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commune is involved in the same decree. Barras is appointed commander of the national guard. Other deputies are despatched to rouse the inhabitants of Paris in defence of the Convention.

‘ Barras did not chuse to wait till all his promised succours should arrive. He would not lose the opportunity of the first onset with men who had always been suffered to begin the attack. As soon as he had formed four or five battalions, “ My friends,” he cried, “ the Convention is disposed to reward your alacrity in coming first. ’Tis you shall conduct the tyrant to it.” Applauses ensue—they march. *It is the duty of the historian to observe here, that the battalions thus distinguished for their diligence, were chiefly composed of artizans, men poor, who saw in Robespierre the author of massacres, for which they daily conceived increasing horror . . .* Barras arrives with his battalions; he had so distributed them as to command every issue from the seat of the commune. Night concealed their small number. The victory, than which none more essential to nations was ever obtained, was not even disputed. Of so many assassins, not one sought the honour of perishing in battle. The dastardly Robespierre had not even appeared in the midst of his revolutionary bands. They laid down their arms on the first summons . . . The Revolutionary Tribunal was condemned to pass sentence upon them: It was executed on the 28th at four in the afternoon. They were dragged, covered with blood and with mud, under the eyes of a people delirious with joy. Never did criminal experience more dreadful agony than Robespierre. But, heaven and mankind, were they avenged!’

The history of the Convention from this period till the 4th of October 1795, when it was dissolved, is given in a very imperfect manner, from the very reduced scale of abridgement on which it is conducted. In the extracts which we have now given, we have chiefly had it in-view to lay before our readers those parts of the story that are least accurately known in this country, and to direct their attention to those indications of temper and impartiality which appear to us to constitute its chief recommendation.

ART. XIV. *The Sabbath: A Poem.* Second Edition, corrected and enlarged. To which are now added, *Sabbath Walks.* 12mo. pp. 170. Edinburgh and London, 1805.

WE do not know whether to attribute the success of this little volume to the love of poetry or the love of religion; but from one or both of these laudable dispositions, which are known to prevail with extraordinary vigour in this part of the united kingdoms, the publisher has been enabled to dispose of one entire impression in the course of a very few weeks; and we are

called upon to give some account of a second edition, before many of our English readers are likely to have heard of the publication. This is a duty, however, which we discharge with considerable pleasure towards this anonymous author; for he has much more merit than many of those with whose names the printers are familiar.

The subject does not admit of much novelty; and accordingly, when the author sticks to it, he is far from being original. He indulges in digressions, however, with laudable liberality, and is not very scrupulous about the strength of the tie which connects them with the subject of his poem. Thus we are presented with a prison scene, and a dissertation on criminal law—a death and burial—a view of the slave trade—of emigrations from the Highlands—of the invasion of Switzerland, and the Jewish jubilee—together with a variety of other topics that have not any immediate relation either to each other, or to the institution of the Christian Sabbath. None of these subjects, our readers will perceive, are new; nor is there any thing very striking in this author's manner of treating them. He has borrowed, very freely indeed, from most of the English poets, though it should be observed in his favour, that he has rarely made use of their words, and generally imitated their good passages.

The poem is written, we think, partly upon the model of the *Grave of Blair*, from which the cast of the diction, and the cadence of the verse, appear to us to be evidently copied; and partly on that of the *'Task of Cowper*, in which the author was probably glad to find a precedent for his wanderings and digressions. It opens with the following passage.

'How still the morning of the hallow'd day!
Mute is the voice of rural labour, hush'd
The ploughboy's whistle, and the milkmaid's song.
The scythe lies glitt'ring in the dewy wreath
Of tedded grass, mingled with fading flowers,
That yester-morn bloom'd waving in the breeze:
Sounds the most faint attract the ear,—the hum
Of early bee, the trickling of the dew,
The distant bleating, midway up the hill.
Caltness seems thron'd on yon unmoving cloud,
To him who wanders o'er the upland leas,
The blackbird's note comes mellow from the dale;
And sweeter from the sky the gladsome lark
Warbles his heav'n-tun'd song; the lulling brook
Murmurs more gently down the deep-sunk glen;
While from yon lowly roof, whose curling smoke
O'ermounts the mist, is heard, at intervals,
The voice of psalms, the simple song of praise.'

p. 9. 10.

