

POETRY.

A SKETCH FROM NATURE.

She knelt beside me—and mine eye once glanc'd
Upon her form. 'Twas but a glance—but ne'er
From my remembrance will it pass away.
Her arms were folded on her breast—her head
Bow'd down most meekly, as became the place;
And her dark eye-brow, and still darker hair
Shaded a countenance wherein was less
Of beauty than expression; it was pale
As is the lily in the spring; it bore
Some touches of the frame and mind's disease,
Some marks of hidden wo—Her half clos'd eye
Was bent to earth, and shaded by a lash,
Silken and shining as the raven's wing;
Her lip was motionless, and it seem'd
As though her supplication spell at word
Forth from her pious bosom to her God.
There was a wither'd flow' ret on her breast,
Perchance an emblem of the hopes which there
Had blossom'd and there faded.

I have view'd
Woman in many a scene—I have beheld
Her gay and glorious in the festive hall,
Eager of conquest—and I too have mark'd
The winning languish and seductive smile,
Both dear and dangerous to the youthful heart,
And I have stray'd with beauty by my side,
Through the still glade at evening's pensive hour
By the pale radiance of the moon, whose beam's
Hath silver'd o'er her smiles; and she hath look'd
As she had thrown herself into her eyes!
Nay, I have view'd her by the fever'd bed
Of sickness, pillow the pale cheek, and bathe
The fainting brow, where, like a form of light,
She whisper'd peace where else there had been
none;

But never by the side of woman yet
Such thrilling and unearthly feelings stole
On my o'er-charged heart, as when I saw
That pious maid communing with her God.

[FOR THE ROYAL GAZETTE.]

A DECEASED MOTHER.

If ever the heart is imbued with sentiments of genuine sympathy, it is when we visit the bed of a deceased Mother—and turn to contemplate the surviving Infant, sweetly smiling, unconscious of its loss, happily deprived of the knowledge thereof by infantine insensibility.

I was recently called upon to witness a scene of this kind, and I blush not to say that I witnessed it with tears. Around the death-bed stood the Sisters of the deceased, absorbed in grief: The tear of devout affection stole down those cheeks, where a few days previous I had beheld only the smile of happiness and love. The aged Mother of the departed sat before the fire, her head supported on her hands, while the deep groan of maternal anguish escaped her bosom;—That sigh!—the burning tears of fruitless regret—of piercing sorrow—these were the undoubted testimonies of heartfelt affliction.—No affectation—no becoming sorrow.—The tears that fell, and the sighs that would not be controlled, were real.

Such was the group, that I was summoned to witness, or rather, that feelings of respect and sympathy, bade me witness. They spoke not—they were silent. Yet in that silence I read a lesson, which all the panegyrics on departed greatness have never taught me. There was an eloquence in those tears, that came from the heart—and they went to the heart. I read in them—"We have lost a friend."—Did I weep?—I am a man of feeling—I did.

Yet there was one only, unmoved by this affecting scene; one only whose countenance was unmarked by sorrow, whose eye was not moistened with a tear.—'Twas the poor little motherless infant who lay gamboling in its cradle. "Sweet innocent," said I; "How little can you feel the extent of your loss? How little do you know at this moment the sorrows and disappointments that await you in the world? But "God tempers the wind to the shorn Lamb; and he is a God to the widows, and a Father to the fatherless." P—

PHILOSOPHICAL INQUIRIES.

One of the most sublime and sanctifying purposes of Philosophy, is to trace in the works of Nature proofs of the divine skill. From the smallest floweret that blooms in the valley to the most majestic oak which towers in the forest—from the most diminutive insect, to the most gigantic of the animal tribes, are to be discovered traces of the same perfect and mysterious intelligence, who fashioned the arch of heaven and gemmed it with its innumerable spheres of light and brilliancy. But it is not only in their form and exterior appearance that this wisdom is manifested...follow out their analogies...examine their internal organization...inquire into their adaptation for their different circumstances...and the Mind of Man will be awed into a more solemn and reverential wonder of his Maker's unspeakable powers. By the kindness of a friend, we have been presented with a pamphlet published in London, in March last, under the patronage of the Society for the diffusion of Useful knowledge, entitled a "Discourse on the objects, advantages and pleasures of Science." One part of the Essay is to prove the uses that result from the application of mathematical, mechanical and chemical knowledge to the habits of animals and plants: and in the course of this inquiry, so many striking evidences of the Divine Intelligence are brought to light, that we are satisfied we cannot render religion and mortality a more essential service, than in devoting our journal to a few extracts...*Novascotian.*

*Formation of Fish...*If we have a certain quantity of any substance, a pound of wood, for example, and would fashion it in the shape to take the least room, we must make a globe of it; it will in this figure have the smallest surface. But suppose we want to form the wood, so that in moving through the air or water it shall meet with the least possible resistance, then we must lengthen it out for ever, till it becomes not only like a long-pointed pin, but thinner and thinner, longer and longer, till it is quite a straight line, and has no perceptible breadth or thickness at all. If we would dispose of the given quantity of matter so that it shall have a certain length only, say a foot, and a certain breadth at the thickest part, say three inches, and move through the air or water with the smallest possible resistance which a body of those dimensions can meet, then we must form it into a figure of a peculiar kind, called the Solid of least resistance, because of all the shapes that can be given to the body, its length and breadth remaining the same, this is the one which will make it move with the least resistance through the air or water, or other fluid. A very difficult chain of mathematical reasoning, by means of the highest branches of algebra, leads to a knowledge of the curve, which by revolving on its axis makes a solid of this shape, in the same way that a circle by so revolving makes a sphere or globe; and the curve certainly resembles closely the face or head part of a fish. Nature, therefore, (by which we always mean the Divine Author of nature,) has fashioned these fishes so, that according to mathematical principles, they swim the most easily through the element they live and move in.

