woodman lays their honours low,†
 He fell in youth's fair bloom by fate's command.
 'Twas fate that struck, 'tis ours to mourn the blow.

* " His remains lie on the south side, and near the top of the west burying-ground in this parish. The spot is marked by a neat and rather handsome stone, which does not, however, seem to have been erected to his memory, as the inscription relating to his father occupies the front and principal part of the stone, while that relating to himself and a half brother, whose name was Lister, a minister of the Secession in Dundee, occupies the back, and was probably put on at a later period than the other."—*Letter from W. A. Pettigrew, Dysart, to the Editor.*

† " Ac veluti summis antiquam in montibus ornum,
 Cum ferro accisam crebrisque bipennibus, instant
 Eruere agricolæ certatim ; illa usque minatur,
 Et tremefacta comam, concusso vertice, nutat."

VIRGIL, *Æneid II.*

" Rent like a mountain ash, which dar'd the winds,
 And stood the sturdy strokes of lab'ring hinds.

Alas! we fondly thought that heaven designed
 His bright example mankind to improve:
 All they should be, was pictured in his mind;
 His thoughts were virtue, and his heart was love.

Calm as a summer's sun's unruffled face,
 He looked unmoved on life's precarious game,
 And smiled at mortals toiling in the chase
 Of empty phantoms—opulence and fame.

Steady he followed Virtue's onward path,
 Inflexible to Error's devious way;
 And firm at last, in hope and fixed faith,
 Thro' Death's dark vale he trod without dismay.

The gloomy vale he trod, relentless Death!
 Where waste and horrid desolation reign.
 The tyrant, humbled, there resigns his wrath;
 The wretch, elated, there forgets his pain:

There sleep the infant, and the hoary head;
 Together lie the oppressor and the oppressed;
 There dwells the captive, free among the dead;
 There Philocles, and there the weary rest.

About the roots the cruel axe resounds:
 The stumps are pierc'd with oft repeated wounds,
 The war is felt on high, the nodding crown
 Now threatens a fall, and throws the leafy honours down."
 DRYDEN'S *Translation*.

The curtains of the grave fast drawn around,
'Till the loud trumpet wakes the sleep of death,
With dreadful clangour through the world resound,
Shake the firm globe, and burst the vaults beneath.

Then Philocles shall rise, to glory rise,
And his Redeemer for himself shall see ;
With him in triumph mount the azure skies :
For where He is, his followers shall be.

Whence then these sighs ? and whence this falling tear ?
To sad remembrance of his merit just,
Still must I mourn, for he to me was dear,
And still is dear, though buried in the dust.

DAPHNIS:*

A MONODY.

TO THE MEMORY OF MR WILLIAM ARNOT, SON OF MR
DAVID ARNOT OF PORTMOAK, NEAR KINROSS.

No more of youthful joys, or love's fond dreams,
No more of morning fair, or ev'ning mild,
While Daphnis lies among the silent dead
Unsung; though long ago he trode the path,
The dreary road of death,
Which soon or late each human foot must tread.
He trode the dark uncomfortable wild
By faith's pure light, by hope's heaven-op'ning beams;
By love, whose image gladdens mortal eyes,
And keeps the golden key that opens all the skies.

Assist ye Muses!—and ye will assist:
For Daphnis, whom I sing, to you was dear:
Ye loved the boy, and on his youthful head
Your kindest influence shed.—
So may I match his lays, who to the lyre
Wailed his lost Lycidas by wood and rill:

* See ¶ 15, Life of Bruce.

So may the muse my grov'ling mind inspire
To sing a farewell to thy ashes blest ;
To bid fair peace be to thy gentle shade ;
To scatter flowerets, cropt by Fancy's hand,
In sad assemblage round thy tomb,
If watered by the Muse, to latest time to bloom.

Oft by the side of Leven's crystal lake,
Trembling beneath the closing lids of light,
With slow short-measured steps we took our walk :
Then he would talk
Of argument far, far above his years ;
Then he would reason high,
Till from the east the silver queen of night
Her journey up heaven's steep began to make,
And Silence reigned attentive in the sky.

