

Poetry.

STANZAS

On the sounds produced by the wind passing over the strings of a Pedal Harp in a Garden. From the unpublished Poems of the Hon. R. Spencer.

When an Eden zephyr hovers
O'er a slumbering cherub's lyre,
Or when sighs of soraph lovers
Breathe upon th' unfinger'd wire.

Not more soft those strains aerial,
Than those vision sounds appear,
Sounds too pure for sense material,
Which the soul alone should hear!

Now 'tis fancy's minstrel mildness,
Thoughts of flame, those notes impart—
Now misfortune's plaintive mildness
Melts and dies up the heart!

Heav'n must bear—a bloom more tender
Seems to tint the wreath of May,
Lovelier beams the noon-day splendour,
Brighter dew-drops gem the spray!

Is the breath of angels moving
O'er each flow'et's brighten'd hue?
Are the smiles the day improving,
Have their tears enrich'd the dew?

Hark! they sing in that sweet measure,
More than harp or zephyr spoke;
O what tones of mournful pleasure
On my tranced senses broke!

How it saddens, how rejoices,
Whilst I seem in Fancy's ear,
Mid that choir of spirit voices,
All I've lov'd and lost, to hear!

THE DUELLIST.

The promise of his youth was bright,
And fortune lent her smile;
And genius, like a burning light,
Illum'd his path the while.

And friendship wove a burnished chap,
And bound it round his brow,
And dearly was he lov'd again,
By her who heard his vow.

One glance of her sweet eyes of blue
Was worth an age of bliss,
And oh, they smiled on him too true
For such a world as this.

He had a mother, and her joy
Was centered all in one,
The spirit of her noble boy
Was of her world, the sun.

And the winter of her age
Came o'er the wreck of years,
His smile could all her grief assuage,
And dry her flowing tears.

The birds were sporting in the grove,
'Twas in the month of May,
When to Matilda and to love
He gave his hand away.

I saw him in his love-lit bower,
When all was bright and gay—
Alas that ever came the hour
That swept its bloom away.

'Twas on a summer's eve like this,
He wandered far alone;
But first he stole a parting kiss
From her his chosen one.

And as in whispers tremblingly,
He said "My love farewell,"
I saw a tear bedim his eye—
I saw his bosom swell.

He went, but ne'er returned again—
He went at "honour's" call,
To shed his blood like crimson rain—
Ingloriously to fall—

He fell, and at the cottage now,
Down on the village green,
With hollow cheek and dewy brow
Is young Matilda seen:

And nightly by the pale moon's beam,
She wanders in his rest—
And still recalls the cruel dream
That wrings her bleeding breast.

He sleeps! and near him gently sleeps,
His aged mother dear;
Matilda only lives and keeps;
Her weeping vigils here.

Miscellaneous.

THE ERA OF THE CREATION OF THE WORLD, AND THE FORMATION OF MAN.

If we fix the epoch of the creation of the world, according to the testimony of the sacred writings, it can scarcely have subsisted 6000 years. Those who suppose it much older, are contradicted, both by reason, and the historic monuments, which have been handed down to us. The history of the human race, does not go further back than that which Moses has written; for all that has been said concerning the origin of ancient nations, is advanced without proof: nor does their history extend beyond the general deluge. As to the chronological books of the Chinese, they are evidently full of falsities. The Phœnicians have no historian more ancient than Sanchoniatho, who lived after Moses. The Egyptian history does not extend beyond Ham, the son of Noah; and the books of the Jewish lawgiver, are not only the most ancient but also the most authentic of all the monuments of antiquity. If the world were some thousands of years older, it must be much better peopled, than it is at present. Population has always increased since the deluge, and yet there might be three times as many more inhabitants on the earth, than it at present contains. It has been computed, that at least 5000 millions of men, might live at once on our globe: and yet it does not appear, that there are really more than 1080 millions. In Asia, are reckoned 650 millions: in Africa and America, 300 millions: and in Europe, 130 millions.

