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JUDEX DAMNATUR CUM NOCENS ABSOLVITUR.  
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as the United States, where the rate of wages is high, it is probable that it would rather have a tendency to infuse a spirit of economy into the people, than, by checking the former rate of their increase, and diminishing the supply of labour, to raise its price. But in all old settled, and fully peopled countries, the wages of labour are seldom so high as to permit workmen to economize to any great extent. Nor is this to be at all desired. It is, whatever may be said to the contrary, the great and leading defect in the lower classes, that they submit to privations with too little reluctance. Nothing ought to be more earnestly deprecated, than any change in the sentiments of the great body of the people, which may have the effect of inducing them to lower their opinion as to what is necessary to their comfortable subsistence. Every such degradation is almost sure to be permanent; inasmuch as wages would always fall in a corresponding ratio.

But there are limits to this fall of wages, and there are consequently limits to the power of the labourers to pay taxes. And whenever these limits have been attained, and it is for the interest of society that they should be easily reached, or that wages should be kept as high and as steady as possible, every succeeding tax on wages, or on the necessaries required for the maintenance of the labourers, will fall entirely on the profits of their employers.

We have thus endeavoured, and we trust not altogether unsuccessfully, to lay before our readers an accurate exposition of the nature, as well of those general principles which Mr Ricardo has been the first to ascertain, as of those which he has adopted from late writers, and combined with the others into one harmonious, consistent, and beautiful system. It is to Mr Ricardo's own work, however, that such of our readers as wish to acquire a thorough knowledge of the subject, must have recourse; and although his conciseness of manner, coupled with the complexity and multiplicity of the details which every inquiry of this nature necessarily involves, may sometimes give the appearance of obscurity to his reasoning, it will be found, when rightly examined, to be no less logical and conclusive, than it is profound and important.

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ART. III. *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage. Canto the Fourth.* By LORD BYRON. 8vo. pp. 257. London, 1818.

**T**HERE are two writers, in modern literature, whose extraordinary power over the minds of men, it may be truly said,

has existed less in their works than in themselves,—Rousseau and Lord Byron. They have other points of resemblance. Both are distinguished by the most ardent and vivid delineations of intense conception, and by an intense sensibility of passion, rather than of affection. Both, too, by this double power, have held a dominion over the sympathy of their readers, far beyond the range of those ordinary feelings which are usually excited by the mere efforts of genius. The impression of this interest still accompanies the perusal of their writings: But there is another interest of more lasting, and far stronger power, which the one has possessed, and the other now possesses,—which lies in the continual embodying of the individual character,—it might almost be said, of the very person of the writer. When we speak or think of Rousseau or Byron, we are not conscious of speaking or thinking of an author. We have a vague but impassioned remembrance of men of surpassing genius, eloquence and power,—of prodigious capacity both of misery and happiness. We feel as if we had transiently met such beings in real life, or had known them in the dim and dark communion of a dream. Each of their works presents, in succession, a fresh idea of themselves; and, while the productions of other great men stand out from them, like something they have created, theirs, on the contrary, are images, pictures, busts of their living selves,—clothed, no doubt, at different times in different drapery, and prominent from a different background,—but uniformly impressed with the same form, and mien, and lineaments, and not to be mistaken for the representations of any other of the children of men.

But this view of the subject, though universally felt to be a true one, requires perhaps a little explanation. The personal character of which we have spoken, it should be understood, is not, altogether, that on which the seal of life has been set,—and to which, therefore, moral approval or condemnation is necessarily annexed, as to the language or conduct of actual existence. It is the character, so to speak, which is prior to conduct, and yet open to good and to ill,—the constitution of the being, in body and in soul. Each of those illustrious writers has, in this light, filled his works with expressions of his own character,—has unveiled to the world the secrets of his own being,—the mysteries of the framing of man. They have gone down into those depths which every man may sound for himself, though not for another; and they have made disclosures to the world of what they beheld and knew there—disclosures that have commanded and enforced a profound and universal sympathy, by proving that all mankind, the troubled and

the untroubled, the lofty and the low, the strongest and the frailest, are linked together by the bonds of a common but inscrutable nature,

Thus, each of these wayward and richly-gifted spirits has made himself the object of profound interest to the world,—and that too, during periods of society when ample food was everywhere spread abroad for the meditations and passions of men. What love and desire,—what longing and passionate expectation hung upon the voice of Rousseau, the idol of his day!—That spell is broken. We now can regard his works in themselves, in great measure free from all the delusions and illusions that, like the glories of a bright and vapoury atmosphere, were for ever rising up and encircling the image of their wonderful creator. Still is the impression of his works vivid and strong. The charm which cannot pass away is there,—life breathing in dead words,—the pulses of passion,—the thrilling of the frame,—the sweet pleasure stealing from senses touched with ecstasy into sounds which the tongue frames, and the lips utter with delight. All these still are there,—the fresh beauty, the undimmed lustre—the immortal bloom and verdure and fragrance of life. These, light and vision-like as they seem, endure as in marble. But that which made the spirits of men, from one end of Europe to the other, turn to the name of Rousseau,—that idolizing enthusiasm which we can now hardly conceive, was the illusion of one generation, and has not survived to another. And what was the spell of that illusion? Was it merely that bewitching strain of dreaming melancholy which lent to moral declamation the tenderness of romance? Or that fiery impress of burning sensibility which threw over abstract and subtle disquisitions all the colours of a lover's tale? These undoubtedly—but not these alone. It was that continual impersonation of himself in his writings, by which he was for ever kept brightly present before the eyes of men. There was in him a strange and unsated desire of depicting himself, throughout all the changes of his being. His wild temper only found ease in tracing out, in laying bare to the universal gaze, the very groundwork, the most secret paths, the darkest coverts of one of the most wayward and unimaginable minds ever framed by nature. From the moment that his first literary success had wedded him to the public, this was his history,—and such his strange, contradictory, divided life. Shy, and shunning the faces of men in his daily walks, yet searching and rending up the inmost recesses of his heart for the inspection of that race which he feared or hated. As a man, turning from the light, as from something unsupportably loathsome, and plunging into the thickest



shades. Yet, in that other existence which he held from imagination, living only in the presence of men,—in the full broad glare of the world's eye,—and eagerly, impetuously, passionately, unsparingly seizing on all his own most hidden thoughts—his loneliest moods—his most sacred feelings—which had been cherished for the seclusion in which they sprung—for their own still deep peace—and for their breathings of unbeheld communions,—seizing upon all these, and flinging them out into the open air, that they might feed the curiosity of that eager, idle, frivolous world from which he had fled in misanthropical disgust—that he might array an exhibition to their greedy gaze,—and that he, the morbid and melancholy lover of solitude, might act a conspicuous and applauded part on the crowded theatre of public fame.

It might, on a hasty consideration, seem to us, that such undisguised revelation of feelings and passions, which the becoming pride of human nature, jealous of its own dignity, would, in general, desire to hold in unviolated silence, could produce in the public mind only pity, sorrow, or repugnance. But, in the case of men of real genius, like Rousseau or Byron, it is otherwise. Each of us must have been aware in himself of a singular illusion, by which these disclosures, when read with that tender or high interest which attaches to poetry, seem to have something of the nature of private and confidential communications. They are not felt, while we read, as declarations published to the world,—but almost as secrets whispered to chosen ears. Who is there that feels, for a moment, that the voice which reaches the inmost recesses of his heart is speaking to the careless multitudes around him? Or, if we do so remember, the words seem to pass by others like air, and to find their way to the hearts for whom they were intended,—kindred and sympathizing spirits, who discern and own that secret language, of which the privacy is not violated, though spoken in hearing of the uninitiated,—because it is not understood. There is an unobserved beauty that smiles on us alone; and the more beautiful to us, because we feel as if chosen out from a crowd of lovers. Something analogous to this is felt in the grandest scenes of Nature and of Art. Let a hundred persons look from a hill-top over some transcendent landscape. Each will select from the wide-spread glory at his feet, for his more special love and delight, some different glimpse of sunshine,—or solemn grove,—or embowered spire,—or brown-mouldering ruin,—or castellated cloud. During their contemplation, the soul of each man is amidst its own creations, and in the heart of his own solitude;—nor is the depth of that solitude broken, though it

lies open to the sunshine, and before the eyes of unnumbered spectators. It is the same in great and impressive scenes of art,—for example, in a theatre. The tenderest tones of acted tragedy reach our hearts with a feeling as if that inmost soul which they disclose revealed itself to us alone. The audience of a theatre forms a sublime unity to the actor; but each person sees and feels with the same incommunicated intensity, as if all passed only before his own gifted sight. The publicity which is before our eyes is not acknowledged by our minds; and each heart feels itself to be the sole agitated witness of the pageant of misery.

But there are other reasons why we read with complacency writings which, by the most public declaration of most secret feelings, ought, it might seem, to shock and revolt our sympathy. A great poet may address the whole world in the language of intensest passion, concerning objects of which, rather than speak, face to face, with any one human being on earth, he would perish in his misery. For it is in solitude that he utters what is to be wafted by all the winds of heaven. There are, during his inspiration, present with him only the shadows of men. He is not daunted, or perplexed, or disturbed, or repelled by real living breathing features. He can updraw just as much as he chuses of the curtain that hangs between his own solitude and the world of life. He thus pours his soul out, partly to himself alone,—partly to the ideal abstractions, and impersonated images that float round him at his own conjuration,—and partly to human beings like himself, moving in the dark distance of the every-day world. He confesses himself, not before men, but before the Spirit of Humanity. And he thus fearlessly lays open his heart,—assured that nature never prompted unto genius that which will not triumphantly force its wide way into the human heart. We can thus easily imagine the poet whom, in real life, the countenances and voices of his fellow-men might silence into shame, or fastidiousness, or timidity, or aversion or disdain,—yet kindling in his solitude into irrepressible passion and enthusiasm towards human nature and all its transitory concerns,—anxiously moulding himself into the object of men's most engrossing and vehement love or aversion,—identifying his own existence with all their strongest and profoundest passions,—claiming kindred with them, not in their virtues alone, but in their darkest vices and most fatal errors;—yet, in the midst of all this, proudly guarding his own prevailing character, so that it shall not merge in the waves of a common nature, but stand 'in shape and gesture proudly eminent,' contemplated with still-increasing interest by the millions that,

in spite of themselves, feel and acknowledge its strange and unaccountable ascendancy.

The reasons then are obvious, why a writer of very vivid sensibilities may, by empassioned self-delineation, hold a wondrous power over the entranced minds of his readers. But this power is in his living hands; and, like the wand of the magician, it loses its virtue on its master's death. We feel chiefly the influence of such a writer, while he lives—our cotemporary—going with us a fellow-voyager on the stream of life, and from time to time flashing towards us the emanations of his spirit. Our love—our expectation follow the courses of his mind, and, if his life repel us not, the courses of his life. It was the strange madness of Rousseau to pour the blaze of his reputation over the scandals of his life. But this was later in his career; and his name for a long time in Europe was that of an hermitage,—a martyr of liberty and virtue,—a persecuted good man loving a race unworthy of him, and suffering alike from their injustice and from the excess of his own spirit. He made a character for himself;—and whatever he had made it, it might have been believed. It was an assumed ideal impersonation of a character of literary and philosophical romance. At last, indeed, he broke up his own spell. But if he could have left the delusion behind him, he could not have left the power;—for the power hangs round the living man: it does not rest upon the grave.

When death removes such a writer from our sight, the magical influence of which we have spoken gradually fades away; and a new generation, free from all personal feelings towards the idol of a former age, may perhaps be wearied with that perpetual self-reference which to them seems merely the querulousness or the folly of unhappy or diseased egoism. It is even probable, that they may perversely withhold a portion of just admiration and delight from him who was once the undisputed sovereign of the soul, and that they may show their surprise at the subjection of their predecessors beneath the tyrannical despotism of genius, by scorning themselves to bow before its power, or acknowledge its legitimacy. It is at least certain, that by the darkness of death such luminaries, if not eclipsed, are shorn of their beams. So much, even in their works of most general interest, derives its beauty and fascination from a vivid feeling, in the reader's mind, of its being a portraiture of one with whom he has formed a kind of strange, wild and disturbed friendship, that they who come after, and have never felt the sorcery of the living man, instead of being kindled up by such pictures into impassioned wonder and delight, may

gaze on them with no stronger emotion than curiosity, and even turn from them with indifference. Such must be more or less the fate of all works of genius, however splendid and powerful, of which the chief interest is not in universal truth, so much as in the intensity of individual feeling, and the impersonation of individual character.

It would, indeed, be in most violent contradiction to all we have formerly written of Lord Byron, were we to say that he stands in this predicament. Yet, there is a certain applicability of our observations even to him, as well as to Rousseau, with whom, perhaps too fancifully, we have now associated his nature and his name. Posterity may make fewer allowances for much in himself and his writings, than his contemporaries are willing to do; nor will they, with the same passionate and impetuous zeal, follow the wild voice that too often leads into a haunted wilderness of doubt and darkness. To them, as to us, there will always be something majestic in his misery—something sublime in his despair. But they will not, like us, be withheld from sterner and severer feelings, and from the more frequent visitings of moral condemnation, by that awful commiseration and sympathy which a great poet breathes at will into all hearts, from his living agonies,—nor, by that restless, and watchful, and longing anxiety, to see again and again the princely sufferer rising up with fresh confessions of a still more magnificent sorrow,—nor, by that succession of affecting appeals to the frailties and troubles of our own hearts, which now keeps him vividly, and brightly, in our remembrance, wherever his soul, tempest-like, may have driven him over earth and sea,—nor, above all, by the cheering and lofty hope now felt by them who wish to see genius the inseparable companion of virtue,—that he whose inspiration holds us always in wonder, and so often in delight, may come ere long to breathe a serener atmosphere of thought,—and, after all his wanderings, and all his woes,—with subsided passions, and invigorated intellect, calmly rest at last in the collected majesty of his power.

