

and, except on Sundays, when the nailer lads get into them, when they can, few people come their way. Squire Shenstone was a poet," she added, "and died for love." This was not quite the case: the Squire, who might have married his Phillis had he not been afraid to incur the expense of a wife, died of a putrid fever at the sober age of forty-nine; but there would have been little wit in substituting a worse for a better story, and so I received without challenge the information of the spinster. In descending, I took the right-hand branch of the valley, which is considerably more extended than that to the left. A low cliff, composed of the yellow gritty sandstone of the Lower Coal Measures, and much overhung by stunted alder and hazel bushes, stands near the head of the ravine, just where the Leasowes begin; and directly out of the middle of the cliff, some three or four feet from its base, there comes leaping to the light, as out of the smitten rock in the wilderness, a clear and copious spring, — one of the "health-bestowing" fountains,

"All bordered with moss,
Where the harebells and violets grew."

Alas! moss, and harebells, and violets, were gone, with the path which had once led to the spot, and the seat which had once fronted it; the waters fell dead and dull into a quagmire, like young human life leaping out of unconscious darkness into misery, and then stole away through a boggy strip of rank grass and rushes, along a line of scraggy alders. All was changed, save the full-volumed spring, and it, —

"A thousand and a thousand years,
'T will flow as now it flows."