

ras, that a season of great irritation ensued; very warm personal attacks were directed against him, and another chaplain, a friend of Martyn's, found it expedient to adopt the plan of simply reading the homilies to the congregation, in order to avoid the spirit of dissimulation and controversy which began to prevail universally.

"It is not improbable that his opponents in the ship would have been equally unmoved had he addressed them in a different manner; but the experiment should have been tried, the truth should have been spoken in love, and a way gradually opened for the introduction of topics which could not be heard with candour, or received with advantage by minds in a state of violent irritation against them." P. 365.

Upon the whole we cannot close our remarks without thanking Mr. Sumner for the pleasure and satisfaction we have derived from the perusal of his work. We do not doubt that it will take its station in the highest rank of the more popular theological productions of the day. We do not doubt, that from the nature of the subject, as well as from the exalted patronage under which it is ushered into the world, it will enjoy a well merited degree of public favour. The world in general are apt to be startled at the very name of a book of divinity: but the work before us has none of the forbidding dryness and prolixity, none of the offensive asperity, none of the ponderous dulness, which are the established attributes which the world never fails to ascribe to every theological work. The volume before us is practical in its tendency, and is well calculated to address itself to the refined and polished understanding; and we have little doubt will, wherever it is read and known, be duly appreciated; and have a powerful tendency to promote those practical ends which should be the ultimate object of every work on religious subjects, and the attainment of which, we doubt not, would be to the author a source of more sincere gratification, than any which the praise and celebrity attending his exertions could possibly bestow.

ART. V. *The Private Memoirs and Confessions of a Justified Sinner. Written by himself. With a Detail of curious traditional Facts, and other Evidence, by the Editor.* 12mo. 390. pp. 10s. 6d. Longman. 1824.

WRITE what he will, there is a diseased and itching peculiarity of style, a *scabies et porrigo Porci*, which, under every

disguise, is always sure to betray Mr. Hogg. We had not read twenty pages of this most uncouth and unpleasant volume, before we satisfied ourselves of its parentage: and notwithstanding our usual deep mistrust of internal evidence, we are enough confirmed in our opinion, upon a careful revision of its matter, to treat it as the production of the Ettrick Shepherd.

Out of three hundred and ninety closely printed pages, one hundred and forty-two are occupied by the "Editor's Narrative:" a narrative which we are by no means sure that we wholly understand: but of a very brief abstract of which we shall endeavour to the best of our power to put our readers in possession. In 1687, George Colwan, Laird of Dalchastre and Balgrennan, married the sole daughter and heiress of Baillie Orde, of Glasgow. The laird was "a droll careless chap;" the bride, on the contrary, had drunk deep from the bitter waters of Predestinarianism. The festivities of the wedding were interrupted by a nuptial quarrel, which is coarsely related at a wearisome length, and the consequence of which was an immediate separation between the ill-adjusted pair. Lady Dalcastle's cause was espoused by Mr. Wringhim, the puritanical divine from whom she had imbibed her fearful notions of religion; and we are given to understand that as the laird supplied the place of his legitimate wife by the affectionate cares of his housekeeper, Miss Logan, so the lady similarly employed the services of her devout chaplain, to atone for the neglect of her undutiful spouse. Two sons, however, were the fruit of this nominal union: the eldest, George, was acknowledged by his father, and educated by him as his heir; the second, Robert, was consigned to the care of the deputy whom Lady Dalcastle had substituted for her liege lord. The tempers of the two youths from their birth seemed naturally to resemble those of their respective protectors; and the opposite system of education by which they were trained, materially contributed to strengthen this marked difference. George was a generous, light-hearted, ballastless scapegrace: Robert was a stern, ungovernable, ferocious, saturnine Covenanter. Till arrived at years of manhood they never met: and then their first interview occurred in a tennis-court, at Edinburgh. The elder was a skilful player, and was engaged in a match of deep interest. The younger impudently obtruded himself as a spectator, disturbed the game, and pertinaciously sought and succeeded in provoking a quarrel. George, who did not know his brother, struck him; and the blow was never forgotten. A clumsy mixture of the politics of the day is forced into the