We are not now writing a formal critique on the genius of Byron, but rather expressing our notions of the relation in which he stands with the lovers of poetry. There is felt to be between him and the public mind, a stronger personal bond than ever linked its movements to any other living poet. And we think that this bond will in future be still more closely rivetted. During the composition of the first cantos of *Childe Harold*, he had but a confused idea of the character he wished to delineate,—nor did he perhaps very distinctly comprehend the scope and tendencies of his own genius. Two conceptions, distinct

from each other, seem therein to be often blended,—one, of ideal human beings, made up of certain troubled powers and passions,—and one, of himself ranging the world of Nature and Man in wonder and delight and agitation, in his capacity of a poet. These conceptions, which frequently jostled and interfered with each other, he has since more distinctly unfolded in separate poems. His troubled imaginary beings,—possessing much of himself, and far more not of himself, he has made into Giaours, Conrads, Laras and Alps,—and his conception of himself has been expanded into Childe Harold, as we now behold him on that splendid pilgrimage. It is not enough to say that the veil is at last thrown off. It is a nobler creature who is before us. The ill-sustained misanthropy, and disdain of the two first Cantos, more faintly glimmer throughout the third, and may be said to disappear wholly from the fourth, which reflects the high and disturbed visions of earthly glory, as a dark swollen tide images the splendours of the sky in portentous colouring, and broken magnificence.

We have admitted, that much of himself is depicted in all his heroes; but when we seem to see the poet shadowed out in all those states of disordered being which such heroes exhibit, we are far from believing that his own mind has gone through those states of disorder, in its own experience of life. We merely conceive of it as having felt within itself the capacity of such disorders, and therefore exhibiting itself before us in possibility. This is not general—it is rare with great poets. Neither Homer, nor Shakspeare, nor Milton, ever so show themselves in the characters which they portray. Their poetical personages have no reference to themselves; but are distinct, independent creatures of their minds, produced in the full freedom of intellectual power. In Byron, there does not seem this freedom of power. There is little appropriation of character to events. Character is first, and all in all. It is dictated—compelled by some force in his own mind necessitating him,—and the events obey. These poems, therefore, with all their beauty and vigour, are not, like Scott's poems, full and complete narrations of some one definite story, containing within itself a picture of human life. They are merely bold, confused, and turbulent exemplifications of certain sweeping energies and irresistible passions. They are fragments of a poet's dark dream of life. The very personages, vividly as they are pictured, are yet felt to be fictitious; and derive their chief power over us from their supposed mysterious connexion with the poet himself, and, it may be added, with each other. The law of his mind is, to embody his own peculiar feelings in the forms of other men. In all his

heroes we accordingly recognise—though with infinite modifications, the same great characteristics,—a high and audacious conception of the power of the mind,—an intense sensibility of passion,—an almost boundless capacity of tumultuous emotion,—a haunting admiration of the grandeur of disordered power,—and, above all, a soul-felt, blood-felt delight in beauty,—a beauty which, in his wild creations, is often scared away from the agitated surface of life by stormier passions, but which, like a bird of calm, is for ever returning, on its soft, silvery wings, before the black swell has finally subsided into sunshine and peace.

It seems to us, that this exquisite sense of beauty has of late become still more exquisite in the soul of Byron. *Parasina*, the most finished of all his poems, is full of it to overflowing;—it breathes from every page of the *Prisoners of Chillon*;—but it is in *Manfred* that it riots and revels among the streams and waterfalls, and groves, and mountains, and heavens. Irrelevant and ill-managed as many parts are of that grand drama, there is in the character of *Manfred* more of the self-might of Byron than in all his previous productions. He has therein brought, with wonderful power, metaphysical conceptions into forms,—and we know of no poem in which the aspect of external nature is throughout lighted up with an expression at once so beautiful, solemn and majestic. It is the poem, next to *Childe Harold*, which we should give to a foreigner to read, that he might know something of Byron. Shakspeare has given to those abstractions of human life and being, which are truth in the intellect, forms as full, clear, glowing as the idealized forms of visible nature. The very words of *Ariel* picture to us his beautiful being. In *Manfred*, we see glorious but immature manifestations of similar power. The poet there creates, with delight, thoughts and feelings and fancies into visible forms, that he may cling and cleave to them, and clasp them in his passion. The beautiful *Witch of the Alps* seems exhaled from the luminous spray of the *Cataract*,—as if the poet's eyes, unsated with the beauty of inanimate nature, gave spectral apparitions of loveliness to feed the pure passion of the poet's soul.

We speak of *Manfred* now, because it seems to us to hold a middle place between the *Tales of Byron*, and *Childe Harold*, as far as regards the Poet himself. But we likewise do so, that we may have an opportunity of saying a few words on the moral of this poem, and a few words on a subject that may scarcely seem to fall under the legitimate province of the critic, but which, in the case of this great writer, forms so profoundly-interesting a part of his poetical character—we mean, his scepticism.

The moral character of Byron's poetry has often been assailed, and we have ourselves admitted that some strong objections might be urged against it. But we think that his mind is now clearing up, like noon-day, after a stormy and disturbed morning;—and when the change which we anticipate has been fully brought about, the moral character of his poetry will be lofty and pure. Over this fine drama, a moral feeling hangs like a sombrous thunder cloud. No other guilt but that so darkly shadowed out could have furnished so dreadful an illustration of the hideous aberrations of human nature; however noble and majestic, when left a prey to its desires, its passions and its imagination. The beauty, at one time so innocently adored, is at last soiled, profaned and violated. Affection, love, guilt, horror, remorse and death come in terrible succession, yet all darkly linked together. We think of Astartè as young, beautiful, innocent—guilty—lost—murdered—buried—judged—pardoned; but still, in her permitted visit to earth, speaking in a voice of sorrow, and with a countenance yet pale with mortal trouble. We had but a glimpse of her in her beauty and innocence; but, at last, she rises up before us in all the mortal silence of a ghost, with fixed, glazed and passionless eyes, revealing death, judgement and eternity. The moral breathes and burns in every word,—in sadness, misery, insanity, desolation and death. The work is 'instinct with spirit,'—and in the agony and distraction, and all its dimly imagined causes, we behold, though broken up, confused and shattered, the elements of a purer existence.

On the other point, namely, the dark and sceptical spirit prevalent through the works of this poet, we shall not now utter all that we feel, but rather direct the notice of our readers to it as a singular phenomenon in the poetry of the age. Whoever has studied the spirit of Greek and Roman literature, must have been struck with the comparative disregard and indifference wherewith the thinking men of these exquisitely polished nations contemplated those subjects of darkness and mystery which afford, at some period or other of his life, so much disquiet—we had almost said so much agony to the mind of every reflecting modern. It is difficult to account for this in any very satisfactory, and we suspect altogether impossible to do so in any strictly logical manner. In reading the works of Plato and his interpreter Cicero, we find the germs of all the doubts and anxieties to which we have alluded, so far as these are connected with the workings of our reason. The singularity is, that those clouds of darkness, which hang over the intellect, do not appear, so far as we can perceive, to have thrown at any time any

very alarming shade upon the feelings or temper of the ancient sceptic. We should think a very great deal of this was owing to the brilliancy and activity of his southern fancy. The lighter spirits of antiquity, like the more mercurial of our moderns, sought refuge in mere *gaieté du cœur* and derision. The graver poets and philosophers—and poetry and philosophy were in those days seldom disunited—built up some airy and beautiful system of mysticism, each following his own devices, and suiting the erection to his own peculiarities of hope and inclination; and this being once accomplished, the mind appears to have felt quite satisfied with what it had done, and to have reposed amidst the splendours of its sand-built fantastic edifice, with as much security as if it had been grooved and rivetted into the rock of ages. The mere exercise of ingenuity in devising a system, furnished consolation to its creators or improvers. Lucretius is a striking example of all this; and it may be averred that, down to the time of Claudian, who lived in the 4th century of our era, in no classical writer of antiquity do there occur any traces of what moderns understand by the restlessness and discomfort of uncertainty as to the government of the world, and the future destinies of Man.

There are three only even among the great poets of modern times, who have chosen to depict, in their full shape and vigour, those agonies to which great and meditative intellects are, in the present progress of human history, exposed by the eternal recurrence of a deep and discontented scepticism. But there is only one who has dared to represent himself as the victim of these nameless and undefinable sufferings. Goëthe chose for his doubts and his darkness the terrible disguise of the mysterious Faustus. Schiller, with still greater boldness, planted the same anguish in the restless, haughty and heroic bosom of Wallenstein. But Byron has sought no external symbol in which to embody the inquietudes of his soul. He takes the world and all that it inherit for his arena and his spectators; and he displays himself before their gaze, wrestling unceasingly and ineffectually with the demon that torments him. At times there is something mournful and depressing in his scepticism; but oftener, it is of a high and solemn character, approaching to the very verge of a confiding faith. Whatever the poet may believe, we his readers always feel ourselves too much ennobled and elevated even by his melancholy, not to be confirmed in our own belief by the very doubts so majestically conceived and uttered. His scepticism, if it ever approaches to a creed, carries with it its refutation in its grandeur. Their is neither philoso-



phy nor religion in those bitter and savage taunts which have been cruelly thrown out, from many quarters, against those moods of mind which are involuntary, and will not pass away;—the shadows and spectres which still haunt his imagination, may once have disturbed our own;—through his gloom there are frequent flashes of illumination;—and the sublime sadness which, to him, is breathed from the mysteries of mortal existence, is always joined with a longing after immortality, and expressed in language that is itself divine.

But it is our duty now to give our readers an analysis of the concluding Canto of *Childe Harold*; and as it is, in our opinion, the finest of them all, our extracts shall be abundant. The poem which it brings to an end is perhaps the most original in the language, both in conception and execution. It is no more like Beattie's *Minstrel* than *Paradise Lost*—though the former production was in the Noble author's mind when first thinking of *Childe Harold*. A great poet, who gives himself up, free and unconfined, to the impulses of his genius, as Byron has done in the better part of this singular creation, shows to us a spirit as it is sent out from the hands of Nature, to range over the earth and the societies of men. Even Shakespeare himself submits to the shackles of history and society. But here Byron traverses the whole earth, borne along by the whirlwind of his own spirit. Wherever a forest frowns, or a temple glitters—there he is privileged to bend his flight. He may suddenly start up from his solitary dream by the secret fountain of the desert, and descend at once into the tumult of peopled, or the silence of desolated cities. Whatever lives now—has perished heretofore—or may exist hereafter—and that has within it a power to kindle passion, may become the material of his all-embracing song. There are no unities of time or place to fetter him,—and we fly with him from hilltop to hilltop, and from tower to tower, over all the solitude of nature, and all the magnificence of art. When the past pageants of history seem too dim and faded, he can turn to the splendid spectacles that have dignified our own days; and the images of kings and conquerors of old may give place to those yet living in sovereignty or exile. Indeed, much of the power which *Harold* holds over us is derived from this source. He lives in a sort of sympathy with the public mind—sometimes wholly distinct from it—sometimes acting in opposition to it—sometimes blending with it,—but, at all times,—in all his thoughts and actions having a reference to the public mind. His spirit need not go back into the past,—though it often does so,—to bring the objects of its love back to earth in more beautiful life. The ex-

istence he paints is—now. The objects he presents are marked out to him by men's present regards. It is his to speak of all those great political events which have been objects of such passionate sympathy to the nation. And when he does speak of them, he either gives us back our own feelings, raised into powerful poetry, or he endeavours to displace them from our breasts, and to substitute others of his own. In either case, it is a living speaker standing up before us, and ruling our minds. But chiefly he speaks our own feelings, exalted in thought, language, and passion. The whole substance and basis of his poem is, therefore, popular. All the scenes through which he has travelled, were, at the very moment, of strong interest to the public mind, and that interest still hangs over them. His travels were not, at first, the self-impelled act of a mind severing itself in lonely roaming from all participation with the society to which it belonged, but rather obeying the general motion of the mind of that society. The southern regions of Europe have been like a world opening upon us with fresh and novel beauty, and our souls have enjoyed themselves there, of late years, with a sort of romantic pleasure. This fanciful and romantic feeling was common to those who went to see those countries, and to those who remained at home to hear the narrations of the adventurers,—so that all the Italian, Grecian, Peninsular, Ionian and Ottoman feeling which pervades *Childe Harold*, singularly suited as it is to the genius of Byron, was not first brought upon the English mind by the power of that genius, but was there already in great force and activity.

There can be no limits set to the interest that attaches to a great poet thus going forth, like a spirit, from the heart of a powerful and impassioned people, to range among the objects and events to them most pregnant with passion,—who is, as it were, the representative of our most exalted intellect,—and who often seems to disclose within ourselves that splendour with which he invests our own ordinary conceptions. The consciousness that he is so considered by a great people, must give a kingly power and confidence to a poet. He feels himself entitled, and, as it were, elected to survey the phenomena of the times, and to report upon them in poetry. He is the speculator of the passing might and greatness of his own generation. But though he speaks to the public, at all times, he does not consider them as his judges. He looks upon them as sentient existences that are important to his poetical existence,—but, so that he command their feelings and passions, he cares not for their censure or their praise,—for his fame is more than mere literary fame; and he aims in poetry, like the fallen chief whose image is so often be-

fore him, at universal dominion, we had almost said, universal tyranny, over the minds of men.

Childe Harold is now in Italy; and his first strain rises from Venice, 'the City of the Sea.' There is, unquestionably, much vigour in his lament over her fallen greatness,—yet we confess, that, during the first thirty stanzas of this Canto, the poet's mind seems scarcely to have kindled into its perfect power; and that there is not much in them beyond the reach of a far inferior intellect. It seems to us, also, the only part of the poem in which he forces his own individual feelings into reluctant words, instead of giving vent to them, as is usual with him, in impassioned music. The following stanzas are fine.

Statues of glass—all shiver'd—the long file  
Of her dead Doges are declin'd to dust;  
But where they dwelt, the vast and sumptuous pile  
Bespeaks the pageant of their splendid trust;  
Their sceptre broken, and their sword in rust,  
Have yielded to the stranger: empty halls,  
Thin streets, and foreign aspects, such as must  
Too oft remind her who and what enthral,  
Have flung a desolate cloud o'er Venice' lovely walls.

When Athens' armies fell at Syracuse,  
And fetter'd thousands bore the yoke of war,  
Redemption rose up in the Attic Muse,  
Her voice their only ransom from afar:  
See! as they chant the tragic hymn, the car  
Of the o'er-master'd victor stops, the reins  
Fall from his hands—his idle scimitar  
Starts from its belt—he rends his captive's chains,  
And bids him thank the bard for freedom and his straits.

