

THE DOOM OF SOULIS.

"They rolled him up in a sheet of lead,
A sheet of lead for a funeral pall;
They plunged him in the caldron red,
And melted him—lead, and bones, and all."—*Leyden.*

A Gazetteer would inform you that Den-
olm is a village beautifully situated near
the banks of the Teviot, about midway be-
tween Jedburgh and Hawick, in the parish
of Cavers; and, perhaps, if of modern date,
would add, it has the honour of being the
birth-place of Dr. Leyden. However, it was
somewhat early on a summer morning, a few
years ago, that a young man, a stranger, with
a fishing-rod in his hand and a creel fastened
to his shoulders, entered the village. He stood
in the midst of it, and, turning round—"This,
gentlemen," said he, "is the birth-place of Ley-
den—the son of genius—the martyr of study;
a friend of Scott!"

Few of the villagers were astir; and at
first he met—who carried a spade over
his shoulder, and appeared to be a ditcher;
inquired if he could shew him the house
in which the bard and scholar was born.

"Oh, ay, sir," said the man, "I wad can
I'll shew ye that instantly, and proud to
show you it too."

"That is good," thought the stranger;
"the prophet is dead, but he yet speaketh;
with honour in his own country."

The ditcher conducted him across the green
past the end of a house, which was des-
cribed as being a school-house, and was
newly built, and led him towards an humble
building, the height of which was but a sin-
gle story, and which was found occupied by
a blacksmith as a workshop. Yet, again, the
stranger rejoiced to find that the occupier
valued his premises for the poet's sake,
that he honoured the genius of him who
was born in their precincts.

"Show it!" said the stranger, quoting the
usual phrase of poor Leyden, "I shall fish to-
day." And I wonder not at his hav-
ing said; for it is not every day that we
stand beneath the thatch-clad roof—or
under her roof—where was born one whose
name will bear written in undying char-
acters on its wings, until those wings droop
in darkness of eternity.

The stranger proceeded up the Teviot, of-

tentimes thinking of Leyden, of all that he
had written, and occasionally repeating pas-
sages aloud. He almost forgot that he had
a rod in his hand—his eyes did anything but
follow the fly, and, I need hardly say, his
success was not great.

About mid-day, he sat down on the green
bank in solitariness, to enjoy a sandwich,
and he also placed by his side a small flask
containing spirits, which almost every an-
gler, who can afford it, carries with him.—
But he had not sat long, when a venerable
looking old man saluted him with—

"Here's a bonny day, sir." The old man
stood as he spoke. There was something pre-
possessing in his appearance. He had a wea-
ther-beaten face, with thin white hair; blue
eyes that had lost somewhat of their former
lustre; his shoulders were rather bent; and
he seemed a man who was certainly neither
rich nor affluent, but who was at ease with
the world, and the world was at ease with
him.

They entered into conversation, and they
sat down together. The old man appeared
exactly one of those characters whom you
will occasionally find fraught with the tra-
ditions of the Borders, and still tainted with,
and half believing in their ancient supersti-
tions. I wish not to infer that superstition
was carried to a greater height of absurdity
on the Borders than in other parts of En-
gland and Scotland, nor even that the inha-
bitants of the north were as remarkable in
early days for their superstitions, as they now
are for their intelligence; for every nation
had its superstitions, and I am persuaded
that most of them might be traced to a com-
mon origin. Yet, though the same in origin,
they change their likeness with the charac-
ter of a nation or district. People uncon-
sciously made their superstitions to suit them-
selves, though their imaginary effects still
terrified them. There was, therefore, a
something characteristic in the fables of our
forefathers, which fables they believed as
facts. The cunning deceived the ignorant;