story at this period, with a view of giving it the circumstantiality of authentic narrative; but the episode is stitched on with so rude a needle, that we must be forgiven if we keep to the main texture, without meddling with this unsightly patch. The bickering between the brothers, thus commenced, was daily renewed. Go where he would, George was haunted by the fiend-like apparition of Robert, whose "approaches were undiscerned, and whose looks were fraught with hideous malignity." At places of public amusement, at church, at his own door, in the streets, in his private walks, his steps were ever beset by the being whom he most sought to avoid. But we hasten over these meetings, some of which are intended to be thought supernatural, in order that we may arrive at the catastrophe. George, after a tavern dinner, adjourns with some friends to a bagnio. Here he has a slight altercation with one of the party, a Mr. Drummond, who quits the house. In a few minutes George is summoned out, and his body is found on the next morning stabbed in two places.

Suspicion was strong against Drummond, and the train of circumstantial evidence arrayed against him was apparently too conclusive to leave a doubt of his guilt. Though he persisted in a firm denial of all knowledge of the transaction, his friends did not think it advisable that he should encounter the merciless investigation of a Scottish criminal Court. He withdrew in good season, for he was pronounced guilty of murder, outlawed for not appearing, and advertised with a high reward for his apprehension. The old laird did not long survive the loss of his favourite son. He also was unconvinced of Drummond's participation in the murder. God, he said, who had permitted the flagrant deed, would bring it to light in his own time and way; and his chief regret appeared to be that his spurious issue, whom the law obliged him to recognize, must succeed to his estates—an event which in a few weeks afterwards took place.

Miss Logan partook of the suspicions of her dying protector; and she resolved to dedicate her remaining days to the unravelment of the mystery. A flat burglary luckily brought her acquainted with a genuine melodramatic heroine, who with the exception of the minor feminine virtues of chastity and honesty, was endowed with every quality which might entitle her to canonization. This damsel, in the course of professional occupation, had seen the transaction of the fatal night, in which young Dalcastle fought, not with Drummond, but with a person so strongly resembling him, that without an indisputable knowledge of an *alibi*, she must have believed it to have been that person. Dalcastle was pressing

upon his antagonist when he was foally assassinated from behind by his younger brother, who had been secreted for the base purpose in a dark entrance by the mysterious antagonist.

By this clue, the ladies jointly traced the crime to Robert Wringhim Colwan; whom they found at Dalcastle, in company with the duplicate Drummond. The latter, however, had now dispensed with this likeness, which he had once assumed for his own purpose, and for the present, wore that of the murdered George Colwan. The ladies heard him endeavouring to persuade his wretched friend to crown his wickedness by the assassination of his mother. Dalcastle discovered his visitors, and made a fruitless attempt upon their lives. He was, however, overpowered between them; and the ladies having marshalled their evidence in legal form, presented it to "Lord Cragie," who granted a warrant,

"Officers were then despatched, without delay, to apprehend the monster, and bring him to justice. On these going to the mansion, and inquiring for him, they were told he was at home; on which they stationed guards, and searched all the premises, but he was not to be found. It was in vain that they overturned beds, raised floors, and broke open closets; Robert Wringhim Colwan was lost once and for ever. His mother also was lost; and strong suspicions attached to some of the farmers and house servants, to whom she was obnoxious, relating to her disappearance. The Honourable Thomas Drummond became a distinguished officer in the Austrian service, and died in the memorable year for Scotland, 1715; and this is all with which history, judiciary records, and tradition, furnish me relating to these matters." P. 141.

In order to make the "Private Memoirs" which are subjoined to this narrative in any degree intelligible, it will be necessary to treat them as if they were written in Hebrew, and to begin at the end. When Mr. Hogg has finished his volume, he asks a very naive question, which many a reader, we doubt not, will be inclined to reiterate, "what can this work be?" And he endeavours to explain its nature by referring to a letter written by himself to that "vast profound" of Scottish lore, Blackwood's Magazine. The letter relates to the grave of a suicide, on a wild height, called Cowan's Croft. Tradition states, that more than a century back, the unhappy wretch whose bones ought to moulder in it, hung himself in a singular manner, on a neighbouring haystack. A summer or two back, the grave was opened; the body was found entire; and Mr. Hogg dressed up the facts of the fiction, we know not which, and gave them, to the public in

the manner which we have described. Another gentleman, the Editor of this volume, ("Mungo here, Mungo there," for who can this be, save Mr. Hogg himself?) was attracted by the wildness of the tale, visited the spot, saw the remains of the remains, which he describes with most loathsome circumstantiality, and discovered about them a leathern case containing a printed pamphlet, of which the pages before us are a faithful reprint.