Thus, Venice, if no stronger claim were thine,  
Were all thy proud historic deeds forgot,  
Thy choral memory of the Bard divine,  
Thy love of Tasso, should have cut the knot  
Which ties thee to thy tyrants; and thy lot  
Is shameful to the nations,—most of all,  
Albion! to thee: the Ocean queen should not  
Abandon Ocean's children; in the fall  
Of Venice think of thine, despite thy watery wall.

I lov'd her from my boyhood—she to me  
Was as a fairy city of the heart,  
Rising like water-columns from the sea,  
Of joy the sojourn, and of wealth the mart;  
And Otway, Katcliff, Schiller, Shakspeare's art,  
Had stamp'd her image in me, and even so,  
Although I found her thus, we did not part,

Perchance even dearer in her day of woe,  
Than when she was a boast, a marvel, and a show. p. 10—12.

Escaping from Venice, he presents us with an exquisite moonlight landscape on the banks of the Brenta. Indeed, the whole of this Canto is rich in description of Nature. The love of Nature now appears as a distinct passion in his mind. It is a love that does not rest in beholding, nor is satisfied with describing what is before him. It has a power and being, blending itself with the poet's very life. Etherially and ideally beautiful and perfect, and therefore satisfying the longings of a poet's soul, Nature yet seems to woo with delight his very senses—to love him, frail, weak and lowly as he is, and to breathe upon him the blessedness and glory of her own deep, calm, and mighty existence. Though Byron had, with his real eyes, perhaps seen more of Nature than ever was before permitted to any great poet, yet he never before seemed to open his whole heart to her genial impulses. But in this he is changed; and, in the third and fourth Cantos of *Harold*, he will stand a comparison with the best descriptive poets, in this age of descriptive poetry.

The Moon is up, and yet it is not night—  
Sunset divides the sky with her—a sea  
Of glory streams along the Alpine height  
Of blue Friuli's mountains; Heaven is free  
From clouds, but of all colours seems to be  
Melted to one vast Iris of the West,  
Where the Day joins the past Eternity;  
While, on the other hand, meek Dian's crest  
Floats through the azure air—an island of the blest!

A single star is at her side, and reigns  
With her o'er half the lovely heaven; but still  
Yon sunny sea heaves brightly, and remains  
Roll'd o'er the peak of the far Rhætian hill,  
As Day and Night contending were, until  
Nature reclaim'd her order:—gently flows  
The deep-dyed Brenta, where their hues instil  
The odorous purple of a new-born rose,  
Which streams upon her stream, and glass'd within it glows,  
Fill'd with the face of heaven, which, from afar,  
Comes down upon the waters; all its hues,  
From the rich sunset to the rising star,  
Their magical variety diffuse:  
And now they change; a paler shadow strews  
Its mantle o'er the mountains; parting day  
Dies like the dolphin, whom each pang imbues  
With a new colour as it gasps away,  
The last still loveliest, till—'tis gone—and all is gray. p. 16, 17.

Passing through Arqua, the mountain-village where Petrarch 'went down the vale of years,' he beautifully muses over the remains of his simple mansion and his sepulchre, and then starts away from the peacefulness of the hallowed scene, into one of those terrible fits, which often suddenly appal us in his poetry.

There is a tomb in Arqua ;—rear'd in air,  
Pillar'd in their sarcophagus, repose  
The bones of Laura's lover : here repair  
Many familiar with his well-sung woes,  
The pilgrims of his genius. He arose  
To raise a language, and his land reclaim  
From the dull yoke of her barbaric foes :  
Watering the tree which bears his lady's name  
With his melodious tears, he gave himself to fame.

They keep his dust in Arqua, where he died ;  
The mountain village where his latter days  
Went down the vale of years ; and 'tis their pride—  
An honest pride—and let it be their praise,  
To offer to the passing stranger's gaze  
His mansion and his sepulchre ; both plain  
And venerably simple, such as raise  
A feeling more accordant with his strain  
Than if a pyramid form'd his monumental fane.

And the soft quiet hamlet where he dwelt  
Is one of that complexion which seems made  
For those who their mortality have felt,  
And sought a refuge from their hopes decay'd  
In the deep umbrage of a green hill's shade,  
Which shows a distant prospect far away  
Of busy cities, now in vain display'd,  
For they can lure no further ; and the ray  
Of a bright sun can make sufficient holiday,

Developing the mountains, leaves, and flowers,  
And shining in the brawling brook, where-by,  
Clear as its current, glide the sauntering hours  
With a calm languor, which, though to the eye  
Idlese it seem, hath its morality.  
If from society we learn to live,  
'Tis solitude should teach us how to die ;  
It hath no flatterers ; vanity can give  
No hollow aid ; alone—man with his God must strive :

Or, it may be, with Demons, who impair  
The strength of better thoughts, and seek their prey  
In melancholy bosoms, such as were  
Of moody texture from their earliest day,

And loved to dwell in darkness and dismay,  
 Deeming themselves predestin'd to a doom  
 Which is not of the pangs that pass away ;  
 Making the sun like blood, the earth a tomb,

The tomb a hell, and hell itself a murkier gloom. 18—20.

In Ferrara, he vents his pity over the fate of Tasso, and his wrath against the tyrant Alphonso; and after some eloquent eulogiums on Italy and her finest spirits, we find him at Florence. The delight with which the pilgrim contemplates the ancient Greek statues there, and afterwards at Rome, is such as might have been expected from any great poet, whose youthful mind had, like his, been imbued with those classical ideas and associations, which afford so many sources of pleasure, through every period of life. He has gazed upon these masterpieces of art with, as it seems to us, a more susceptible, and in spite of his disavowal, we had almost said with a more learned eye, than can be traced in the effusions of any poet who had previously expressed, in any formal manner, his admiration of their beauty. It may appear fanciful to say so;—but we think the genius of Byron is, more than that of any other modern poet, akin to that peculiar genius, which seems to have been diffused among all the poets and artists of ancient Greece; and in whose spirit, above all its other wonders, the great specimens of Sculpture seem to have been conceived and executed. Modern poets, in general, delight in a full assemblage of persons or ideas or images, and in a rich variety of effect, something not far dissimilar from which is found and admired in the productions of Painters. Byron alone seems to be satisfied with singleness, simplicity and unity. He shares, what some consider to be the disadvantages of Sculpture, but what we conceive to be, in no small degree, the sources of that power, which, unrivalled by any other productions, save only those of the poet, breathes from the inimitable monuments of that severest of the arts. His creations, whether of beauty or of strength, are all single creations. He requires no grouping to give effect to his favourites, or to tell his story. His heroines are solitary symbols of loveliness, which require no foil; his heroes stand alone as upon marble pedestals, displaying the naked power of passion, or the wrapped up and reposing energy of grief. The artist who would illustrate, as it is called, the works of any of our other poets, must borrow the mimic splendours of the pencil. He who would transfer into another vehicle the spirit of Byron, must pour the liquid metal, or hew the stubborn rock. What he loses in ease, he will gain in power. He might draw from Medora, Gulnare, Lara, or Manfred, subjects for relieves, worthy of enthusiasm almost as great as Harold

has himself displayed on the contemplation of the loveliest, and the sternest relics, of the inimitable genius of the Greeks.

But Arno wins us to the fair white walls,  
Where the Etrurian Athens claims and keeps  
A softer feeling for her fairy halls.  
Girt by her theatre of hills, she reaps  
Her corn, and wine, and oil, and Plenty leaps  
To laughing life, with her redundant horn.  
Along the banks where smiling Arno sweeps  
Was modern Luxury of Commerce born,  
And buried Learning rose, redeem'd to a new morn.

There, too, the Goddess loves in stone, and fills  
The air around with beauty ; we inhale  
The ambrosial aspect, which, beheld, instils  
Part of its immortality ; the veil  
Of heaven is half undrawn ; within the pale  
We stand, and in that form and face behold  
What Mind can make, when Nature's self would fail ;  
And to the fond idolaters of old  
Envy the innate flash which such a soul could mould :

We gaze and turn away, and know not where,  
Dazzled and drunk with beauty, till the heart  
Reels with its fulness ; there—for ever there—  
Chain'd to the chariot of triumphal Art,  
We stand as captives, and would not depart.  
Away !—there need no words, nor terms precise,  
The paltry jargon of the marble mart,  
Where Pedantry gulls Folly—we have eyes :  
Blood—pulse—and breast, confirm the Dardan Shepherd's prize.

Appear'dst thou not to Paris in this guise ?  
Or to more deeply blest Anchises ? or,  
In all thy perfect goddess-ship, when lies  
Before thee thy own vanquish'd Lord of War ?  
And gazing in thy face as toward a star,  
Laid on thy lap, his eyes to thee upturn,  
Feeding on thy sweet cheek ! while thy lips are  
With lava kisses melting while they burn,  
Showered on his eyelids, brow, and mouth, as from an urn !

Glowing, and circumfused in speechless love,  
Their full divinity inadequate  
That feeling to express, or to improve,  
The gods become as mortals, and man's fate  
Has moments like their brightest ; but the weight  
Of earth recoils upon us ;—let it go !

We can recal such visions, and create,  
From what has been, or might be, things which grow  
Into thy statue's form, and look like gods below. p. 27—29.

With the same divine glow of enthusiasm he speaks of the Greek statues at Rome.

Or, turning to the Vatican, go see  
 Laocoon's torture dignifying pain—  
 A father's love and mortal's agony  
 With an immortal's patience blending :—Vain  
 The struggle ; vain, against the coiling strain  
 And gripe, and deepening of the dragon's grasp,  
 The old man's clench ; the long envenomed chain  
 Rivets the living links,—the enormous asp  
 Enforces pang on pang, and stifles gasp on gasp.

Or view the Lord of the unerring bow,  
 The God of life, and poesy, and light—  
 The Sun in human limbs arrayed, and brow  
 All radiant from his triumph in the fight ;  
 The shaft hath just been shot—the arrow bright  
 With an immortal's vengeance ; in his eye  
 And nostril beautiful disdain, and might,  
 And majesty, flash their full lightnings by,  
 Developing in that one glance the Deity.

But in his delicate form—a dream of Love,  
 Shaped by some solitary nymph, whose breast  
 Long'd for a deathless lover from above,  
 And madden'd in that vision—are express'd  
 All that ideal beauty ever bless'd  
 The mind with in its most unearthly mood,  
 When each conception was a heavenly guest—  
 A ray of immortality—and stood,  
 Starlike, around, until they gathered to a god !  
 And if it be Prometheus stole from Heaven  
 The fire which we endure, it was repaid  
 By him to whom the energy was given  
 Which this poetic marble hath array'd  
 With an eternal glory—which, if made  
 By human hands, is not of human thought ;  
 And Time himself hath hallowed it, nor laid  
 One ringlet in the dust—nor hath it caught  
 A tinge of years, but breathes the flame with which 'twas  
 wrought. . . p. 83, 84.

While he yet remains at Florence, he meditates for a while on the ashes of the great men in Santa Croce ; and then, expressing a feigned scorn of those very works of art, which had awakened his inspiration, he carries us at once into the bloody field of Thrasimene.

— I roam

By Thrasimene's lake, in the desiles



Fatal to Roman rashness, more at home ;  
 For there the Carthaginian's warlike wiles  
 Come back before me, as his skill beguiles  
 The host between the mountains and the shore,  
 Where Courage falls in her despairing files,  
 And torrents, swoln to rivers with their gore,  
 Reek through the sultry plain, with legions scatter'd o'er.

Like to a forest fell'd by mountain winds ;  
 And such the storm of battle on this day,  
 And such the phrenzy, whose convulsion blinds  
 To all save carnage, that, beneath the fray,  
 An earthquake reel'd unheededly away !  
 None felt stern Nature rocking at his feet,  
 And yawning forth a grave for those who lay  
 Upon their bucklers for a winding sheet ;  
 Such is the absorbing hate when warring nations meet !

The Earth to them was as a rolling bark  
 Which bore them to Eternity ; they saw  
 The Ocean round, but had no time to mark  
 The motions of their vessel ; Nature's law,  
 In them suspended, reck'd not of the awe  
 Which reigns when mountains tremble, and the birds  
 Plunge in the clouds for refuge and withdraw  
 From their down-toppling nests ; and bellowing herds  
 Stumble o'er heaving plains, and man's dread hath no words.

p. 34, 35.

How delightful, after such a terrible picture, is the placid  
 and beautiful repose of what follows.

Far other scene is Thrasimene now ;  
 Her lake a sheet of silver, and her plain  
 Rent by no ravage save the gentle plough ;  
 Her aged trees rise thick as once the slain  
 Lay where their roots are ; but a brook hath ta'en—  
 A little rill of scanty stream and bed—  
 A name of blood from that day's sanguine rain ;  
 And Sanguinetto tells ye where the dead  
 Made the earth wet, and turn'd the unwilling waters red.

But thou, Clitumnus ! in thy sweetest wave  
 Of the most living crystal that was e'er  
 The haunt of river nymph, to gaze and lave  
 Her limbs where nothing hid them, thou dost rear  
 Thy grassy banks whereon the milk-white steer  
 Grazes ; the purest god of gentle waters !  
 And most serene of aspect, and most clear ;  
 Surely that stream was unprofaned by slaughters—  
 A mirror and a bath for Beauty's youngest daughters !

And on thy happy shore a temple still,  
 Of small and delicate proportion, keeps,  
 Upon a mild declivity of hill,  
 Its memory of thee; beneath it sweeps  
 Thy current's calmness; oft from out it leaps  
 The finny darter with the glittering scales,  
 Who dwells and revels in thy glassy deeps;  
 While, chance, some scatter'd water-lily sails  
 Down where the shallower wave still tells its bubbling tales.

p. 35, 36.

This gentle scene is again suddenly disturbed by a description of the Cataract of Velino, which absolutely thunders in our ears like a reality. The passion with which the whole description is imbued, is peculiarly characteristic of Byron.