If we consider the arts invented by men, we shall find that few, or none of them have been discovered more than two or three thousand years. Man owes not only to his nature and reason, the aptitude he has for acquiring arts and sciences, but he is also led to this by necessity; by the desire he has to procure himself conveniences and pleasures; by vanity and ambition; and by luxury, the child of abundance, which creates new wants. This propensity is evident among all men, in all ages. History carries us back to the time, when men had scarcely invented the most necessary arts; when those arts which were known, were but very imperfectly understood; and in which they scarcely knew any thing of the first principles of the sciences.

About four thousand years ago, men were still in a state of great ignorance, concerning most subjects: and if we calculate according to the progress which they made since that time, and afterwards go back to the remotest periods, we may with tolerable exactness fix the era, when men knew nothing: which is in other words, that of the infancy of the human race. Were their existence to be carried higher, it is utterly improbable, that the most useful and necessary arts should have continued unknown to them, through such a long series of ages. On the contrary, all that can be discovered by the human mind, must have been known a long time ago. From this circumstance therefore, we must conclude, that the origin of the human race, can have no other era, than that which Moses has assigned it in his history of the creation. Would it not be absurd to suppose, that men during the course of so many thousand years could have remained enveloped with the thickest darkness, and plunged in a sort of lethargy, from which they suddenly awoke, and began to invent arts to procure themselves the pleasures and conveniences of life.

Another circumstance should be remarked here: almost all Europe, was formerly covered with immense forests: very few cities, towns, or villages being found in it. It is manifest that it must be better peopled now, than it was at that time. Germany for instance, was then but one great forest: judge therefore, what a desert it must have been! At first, men could only sow vacant places which were found here and there in the forest; they had no separate property, and changed their place of residence every year. In all Germany, there was not a single fruit-tree. Acorns alone prevailed. If we wish to draw a parallel between ancient and modern Germany, we must first put aside the inhabitants of cities, and towns; pay attention to the numerous colonies which Germany has sent to other countries; observe, that most of the forests, being now cut down, and converted into arable ground, ancient Germany could scarcely have had one tenth part of the cultivated ground which it at present contains: and, consequently, could have had but one tenth part of its present number of inhabitants. How many millions less of men at that time, than now! And how abundantly must they have been multiplied since! And yet, the forests which extend from Germany to the north-east of Asia, and those that remain still in Africa and America, prove, that the earth is not as well peopled as it might be. The further we go back into antiquity, the less we shall find the world peopled and the earth cultivated: till we arrive at the epoch of the birth of the human race. It is therefore impossible, that our globe should have been eternal; for, had it been so, it must have been as well peopled from time immemorial, as it is at present.

All these considerations lead us to him, who is the Creator of the heavens and the earth. From him, the world and its inhabitants, derive their being. All things were made by him, and he was, before worlds or creatures existed; and shall be eternally the same, when new worlds, and new earths, shall be produced. And shall not we also live for ever! Delightful and transporting thought! When the heavens shall pass away, I shall remain! And while eternity rolls on, I shall be found in the realms of beatitude!—*Sturm.*

ON THE PHASES OF THE MOON.

ALL observations on the moon confirm the opinion, that she has a particular motion, by which she turns round the Earth from west to east. For, after having been placed between us and the Sun, she retires from below him, and continues to go back towards the east, changing each day the point of her rising. At the end of fifteen days, she reaches the most easterly part of the horizon, at the time the sun sets