The Suicide then, was no other than Robert Wringhim Cowlan, the Predestinarian and Murderer; and the Memoirs are those of his miserable career. He details his infant training in Hyper-Covenanting-Calvinism; till the stern and ferocious doctrines which he had imbibed, had clutched all the powers of his soul in their unrelenting grasp. A boyhood of petty guile and hypocrisy in trifles prepared him to become a burning light of his sect when he attained to manhood; and we think, it little needed the active and personal co-operation of the Devil himself.—There was no *nodus* which required such cacodæmonical interference, in order to bring the self-justified sinner to the halter which he richly merited, whether adjusted by his own individual hands or those of the public executioner.

Mr. Hogg has probably been reading a German Tale, recently translated into English, under the title of *The Devil's Elixir*: and from this he has no doubt borrowed the machinery of his present volume. The similarity, *mutatis mutandis*, is too striking to be accidental. Each of the heroes of the two narratives is subjected by different means to the same evil influence; each perpetrates most atrocious crimes under this black guidance, and is made to bear the blame of yet more which are committed for him by his diabolical double. The fiend in each assumes another person's likeness: and about each there is an occasional mist and obscurity, which, as it is probable the writer himself has not penetrated, the reader may be excused for leaving as he finds it.

Robert Wringhim Cowlan had been informed by his real father, (the Covenanting minister,) that he had at length been admitted into the community of the just upon earth; and that in consequence of the incessant prayers and the struggling with God of his parents, he was now exalted to a condition from which all the powers of darkness should never be able to pluck him back. Fraught with this more comfortable assurance, he accidentally meets with and attaches himself to a stranger youth, who, in clothes, form, age, hair, eyes, and features, is the mirror of himself; who professes to hold the same creed, and who dwells with most particular em-

phasis during every religious conversation, on the impossibility of those ever falling away who have once been accepted by God. This new companion gradually obtains uncontrollable influence over Robert's mind; he confirms the wildest notions which his disciple had been taught to entertain of absolute predestination; he weans him entirely from prayer; and when Cowlan asks his name, he conveys a notion of himself and his connection which the reader would scarcely anticipate. We shall give it as it is set down.

"But if you cannot converse without naming me, you may call me Gil for the present," added he; "and if I think proper to take another name at any future period, it shall be with your approbation."

"Gil!" said I; "Have you no name but Gil? Or which of your names is it? Your Christian or surname?"

"O, you must have a surname too, must you," replied he, "Very well, you may call me Gil-Martin. It is not my *Christian* name; but it is a name which may serve your turn."

"This is very strange!" said I. "Are you ashamed of your parents, that you refuse to give your real name?"

"I have no parents save one, whom I do not acknowledge," said he proudly; "therefore, pray drop that subject, for it is a disagreeable one. I am a being of a very peculiar temper, for though I have servants and subjects more than I can number, yet, to gratify a certain whim, I have left them, and retired to this city, and for all the society it contains, you see I have attached myself only to you. This is a secret, and I tell it you only in friendship, therefore pray let it remain one, and say not another word about the matter."

"I assented, and said no more concerning it; for it instantly struck me that this was no other than the *Czar Peter of Russia*, having heard that he had been travelling through Europe in disguise; and I cannot say that I had not henceforward great and mighty hopes of high preferment, as a defender and avenger of the oppressed Christian Church, under the influence of this great potentate. He had hinted as much already, as that it was more honourable, and of more avail to put down the wicked with the sword, than try to reform them, and I thought myself quite justified in supposing that he intended me for some great employment, that he had thus selected me for his companion out of all the rest in Scotland, and even pretended to learn the great truths of religion from my mouth. From that time I felt disposed to yield to such a great prince's suggestions without hesitation." P. 195.