The roar of waters!—from the headlong height  
 Velino cleaves the wave-worn precipice;  
 The fall of waters! rapid as the light  
 The flashing mass foams shaking the abyss;  
 The hell of waters! where they howl and hiss,  
 And boil in endless torture; while the sweat  
 Of their great agony, wrung out from this  
 Their Phlegethon, curls round the rocks of jet  
 That gird the gulf around, in pitiless horror set,  
 And mounts in spray the skies, and thence again  
 Returns in an unceasing shower, which round,  
 With its unemptied cloud of gentle rain,  
 Is an eternal April to the ground,  
 Making it all one emerald:—how profound  
 The gulf! and how the giant element  
 From rock to rock leaps with delirious bound,  
 Crushing the cliffs, which, downward worn and rent  
 With his fierce footsteps, yield in chasms a fearful vent  
 To the broad column which rolls on, and shows  
 More like the fountain of an infant sea  
 Torn from the womb of mountains by the throes  
 Of a new world, than only thus to be  
 Parent of rivers, which flow gushingly,  
 With many windings, through the vale:—Look back!  
 Lo! where it comes like an eternity,  
 As if to sweep down all things in its track,  
 Charming the eye with dread,—a matchless cataract,  
 Horribly beautiful! but on the verge,  
 From side to side, beneath the glittering morn,  
 An Iris sits, amidst the infernal surge,  
 Like Hope upon a death-bed, and, unworn  
 Its steady dyes, while all around is torn  
 By the distracted waters, bears serene

Its brilliant hues with all their beams unshorn :

Resembling, 'mid the torture of the scene,

Love watching Madness with unalterable mien. p. 37-39.

There immediately follows this a passage, which produces a powerful effect on our imagination, as it would seem almost entirely by the mere enumeration of the names of famous mountains. We feel as if we, as well as the poet, had been eyewitnesses of all the sublimity.

Once more upon the woody Apennine,

The infant Alps, which—had I not before

Gazed on their mightier parents, where the pine

Sits on more shaggy summits, and where roar

The thundering lawine—might be worshipp'd more ;

But I have seen the soaring Jungfrau rear

Her never-trodden snow, and seen the hoar

Glaciers of bleak Mont-Blanc both far and near,

And in Chimari heard the thunder-hills of fear,

Th' Acroceraunian mountains of old name ;

And on Parnassus seen the eagles fly

Like spirits of the spot, as 'twere for fame,

For still they soared unutterably high :

I've look'd on Ida with a Trojan's eye ;

Athos, Olympus, Ætna, Atlas, made

These hills seem things of lesser dignity,' &c. p. 39, 40.

But the Pilgrim now approaches—and enters that place whither all his visions were tending, and which surpasses in grandeur all that even his eyes had before witnessed on earth. He has not disappointed us in his poetical commemoration of the Eternal City. Souls the most untouched with that inspiration of which he has drunk so deeply, cannot gaze upon that most affecting of all earthly scenes, without being wrapt for a season into something of that high ecstasy which is the privileged element of genius,—without catching a Roman grandeur in the midst of the crumbled palaces of Rome. The Seven Hills themselves have mouldered into one mass of ruin. The concussions of war, time, and barbarism, have levelled the old land-marks with which we are familiar in the pages of Livy, Tacitus and Virgil,—they have bereaved not only the Palatine of its splendour, but the Tarpeian of its height. We descend, not ascend, to the Pantheon ; and in a few damp, dreary, and subterranean dungeons, we survey the only relics of the gigantic palace of the Cæsars, ' the Domus Aurea, ' the wonder of the world. In the midst of this chaos and this desert—throned on the pathless labyrinth of her ruin, sits the Genius of the place—a personification which is not dreamlike or imaginary, but which rivets and rules the soul of the most prosaic observer,—the ma-

jestic image or memory of the fallen city. Here indeed the sombre spirit of Harold must have found a fitting resting-place. Here, indeed, there was no occasion for the exercise of that fearful power, with which it has been his delight to throw a veil over gladness, and make us despise ourselves for being happy even under the fairest influences of the bloom of Nature. The darkest soul might here revel in images of grief, without fearing any want of sympathy for its terrible creations. But Byron has wisely forborne to carry the impression further than was necessary; or rather, with the genuine submission and reverence natural to a truly great mind, he disdains to be other than passive on such an arena; and taking, as it were, the troubling fingers of his Pilgrim from the lyre, he sets up the trembling strings to answer, only as it may be spoken to them by the mournful breezes of the surrounding desolation.

Oh Rome! my country! city of the soul!  
 The orphans of the heart must turn to thee,  
 Lone mother of dead empires! and controul  
 In their shut breasts their petty misery.  
 What are our woes and sufferance? Come and see  
 The cypress, hear the owl, and plod your way  
 O'er steps of broken thrones and temples, Ye!  
 Whose agonies are evils of a day—

A world is at our feet as fragile as our clay.

The Niobe of nations! there she stands,  
 Childless and crownless, in her voiceless woe;  
 An empty urn within her withered hands,  
 Whose holy dust was scatter'd long ago;  
 The Scipios' tomb contains no ashes now;  
 The very sepulchres lie tenantless  
 Of their heroic dwellers: dost thou flow,  
 Old Tiber! through a marble wilderness?

Rise, with thy yellow waves, and mantle her distress!

The Goth, the Christian Time, War, Flood, and Fire,  
 Have dealt upon the seven-hill'd city's pride;  
 She saw her glories star by star expire,  
 And up the steep barbarian monarchs ride,  
 Where the car clim'b the capitol: far and wide  
 Temple and tower went down, nor left a site:—  
 Chaos of ruins! who shall trace the void,  
 O'er the dim fragments cast a lunar light,

And say, "here was, or is," where all is doubly night?

The double night of ages, and of her,  
 Night's daughter, Ignorance, hath wrapt and wrap  
 All round us; we but feel our way to err:  
 The ocean hath his chart, the stars their map,

And Knowledge spreads them on her ample lap ;  
 But Rome is as the desert, where we steer  
 Stumbling o'er recollections ; now we clap  
 Our hands, and cry, " Eureka ! " it is clear—  
 When but some false mirage of ruin rises near.

Alas ! the lofty city ! and alas !  
 The trebly hundred triumphs ! and the day  
 When Brutus made the dagger's edge surpass  
 The conqueror's sword in bearing fame away !  
 Alas, for Tully's voice, and Virgil's lay,  
 And Livy's pictur'd page !—but these shall be  
 Her resurrection ; all beside—decay.

Alas, for Earth, for never shall we see  
 That brightness in her eye she bore when Rome was free !

Oh thou, whose chariot roll'd on Fortune's wheel,  
 Triumphant Sylla ! Thou, who didst subdue  
 Thy country's foes ere thou would pause to feel  
 The wrath of thy own wrongs, or reap the due  
 Of hoarded vengeance till thine eagles flew  
 O'er prostrate Asia ;—thou, who with thy frown  
 Annihilated senates—Roman, too,

With all thy vices, for thou didst lay down  
 With an atoning smile a more than earthly crown—

The dictatorial wreath,—couldst thou divine  
 To what would one day dwindle that which made  
 Thee more than mortal ? and that so supine  
 By aught than Romans Rome should thus be laid ?  
 She who was named Eternal, and array'd  
 Her warriors but to conquer—she who veil'd  
 Earth with her haughty shadow, and display'd,  
 Until the o'er-canopied horizon fail'd,

Her rushing wings—Oh ! she who was Almighty hail'd !

p. 42-45.

Here his mind reverts, in its passion, to the great ruling spirits of his own country or age, in whom he discerns a dark and shadowy resemblance to the Syllas and Cæsars of Rome ; and, passing from Cromwell to Napoleon, he glances at the French Revolution, and fills several confused and turbid stanzas with political retrospects and prophecies. From these lucubrations, however, we confess we are not unwillingly brought back to the scene before him, by a very beautiful passage, which ends, like so many others, with the powerful expression of his own gloom and misanthropy. This strain, however, is soon discontinued. Among the ruins of Rome there is no stedfast resting-place for the indulgence of individual sorrow ; and the pilgrim, rising into a loftier mood, thus blends his spirit with the glorious decay.

Then let the winds howl on! their harmony  
 Shall henceforth be my music, and the night  
 The sound shall temper with the owl's cry,  
 As I now hear them, in the fading light  
 Dim o'er the bird of darkness' native site,  
 Answering each other on the Palatine,  
 With their large eyes, all glistening grey and bright,  
 And sailing pimons.—Upon such a shrine  
 What are our petty griefs?—let me not number mine.

Cypress and ivy, weed and wallflower grown  
 Matted and mass'd together, hillocks heap'd  
 On what were chambers, arch crush'd, column strown  
 In fragments, chok'd up vaults, and frescos steep'd  
 In subterranean damp, where the owl peep'd,  
 Deeming it midnight:—Temples, baths, or halls?  
 Pronounce who can; for all that Learning reap'd  
 From her research hath been, that these are walls—  
 Behold the Imperial Mount! 'tis thus the mighty falls.

There is the moral of all human tales;  
 'Tis but the same rehearsal of the past,  
 First Freedom, and then Glory—when that fails,  
 Wealth, vice, corruption,—barbarism at last.  
 And History, with all her volumes vast,  
 Hath but *one* page,—'tis better written here,  
 Where gorgeous Tyranny had thus amass'd  
 All treasures, all delights, that eye or ear,  
 Heart, soul could seek, tongue ask—Away with words! draw  
 near,

Admire, exult—despise—laugh, weep,—for here  
 There is such matter for all feeling:—Man!  
 Thou pendulum betwixt a smile and tear,  
 Ages and realms are crowded in this span,  
 This mountain, whose obliterated plan  
 The pyramid of empires pinnacled,  
 Of Glory's gewgaws shining in the van  
 Till the sun's rays with added flame were fill'd!  
 Where are its golden roofs? where those who dared to build?

Tully was not so eloquent as thou,  
 Thou nameless column with the buried base!  
 What are the laurels of the Cæsar's brow?  
 Crown me with ivy from his dwelling-place.  
 Whose arch or pillar meets me in the face,  
 Titus or Trajan's? No—'tis that of Time:  
 Triumph, arch, pillar, all he doth displace  
 Scoffing; and apostolic statues climb  
 To crush the imperial urn, whose ashes slept sublime,

Buried in air, the deep blue sky of Rome,  
 And looking to the stars: they had contain'd  
 A spirit which with these would find a home,  
 The last of those who o'er the whole earth reign'd,  
 The Roman globe, for after none sustain'd,  
 But yielded back his conquests:—he was more  
 Than a mere Alexander, and, unstain'd  
 With household blood and wine, serenely wore  
 His sovereign virtues— still we Trajan's name adore.  
 Where is the rock of Triumph, the high place  
 Where Rome embraced her heroes? where the steep  
 Tarpeian? fittest goal of Treason's race,  
 The promontory whence the Traitor's Leap  
 Cured all ambition. Did the conquerors heap  
 Their spoils here? Yes; and in yon field below,  
 A thousand years of silenced factions sleep—  
 The Forum, where the immortal accents glow,  
 And still the eloquent air breathes—burns with Cicero!

p. 56—59.

On the accidental recurrence to his mind of the character of Numa, his spirit falls into a passionate dream of the Egerian Grot, in which there breathes that full, delicate, and perfect sense of beauty which often steals upon him during moods of a very different kind, and wins him, somewhat reluctantly, away into scenes filled with images of stillness and peace.

Egeria! sweet creation of some heart  
 Which found no mortal resting-place so fair  
 As thine ideal breast; whate'er thou art  
 Or wert,—a young Aurora of the air,  
 The nympholepsy of some fond despair;  
 Or, it might be, a beauty of the earth,  
 Who found a more than common votary there  
 Too much adoring; whatsoe'er thy birth,  
 Thou wert a beautiful thought, and softly bodied forth.  
 The mosses of thy fountain still are sprinkled  
 With thine Elysian water-drops; the face  
 Of thy cave-guarded spring, with years unwrinkled,  
 Reflects the meek-eyed genius of the place,  
 Whose green, wild margin now no more erase  
 Art's works; nor must the delicate waters sleep,  
 Prisoned in marble, bubbling from the base  
 Of the cleft statue, with a gentle leap  
 The rill runs o'er, and round, fern, flowers, and ivy, creep,  
 Fantastically tangled; the green hills  
 Are clothed with early blossoms, through the grass  
 The quick-eyed lizard rustles, and the bills  
 Of summer-birds sing welcome as ye pass;

Flowers fresh in hue, and many in their class,  
 Implore the pausing step, and with their dyes  
 Dance in the soft breeze in a fairy mass ;  
 The sweetness of the violet's deep blue eyes,  
 Kiss'd by the breath of heaven, seems coloured by its skies.

Here didst thou dwell, in this enchanted cover,  
 Egeria ! thy all heavenly bosom beating  
 For the far footsteps of thy mortal lover ;  
 The purple Midnight veil'd that mystic meeting  
 With her most starry canopy, and seating  
 Thyself by thine adorer, what befel ?  
 This cave was surely shaped out for the greeting  
 Of an enamour'd Goddess, and the cell  
 Haunted by holy Love—the earliest oracle !

And didst thou not, thy breast to his replying,  
 Blend a celestial with a human heart ;  
 And Love, which dies as it was born, in sighing,  
 Share with immortal transports ? could thine art  
 Make them indeed immortal, and impart  
 The purity of heaven to earthly joys,  
 Expel the venom and not blunt the dart—  
 The dull satiety which all destroys—  
 And root from out the soul the deadly weed which cloy's ?

p. 60—62.

But he will not allow himself to be held in the innocent enchantment of such emotions, and bursts again into those bitter communings with misery, without which it would absolutely seem he can have no continued existence, till at last he denounces a curse—the curse of forgiveness it is said to be—on all that has perturbed and maddened his spirit. We wish to avoid, as much as possible, all reference to such distressing passions. But here they give a dark and terrible colouring to the poem, and it is impossible to misunderstand them. Our business is only with the poetry—at least we desire not to extend our privilege: And of the poetry we must say, that the season when the wild curse is imprecated, midnight; the scene, the ruined site of the Temple of the Furies; the auditors, the ghosts of departed years; and the imprecator, a being whose soul, though endowed with the noblest gifts of nature, is by himself said to be in ruins like the grandeur around him—and even dark hints thrown out, that for its aberrations there may be found the most mournful of all excuses in the threatening of the most mournful of all human calamities;—all this renders the long passage to which we allude, one of the most awful records of the agonies of man—perhaps the most painful and agitating pic-



ture of the misery of the passions, without their degradation, that is to be found in the whole compass of human language. Let us escape from it, and turn our eyes to the moonlight and indistinct shadow of the ruins of the Coliseum.