with us. She is then in *opposition*. In the evening, when she retires, she arises above our horizon; and sets in the morning nearly about the time the sun rises. If then she continue to describe the circle round the earth which she has half finished; she will depart visibly from the point of her opposition to the Sun, and be less and less distant from that luminary, rise later than when in opposition to him, till at last she has got so near, as only to be discovered a little before his rising. This revolution of the Moon round the Earth, explains why she rises and sets at such different times; and why her phases are so different, and at the same time so regular. Every body knows that a globe, illuminated by the Sun, or by a flambeau, can receive the light only on one of its sides. At first sight, we are convinced that the Moon is a globe which receives her light from the Sun; when therefore, she is in conjunction, i. e. placed between the Sun and us, she turns the whole of her illuminated side to him; and of course her dark part to us. She is then consequently visible to us: she rises with the Sun in the same region of the heavens, and sets also with him: this is called the *conjunction*, or *new moon*. But, when the Moon retires from under the Sun, and goes back towards the east, then she has no longer the whole of her dark side turned towards us; a small part, a little border of the illuminated disk comes in view. This luminous border is seen on the right side toward the Sun, just at his setting, or even a little before; and the extremities, or points of this crescent, are turned to the left, facing the east. The farther the Moon resides from the Sun, the more visible she becomes: till at the end of seven days, when she has performed the fourth part of her course, she discovers half of her enlightened face. The enlightened part is then turned towards the Sun; and her dark part casts no light on the Earth. Exactly half the Moon is then illuminated: the half of that half can only be the fourth part of her whole globe: and it is this fourth part which we see. Then the Moon is said to be in her *first quarter*.

In proportion as the Moon departs from the Sun, and the earth is found nearly between them; the light occupies a greater space in that part of the Moon which faces us: at the end of seven days, counting from the first quarter, she is almost directly opposite the Sun; and then her whole disk, perfectly illuminated, is presented to us. She then rises in the east, precisely at the moment when the sun sets in the west. Then is our *full moon*. The next day, the enlightened part is a little turned away from us; so that we see no longer the full enlightened face. The light seems to leave the western side by little and little; stretching over that part which does not face the earth. This is the *wane* or *decrease* of the Moon; and the farther she advances, the more her obscure part increases, till at last, half the dark part, and consequently half of the light side are turned towards the earth: it has then the form of a semicircle; and the Moon is said to be in her *last quarter*.

Let us adore the wisdom and goodness of our Creator; who manifests himself to us in the phases and different aspects of the Moon. By the admirable harmony which subsists between the motion of this planet on her own axis, and her motion round the earth; it so happens that the moon always shows us the same half of her sphere which she has shewn from the commencement of the world. For some thousands of years, this globe has finished her revolution in 27 days and 8 hours. Regularly, and at the same periods she has enlightened at one time the nights of our climate, at another the most distant countries. With what goodness has it pleased the Divine Wisdom, to grant our earth a faithful companion, to enlighten almost half our nights! Alas! we do not sufficiently value this wise appointment of the Creator. But, there is a people who know better than us how to estimate this advantage; to whom the light of the Moon is indispensable. Doubtless they feel more gratitude for this present from heaven than we generally do.

The continual changes of the Moon, both in respect of her phases, and her course, are a lively emblem of the revolutions to which terrestrial things are liable. Sometimes health, joy, affluence, and a thousand other blessings, concur to render us happy; and we walk, so to speak, in brilliant light. But, at the end of a few days, all this splendor disappears; and soon there remains only the sorrowful remembrance of the transitory and fickle blessings we have enjoyed. How earnestly then should we long to pass from this uncertain world to a region of facility; where, all the blessings which we shall enjoy, shall appear to us the more excellent, because they are not sub ject either to corruption or decay.—*Lu.*

IRISH HUMOUR.—An American citizen, for the purpose of arresting attention, caused his sign to be set upside down. One day, while the rain was pouring down with great violence, a son of Hibernia was discovered directly opposite, standing with some gravity upon his head, and fixing his eyes steadfastly on the sign. On the inquiry being made of this inverted gentleman, why he stood in so singular an attitude, he answered, "I am trying to read that sign."

THE ROYAL GAZETTE is published every Tuesday, by GEO. K. LUGRIN, Printer to the King's Most Excellent Majesty, at his Office in Queen Street, over Mr. Stoot's Store, where Blanks, Handbills, &c. can be struck off at the shortest notice.

CONDITIONS.

The price of this Paper is Sixteen Shillings per annum (exclusive of Postage)—the whole to be paid in advance.

Advertisements not exceeding Twelve Lines will be inserted for Four Shillings and Sixpence the first, and One Shilling and Sixpence for each succeeding Insertion. Advertisements must be accompanied with Cash, and the insertions will be regulated according to the amount received.

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