O happy days !—for ever, ever gone !
When o'er the flowery green we ran, we played
With blooms bedropt by youthful Summer's hand :
Or, in the willow-shade,
We mimic castles built among the sand,
Soon by the sounding surge to be beat down,
Or sweeping winds ; when, by the sedgy marsh,
We heard the heron and the wild duck harsh,
And sweeter lark tune his melodious lay,
At highest noon of day.
Among the antic moss-grown stones we'd roam,
With ancient hieroglyphic figures graced ;
Winged hour-glasses, bones, and skulls, and spades,

And obsolete inscriptions by the hands
Of other ages. Ah ! I little thought
That we then play'd o'er his untimely tomb !*

Where were ye, Muses ! when the leaden hand
Of Death, remorseless, closed your Daphnis' eyes ?
For sure ye heard the weeping mother's cries ;—
But the dread power of Fate what can withstand ?
Young Daphnis smiled at Death ; the tyrant's darts
As stubble counted. What was his support ?
His conscience, and firm trust in Him whose ways
Are truth ; in Him who sways
His potent sceptre o'er the dark domains
Of death and hell ; who holds in straitened reins
Their banded legions ; “ Through the darksome vale
“ He'll guide my trembling steps with heavenly ray ;
“ I see the dawning of immortal day,”
He, smiling, said, and died !—

Hail, and farewell, blest youth ! Soon hast thou left
This evil world. Fair was thy thread of life :
But quickly by the envious Sisters shorn.
Thus have I seen a rose with rising morn
Unfold its glowing bloom, sweet to the smell,
And lovely to the eye ; when a keen wind

* The farm of Portmoak stands on the margin of Lochleven. The parish church formerly stood beside it, and a portion of the old burying-ground still remains in which young Arnot is interred.

Hath torn its blushing leaves, and laid it low,
 Stripped of its sweets.—Ah! so,
 So Daphnis fell! long ere his prime he fell!
 Nor left he on these plains his peer behind;*
 These plains, that mourn their loss, of him bereft,
 No more look gay, but desert and forlorn.

Now cease your lamentations, shepherds! cease:
 Though Daphnis died below, he lives above;
 A better life, and in a fairer clime,
 He lives.† No sorrow enters that blest place;
 But ceaseless songs of love and joy resound:
 And fragrance floats around,
 By fanning zephyrs from the spicy groves,
 And flowers immortal wafted; asphodel
 And amaranth, unfading, deck the ground,
 With fairer colours than, ere Adam fell,
 In Eden bloomed. There, haply he may hear
 This artless song. Ye powers of verse! improve,
 And make it worthy of your darling's ear,
 And make it equal to the shepherd's love.

* "For Lycidas is dead, dead ere his prime;
 Young Lycidas, and hath not left his peer."

MILTON'S *Lycidas*.

† "Weep no more, woful shepherds, weep no more,
 For Lycidas your sorrow is not dead,
 Sunk though he be beneath the wat'ry floor.

* * * * *

So Lycidas sunk low, but mounted high
 Through the dear might of Him that walk'd the waves."

Ibid.

Thus, in the shadow of a frowning rock,
Beneath a mountain's side, shaggy and hoar,
A homely swain, tending his little flock,
Rude, yet a lover of the Muse's lore,
Chanted his Doric strain till close of day ;
Then rose, and homeward slowly bent his way.*

* "He touch'd the tender stops of various quills
With eager thought, warbling his Doric lay ;
And now the sun had stretch'd out all the hills,
And now was dropt into the western bay :
At last he rose, and stretch'd his mantle blue,
To-morrow to fresh woods, and pastures new."

MILTON'S *Lycidas*.

ELEGY ;

WRITTEN IN SPRING.*

'Tis past : the iron North has spent his rage ;
 Stern Winter now resigns the lengthening day ;
 The stormy howlings of the winds assuage,
 And warm o'er ether western breezes play.

Of genial heat and cheerful light the source,
 From southern climes, beneath another sky,
 The sun, returning, wheels his golden course :
 Before his beams all noxious vapours fly.

Far to the north grim Winter draws his train,
 To his own clime, to Zembla's frozen shore ;
 Where, thron'd on ice, he holds eternal reign ;
 Where whirlwinds madden, and where tempests roar.

Loos'd from the bands of frost, the verdant ground
 Again puts on her robe of cheerful green,
 Again puts forth her flow'rs ; and all around,
 Smiling, the cheerful face of spring is seen.

Behold ! the trees new-deck their wither'd boughs ;
 Their ample leaves, the hospitable plane,

* See ¶ 47 Life of Bruce.

The taper elm, and lofty ash, disclose ;
 The blooming hawthorn variegates the scene,

The lily of the vale, of flow'rs the queen,
 Puts on the robe she neither sew'd nor spun :
 The birds on ground, or on the branches green,
 Hop to and fro, and glitter in the sun.