A ruin—yet what ruin! from its mass  
 Walls, palaces, half-cities, have been reared;  
 Yet oft the enormous skeleton ye pass  
 And marvel where the spoil could have appeared.  
 Hath it indeed been plundered, or but cleared?  
 Alas! developed, opens the decay,  
 When the colossal fabric's form is neared:  
 It will not bear the brightness of the day,  
 Which streams too much on all years, man, have reft away.  
 But when the rising moon begins to climb  
 Its topmost arch, and gently pauses there;  
 When the stars twinkle through the loops of time,  
 And the low night-breeze waves along the air  
 The garland-forest, which the grey walls wear,  
 Like laurels on the bald first Cæsar's head;  
 When the light shines serene but doth not glare,  
 Then in this magic circle raise the dead:  
 Heroes have trod this spot—'tis on their dust ye tread.

p. 74, 75.

We regret that our limits will not allow us to quote any more of his description of the Ancient City;—not even that of St Peter's—in which the loftiest words and most majestic images render back an image of the august conceptions by which the mind of the poet seems to have been expanded in its contemplation. There are still, however, two passages in the poem which we would wish to lay before our readers—that on the death of our Princess—and that on the Ocean. On the first we have not yet heart to venture—and with the last, therefore, we shall conclude; in which the Poet bids us farewell in a more magnificent strain than we can hope to hear again till his own harp, which has assuredly lost none of its music, be once more struck—and may it then be with steadier hands and a more tranquil spirit!

There is a pleasure in the pathless woods;  
 There is a rapture on the lonely shore,  
 There is society, where none intrudes,  
 By the deep Sea, and music in its roar:  
 I love not Man the less, but Nature more,  
 From these our interviews, in which I steal  
 From all I may be, or have been before,  
 To mingle with the Universe, and feel  
 What I can ne'er express, yet can not all conceal.

Roll on, thou deep and dark blue Ocean—roll !  
 Ten thousand fleets sweep over thee in vain ;  
 Man marks the earth with ruin—his control  
 Stops with the shore ;—upon the watery plain  
 The wrecks are all thy deed, nor doth remain  
 A shadow of man's ravage, save his own,  
 When, for a moment, like a drop of rain,  
 He sinks into thy depths with bubbling groan,  
 Without a grave, unknell'd, uncoffin'd, and unknown.

His steps are not upon thy paths,—thy fields  
 Are not a spoil for him,—thou dost arise  
 And shake him from thee ; the vile strength he wields  
 For earth's destruction thou dost all despise,  
 Spurning him from thy bosom to the skies,  
 And send'st him, shivering in thy playful spray  
 And howling, to his Gods, where haply lies  
 His petty hope in some near port or bay,  
 And dashest him again to earth :—there let him lay.

The armaments which thunderstrike the walls  
 Of rock-built cities, bidding nations quake,  
 And monarchs tremble in their capitals,  
 The oak levjathans, whose huge ribs make  
 Their clay creator the vain title take  
 Of lord of thee, and arbiter of war ;  
 These are thy toys, and, as the snowy flake,  
 They melt into thy yeast of waves, which mar  
 Alike the Armada's pride, or spoils of Trafalgar.

Thy shores are empires, changed in all save thee—  
 Assyria, Greece, Rome, Carthage, what are they ?  
 Thy waters wasted them while they were free,  
 And many a tyrant since ; their shores obey  
 The stranger, slave, or savage ; their decay  
 Has dried up realms to deserts :—not so thou,  
 Unchangeable save to thy wild waves' play—  
 Time writes no wrinkle on thine azure brow—  
 Such as creation's dawn beheld, thou rollest now.

Thou glorious mirror, where the Almighty's form  
 Glasses itself in tempests ; in all time,  
 Calm or convuls'd—in breeze, or gale, or storm,  
 Icing the pole, or in the torrid clime  
 Dark-heaving ;—boundless, endless, and sublime—  
 The image of Eternity—the throne  
 Of the Invisible ; even from out thy slime  
 The monsters of the deep are made ; each zone  
 Obeys thee ; thou goest forth, dread, fathomless, alone.

And I have loved thee, Ocean! and my joy  
 Of youthful sports was on thy breast to be  
 Borne, like thy bubbles, onward: from a boy  
 I wantoned with thy breakers—they to me  
 Were a delight; and if the freshening sea  
 Made them a terror—'twas a pleasing fear,  
 For I was as it were a child of thee,  
 And trusted to thy billows far and near,  
 And laid my hand upon thy mane—as I do here.

My task is done—my song hath ceased—my theme  
 Has died into an echo; it is fit  
 The spell should break of this protracted dream.  
 The torch shall be extinguish'd which hath lit  
 My midnight lamp—and what is writ, is writ,—  
 Would it were worthier! but I am not now  
 That which I have been—and my visions flit  
 Less palpably before me—and the glow  
 Which in my spirit dwelt, is fluttering, faint, and low.

Farewell! a word that must be, and hath been—  
 A sound which makes us linger;—yet—farewell!  
 Ye! who have traced the Pilgrim to the scene  
 Which is his last, if in your memories dwell  
 A thought which once was his, if on ye swell  
 A single recollection, not in vain  
 He wore his sandal-shoon, and scallop-shell;  
 Farewell! with *him* alone may rest the pain;  
 If such there were—with *you*, the moral of his strain!

p. 92-96.

The Pilgrimage of Childe Harold has now been brought to its close; and of his character there remains nothing more to be laid open to our view. It is impossible to reflect on the years which have elapsed since this mysterious stranger was first introduced to our acquaintance, without feeling that our own spirits have undergone in that time many mighty changes—sorrowful in some it may be, in others happy changes. Neither can we be surprised, knowing as we well do who Childe Harold is, that he also has been changed. He represented himself, from the beginning, as a ruin; and when we first gazed upon him, we saw indeed in abundance the black traces of recent violence and convulsion. The edifice has not been rebuilt; but its hues have been sobered by the passing wings of time, and the calm slow ivy has had leisure to wreath the soft green of its melancholy among the fragments of the decay. In so far, the Pilgrim has become wiser. He seems to think more of others, and with a greater spirit of humanity. There was some-

thing tremendous, and almost fiendish, in the air with which he surveyed the first scenes of his wanderings; and no proof of the strength of genius was ever exhibited so strong and unquestionable, as the sudden and entire possession of the minds of Englishmen by such a being as he then appeared to be. He looked upon a bull-fight, and a field of battle, with no variety of emotion. Brutes and men were, in his eyes, the same blind, stupid victims of the savage lust of power. He seemed to shut his eyes to every thing of that citizenship and patriotism which ennoble the spirit of the soldier, and to delight in scattering the dust and ashes of his derision over all the most sacred resting-places of the soul of man.

Even then, we must allow, the original spirit of the Englishman and the poet broke triumphantly, at times, through the chilling mist in which it had been spontaneously enveloped. In Greece, above all, the contemplation of Athens, Salamis, Marathon, Thermopylæ and Plataea, subdued the prejudices of him who had gazed unmoved upon the recent glories of Trafalgar and Talavera. The nobility of manhood appeared to delight this moody visitant; and he accorded, without reluctance, to the shades of long-departed heroes that reverent homage, which, in the strange mixture of envy and scorn wherewith the contemplative so often regard active men, he had refused to the living, or to the newly dead.

At all times, however, the sympathy and respect of Childe Harold—when these have been excited by any circumstances external to himself—have been given almost exclusively to the intellectual, and refused to the moral greatness of his species. There is certainly less of this in his last Canto. Yet we think that the ruins of Rome might have excited within him not a few glorious recollections, quite apart from those vague lamentations and worshippings of imperial power, which occupy so great a part of the conclusion of his Pilgrimage. The stern purity and simplicity of domestic manners—the devotion of male and female bosoms—the very names of Lucretia, Valeria, and the mother of the Gracchi, have a charm about them at least as enduring as any others, and a thousand times more delightful than all the iron memories of conquerors and consuls.—But the mind must have something to admire—some breathing-place of veneration—some idol, whether of demon or of divinity, before which it is its pride to bow. Byron has chosen too often to be the undoubting adorer of Power. The idea of tyrannic and unquestioned sway seems to be the secret delight of his spirit. He would pretend, indeed, to be a republican,—but his heroes are all stamped with the leaden signet of despotism; and we

sometimes see the most cold, secluded, immitigable tyrant of the whole, lurking beneath the 'scallop-shell and sandal-shoon' of the Pilgrim himself.

In every mien and gesture of this dark being, we discover the traces of one that has known the delights, and sympathized with the possessors of intellectual power; but too seldom any vestiges of a mind that delights in the luxuries of quiet virtue, or that could repose itself in the serenity of home. The very possession of purity would sometimes almost seem to degrade, in his eyes, the intellectual greatness with which it has been sometimes allied. He speaks of Pompey with less reverence than Cæsar; and, in spite of many passing visitings of anger and of scorn, it is easy to see that, of all cotemporary beings, there is ONE only with whom he is willing to acknowledge mental sympathy—one only whom he looks upon with real reverence—one only whose fortunes touch the inmost sanctuaries of his proud soul—and that this one is no other than that powerful, unintelligible, unrivalled spirit, who, had he possessed either private virtue or public moderation, might still have been in a situation to despise the offerings of even such a worshipper as Harold.

But there would be no end of descanting on the character of the Pilgrim, nor of the moral reflections which it awakens. Of the Poet himself, the completion of this wonderful performance inspires us with lofty and magnificent hopes. It is most assuredly in his power to build up a work that shall endure among the most august fabrics of the genius of England. Indeed, the impression which the collective poetry of our own age makes upon our minds is, that it contains great promise of the future; and that, splendid as many of its achievements have been, some of our living poets seem destined still higher to exalt the imaginative character of their countrymen. When we look back and compare the languid, faint, cold delineations of the very justest and finest subjects of inspiration, in the poetry of the first half of the last century, with the warm, life-flushed and life-breathing pictures of our own, we feel that a great accession has been made to the literature of our day,—an accession not only of delight, but of power. We cannot resist the persuasion, that if literature, in any great degree, impresses and nourishes the character of a people,—then this literature of ours, pregnant as it is with living impressions,—gathered from Nature in all her varieties of awfulness and beauty,—gathered too from those high and dread Passions of men, which our ordinary life scarcely shows, and indeed could scarcely bear, but which, nevertheless, have belonged, and do belong, to our human life,—and held up in the powerful representations of the poets to our con-

sciousness at times, when the deadening pressure of the days that are going by might bereave us of all genial hope and all dignified pride,—we say it is impossible for us to resist the belief that such pregnant, glowing, powerful poetry, must carry influences into the heart of this generation, even like those which are breathed from the heart of Nature herself,—or like those which lofty passions leave behind them in bosoms which they have once possessed. The same spirit of poetical passion which so uniformly marks the works of all our living poets, must exist very widely among those who do not aspire to the name of genius; it must be very widely diffused throughout the age, and, as we think, must very materially influence the reality of life. Yet highly as we estimate the merits of our modern poetry, it is certain, that the age has not yet produced any one great epic or tragic performance. Vivid and just delineations of passion there are in abundance,—but of moments of passions—fragments of representation. The giant grasp of thought, which conceives, and brings into full and perfect life, full and perfect passion—passion pervading alike action and character, through a majestic series of events, and at the same time cast in the mould of grand imagination,—this seems not to be of our age. In the delineation of external nature, which, in a poet's soul, requires rather moral beauty than intellectual strength, this age has excelled. But it has produced no poem gloriously illustrative of the agencies, existences, and events, of the complex life of man. It has no *Lear*—no *Macbeth*—no *Othello*. Some such glory as this Byron may yet live to bring over his own generation. His being has in it all the elements of the highest poetry. And that being he enjoys in all the strength of its prime. We might almost say, that he needs but to exercise his will to construct a great poem. There is, however, much for him to alter in what may be called, his Theory of Imagination respecting Human Life. Some idols of his own setting-up he has himself overthrown. There are yet some others, partly of gold, and partly of clay, which should be dashed against the floor of the sanctuary. We have already spoken of his personal character, as it shines forth in his poetry. This personal character exists in the nature of his imagination, and may therefore be modified—purified—dignified by his own will. His imagination does, to his own eyes, invest him with an unreal character. Purposes, passions, loves, deeds, events, may seem great and paramount in imagination, which have yet no power to constrain to action; and those which perhaps may govern our actions, vanish altogether from our imagination. There is a region—a

world—a sphere of being in imagination, which, to our real life, is no more than the world of a dream; yet, long as we are held in it by the transport of our delusion, we live, not in delight only, but in the conscious exaltation of our nature. It is in this world that the spirit of Byron must work a reformation for itself. He knows, far better than we can tell him, what have been the most hallowed objects of love and of passion to the souls of great poets in the most splendid eras of poetry,—and he also knows well, that those objects, if worshipped by him with becoming and steadfast reverence, will repay the worship which they receive, by the more fervent and divine inspiration which they kindle.

ART. IV. *Notes on a Journey in America, from the Coast of Virginia to the Territory of the Illinois.* By MORRIS BIRKBECK. Second Edition. 8vo. pp. 163. London. Ridgway, 1818.

WE have no hesitation in pronouncing this one of the most interesting and instructive books that have appeared for many years. The subject is curious and important in the highest degree; the rapid growth of one country, still in its early infancy,—and the formation of another in its neighbourhood, by the overflowings of its population. The author is an eyewitness of every thing he describes; and, with a good sense extremely rare among authors, he is content to tell what is material, without tedious dissertations or trifling details, and to tell it in the plainest language. His matter is condensed, and his style is unexceptionable. We think he deserves peculiar credit, too, for the unassuming appearance, and moderate price of his book. What he has given for a few shillings, in the form of a pamphlet, would have swelled to a guinea quarto in the hands of a regular bookmaker. Indeed, which of the costly volumes for the last twenty years poured upon the publick by travellers of all descriptions, can vie with this modest little tract, in the importance, the novelty, or the interest of its contents?

