

description of the Leasowes. I could never form from it any idea of the place as a whole: the imagery seemed broken up into detached slips, like the imagery of a magic lantern; but then nothing could be finer than the insulated slips; and my mind was filled with gorgeous pictures, all fresh and bright, of "sloping groves," "tufted knolls," "wooded valleys," "sequestered lakes," and "noisy rivulets," — of rich grassy lawns, and cascades that come bursting in foam from bosky hill-sides, — of monumental urns, tablets, and temples, — of hermitages and priories; and I had now come to see in what degree my conceptions, drawn from the description, corresponded with the original, if, indeed, the original still maintained the impress given it by the genius of Shenstone. His writings, like almost all poetic writings that do not please equally at sixteen and sixty, had stood their testing century but indifferently well. No one at least would now venture to speak of him as the "celebrated poet, whose divine elegies do honor to our nation, our language, and our species;" though such, sixty years ago, was the estimate of Burns, when engaged in writing his preface to an uncouth volume of poems first published at Kilmarnock, that promise to get over *their* century with much greater ease. On the "Leasowes," — by far the most elaborate of all the compositions of its author, — the ingenious thinking of full twenty years had been condensed; and I was eager to ascertain whether it had not stood its testing century better, under the skyey influences, than "Ophelia's Urn," or "the Song of Colin, a discerning Shepherd," under those corresponding influences of the literary heavens which freshen and preserve whatever has life in it, and wear down and dilapidate whatever is dead.

A little after ten o'clock, a gentleman, who travelled in his own carriage, entered the inn, — a frank, genial Englishman, who seemed to have a kind word for every one, and whom the