*Of the eye...*It is found by optical inquiries, that the rays or particles of light, in passing through transparent substances of a certain form, are bent to a point where they make an image or picture of the shining bodies they come from, or of the dark bodies they are reflected from. Thus, if a pair of spectacles be held between a candle and the wall, they make two images of the candle upon it; and if they be held between

the window and a sheet of paper when the sun is shining, they will make a picture on the paper of the houses, trees, fields, sky, and clouds. The eye is found to be composed of several natural magnifiers which make a picture on a membrane at the back of it, and from this membrane there goes a nerve to the brain, conveying the impression of the picture, by means of which we see it. Now, white light was discovered by Newton to consist of different coloured parts, which are differently bent in passing through transparent substances, so that the lights of different colours come to a point at different distances, and thus create an indistinct image. This was long found to make our telescopes imperfect, inasmuch that it became necessary to make them of reflectors or mirrors, and not of magnifying glasses...the same difference not being observed to affect their reflection. But another discovery was about fifty years afterwards made by Mr. Dollond, that by combining different kinds of glass in a compound magnifier, the difference may be greatly corrected; and on this principle he constructed his telescopes. It is found, that the different natural magnifiers of the eye are combined upon a principle of the same kind. Thirty years later, a third discovery was made by Mr. Blair, of the greatly superior effect which combinations of different liquids have in correcting the imperfection; and most wonderful to think, when the eye is examined, we find it consists of different liquids, acting naturally upon the same principle which was thus recently found out in Optics by many ingenious mechanical and chemical experiments.

*The Eyes of Birds...*Again, the point to which any magnifier collects the light is more or less distant, as the magnifier is smaller or rounder, so that a small globe of glass or any transparent substance makes a microscope. And this property of light depends upon the nature of lines, and is purely of a mathematical nature, after we have at once ascertained by experiment, that light is bent in a certain way when it passes through transparent bodies. Now birds flying in the air, and meeting with many obstacles, as branches and leaves of trees, require to have their eyes sometimes as flat as possible, for protection; but sometimes as round as possible, that they may see the small objects, flies and other insects, while they are chasing through the air, and which they pursue with the most unerring certainty. This could only be accomplished by giving them a power suddenly changing the form of their eyes. Accordingly, there is a set of hard scales, placed on the outer coat of their eye, round the place where the light enters; and over these scales are drawn the muscles of fibres by which motion is communicated; so that, by acting with these muscles, the bird can press the scales, and squeeze the natural magnifier of the eye into a round shape when it wishes to follow an insect through the air, and can relax the scales, in order to flatten the eye when it would see a distant object, or move safely through leaves and twigs. The power of altering the shape of the eye is possessed by birds of prey in a very remarkable degree. They can see the smallest objects close to them, and can yet discern larger bodies at vast distances, as a carcass stretched upon the plain, or a dying fish afloat on the water.

A singular provision is made for keeping the surface of the bird's eye clean, for wiping the glass of the instrument, as it were, and also for protecting it, while rapidly flying through the air and through thickets, without hindering the sight. Birds are, for these purposes furnished with a third eyelid, a fine membrane or skin, which is constantly moved very rapidly over the eyeball by

two muscles placed in the back of the eye. One of the muscles ends in a loop, the other in a string which goes through the loop, and is fixed in the corner of the membrane, to pull it backward and forward. If you wish to draw a thing towards any place with the least force, you must pull directly in the line between the thing and the place; but if you wish to draw it as quickly as possible, and do not regard the loss of force, you must pull it obliquely, by drawing it in two directions at once. Tie a string to a stone, and draw it straight towards you with one hand; then make a loop on another string, and running the first through it, draw one string in each hand, not towards you, but side ways, till both strings are stretched in a straight line: you will see how much swifter the stone moves than it did before when pulled straight forward. Now this is proved, by mathematical reasoning, to be the necessary consequence of forces applied obliquely; there is a loss of power, but a great increase of velocity. The velocity is the thing required to be gained in the third eyelid, and the contrivance is exactly that of a string and a loop, moved each by a muscle, as the two strings are by the hands in the case we have been supposing.

A third eyelid of the same kind is found in the horse and called the haw: it is moistened with a pulpy substance (or muci-lage) to take hold of the dust on the eyeballs, and wipe it clean off so that it is hardly seen with any thing upon it though greatly exposed from its size and posture. The swift motion of the haw is given by a gristly, elastic substance placed between the eyelid and socket, and striking obliquely, so as to drive out the haw with great velocity over the eye, and then let it come back as quickly. Ignorant persons when this haw is inflamed from cold and swells so as to appear, which it never does in a healthy state, often mistake it for an imperfection, and cut it off; So nearly does ignorance produce the same mischief as cruelty! They might as well cut off the pupil of the eye, taking it for a black spot.

[To be continued.]

MAN.—Every man is a republic in miniature; and although very limited in its parts, yet very difficult to govern. Each individual is a little world, the elements; and having life like the brutes, and reason like the angels, it seems as though all were happily united in him. He can traverse the vast universe, comprehend the present, past, and future; in him are the principles of life and death, light and darkness; in him, also, are united the most contrary elements and most incompatible qualities.

At Hastings there are the ruins of an ancient fortification, one of the parts of which presents, from the opposite hill of the East cliff, a most perfect colossal bust of his late Majesty George III.

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