We have heard much said of Mr Birkbeck's work; and its merits have been very generally allowed. But we have found, that this tribute is most reluctantly paid in certain quarters, where his statements, and their effect on the publick mind, have given great umbrage, and even excited considerable alarm. They who hate America, as it were, personally; who meanly regard with jealousy every step she advances in renown, or foolishly view with apprehension each accession to her power,

or ridiculously consider all that she gains of wealth as taken from England—this class of reasoners, (if the term may be so applied) can with difficulty conceal their dismay at the testimony borne by Mr Birkbeck, to the prodigious rapidity with which that marvellous community is advancing in every direction. Their favourite course of argument, indeed, had always been a little inconsistent. To make the Americans the more detested, they often represented them as dangerous competitors for wealth and power, and actually succeeded in producing a war with them by spreading the alarm. But the same feeling that made them hate those rivals, induced a strong desire to make them also the objects of contempt; and, forgetting that it was difficult at once to dread and despise any thing, they used every means to underrate the importance of the United States. This last course of attack proved, in the end, the most gratifying both to the senseless feelings of animosity against the Americans, and to the sense of national pride: Accordingly, when required to chuse between the two inconsistent arguments, it was preferred; and of late years the tone assumed by the party has been that of unsparring detraction and bitter sneering at every thing beyond the Atlantic,—except the province of Canada, which the same judicious authorities represent upon all occasions as the very right arm of British strength. These contemptuous feelings seem to have augmented pretty nearly in proportion as their object was rising in importance and power; and they appeared to be approaching their acmè, if indeed they had not reached it, when, unhappily, Mr Birkbeck's 'plain tale' comes forth to put them down. So untoward an event has not often happened in such controversies; and the rage and disappointment excited by it have been proportioned to its decisive influence upon the question, and to the necessity which existed for stifling the outward expression of it. The remains of stubborn pride and dignified contempt for America forbade that; and the inoffensive modest character of the much hated volume seemed equally to prescribe, at least, the semblance of moderation to its adversaries. Accordingly, while they mutter curses both loud and deep, they are beginning already to change the manner of attack, and, precluded from indulging their spleen in the shape of contempt, they are preparing to seek relief by venting it in open hatred, drawing, from Mr Birkbeck's statements, the materials of alarm.

The spectacle presented by America during the last thirty or forty years,—ever since her emancipation began to produce its full effect, and since she fairly entered the lists as an independent nation with a completely popular government,—has been, be-



yond every thing formerly known in the history of mankind, imposing and instructive. In order to contemplate its wonders with complete advantage, an observer ought to have visited the New World *twice* in the course of a few years. A single view is insufficient to exhibit this progress in the States already settled; for there, quickly as the changes are going on, the process of creation is not actually seen at once, or disclosed, as it were, to the eye; some interval of time must be allowed, and the comparison then shows the extent of the wonderful change. But the extraordinary state of things in the Western part of the Union, developed by Mr Birkbeck, shows us the process both of colonization and increase at one glance:—We see exposed to the naked eye, the whole mystery of the generation as well as the growth of nations; we at once behold in what manner the settled parts of America are increasing with unparalleled rapidity; and how new and extensive communities are daily created in the plains and the forests of the West, by the superfluous population of the Eastern settlements. Those settlements assume a novel and a striking aspect;—they no longer are to be regarded as new colonies, to which other communities send their overflowing numbers—they are already fully peopled States, which having reached maturity in a few years, cannot stop in their growth; but become in their turn the '*officina gentium*,' and send off their countless swarms to the hardly more recent, but infinitely less peopled, regions that surround them. The new community of the United States is, in fact, already the source of an emigration beyond all comparison more extensive than ever was known in the most confined and overpeopled portions of the old world. A broad, deep, and rapid stream of population is running constantly towards the western parts of the Continent; and vast states are forming towards the Pacific Ocean, the growth of which as much exceeds in rapidity what we have been wont to admire on the shores of the Atlantic, as this leaves at an immeasurable distance the scarcely perceptible progress of our European societies.

Mr Birkbeck is not a professed author, although he is most creditably known by a work, in plan similar to the present, upon France. He is himself a practical man, having devoted his life to agriculture; and he begins with stating the reasons which induced him to change the condition of an English farmer for that of an American proprietor. Political principles seem to have had some weight among these.

'A nation, with half its population supported by alms, or poor-rates, and one fourth of its income derived from taxes, many of which are dried up in their sources, or speedily becoming so, must teem with

emigrants from one end to the other : and, for such as myself, who have had " nothing to do with the laws but to obey them," it is quite reasonable and just to secure a timely retreat from the approaching crisis—either of anarchy or despotism.

' An English farmer, to which class I had the honour to belong, is in possession of the same rights and privileges with the *villains* of old time, and exhibits for the most part, a suitable political character. He has no voice in the appointment of the legislature unless he happen to possess a freehold of forty shillings a year, and he is then expected to vote in the interest of his landlord. He has no concern with public affairs excepting as a tax-payer, a parish officer, or a militia man. He has no right to appear at a county meeting, unless the word *inhabitant* should find its way into the sheriff's invitation : in this case he may show his face among the nobility, clergy, and freeholders :—a felicity which once occurred to myself, when the inhabitants of Surrey were invited to assist the gentry in crying down the Income Tax.

' Thus, having no elective franchise, an English farmer can scarcely be said to have a political existence; and political *duties* he has none, except such as, under existing circumstances, would inevitably consign him to the special guardianship of the Secretary of State for the home department.' p. 8, 9.

Upon the soundness of these reasonings in behalf of emigration, there may be some difference of opinion; there can be none as to the other inducements which operated upon his mind, and which, we may reasonably presume, turned the balance in favour of America. With all its excellences, the English government is a most expensive one; protection to person and property is nowhere so dearly purchased; and the follies of the people, and the corruption of their rulers, have entailed such a load of debt upon us, that whoever prefers his own to any other country as a place of residence, must be content to pay an enormous price for the gratification of his wish. In truth, a temptation to emigrate is now held out to all persons of moderate fortune, which must, in very many cases, prove altogether irresistible. Nor can any thing be more senseless than the wonder testified by some zealous lovers of their native land, at any family, of small income, seeking a more fruitful soil and a better climate, where half their means may not be seized to pay the state and the poor—except perhaps the indignation which such a change of residence usually excites in the same sagacious personages. Mr Birkbeck appears not to have been at all deterred by such feelings, and to have decided upon emigrating with his family and his capital; not because he overlooked the many inconveniences to which the removal must expose him, but because he was desirous of purchasing, ' by a great sacrifice of present ease, an exemption,

in the decline of life, from that wearisome solicitude about pecuniary affairs, from which even the affluent find no refuge in England.' He expected also to obtain for his children a career of enterprise, and wholesome family connexion, in a society whose institutions are favourable to virtue; and to have the consolation of leaving them efficient members of a flourishing, public spirited, energetic community, where the insolence of wealth and the servility of pauperism, between which, in England, there is scarcely an interval remaining, are alike unknown.' We notice these sentiments for the purpose of remarking, *first*, that they are calculated to excite very great indignation among the thoughtless optimists of this country, who would be far less irritated if they were not conscious that the offensive observations have at least some foundation in fact; and, *secondly*, that the state of our finances and poor laws ought, instead of discouraging a true lover of his country from all attempts at restoring a healthful order of things, only to animate his efforts, by reminding him of the necessity which exists for a reformation.' Mr Birkbeck, as a moderate capitalist and the father of a large family, may be justified in every point of view for leaving this country; but those who remain in it are only the more loud to redouble their exertions in favour of a necessary reform; because such persons as Mr Birkbeck are induced to emigrate by the defects which at present exist in our system of administration; and they certainly are the most shallow, as well as the most unjust of all reasoners, who, while they loudly blame emigration, strenuously resist every attempt at removing the evils which produce it.

Our emigrants, after a favourable voyage in a large vessel, arrived at Norfolk in Virginia, about the beginning of May. Every thing they at first saw made them regret the country they had left. The market place was filled with negroes selling the worst butcher's meat at high prices; miserable horses drew all the vehicles of the farmer; and the horrors of negro slavery appeared in every corner. As they ascended the river, the great beauty of the scenery somewhat reconciled them to their new abode. By degrees the character of the country improved; the soil was rich and well cultivated; and the habitations of the farmers wore an appearance of ease and comfort, which the practice of domestic slavery alone interrupted. They arrived at Petersburg during the time of the races; and the following passage deserves attention.

'A Virginian tavern resembles a French one with its table d'hôte, (though not in the excellence of the cookery) but somewhat exceeds it in filth, as it does an English one in charges. The daily number

of guests at the ordinary in this tavern (and there are several large taverns in Petersburg) is fifty, consisting of travellers, store-keepers, lawyers, and doctors.

‘A Virginian planter is a republican in politics, and exhibits the high-spirited independence of that character. But he is a slave-master, irascible, and too often lax in morals. A dirk is said to be a common appendage to the dress of a planter in this part of Virginia.

‘I never saw in England an assemblage of countrymen who would *average* so well as to dress and manners: none of them reached any thing like style; and very few descended to the shabby.

‘As it rained heavily, every body was confined the whole day to the tavern, after the race, which took place in the forenoon. The conversation which this afforded me an opportunity of hearing, gave me a high opinion of the intellectual cultivation of these Virginian farmers.

‘Negro slavery was the prevailing topic—the beginning, the middle and the end—an evil uppermost in every man’s thoughts; which all deplored, many were anxious to fly, but for which no man can devise a remedy. One gentleman, in a poor state of health, dared not encounter the rain, but was wretched at the thought of his family being for one night without his protection—from his own slaves! He was suffering under the effects of a poisonous potion, administered by a negro, who was his personal servant, to whom he had given indulgences and privileges unknown to the most favoured valet of an English gentleman. This happened in consequence of some slight unintentional affront on the part of the indulgent master. It is stated as a melancholy fact, that severe masters seldom suffer from their slaves’ resentment.’ p. 16, 17.

Here they left the vessel, and proceeded in the steam boat to Richmond, where every thing seemed to be dear beyond example; eggs, 2d. a piece; butter, 3s. 6d. a pound; hay, 9s. per cwt.; a warehouse 200*l.* a year; and ground to build upon, from 2000*l.* to 3000*l.* an acre. It is reckoned the dearest and worst supplied town in the United States. We must here pause to extract a passage containing this calm and accurate observer’s testimony to the radical and incurable evils of negro slavery, even in a form by far the most mitigated; for who can compare the state of the slave in the Sugar Islands with that in North America?

‘I saw two female slaves and their children sold by auction in the street,—an incident of common occurrence here, though horrifying to myself and many other strangers. I could hardly bear to see them handled and examined like cattle; and when I heard their sobs, and saw the big tears roll down their cheeks at the thought of being separated, I could not refrain from weeping with them. In selling these unhappy beings, little regard is had to the parting

of the nearest relations. Virginia prides itself on the comparative mildness of its treatment of the slaves; and in fact they increase in numbers, many being annually supplied from this state to those farther south, where the treatment is said to be much more severe. There are regular dealers, who buy them up and drive them in gangs, chained together, to a southern market. I am informed that few weeks pass without some of them being marched through this place. A traveller told me that he saw, two weeks ago, one hundred and twenty sold by auction, in the streets of Richmond; and that they filled the air with their lamentations.

It has also been confidently alleged, that the condition of slaves in Virginia, under the mild treatment they are said to experience, is preferable to that of our English labourers. I know and lament the degrading state of dependent poverty, to which the latter have been gradually reduced, by the operation of laws originally designed for their comfort and protection. I know also, that many slaves pass their lives in comparative ease, and seem to be unconscious of their bonds, and that the *most wretched* of our paupers might envy the allotment of the *happy negro*: This is not, however, instituting a fair comparison, to bring the opposite extremes of the two classes into competition. Let us take a view of some particulars which operate generally.

In England, exertion is not the result of personal fear: in Virginia, it is the prevailing stimulus.

The slave is punished for mere *indolence*, at the discretion of an *overseer*:—The peasant is only punished by the law when guilty of a crime.

In England, the labourer and his employer are equal in the eye of the law. Here, the law affords the slave no protection, unless a white man gives testimony in his favour.

Here, any white man may insult a black with impunity: whilst the English peasant, should he receive a blow from his employer, might and would return it with interest, and afterwards have his remedy at law for the aggression.

The testimony of a peasant weighs as much as that of a lord in a court of justice; but the testimony of a slave is never admitted at all, in a case where a white man is opposed to him.

A few weeks ago, in the streets of Richmond, a friend of mine saw a white boy wantonly throw quicklime in the face of a negro-man. The man shook the lime from his jacket, and some of it accidentally reached the eyes of the young brute. This casual retaliation excited the resentment of the brother of the boy, who complained to the slave's owner, and actually had him punished with thirty lashes. This would not have happened to an English peasant.

I must, however, do this justice to the slave-master of Virginia: It was not from him that I ever heard a defence of slavery; some extenuation on the score of expediency, or necessity, is the utmost range now taken by that description of reasoners, who, in former

times, would have attempted to support the principle as well as the practice.

' Perhaps it is in its depraving influence on the moral sense of both slave and master, that slavery is most deplorable. Brutal cruelty, we may hope, is a rare and transient mischief; but the degradation of soul is universal, and, as it should seem, from the general character of free negroes, indelible.

' All America is now suffering in morals through the baneful influence of negro slavery, partially tolerated, corrupting justice at the very source.' p. 21-24.

Our party journeyed on in hired carriages and diligences to Washington; where they were struck with the absurd inconsistency of the architectural ornaments affected in the public buildings. 'Ninety marble capitals,' says Mr Birkbeck, 'have been imported at a vast cost from Italy, to crown the columns of the capitol, and show how *un-American* is the whole plan.'— 'There is nothing,' he adds, with his usual sagacity and neatness, 'to which I can liken this affectation of splendor, except the painted face and gaudy head-dress of a half-naked Indian.' When, continuing their route, they arrived at the point on the road to Pittsburg, where their stage coach stopt, they found themselves 130 miles of mountain country short of that place, and had no means of proceeding, except on foot, or by waiting for vehicles and horses from a great distance. They preferred walking, and set out, nine in number, to traverse the Alleghany Ridge with the current of emigrants setting in towards the same quarter, and which he thus in a simple picturesque manner describes.

' We have now fairly turned our backs on the old world, and find ourselves in the very stream of emigration. Old America seems to be breaking up, and moving westward. We are seldom out of sight, as we travel on this grand track towards the Ohio, of family groups, behind and before us, some with a view to a particular spot; close to a brother perhaps, or a friend, who has gone before, and reported well of the country. Many like ourselves, when they arrive in the wilderness, will find no lodge prepared for them.

' A small waggon (so light that you might almost carry it, yet strong enough to bear a good load of bedding, utensils and provisions, and a swarm of young citizens,—and to sustain marvellous shocks in its passage over these rocky heights) with two small horses; sometimes a cow or two comprises their all; excepting a little store of hard-earned cash for the land-office of the district, where they may obtain a title for as many acres as they possess half-dollars, being one-fourth of the purchase-money. The waggon has a tilt, or cover, made of a sheet, or perhaps a blanket. The family are seen before, behind, or within the vehicle, according to the road or weather, or perhaps the spirits of the party.