The first practical fruit which Gil-Martin reaps from the doctrines which he has inculcated, is in persuading Cowlan to murder Mr. Blanchard, "a worthy pious divine, but quite of the moral cast." The arguments which Gil advanced,

were, that such a man might do infinite evil; that a Christian soldier ought not to hesitate in destroying all enemies of his church; that it was the duty of an elect champion of the faith, to cut off a rotten limb; that if Blanchard was worthy, by death he was only exchanging his present situation for a better; if he was unworthy, it was fitter that one should fall than that a thousand souls should perish. These sophisms by day, similar dreams by night, (for the Czar Peter, Gil-Martin exercised his extraordinary influence even when absent,) and a vision of golden daggers, not like that of Macbeth on a similar occasion, with "the handle towards his hand," but by an odd contradiction, with the point towards it, persuaded Robert in the end, that the proposed murder was the will of the Lord, and led him to its execution in cold blood.

An unhappy rival preacher was tried and condemned on strong circumstantial evidence for this crime, and the Czar Peter pronounced this feat, by which an innocent fellow-creature was left to the gallows, to be worthier of his friend than even that which occasioned it. He next introduced Robert to his brother, and we are presented with an account of their quarrel as it was viewed by the aggressor himself. One of the deepest mysteries of the volume follows, and this we shall cite as a specimen of their style.

"Immediately after this I was seized with a strange distemper, which neither my friends nor physicians could comprehend, and it confined me to my chamber for many days; but I knew, myself, that I was bewitched, and suspected my father's reputed concubine of the deed. I told my fears to my reverend protector, who hesitated concerning them, but I knew by his words and looks that he was conscious I was right. I generally conceived myself to be two people. When I lay in bed, I deemed there were two of us in it; when I sat up, I always beheld another person, and always in the same position from the place where I sat or stood, which was about three paces off me towards my left side. It mattered not how many or how few were present: this my second self was sure to be present in his place; and this occasioned a confusion in all my words and ideas that utterly astounded my friends, who all declared, that instead of being deranged in my intellect, they had never heard my conversation manifest so much energy or sublimity of conception; but for all that, over the singular delusion that I was two persons, my reasoning faculties had no power. The most perverse part of it was, that I rarely conceived myself to be any of the two persons. I thought for the most part that my companion was one of them, and my brother the other; and I found, that to be obliged to speak and answer in the character of another man, was a most awkward business at the long run.

"Who can doubt, from this statement, that I was bewitched, and that my relatives were at the ground of it? The constant and unnatural persuasion that I was my brother, proved it to my own satisfaction, and must, I think, do so to every unprejudiced person. This victory of the wicked one over me kept me confined in my chamber, at Mr. Millar's house, for nearly a month, until the prayers of the faithful prevailed, and I was restored. I knew it was a chastisement for my pride, because my heart was lifted up at my superiority over the enemies of the church; nevertheless, I determined to make short work with the aggressor, that the righteous might not be subjected to the effect of his diabolical arts again.

"I say I was confined a month. I beg he that readeth to take note of this, that he may estimate how much the word, or even the oath, of a wicked man, is to depend on. For a month I saw no one but such as came into my room, and for all that, it will be seen, that there were plenty of the same set to attest upon oath that I saw my brother every day during that period; that I persecuted him with my presence day and night, while all the time I never saw his face, save in a delusive dream. I cannot comprehend what manœuvres my illustrious friend was playing off with them about this time; for he, having the art of personating whom he chose, had peradventure deceived them, else so many of them had never all attested the same thing." P. 233.

A solemn compact was entered into not long afterwards between the friends, which one would suppose might have awakened a suspicion in Robert Cowlan that he was not exactly dealing with the Czar Peter in disguise. Gil-Martin gave his "bond of blood that no human hand should ever henceforth be able to injure his companion's life, nor shed one drop of his precious blood, on condition that he would walk always by his directions." In spite of all recollections of Drs. Dee and Faustus, Robert accepted the bargain with cheerfulness, and with no apparent misgiving that the powers of the Russian Autocrat might be too limited to redeem a pledge, which no other crowned head (as far as we remember) has hitherto ventured to embody in any treaty.