Soon as o'er eastern hills the morning peers,
 From her low nest the tufted lark upsprings ;
 And, cheerful singing, up the air she steers ;
 Still high she mounts, still loud and sweet she sings.

On the green furze, cloth'd o'er with golden blooms
 That fill the air with fragrance all around,
 The linnet sits, and tricks his glossy plumes,
 While o'er the wild his broken notes resound.

While the sun journeys down the western sky,
 Along the green sward, mark'd with Roman mound,
 Beneath the blithsome shepherd's watchful eye,
 The cheerful lambkins dance and frisk around.

Now is the time for those who wisdom love,
 Who love to walk in Virtue's flow'ry road,
 Along the lovely paths of spring to rove,
 And follow Nature up to Nature's God.*

* " Slave to no sect, who takes no private road,
 But looks thro' Nature up to Nature's God."

POPE'S *Essay on Man*.

Thus Zoroaster studied Nature's laws ;
 Thus Socrates, the wisest of mankind ;
 Thus heav'n-taught Plato trac'd th' Almighty cause,
 And left the wond'ring multitude behind.

Thus Ashley gather'd academic bays ;
 Thus gentle Thomson, as the seasons roll,
 Taught them to sing the great Creator's praise,
 And bear their poet's name from pole to pole.

Thus have I walk'd along the dewy lawn ;
 My frequent foot the blooming wild hath worn ;
 Before the lark I've sung the beauteous dawn,
 And gather'd health from all the gales of morn.

And, ev'n when Winter chill'd the aged year,
 I wander'd lonely o'er the hoary plain :
 Tho' frosty Boreas warn'd me to forbear,
 Boreas, with all his tempests, warn'd in vain.

Then, sleep my nights, and quiet bless'd my days ;
 I fear'd no loss, my Mind was all my store ;
 No anxious wishes e'er disturb'd my ease ;
 Heav'n gave content and health—I ask'd no more.

Now, Spring returns : but not to me returns*
 The vernal joy my better years have known ;

* " With the year
 Seasons return, but not to me returns
 Day, or the sweet approach of even or morn."

Dim in my breast life's dying taper burns,
And all the joys of life with health are flown.

Starting and shiv'ring in th' inconstant wind,
Meagre and pale, the ghost of what I was,
Beneath some blasted tree I lie reclin'd,
And count the silent moments as they pass :

The winged moments, whose unstaying speed
No art can stop, or in their course arrest ;
Whose flight shall shortly count me with the dead,
And lay me down in peace with them at rest.

Oft morning-dreams presage approaching fate ;
And morning-dreams, as poet's tell, are true.*
Led by pale ghosts, I enter Death's dark gate,
And bid the realms of light and life adieu.

I hear the helpless wail, the shriek of wo ;
I see the muddy wave, the dreary shore,
The sluggish streams that slowly creep below,
Which mortals visit, and return no more.

* " Atqui, ego cum Græcos facerem, natus mare citra,
Versiculos, vetuit me tali voce Quirinus
Post mediam noctem visus, cum somnia vera."

HORACE, *Sermonum I. Satira x.*

" Italian born, I once proposed to write
Some Grecian versicals, in deep of night,
When dreams, they say, are true."

FRANCIS, *Translation.*

Farewell, ye blooming fields ! ye cheerful plains !

Enough for me the church-yard's lonely mound,
Where melancholy with still silence reigns,
And the rank grass waves o'er the cheerless ground.

There let me wander at the shut of eve,

When sleep sits dewy on the labourer's eyes :
The world and all its busy follies leave,
And talk with Wisdom where my Daphnis lies.

There let me sleep forgotten in the clay,

When death shall shut these weary aching eyes ;
Rest in the hopes of an eternal day,
Till the long night is gone, and the last morn arise.

ECLOGUE.

IN THE MANNER OF OSSIAN.

O COME, my love ! from thy echoing hill ; thy locks
on the mountain wind !

The hill-top flames with setting light ; the vale is
bright with the beam of eve. Blithe on the village
green the maiden milks her cows. The boy shouts in
the wood, and wonders who talks from the trees. But
Echo talks from the trees, repeating his notes of joy.
Where art thou, O Morna ! thou fairest among women ?
I hear not the bleating of thy flock, nor thy voice in
the wind of the hill. Here is the field of our loves ;
now is the hour of thy promise. See, frequent from
the harvest-field the reapers eye the setting sun : but
thou appearest not on the plain.