‘ The New-Englanders, they say, may be known by the cheerful air of the women advancing in front of the vehicle; the Jersey people by their being fixed steadily within it; whilst the Pennsylvanians creep lingering behind, as though regretting the homes they have left. A cart and single horse frequently afford the means of transfer, sometimes a horse and pack-saddle. Often the back of the poor pilgrim bears all his effects; and his wife follows, naked-footed, bending under the hopes of the family.

‘ This is a land of plenty; and we are proceeding to a land of abundance, as is proved by the noble droves of oxen we meet, on their way from the western country to the city of Philadelphia. They are kindly, well-formed, and well-fed animals, averaging about six cwt.

‘ A flock of sheep, properly speaking, has not met my eyes in America, nor a tract of good sheep pasture. Twenty or thirty half-starved creatures are seen now and then straggling about in much wretchedness. These supply a little wool for domestic use. Cattle are good and plentiful, and horses excellent.’ p. 31—34.

The following general remarks may still further tend to present a picture of this wonderful emigration to the reader.

‘ The condition of the people of America is so different from aught that we in Europe have an opportunity of observing, that it would be difficult to convey an adequate notion of their character.

‘ They are great travellers; and in general, better acquainted with the vast expanse of country spreading over their eighteen states, (of which Virginia alone nearly equals Great Britain in extent), than the English with their little island.

‘ They are also a migrating people; and, even when in prosperous circumstances, can contemplate a change of situation, which under our old establishments and fixed habits, none, but the most enterprising, would venture upon, when urged by adversity.

‘ To give an idea of the internal movements of this vast hive, about 12,000 waggons passed between Baltimore and Philadelphia, in the last year, with from four to six horses, carrying from thirty-five to forty cwt. The cost of carriage is about seven dollars per cwt., from Philadelphia to Pittsburg; and the money paid for the conveyance of goods on this road, exceeds 300,000*l.* sterling. Add to these the numerous stages loaded to the utmost, and the innumerable travellers, on horseback, on foot, and in light waggons, and you have before you a scene of bustle and business extending over a space of three hundred miles which is truly wonderful.

‘ When, on our voyage, we approached within twenty leagues of the American coast, we were cheered by the sight of ships in every direction. Up James River, vessels of all sorts and sizes, from five hundred tons downwards, continually passing; and steam-boats crowded with passengers. The same on the Potowmack: and in the winter, when the navigation is interrupted by frost, stages, twelve or fourteen in file, are seen posting along, to supply the want of that luxurious accommodation.

‘ But what is most at variance with English notions of the American people, is the urbanity and civilization that prevail in situations remote from large cities. In our journey from Norfolk, on the coast of Virginia, to this place, in the heart of the Alleghany mountains, we have not for a moment lost sight of the manners of polished life. Refinement is unquestionably far more rare, than in our mature and highly cultivated state of society; but so is extreme vulgarity. In every department of common life, we here see employed, persons superior in habits and education to the same class in England.

‘ The taverns in the great towns east of the mountains which lay in our route, afford nothing in the least corresponding with our habits and notions of convenient accommodation; the only similarity is in the expense.

‘ At these places all is performed on the gregarious plan: every thing is public by day and by night;—for even night in an American inn affords no privacy. Whatever may be the number of guests, they must receive their entertainment *en masse*, and they must sleep *en masse*. Three times a day the great bell rings, and a hundred persons collect from all quarters to eat a hurried meal, composed of almost as many dishes. At breakfast you have fish, flesh, and fowl, bread of every shape and kind, butter, eggs, coffee, tea—every thing, and more than you can think of. Dinner is much like the breakfast, omitting the tea and coffee; and supper is the breakfast repeated. Soon after this meal, you assemble once more, in rooms crowded with beds, something like the wards of an hospital; where, after undressing in public, you are fortunate if you escape a partner in your bed, in addition to the myriads of bugs, which you need not hope to escape.

‘ But the horrors of the kitchen, from whence issue these shoals of dishes, how shall I describe, though I have witnessed them!—It is a dark and sooty hole, where the idea of cleanliness never entered, swarming with negroes of all sexes and ages, who seem as though they were bred there; without floor, except the rude stones that support a raging fire of pine logs, extending across the entire place; which forbids your approach, and which no being but a negro could face.’ p. 35—39.

Pittsburg, termed the Birmingham of America, was naturally expected to present a scene of filth, noise and smoke, somewhat resembling its archetype in the old world. The travellers, however, were agreeably disappointed to find themselves in a beautiful and cleanly though busy town, at the junction of the two rivers which here form the Ohio, and surrounded by the most delightful woodland and hilly scenery. Though a manufacturing district, wages are so high that a poor Irish emigrant who came as a journeyman shoemaker, three years before, had already saved money enough to pay 300 dollars for the good-



will of his master's shop, and had, when Mr Birkbeck saw him, a well stocked shop and very lucrative business. ' In ' this town,' says Mr Birkbeck, ' I heard delightful musick ' from a pianoforte *made here!*—a few years ago it was a fort, ' from which a white man durst not stir without a military ' guard, for the Indians.' A small remnant of this race still resides; it seems, at no great distance, having adopted the habits of their civilized neighbours. But the rise of a man's fortune, and the general progress of the country, is better illustrated by the history of a few individuals whom Mr Birkbeck judiciously selects as examples. One whom he conversed with

—' is about thirty; has a wife and three fine healthy children: His father is a farmer; that is to say, a proprietor, living five miles distant. From him he received five hundred dollars, and " began the world " in true style of American enterprise, by taking a cargo of flour to New Orleans, about two thousand miles, gaining a little more than his expenses, and a stock of knowledge. Two years ago, he had increased his property to nine hundred dollars; purchased this place; a house, stable, &c. and two hundred and fifty acres of land (sixty-five of which are cleared and laid down to grass), for three thousand five hundred dollars, of which he has already paid three thousand, and will pay the remaining five hundred next year. He is now building a good stable, and going to improve his house. His property is at present worth seven thousand dollars; having gained, or rather grown, five thousand five hundred dollars in two years, with prospects of future accumulation to his utmost wishes. Thus it is that people here grow wealthy, without extraordinary exertion, and without any anxiety.' p. 51.

Of another, an Irishman, he tells us, that, fourteen years ago, he came to his present estate, before an axe had ever been lifted on it, and with only his axe in his hand; and that he now discusses the interests of the country like one concerned in its prosperity—being possessed of 118 acres of excellent land, well cultivated; the father of twenty descendants; and paying eight dollars a year in taxes, five to the federal treasury, and three to his own country, in all about fourpence an acre. About the same time, there came also another poor emigrant, who ' unloaded his family under a tree,' on the land where he now possesses two hundred acres of fine land, in excellent culture, producing from 80 to 100 bushels of Indian corn an acre. Incited by such prospects, the emigrants pour along this tract in countless swarms. Fourteen waggons of them passed in one day; thirteen the next. Three of these contained forty-two young children. The inhabitants of the wilderness are driven back: And Mr Birkbeck relates the singular case of a General Boon, one of the first settlers of Kentucky, who, smit with the love of so-

litude, plunged into the western territory, beyond the Missouri, at what was then thought an inapproachable distance from civilized footsteps. There he lived alone; and, while solely occupied with the chase, about two years ago, he was overtaken, in his turn, by 'the restless foot of civilization,' and compelled to go back two hundred miles further; where, having attained the age of seventy, he may hope that his fellow creatures will not reach him before he terminates his days.

Our party having purchased horses at Pittsburg, proceeded on their journey westward; and, crossing the Ohio, began to search for a spot where they might fix their abode. Every step of the way afforded evidence of the rapid progress of this wonderful country. They had travelled seventy miles, in company with a gentleman who, twelve years before, had gone the same journey, and recollected it as an Indian footpath through the wilderness. It was now a string of plantations, scarcely interrupted by an uncleared tract. The price of land in this district, has, during that period, risen to twenty or thirty dollars an acre; and, at first, it cost only 320 dollars for 160 acres, the sum to be paid in five years;—so that the settler, who at the beginning had little more than a hundred dollars, now finds himself worth 3000 or 4000, besides supporting his family during the whole time. The whole taxes do not exceed forty shillings upon a square mile of territory, however highly cultivated. An observation occurs almost as soon as Mr Birkbeck enters upon his journey, and is constantly repeated in all parts of the country, that the unhealthy character of most of the settlements is entirely owing to their having been founded in low grounds, on the banks of rivers, and in marshy land. The love of gain—the desire of saving a little trouble, or a little money—dictated this selection; and, wherever it has been adopted, the consequence has been fatal to health—wherever a more elevated position has been chosen, the climate has been found salubrious.

One of the most striking features in the great western wilderness, is the magnificent growth of the vegetable kingdom. In one place our travellers measured a fine walnut tree, about seven feet in diameter, or twenty-one in girth. Two sycamores of equal dimensions were decaying in its neighbourhood. But the white oak, he says, is the glory of the upland forest. As they generally grow in thick groups, their stems are by no means as large as they would be if they stood single; but they are lofty and straight in an extraordinary degree—sometimes eighty or ninety feet without a branch. Mr Birkbeck measured one which

was six feet in diameter at four feet from the ground; and three feet in diameter at seventy from the ground. This is a gigantic growth, altogether unknown in our hemisphere. In one spot he found some hills covered with the same grand trees. For miles together, within view of the road, were thousands of them, whose stems were fourteen or fifteen feet round, and rising straight, and without a branch, for seventy or eighty feet, where they were crowned with luxuriant tops. An accident had befallen this woody tract, which is well described.

‘ For the space of a mile in breadth, a hurricane, which traversed the entire western country in a north-east direction, about seven years ago, had opened itself a passage through this region of giants, and has left a scene of extraordinary desolation. We pass immediately on, after viewing those massive trunks, the emblems of strength and durability, to where they lie tumbled over each other like scattered stubble, some torn up by the roots, others broken off at different heights, or splintered only, and their tops bent over, and touching the ground:—such is the irresistible force of these impetuous airy torrents. These hurricane tracts afford strong holds for game, and all animals of savage kind. There is a panther, the only one remaining, it is said, in this country, which makes this spot its haunt, and eludes the hunters.’ pp. 77, 78.

While traversing these vast forests, our travellers sometimes met with adventures little known to those who journey in more frequented paths. The following passage gives a simple, but a lively account of one of these.

‘ Our rear party, consisting of one of the ladies, a servant boy, and myself, were benighted, in consequence of accidental detention, at the foot of one of these rugged hills; and, without being well provided, were compelled to make our first experiment of “camping out.” A traveller in the woods should always carry flint, steel, tinder, and matches,—a few biscuits, a half-pint phial of spirits, and a tin cup—a large knife or tomahawk; then with his two blankets, and his great coat and umbrella, he need not be uneasy, should any unforeseen delay require his sleeping under a tree. Our party having separated, the important articles of tinder and matches were in the baggage of the division which had proceeded; and as the night was rainy and excessively dark, we were for some time under some anxiety lest we should have been deprived of the comfort and security of a fire. Fortunately, my powder-flask was in my saddle-bags, and we succeeded in supplying the place of tinder, by moistening a piece of paper, and rubbing it with gunpowder. We placed our touch-paper on an old cambric handkerchief, as the most readily combustible article in our stores. On this we scattered gunpowder pretty copiously, and our flint and steel soon enabled us to raise a flame,

and, collecting dry wood, we made a noble fire. There was a mattress for the lady, a bearskin for myself, and the load of the pack-horse as a pallet for the boy. Thus, by means of great coats and blankets, and our umbrellas spread over our heads, we made our quarters comfortable; and placing ourselves to the leeward of the fire, with our feet towards it, we lay more at ease than in the generality of taverns. Our horses fared rather worse; but we took care to tie them where they could browse a little, and occasionally shifted their quarters. We had a few biscuits, a small bottle of spirits, and a phial of oil: with the latter we contrived, by twisting some twine very hard, and dipping it in the oil, to make torches; and after several fruitless attempts we succeeded in finding water; we also collected plenty of dry wood. "Camping out" when the tents are pitched by daylight, and the party is ready furnished with the articles which we were obliged to supply by expedients, is quite pleasant in fine weather. My companion was exceedingly ill, which was, in fact, the cause of our being benighted; and never was the night's charge of a sick friend undertaken with more dismal forebodings, especially during our ineffectual efforts to obtain fire, the first blaze of which was unspeakably delightful: After this, the rain ceased, and the invalid passed the night in safety; so that the morning found us more comfortable than we could have anticipated.' pp. 95-97.

Mr Birkbeck, almost from the moment of his entering the Ohio country, was surrounded by temptations to stop and settle: He found cleared lands, at a moderate price; comforts in the neighbourhood; pleasant society:—But he was resolved to push on till he came to a station where the lowest Government price of two dollars an acre might suffice; aware that a crowd of neighbouring settlers would soon follow, to give the land a higher value, and to bring along with them the comforts and pleasures of social life. At length, in the south-east district of the Illinois territory, this judicious person fixed upon an allotment of 1440 acres, by advancing one-fourth of the price, or 720 dollars; and Mr Flower, his friend and the companion of his fortunes, made an equal and similar purchase adjoining to his own. These allotments form part of a rich and beautiful prairie, six miles from the Big Wabash, and as far from the Little Wabash rivers, both of which are navigable. The reader may naturally be desirous of learning how these land sales are carried on by the American government, and how the vast tracts of territory at its disposal are parcelled out to new settlers. Mr Birkbeck has given this information in the following passage, with his accustomed accuracy and conciseness.

'The tract of country, which is to be disposed of, is surveyed, and laid out in sections of a mile square, containing six hundred and forty acres, and these are subdivided into quarters, and, in particular situations, half-quarters. The country is also laid out in counties of

about twenty miles square, and townships of six miles square in some instances, and in others eight. The townships are numbered in ranges, from north to south, and the ranges are numbered from west to east; and lastly, the sections in each township are marked numerically. All these lines are well-defined in the woods, by marks on the trees. This done at a period, of which public notice is given, the lands in question are put up to auction, excepting the sixteenth section in every township, which is reserved for the support of schools; and the maintenance of the poor. There are also sundry reserves of entire townships, as funds for the support of seminaries on a more extensive scale; and sometimes for other purposes of general interest. No government lands are sold under two dollars per acre; and I believe they are put up at this price in quarter sections, at the auction; and if there be no bidding, they pass on. The best lands and most favourable situations are sometimes run up to ten or twelve dollars, and in some late instances much higher. The lots which remain unsold are, from that time, open to the public, at the price of two dollars per acre; one fourth to be paid down, and the remaining three-fourths to be paid by instalments in five years; at which time, if the payments are not completed, the lands revert to the State, and the prior advances are forfeited.