This

This passage has certainly some poetical merit; but our readers will probably be more struck with the resemblance it bears to the following beautiful sonnet, which is too close, we think, for both of them to be original.

Sonnet on Sabbath Morn.

‘ With silent awe I hail the sacred morn,
That scarcely wakes while all the fields are still!
A soothing calm on every breeze is borne;
A graver murmur gurgles from the rill;
And echo answers softer from the hill,
And softer sings the linnet from the thorn;
The sky-lark warbles in a tone less shrill,
Hail, light serene! hail, sacred Sabbath morn!
The rooks sail silent by in airy drove;
The sky a placid yellow lustre throws;
The gales that lately sigh’d along the grove
Have hush’d their downy wings in dead repose;
The hovering rack of clouds forgets to move:
So soft the day when the first morn arose!

Now, this sonnet, we have occasion to know, was written upwards of five years ago by Dr Leyden, now of Madras; and though we believe it was never before printed, many copies of it have been in circulation among the poetical *amateurs* of this literary metropolis. As there is no physical truth or propriety in considering Sunday as calmer than any other day in the week, the coincidence becomes the more suspicious; and if these suspicions be well founded, we beg leave to remind this author, that though it may sometimes be fair enough to borrow from a printed book without special acknowledgment, yet this is an indispensable ceremony where we are indebted to the MS. of another for any thing which is printed as our own.

The most original, and perhaps the most striking passage in the poem, is that which describes the unhoused congregations and Sabbath devotions of the persecuted Presbyterians and Cameronians in the days of Charles II.

‘ Long ere the dawn, by devious ways,
O’er hills, through woods, o’er dreary wastes, they sought
The upland moors, where rivers, there but brooks,
Dispart to different seas: Fast by such brooks,
A little glen is sometimes scoop’d, a plat
With green sward gay, and flowers that strangers seem
Amid the heathery wild, that all around
Fatigues the eye: in solitudes like these
Thy persecuted children, SCOTIA, foil’d
A tyrant’s and a bigot’s bloody laws:
There, leaning on his spear, (one of th’ array

That,

That, in the times of old, had scath'd the rose
 On England's banner, and had pow'less struck
 Th' infatuate monarch and his wav'ring host,
 Yet rang'd itself to aid his son dethron'd),
 The lyart veteran heard the word of God,
 By CAMERON thunder'd, or by RENWICK pour'd
 In gentle stream : then rose the song, the loud
 Acclaim of praise : the wheeling plover ceas'd
 Her plaint ; the solitary place was glad,
 And on the distant cairns, the watcher's ear
 Caught doubtfully at times the breeze-borne note.
 But years more gloomy followed ; and no more
 Th' assembled people dar'd, in face of day,
 To worship God, or even at the dead
 Of night, save when the wint'ry storm rav'd fierce,
 And thunder peals compell'd the men of blood
 To couch within their dens ; then dauntlessly
 The scatter'd few would meet, in some deep dell
 By rocks o'er-canopied, to hear the voice,
 Their faithful pastor's voice : He by the gleam
 Of sheeted lightning op'd the sacred book,
 And words of comfort spake : Over their souls
 His accents soothing came,—as to her young
 The heathfowl's plumes, when at the close of eve
 She gathers in mournful her brood dispers'd
 By murd'rous sport, and o'er the remnant spreads
 Fondly her wings ; close nestling 'neath her breast
 They cherish'd cow'r amid the purple blooms.' p. 18—20.

The following sketch is not without merit—

' Or turn thee to that house, with studded doors,
 And iron-visor'd windows,—even there
 The Sabbath sheds a beam of bliss, though faint ;
 The debtor's friends (for still he hath some friends)
 Have time to visit him ; the blossoming pea,
 That climbs the rust-worn bars, seems fresher ting'd ;
 And on the little turf, this day renew'd,
 The lark, his prison-mate, quivers the wing
 With more than wonted joy. See, through the bars,
 That pallid face retreating from the view,
 That glittering eye, following with hopeless look,
 The friends of former years, now passing by
 In peaceful fellowship to worship God.' p. 27.