On the night of George Cowlan's murder, Gil-Martin having gained the assent of Robert to the deed, assumed the form of Drummond; he then planted Robert in a dark entry, and pretending to give way to his antagonist, called for help, which was too fatally afforded. The subsequent death of the Laird placed Robert in possession of the family estates, and he was accompanied by his friend to Dalcastle: here, to his surprise, when he believed that he had passed not quite one month, he learned that he had been resident four months and seven days, during which period, as he was also informed, he had debauched an innocent girl, the daughter of a widow,

and had instituted a suit against the unhappy mother, which has transferred her lands to himself and reduced her to utter destitution. Of these acts he was utterly unconscious, and they are succeeded by a second series of equal horror, during another period of similar abstraction; the murders of his mother and his mistress are among them. On his resuscitation he was again joined by Gil-Martin, who now pleased to assume the shape of the deceased George. Robert for the first time was anxious to get quit of his old acquaintance; but he was checked by a mild avowal of fidelity, and a pleasant promise of future enjoyment.

"Sooner shall you make the mother abandon the child of her bosom; nay, sooner cause the shadow to relenquish the substance, than separate me from your side. Our beings are amalgamated, as it were, and consociated in one, and never shall I depart from this country until I can carry you in triumph with me. P. 289.

"We are all subjected to two distinct natures in the same person. I myself have suffered grievously in that way. The spirit that now directs my energies is not that with which I was endowed at my creation. It is changed within me, and so is my whole nature. My former days were those of grandeur and felicity. But, would you believe it? *I was not then a Christian.* Now I am. I have been converted to its truths by passing through the fire, and since my final conversion, my misery has been extreme. You complain that I have not been able to render you more happy than you were. Alas! do you expect it in the difficult and exterminating career which you have begun. I, however, promise you this—a portion of the only happiness which I enjoy, sublime in its motions, and splendid in its attainments—I will place you on the right hand of my throne, and show you the grandeur of my domains, and the felicity of my millions of true professors." P. 293.

At length affairs approached a crisis. Robert was accused of the murder of his mother, and absconded, after exchanging clothes with Gil. He slept on the first night of his flight in a weaver's house, and, to his astonishment, on the next morning, found his own clothes substituted for the borrowed garb, sorely to the annoyance of his host, who believed his lodger to be no better than he should be. Arrived at Edinburgh he engaged with a printer, and here he found time and means to print his own journal, presenting it to his employer under the guise of "a Religious Parable, such as the *Pilgrim's Progress.*" While the work was yet in the press the devil was said to have appeared twice and to have assisted in printing it.

"Surely you are not such a fool," said I, "as to believe that the devil really was in the printing office?"

"Oo, gud bless you sir! saw him myself, gave him a nod, and good-day. Rather a gentlemanly personage—Green Circassian hunting coat and turban—Like a foreigner—Has the power of vanishing in one moment though—Rather a suspicious circumstance that. Otherwise, his appearance not much against him. P. 341.

The master printer having heard this report, examined the pamphlet, which he had not looked at before, and gave no mean proof, as we think, of his critical powers, by calling it "a medley of lies and blasphemy;" and no injudicious exercise of his power, by committing the whole impression to the flames. Robert perceived who had been the unwelcome visitor, and treasuring up the clean sheets which now afforded the only remaining copy of his Memoirs, hastily abandoned Edinburgh, and set out for England.

Every subsequent night was passed in strange and horrible disturbance. Noises and contentions "were heard at the doors and windows and on the roof of the house in which Dalcastle chanced to abide," louder and more furious than the heat of battle when the volleys of artillery are mixed with groans, shouts, and blasphemous cursing. It thundered and lightened, and there were screams, groans, laughter and execrations all intermingled. On one occasion, when he was fairly turned out of doors by his host in the middle of the night,

"The scene that ensued is neither to be described, nor believed, if it were. I was momentarily surrounded by a number of hideous fiends, who gnashed on me with their teeth, and clenched their crimson paws in my face; and at the same instant I was seized by the collar of my coat behind, by my dreaded and devoted friend, who pushed me on, and with his gilded rapier waving and brandishing around me, defended me against all their united attacks. Horrible as my assailants were in appearance, (and they had all monstrous shapes,) I felt that I would rather have fallen into their hands, than be thus led away captive by my defender at his will and pleasure, without having the right or power to say my life, or any part of my will, was my own. I could not even thank him for his potent guardianship; but hung down my head, and moved on I knew not whither, like a criminal led to execution, and still the infernal combat continued, till about the dawning, at which time I looked up, and all the fiends were expelled but one, who kept at a distance; and still my persecutor and defender pushed me by the neck before him.