When a purchaser has made his election of one, or any number of vacant quarters, he repairs to the land office, pays eighty dollars, or as many times that sum as he purchases quarters, and receives a certificate, which is the basis of the complete title, which will be given him when he pays all: this he may do immediately, and receive eight per cent. interest for prompt payment. The sections thus sold are marked immediately on the general plan, which is always open at the land office to public inspection, with the letters A. P. "advance paid." There is a receiver and a register at each land office, who are checks on each other, and are remunerated by a per-centage on the receipts. p. 70, 71.

When a person has, in this manner, obtained possession of part of a *prairie*, it only wants fencing, and water for the live-stock, to make at once rich pasture land; and from this to arable land the transition is easy, expeditious, and profitable as it proceeds. The whole cost of purchase, fencing and watering, that is, of buying the land, and then making it begin to yield a profit, is only eighteen shillings an acre. The cost of buildings and stocking is of course more difficult to estimate; but Mr Birkbeck calculates that 2000*l.* would suffice for 640 acres; so that for 3000*l.* an English farmer, who was but indifferently off on a farm of 600*l.* or 700*l.* a year rent, may find himself owner of a fine estate of 600 or 700 acres in America, capable of almost unlimited improvement, and in the neighbourhood of rich, cheap land, in which he may invest his surplus profits.

This is unquestionably one of the most tempting points of view

in which emigration has ever yet been represented to men of moderate fortunes and industrious habits. Yet we are not of the number of those who view with alarm the probable consequences of such a temptation being held out. After all, says Dr Smith, man is, of all luggage, the most difficult to be transported. In truth, he takes such root wherever he has been planted, that, long after almost all nourishment has been extracted from it, we find him cling to its bare rocks, and rather wither than be torn away. It is in vain to remind him how bleak the sky, how scanty the nutriment, how exposed to tempests the position. We find him rebuilding his cottage upon the half cooled lava which has swept all his possessions away, and obstinately refusing to quit a spot of earth which the perpetual conflicts of the elements hardly leave at rest for a day. Not even the pestilential swamps of Guiana and Java can frighten him from his home, and dissolve the most powerful of all ties—local attachment. In vain we remind him of his privations, his sufferings, his risks. He knows it all; he feels it to be a dear price;—but his home he deems above all price, and he willingly pays it. In vain we paint to his imagination the delights of happier climates, and the rich abundance of more luxuriant soils. He admits it all; but in those lands he feels he would ever be a stranger, and against all these enjoyments he sets one word—home. Even when he leaves it for a season, he fondly dwells upon its pleasures, now magnified in his imagination; while the friendly treachery of his memory sinks every unpleasing reality which fancy has failed to varnish over with fairy colours. And, in the midst of distant pursuits, which leave hardly a possibility that his connexion with the sacred spot should ever be other than nominal, he refuses to give it up, be it but a name; and his heart loudly protests against any final step that may dispel what he knows all the while to be a mere illusion of the brain. If Providence had not, by so powerful an instinct, set its canon against emigration, all the laws of man could never have tied the bulk of any community to a country where they are doomed to pine in want—while ease and comfort are within their reach, and to be purchased by the single act of changing their place of abode. Nay, with the vast majority of mankind, those feelings, which the rudest climate and meanest lot cannot subdue, are too strong even for the ruder hand of the Government and its agents,—what shape soever they may assume—whether of inquisitors, or spies, or mercenary troops, or collectors of taxes.

It thus happens, that unless in circumstances the most extraordinary, the number of emigrants from any community must always bear a very small proportion to the whole population.

The United States appear at present to be placed in circumstances of this description. The rapid multiplication of the inhabitants, which began when the country was almost a wilderness, has apparently gone on without being retarded by the cultivation and consequent scarcity of the land. Had there been no unsettled territory in the neighbourhood, the checks to population would soon have begun to operate; but the possibility of always finding a vent in those boundless and fertile regions, has seemingly kept the velocity of increase in the United States at its original rate. Accordingly, the emigration bears a sensible proportion, if not to the whole numbers of the people, at least to the yearly augmentation of those numbers. The rapidity with which new settlements are formed in this manner, is illustrated by Mr Birkbeck's whole book; but nothing tends more clearly to show it than the state of society which he found at Princeton, where he took up his abode while his land was preparing to receive him. This is a small town, placed at the further limit of Indiana, and founded only two years before our author's arrival. It contained fifty houses; was the county town of the district; and contained (says Mr B.) 'as many well informed, genteel people, in proportion to the number of inhabitants, as any county town I am acquainted with.'—'I think,' (he adds), 'there are half as many individuals who are entitled to that distinction as there are houses; and not one decidedly vicious character, nor one that is not able and willing to maintain himself.'

Though these settlements are apparently locked up in the interior of a vast continent, they have, by the aid of navigable rivers, an easy communication with the ocean; and the invention of the steam-boat renders the voyage, in either direction, sure and expeditious. Shawnee Town, about forty-five miles from Mr Birkbeck's plantation, is connected with it by the Wabash river, at a distance of only six miles. From Shawnee to New Orleans is 1200 miles, and this distance is performed in twenty days. The whole addition to the voyage across the Atlantic amounts to no more than one month. The settlement has a communication also to the north, by means of the Wabash river, for about four hundred miles, and is thus connected with the whole trade of the settlements behind Canada. No situation can be more promising for future wealth and greatness. A frugal and industrious people, here established, is morally certain of rising to the rank of a great state in the course of a few generations. Mr Birkbeck states distinctly, that, although he is desirous of assisting any person in settling upon this territory, he will be agent to no man who intends to remain at home, and

embark his capital in purchases, from the prospect of gain by the rise in the value of land. We believe that the effect of reading his book has pretty uniformly been to excite a strong desire of emigrating in the first instance; and then, as this ardour cooled, to engender a plan of investing capital in purchases near the sagacious author's settlement. Reading, however, to the end, we are disappointed to find, that he will not facilitate such schemes, and that no one can hope for help from him, or benefit from his settlement through him, who will not remove thither himself, with his household gods.

It is impossible to close this interesting volume, without casting our eyes upon the marvellous empire of which Mr Birkbeck paints the growth in colours far more striking than any heretofore used in portraying it. Where is this prodigious increase of numbers, this vast extension of dominion, to end? What bounds has Nature set to the progress of this mighty nation? Let our jealousy burn as it may; let our intolerance of America be as unreasonably violent as we please; still it is plain, that she is a power in spite of us, rapidly rising to supremacy; or, at least, that each year so mightily augments her strength, as to overtake, by a most sensible distance, even the most formidable of her competitors. In foreign commerce, she comes nearer to England than any other maritime power; and already her mercantile navy is within a few thousand tons of our own! If she goes on as rapidly for two or three years, she must overtake and outstrip us. Men's minds are naturally turned towards the chances of her being retarded; and the first and most obvious has been, the prospect of her dividing into several states.

The war has proved this expectation to be in a great measure chimerical. Those who indulged it held, that how well soever adapted to the purposes of internal government, the Federal Constitution must fall to pieces before a foreign enemy;—that war must be the end of the Union. A war with England, the power most likely to divide the States—the only power having a natural interest and party among the American people—was, happily for the Union, begun on principles so extravagant, and conducted with such want of moderation, as to strengthen the party opposed to the English government, and to knit in one indissoluble body the whole States of America.

What chance, then, is there of time effecting, by its silent pace, that which the ruder shock of foreign conflict has failed to accomplish? The question of the dissolution is intimately connected with the causes of the peaceable union of this great empire.

We perceive a nation rapidly *progressing* (as they themselves



term it in language borrowed from our own great poet) towards universal dominion over the New World. Its present population of ten millions will in another generation be increased to twenty; and the new community now forming to the westward, to a million or two more. The question is natural, Can such a vast mass of people, spread over so large a territory, be kept together by a feeble government? And the enemies of the United States have seldom any hesitation in boldly concluding, that their fate is, either to become the slaves of a military despotism, or the prey of internal disunion. No one seems to think the subsistence of the Federal Union a possible event.

It might be proper, however, to consider the real ground of stability which the government of America possesses, before we decide in so positive a manner against it. There can be little doubt, that the whole question turns upon the difference of American and European society, and the total want, in the former, of that race of political characters which abounds in the latter. In America, all men have abundant occupation of their own, without thinking of the State. Every person is deeply interested, and perpetually engaged, in driving his trade, and cultivating his land: and little time is left to any one for thinking of state affairs, except as a subject of conversation. As a business, they engage the attention of no one except the rulers of the country; and even they keep the concerns of the public subordinate to their own. The governor of a State is generally a large landowner and farmer of his own ground. A foreign minister is the active member of a lucrative and laborious profession, quitting it for a few months, and returning to its gains and its toils when his mission is ended. The business of the Senate occupies but a few weeks in the year; and no man devotes himself so much to its duties, as to leave it doubtful to what class of the industrious community he properly belongs. The race of mere statesmen, so well known among us in the Old world, is wholly unknown in the New; and, until it springs up, even the foundations of a change cannot be considered as laid. The Americans, no doubt, are, like other freemen, decided partisans, and warm political combatants; but what project or chance can counterbalance, in their eyes, the benefits conferred by the Union, of cultivating their soil, and pursuing their traffic freely and gainfully, in their capacity of private individuals? A preacher of insurrection might safely be left with such personages as the American farmers; and, until the whole frame of society alters, even a great increase of political characters will not enable those persons successfully to appeal to the bulk of the community, with the pro-

spect of splitting the Union. The cautious and economical character of the Federal Government seems admirably adapted to secure its hold over the affections of a rational and a frugal people.

In the abstracts and extracts, of which this article consists, we have given a tolerably fair outline of Mr Birkbeck's work. We shall close our account of it with one more quotation, containing the account of a religious society, so extraordinary, that we are desirous of acquainting the reader with its character, because all such peculiarities tend to throw a light upon the history of human nature. With this extract, then,—with a warm recommendation of Mr B.'s work, and an expression of our hopes that we may soon again hear from him of the progress which his interesting colony has made, we conclude the present article.

' At this, our third visit, Harmony becomes more enigmatical. This day, being Sunday, afforded us an opportunity of seeing grouped and in their best attire, a large part of the members of this wonderful community. It was evening when we arrived, and we saw no human creature about the streets:—we had even to call the landlord of the inn out of church to take charge of our horses. The cows were waiting round the little dwellings, to supply the inhabitants with their evening's meal. Soon the entire body of people, which is about seven hundred, poured out of the church, and exhibited so much health, and peace, and neatness in their persons, that we could not but exclaim, surely the institutions which produce so much happiness must have more of good than of evil in them; and here I rest, not lowered in my abhorrence of the hypocrisy, if it be such, which governs the ignorant by nursing them in superstition; but inclined in charity to believe that the leaders are sincere. Certain it is, that living in such plenty, and a total abstraction from care about the future provision for a family, it must be some overbearing thralldom that prevents an increase of their numbers by the natural laws of population.

' I had rather attribute this phenomenon to bigotry pervading the mass, than charge a few with the base policy of chaining a multitude, by means of superstition. It is, however, difficult to separate the idea of policy from a contrivance which is so highly political. The number of Mr Rapp's *associates* would increase so rapidly, without some artificial restraint, as soon to become unmanageable.

' This colony is useful to the neighbourhood, a term which includes a large space here: it furnishes from its store many articles of great value, not so well supplied elsewhere; and it is a market for all spare produce. There are also valuable culinary plants and fruit trees, for which the neighbourhood is indebted to the Harmonites; and they set a good example of neatness and industry: but they are despised as ignorant; and men are not apt to imitate what they scorn. Ignorant as the mass of Harmonites may be, when we contrast their

neatness and order with the slovenly habits of their neighbours, we see the good arising from mere *association*, which advances these poor people a century, probably much more, on the social scale, beyond the solitary beings who build their huts in the wilderness. For my reflections on the principles which may be supposed to actuate the rulers of this highly prosperous community, having no personal knowledge of the parties who govern, nor intimacy with any of the governed, I have no data, except the simple and, possibly, superficial observations of a traveller. Should I in this character have underrated or mistaken them, I shall, when their neighbour, gladly repair my error.

‘ In the institution of these societies, the Shakers and the Harmonites,—religion, or, if you will, fanaticism, seems to be an agent so powerful, and in fact is so powerful in its operation on the conduct of their members, that we are apt to attribute all the wonders that arise within the influence of this principle to its agency alone: for what may not be effected, by a sentiment which can bear down and abrogate entirely, in the instance of the Shakers, and nearly so in that of the Harmonites, the first great and fundamental law of human, or rather of *all*, nature? I allude to the tenet which is avowed in the former, and more obscurely inculcated in the latter, that the gospel of Christ is offered to them under the injunction of abstinence from sexual intercourse.

‘ I have had repeated opportunities of personal observation, on the effects of the united efforts of the Harmonites. The result of a similar union of powers among the Shakers, has been described to me by a faithful witness; and I am quite convinced that the association of numbers, in the application of a good capital, is sufficient to account for all that has been done: and that the unnatural restraint, which forms so prominent and revolting a feature of these institutions, is prospective, rather than immediate in its object.

‘ It has, however, as I before remarked, the mischievous tendency to render their example, so excellent in other respects, altogether unavailing. Strangers visit their establishments, and retire from them full of admiration:—but, a slavish acquiescence under a disgusting superstition, is so remarkable an ingredient in their character, that it checks all desire of imitation.’ p. 135—140.

ART. V. *View of the State of Europe during the Middle Ages.*  
By HENRY HALLAM, Esq. 2 vol. 4to. London, 1818.

THE object of this work is to trace the progress of Europe from the middle of the fifth to the end of the fifteenth century; from the establishment of Clovis in Gaul, to the invasion of Italy by Charles VIII.; from the final settlement of the Barbarians in the Western empire, to the consolidation of