

This narrow isthmus 'twixt two boundless seas,
 The *Past*, the *Future*, two Eternities!
 Would sully the bright spot—or leave it bare,
 When he might build him a proud temple there?
 A name, which long should hallow all its space,
 And be each purer soul's high resting place."

To suit the prejudices which the circumstances of time have woven around our hearts, we may descend for a moment, to particulars; and glance at parting, to that branch of the human family with which we are more intimately connected.

The very outset of British history is strongly marked, and romantic; and is at once a check and an excitement to our national pride. We behold migratory barbarians, from the Continent, settling as Fishers and Hunters on the white cliffed Island. We see the Romans illustrating that sentiment,

"Quiet to quick bosoms is a Hell"

and greedy of conquest, descending on the rude Britons, as Eagles on a defenceless flock. We perceive the innate thirst which man has for liberty, and his detestation of wrong, excite the barbarians into stubborn opposition; until accumulated murder reduced their numbers and their resolution, and they bowed helpless slaves under the feet of their civilized masters. We again behold them free, to be persecuted by their more warlike neighbours of Caledonia, and to be again enslaved by daring adventurers from Saxony. We see the strangers over-run, and incorporate themselves, and found a Monarchy in the Country; and behold their descendants in turn driven into caves and mountains, before the locust-like swarms from Denmark. We witness the immortal Alfred, that model of a good and great King, nobly profiting by adversity and prosperity, and like a Giant stemming the tide of national calamity; we find the mounds which he raised against evil, keeping it long in check; but see it finally overleap all, and then deluge and desolate the land. Compounding with the oppressor, we see Britain, weak in arm, and broken in spirit, and behold the Saxons and the Danes ruling together; and, again, see them both set aside, by the cunning and bravery of the Norman Adventurer. From William the Conqueror, and the Tyrant, we have a less broken series down to our day; replete with all which can arouse and captivate the human mind.

In this study, the Eras are many, which address us in the dignified tone of Philosophy; and the incidents are innumerable, which speak trumpet-tongued, to all the energies of our nature. He who reads the history of his own country aright, will often feel his heart swell and his cheek blanch, at the mighty wrongs, which serpent-