"At length he desired me to sit down and take some rest, with which I complied, for I had great need of it, and wanted the power to withstand what he desired. There, for a whole morning did he detain me, tormenting me with reflections on the past, and pointing out the horrors of the future, until a thousand times I wished my-

self non-existent. "I have attached myself to your wayward fortune," said he, "and it has been my ruin as well as thine. Ungrateful as you are, I cannot give you up to be devoured; but this is a life that it is impossible to brook longer. Since our hopes are blasted in this world, and all our schemes of grandeur overthrown; and since our everlasting destiny is settled by a decree which no act of ours can invalidate, let us fall by our own hands, or by the hands of each other; die like heroes; and, throwing off this frame of dross and corruption, mingle with the pure ethereal essence of existence, from which we derived our being."

"I shuddered at a view of the dreadful alternative, yet was obliged to confess that in my present circumstances existence was not to be borne. It was in vain that I reasoned on the sinfulness of the deed, and on its damning nature; he made me condemn myself out of my own mouth, by allowing the absolute nature of justifying grace, and the impossibility of the elect ever falling from the faith, or the glorious end to which they were called; and then he said, this granted, self-destruction was the act of a hero, and none but a coward would shrink from it, to suffer a hundred times more every day and night that passed over his head.

"I said I was still contented to be that coward; and all that I begged of him was, to leave me to my fortune for a season, and to the just judgment of my creator; but he said his word and honour were engaged on my behalf, and these, in such a case, were not to be violated. "If you will not pity yourself, have pity on me," added he: "turn your eyes on me, and behold to what I am reduced."

"Involuntarily did I turn round at the request, and caught a half glance of his features. May no eye destined to reflect on the beauties of the New Jerusalem inward upon the beatific soul, behold such a sight as mine then beheld! My immortal spirit, blood and bones, were all withered at the blasting sight; and I arose and withdrew, with groanings which the pangs of death shall never wring from me. P. 357.

A few more nights of horror complete the tale. Gil-Martin informed him that a number of infernals were watching to make a prey of his body, and that he could only be rescued by repeating, when in the greatest extremity, a certain ejaculatory prayer, which he taught him. The words of this were equivocal and susceptible of a meaning "perfectly dreadful." Robert treasured it up however, and prepared to pass the night alone in an outhouse which had been appointed for his shelter. The remainder he must tell in his own manner.

"September 8.—My first night of trial in this place is overpast! Would that it were the last that I should ever see in this detested world! If the horrors of hell are equal those I have suffered,

eternity will be of short duration there, for no created energy can support them for one single month or week. I have been blasted as never living creature was. My vitals have all been torn, and every faculty and feeling of my soul racked, and tormented into callous insensibility. I was even hung by the locks over a yawning chasm, to which I could perceive no bottom, and then—not till then, did I repeat the tremendous prayer!—I was instantly at liberty; and what I now am, the Almighty knows! Amen.

"September 18, 1712.—Still am I living, though liker to a vision than a human being; but this is my last day of mortal existence. Unable to resist any longer, I pledged myself to my devoted friend, that on this day we should die together, and trust to the charity of the children of men for a grave. I am solemnly pledged; and though I dared to repent, I am aware he will not be gainsaid, for he is raging with despair at his fallen and decayed majesty, and there is some miserable comfort in the idea that my tormentor shall fall with me. Farewell, world, with all thy miseries; for comforts or enjoyments hast thou none! Farewell, woman, whom I have despised and shunned; and man, whom I have hated; whom, nevertheless, I desire to leave in charity! And thou, sun, bright emblem of a far brighter effulgence, I bid farewell to thee also! I do not now take my last look of thee, for to thy glorious orb shall a poor suicide's last earthly look be raised. But, ah! who is yon that I see approaching furiously—his stern face blackened with horrid despair! My hour is at hand.—Almighty God, what is this that I am about to do! The hour of repentance is past, and now my fate is inevitable.—Amen for ever! I will now seal up my little book, and conceal it; and cursed be he who trieth to alter or amend. P. 366.

