

extent of coat-tail, and eclipses the distant sight. Poor Shensstone!—it would have broken his heart. That unsightly mound conveys along its flat, level line, straight as that of a ruler, the Birmingham and Hales Owen Canal. Poor Shensstone once more! With the peculiar art in which he excelled all men, he had so laid out his lakes, that the last in the series seemed to piece on to the great twenty-acre lake dug by the monks, and so to lose itself in the general landscape. And in one of his letters we find him poetical on the course of the vagrant streams,—those of his own grounds,—that feed it. “Their first appearance,” he says, “well resembles the playfulness of infancy; they skip from side to side with a thousand antic motions, that answer no other purpose than the mere amusement of the proprietor. They proceed for a few hundred yards, and then their severer labors begin, resembling the graver toils of manhood. They set mills in motion, turn wheels, and ply hammers for manufactures of all kinds; and in this manner roll on under the name of the Stour, supplying works for casting, forging, and shaping iron for every civil and military purpose. Perhaps you may not know that my rills are the principal sources of this river; or that it furnishes the propelling power to more iron-works than almost any other single river in the kingdom.” The dull mound now cuts off the sportive infancy of the Stour from its sorely-tasked term of useful riverhood. There is so cruel a barrier raised between the two stages, that we fail to identify the hard-working stream below with the playful little runnels above. The water comes bounding all obscurely out of the nether side of the mound, just as it begins its life of toil,—a poor thing without a pedigree, like some hapless child of quality stolen by the gypsies, and sold to hard labor.

Passing upwards along the opposite branch of the valley, I