

broken a ruin, seeing I must have passed many finer ones undescribed; but it will, I trust, be taken into account that I had perused the "Ruined Abbey" at least twice every twelve-month, from my twelfth to my twentieth year, and that I had now before me the original of the picture. The poem is not a particularly fine one. Shenstone's thinking required rhyme, just as Pope's weakly person needed stays, to keep it tolerably erect; and the "Ruined Abbey" is in blank verse. There is poetry, however, in some of the conceptions, such as that of the peasant, in the days of John, returning listless from his fields after the Pope had pronounced his dire anathema, and seeing in every dark overbellying cloud

"A vengeful angel, in whose waving scroll  
He read damnation."

Nor is the following passage, — descriptive of the same gloomy season of terror and deprivation, — though perhaps inferior in elegance and effect to the parallel passage in the prose of Hume, without merit: —

"The wretch, — whose hope, by stern oppression chased  
From every earthly bliss, still as it saw  
Triumphant wrong, took wing and flew to heaven,  
And rested there, — now mourned his refuge lost,  
And wanted peace. The sacred fane was barred;  
And the lone altar, where the mourners thronged  
To supplicate remission, smoked no more;  
While the green weed luxuriant rose around.  
Some from their deathbed, in delirious woe,  
Beheld the ghastly king approach, begirt  
In tenfold terrors, or, expiring, heard  
The last loud clarion sound, and Heaven's decree  
With unremitting vengeance bar the skies.  
Nor light the grief, — by Superstition weighed, —  
That their dishonored corse, shut from the verge  
Of hallowed earth or tutelary fane,  
Must sleep with brutes, their vassals, in the field,  
Beneath some path in marle unexorcised."