Such is a rapid outline of this narrative, and we repeat that it cannot proceed from any pen but that of Mr. Hogg. No other writer could make himself so exactly in all points *qui simul*, unless indeed there be a Gil-Martin in the present day, who professes identity with the Ettrick original. We are unable fully to penetrate the object of the work, but whatever this may be, in its effect we fear it will be mischievous. Mr. Hogg's is not the hand which should approach the abuse of things sacred with railery; and if his intention be to expose the absurdity of principle and the atrocity of conduct into which the unqualified adoption of the doctrine of absolute election may plunge its followers, we fear he has not succeeded in this attempt without exposing religion itself, in some degree, to the malice of the scoffer. We are far from being among those who hold that Christianity can suffer by a judicious ridicule of fanaticism. On the contrary, we think that such a weapon is not only legitimate, but that it possesses a keenness and power which belongs to no other; since

Daniel Wilson's Tour.

here are many things which cannot be attacked seriously without the hazard of bestowing upon them an importance which they little deserve. A laugh raised at the expence of those who profane religion by fantastic and extravagant appendages is widely different from a laugh at religion itself; for inasmuch as the holy truths which we cherish demand our attachment and reverence, in the same proportion do perversions of them call for our indignation and reproof.

In the dexterity or the clumsiness with which this bright but dangerous weapon is employed, lies the distinction between the man of genius and the pretender. *Il est vrai qu'il faut prendre garde que les railleries ne soient pas basses et indignes de la verité. Mais à cela près quand on pourra s'en servir avec adresse c'est un devoir que d'en user.* The sentiment is that of Tertullian, the words are those of Pascal. We wish that the caution which is conveyed in them had been better known to Mr. Hogg.

ART. VI. *Letters from an absent Brother, containing some Account of a Tour through parts of the Netherlands, Switzerland, Northern Italy, and France, in the Summer of 1823.* Two Vols. 8vo. 12s. 6d. Wilson. 1824.

THE advertisements to the first and second editions of these volumes, are somewhat at variance with one another.

The first informs us that

"The Author of the following Letters has yielded, with extreme reluctance, to the desires of his Family and Friends, by printing a few copies of them for private circulation. He earnestly entreats, that no one, into whose hands this small work may fall, will become necessary, in any way, to the Letters, or any part of them, being made public."

The second, as might be expected, reverses this sentence, and states, that the author finds himself compelled to consent to the present publication, since the copies of the letters have been, in fact, so widely circulated, as to make further concealment fruitless, if not impossible.

We see no occasion for these apologies. Mr. Wilson took a trip to the continent for his health—wrote an account of what he saw to his sister—and on his return to this country,

revised and published his letters: a common and innocent concatenation of circumstances, in which the writer and the bookseller are usually more interested than any other portion of the community.

But the volumes before us are of greater importance. The author is not a tourist, but "an enquirer into subjects connected with morals and religion." "He was not at all aware of the length of his correspondence, till he saw it collected on his return;" when "he found, to his utter surprise," that "a considerable circle of friends were pleased to express themselves gratified with the number and variety of facts he had collected, and especially with his account of the state of religion abroad." Since this "the author has received, from various friends, on whose judgment he has been accustomed to rely, the most encouraging expectations as to the work itself," &c. &c. &c.

If these various friends referred to Mr. Wilson's Tour, we can only wish him abler advisers. For, it is neither more nor less than a repetition of what every one has heard before—the travelling correspondence of a plain sensible man, who visits the Rhine and the Simplon for the first time. We suppose, however, that the considerable circle were not thinking of the journey, but of "the subjects connected with religion and morals." As Mr. Wilson is considered an authority in these matters, his letters might be expected to excite considerable attention. For our own parts, we certainly felt curious to know what our author would feel and say, under the novel circumstances in which he was placed; and, presuming that our readers may have a similar curiosity, we shall endeavour to gratify it.

The miscellaneous portions of the work will not detain us long. Schaffhausen and the lake of Geneva, Mont Blanc and Chamouny, can receive no fresh decorations from the hands of a traveller, except his powers of writing are of the highest order. Mr. Wilson's are not. He has a keen relish for the beauties of nature—but he cannot paint them;—his adventures are in no respect above common place. An active and affectionate father of a family travels along after the usual fashion, and we sympathise in the satisfaction which he feels at the recovery of his health and the welfare of his wife and children. But the religious parts of the letters are more important. They bespeak a man who is in earnest—a man who is not accustomed to waste his time or husband his strength—a man who is generally deficient in independence or in moderation. He generally thinks for him-