The following similes we think are original, and possess considerable poetical beauty—

' She smil'd in death, and still her cold pale face
 Retains that smile ; as when a waveless lake,
 In which the wint'ry stars all bright appear,

Is sheeted by a nightly frost with ice,
 Still it reflects the face of heav'n unchang'd,
 Unruffled by the breeze or sweeping blast.' p. 22. 23.

• He never longs to read the sadd'ning tale
 Of endless wars; and seldom does he hear
 The tale of woe; and ere it reaches him,
 Rumour, so loud when new, has died away
 Into a whisper, on the memory borne
 Of casual traveller:—As on the deep,
 Far from the sight of land, when all around
 Is waveless calm, the sudden tremulous swell,
 That gently heaves the ship, tells, as it rolls,
 Of earthquakes dread, and cities overthrown.' p. 57. 58.

There are many other passages in the poem which bear marks of genius; but the greater part of it is written in a heavy and inelegant manner. The diction throughout is tainted with vulgarity, and there is no selection of words, images or sentiments, to conciliate the favour of the fastidious reader. The author has evidently some talents for poetical composition, and is never absolutely absurd, tedious or silly; but he has no delicacy of taste or imagination: he does not seem to feel the force of the sanction against poetical mediocrity, and his ear appears to have no perception of the finer harmony of versification. If he be a young man, we think there are considerable hopes of him; but if this be the production of maturer talents, we cannot in our conscience, exhort him to continue in the service of the muses.

This volume, however, at all events, has nothing but its poetical merit to stand upon. It contains a good deal of doctrine and argumentation, indeed, both in the text and in the notes; but nothing that is not either very trite or very shallow and extravagant. The author talks very big about the inhumanity and injustice of imprisonment for debt, and about the cruel monopolies by which the Highland shepherds are driven from their mountains. He dogmatizes in the same presumptuous style on the character of Bonaparte, and on the most adviseable plan for recruiting the British army, and seems as perfectly persuaded of his own infallibility upon all these subjects, as his readers, we apprehend, must be of his insufficiency. In a poem with such a title, it was certainly natural to expect some consistency in the ecclesiastical tenets of the author; but we have been completely baffled in our attempts to discover to what persuasion he belongs. He seems in many passages to be desperately enamoured of the old Covenanters, Cameronians and Independents, and gives some obscure hints of his intention to immortalize the names of their chief pastors in another poem; but by and by we find him talking with great enthusiasm of the funeral service of the church of England, and

of

of the lofty pealing of the organ, both of which would have been regarded as antichristian abominations, either by the old Covenanters or by the modern Presbyterians of Scotland. To the principal poem are subjoined four small ones, describing a Sabbath walk in each of the four seasons of the year. They contain merely some description of the rural scenery appropriate to those seasons, and seem to have no necessary connexion with the Sabbath. They are by no means without merit however, and give us rather a favourable impression of the author's talent for descriptive poetry : the versification is smoother than in the long poem, and the pictures are sketched with greater truth and conciseness. The whole publication indeed, though not entitled to stand in the first rank of poetical excellence, is respectably executed; and may be considered as very creditable, either to a beginner, or to one who does not look upon poetry as his primary vocation.

ART. XV. *An Account of the Astronomical Discoveries of KEPLER: including an Historical Review of the Systems which had successively prevailed before his time.* By Robert Small, D. D. Fellow of the Royal Society of Edinburgh. London: Printed for J. Mawman, 1804. One vol. 8vo.

THE history of astronomy may be distinguished into two grand periods. The first period commences with the origin of the science, and comprehends many centuries, terminating with the labours of Tycho Brahe. During this long interval, the theory of astronomy was guided by one prevailing principle, that of uniform circular motion; which, if it did not account for the celestial phenomena according to our notions of philosophy, served at least to connect in the imagination the various discordant motions observed in the heavens. This hypothesis, suggested at first by its simplicity, became in a manner a sacred and indisputable principle, and at last formed the greatest obstacle to improvement in the science.

The second period in the history of astronomy, commences with the discoveries of Kepler, and comprehends the present times. In the course of about two hundred years, the ancient theories have been destroyed; and of the labours of so many centuries, the modern astronomer retains almost nothing, excepting the facts and observations that enable him to compare his own deductions with the former state of the heavens. All the complicated phenomena anciently known, as well as many small irregularities, that nicer instruments and more accurate observation have