Daughters of the bow ! saw ye my love, with her
little flock tripping before her ? Saw ye her, fair
moving over the heath, and waving her locks behind
like the yellow sun-beams of evening ?

Come from the hill of clouds, fair dweller of woody
Lumon !

I was a boy when I went to Lumon's lovely vale. Sporting among the willows of the brook, I saw the daughters of the plain. Fair were their faces of youth ; but mine eye was fixed on Morna. Red was her cheek ; and fair her hair. Her hand was white as the lily. Mild was the beam of her blue eye, and lovely as the last smile of the sun. Her eye met mine in silence. Sweet were our words together in secret. I little knew what meant the heavings of my bosom, and the wild wish of my heart. I often looked back upon Lumon's vale, and blest the fair dwelling of Morna. Her name dwelt ever on my lip. She came to my dream by night. Thou didst come in thy beauty, O maid ! lovely as the ghost of Malvina, when, clad with the robes of heaven, she came to the vale of the Moon, to visit the aged eyes of Ossian king of harps.

Come from the cloud of night, thou first of our maidens ! come——

The wind is down ; the sky is clear ; red is the cloud of evening. In circles the bat wheels over head ; the boy pursues his flight. The farmer hails the signs of heaven, the promise of halcyon days : Joy brightens in his eyes. O Morna, first of maidens ! thou art the joy of Salgar ! thou art his one desire ! I wait thy coming on the field. Mine eye is over all the plain. One echo spreads on every side. It is the shout of the shepherds folding their flocks. They call to their companions, each on his echoing hill. From the red cloud

rises the evening star.—But who comes yonder in light, like the Moon the queen of heaven? It is she! the star of stars! the lovely light of Lumon! Welcome, fair beam of beauty, for ever to shine in our vallies!

MORNA.

I come from the hill of clouds. Among the green rushes of Balva's bank, I follow the steps of my beloved. The foal in the meadow frolics round the mare: his bright mane dances on the mountain wind. The leverets play among the green ferns, fearless of the hunter's horn, and of the bounding greyhound. The last strain is up in the wood.—Did I hear the voice of my love? It was the gale that sports with the whirling leaf, and sighs in the reeds of the lake. Blessed be the voice of winds that brings my Salgar to mind. O Salgar! youth of the rolling eye! thou art the love of maidens! Thy face is a sun to thy friends: thy words are sweet as a song: thy steps are stately on thy hill: thou art comely in the brightness of youth; like the Moon, when she puts off her dun robe in the sky, and brightens the face of night. The clouds rejoice on either side: the traveller in the narrow path beholds her, round, in her beauty moving through the midst of heaven. Thou art fair, O youth of the rolling eye! thou wast the love of my youth.

SALGAR.

Fair wanderer of evening! pleasant be thy rest on our plains. I was gathering nuts in the wood for my

love, and the days of our youth returned to mind ; when we played together on the green, and flew over the field with feet of wind. I tamed the blackbird for my love, and taught it to sing in her hand. I climbed the ash in the cliff of the rock, and brought you the doves of the wood.

MORNA.

It is the voice of my beloved ! Let me behold him from the wood-covered vale, as he sings of the times of old, and complains to the voice of the rock. Pleasant were the days of our youth, like the songs of other years. Often have we sat on the old grey stone, and silent marked the stars, as one by one they stole into the sky. One was our wish by day, and one our dream by night.

SALGAR.

I found an apple-tree in the wood. I planted it in my garden. Thine eye beheld it all in flower. For every bloom we marked, I count an apple of gold. To-morrow I will pull the fruit for you. O come, my best beloved !

MORNA.

When the gossamer melts in the air, and the furze crackles in the beam of moon, O come to Cona's sunny side, and let thy flocks wander in our vallies. The heath is in flower. One tree rises in the midst. Sweet flows the river by its side of age. The wild bee hides his honey at its root. Our words will be sweet on the sunny hill. Till grey evening shadow the plain, I will sing to my well-beloved.

THE VANITY OF OUR DESIRE OF IMMORTALITY HERE :

A STORY, IN THE EASTERN MANNER.

CHILD of the years to come, attend to the words of Calem ;—Calem, who hath seen fourteen kings upon the throne of China, whose days are a thousand four hundred thirty and nine years.

Thou, O young man ! who rejoicest in thy vigour ; the days of my strength were as thine. My possessions were large, and fair as the gardens of Paradise. My cattle covered the vallies ; and my flocks were as the grass on Mount Tirza. Gold was brought me from the ocean, and jewels from the Valley of Serpents. Yet I was unhappy ; for I feared the sword of the angel of Death.

One day, as I was walking through the woods which grew around my palace, I heard the song of the birds : but I heard it without joy. On the contrary, their cheerfulness filled me with melancholy. I threw myself on a bank of flowers, and gave vent to my discontent in these words : “ The time of the singing of birds is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard.* These trees spread their verdant branches above me, and beneath the flowers bloom fair. The whole creation re-

* Cant. ii. 12.

joices in its existence. I alone am unhappy. Why am I unhappy? What do I want? Nothing. But what avail my riches, when in a little I must leave them? What is the life of man? His days are but a thousand years! As the waves of the ocean; such are the generations of man: The foremost is dashed on the shore, and another comes rolling on.* As the leaves of a tree; so are the children of men: They are scattered abroad by the wind, and other leaves lift their green heads. So, the generations before us are gone; this shall pass away, and another race arise. How, then, can I be glad, when in a few centuries I shall be no more? Thou Eternal, why hast thou cut off the life of man? and why are his days so few?"

I held my peace. Immediately the sky was black with the clouds of night. A tempest shook the trees of the forest: the thunder roared from the top of Tirza, and the red bolt shot through the darkness. Terror and amazement seized me; and the hand of him before whom the sun is extinguished, was upon me. "Calem," said he, (while my bones trembled), "I have heard thee accusing me. Thou desirest life; enjoy it. I have commanded Death, that he touch thee not."

* "Si, quia perpetuus nulli datur usus, et hæres
Hæredem alterius, velut unda supervenit undam,
Quid vici prosunt, aut horrea!"

HORACE, *Epis.* ii. 2.

"Since thus no mortal properly can have
A lasting tenure; and as wave o'er wave
Heir comes o'er heir, what pleasure can afford
Thy peopled manors and encreasing board."

Francis' Translation.

Again the clouds dispersed ; and the sun chased the shadows along the hills. The birds renewed their song, sweeter than ever before I had heard them. I cast mine eyes over my fields, while my heart exulted with joy. "These," said I, "are mine for ever!" But I knew not that sorrow waited for me.

As I was returning home, I met the beautiful Selima walking across the fields. The rose blushed in her cheeks ; and her eyes were as the stars of the morning. Never before had I looked with a partial eye on woman. I gazed ; I sighed ; I trembled. I led her to my house, and made her mistress of my riches.

As the young plants grow up around the cedar ; so my children grew up in my hall.

Now my happiness was complete. My children married ; and I saw my descendents in the third generation. I expected to see them overspread the kingdom, and that I should obtain the crown of China.

I had now lived a thousand years ; and the hand of time had withered my strength. My wife, my sons, and my daughters, died ; and I was a stranger among my people. I was a burden to them ; they hated me, and drove me from my house. Naked and miserable, I wandered ; my tottering legs scarce supported my body. I went to the dwellings of my friends ; but they were gone, and other masters chid me from their doors. I retired to the woods ; and, in a cave, lived with the beasts of the earth. Berries and roots were my meat ; and I drank of the stream of the rock. I was scorched with the summer's sun ; and shivered in the cold of winter. I was weary of life.

One day I wandered from the woods, to view the palace which was once mine. I saw it ; but it was low. Fire had consumed it : It lay as a rock cast down by an earthquake. Nettles sprung up in the court ; and from within the owl scream'd hideous. The fox looked out at the windows :* the rank grass of the wall waved around his head. I was filled with grief at the remembrance of what it, and what I had been. " Cursed be the day," I said, " in which I desired to live for ever. And why, O thou Supreme ! didst thou grant my request ? Had it not been for this, I had been at peace ; I had been asleep in the quiet grave ; I had not known the desolation of my inheritance ; I had been free from the weariness of life. I seek for death, but I find it not : my life is a curse unto me."

A shining cloud descended on the trees ; and Gabriel the angel stood before me. His voice was as the roaring stream, while thus he declared his message: " Thus saith the Highest, What shall I do unto thee, O Calem ? What dost thou now desire ? Thou askedst life, and I gave it thee, even to live for ever. Now thou art weary of living ; and again thou hast opened thy mouth against me."

* Ossian already quoted, see note p. 201.

THE END.

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