

these glowing, these energetic compositions, these noble effusions of creative fancy, have yielded to the dull ridiculous race of novels! which have made affected sentimental puppets of our females, mere vain pretenders to sensibility, which they are too frivolous to feel; and which have debased into dauling fops and effeminate coxcombs, a race of men who used to be the glory of Europe, the assertors of human virtue, and of human dignity. Oh happy, glorious age!

'When the provencal lyre, with roses
'drest,
'Waked into life the Genius of the West!
'When chivalry, her banners all unfurl'd,
'Charmed with her bold exploits the
'splendid world.'

Or as our ancient bard Lydgate, on another occasion, beautifully expresses himself:

'Fortitude then stode stedfast in his
'night,
'Defended wydowes, cherished chastity;
'Knyghthood in prowes gave so clere a
'light,
'Girte with his sword of truth and
'equity.'

'Yes, these were the days of virtue and of honour, when sublimity of sentiment blended with generous simplicity, and martial ardour was wedded to hospitable freedom—when the gem of chastity was prized according to its worth, and man considered himself not as the spoiler, but as the guardian of innocence; when the smiles of beauty were at once the beacons and the rewards of generous fortitude—and the hands of the fair one entwined the wreath of fame to crown the brows of the hero whom her charms had stimulated in the glorious chase! Then too it was that modest simplicity taught refinement to accord with dignity; and gallantry, now the pest of society, was regulated by the laws of innocence. Why was I not doomed to live in this age of splendid hospitality? why did I come loitering into the world when its spirit and energy were extinct, and affectation had smothered all the glowing feelings of nature? Yet even now the perusal of those writings which picture the manners of that lamented age, and renew to our imaginations, the amusements and the fictions which delighted our godlike ancestors, imparts to us some proportion of the heroism and the generosity of the age perhaps without the alloy of its ambition, or the contamination of its ruder faults.—How do these compo-

sitions restrain the licentious passions, by shewing us, in strong and forcible colours, the trials and the triumphs of determined innocence! How do they sublime the soul, and lift it above, fordid and grovelling objects, by displaying those images of fortitude and perfection, which (how far so ever they may be beyond the reach of human imitation) certainly infuse dignity of sentiment; and, as Hayley expresses it,

'New model nature on her noblest
'plan,
'And give fresh sinews to the soul of
'man!'

How do they restrain from vicious indulgence, by giving to vice its most horrid form!—Where the sublime geniuses of the present æra to dress narrations, of this kind in a regular system, of that moral allegory of which they are so susceptible, and reduce them to those classical rules by which they might be conducted, how lasting and advantageous would be the impressions they might make on the youthful fancy! and how much more might they tend to sublimate and delight the heart

'Than all which charms this laggard
'age!'

Thus saying, he bade us a hasty adieu, and departed in a fit of enthusiasm, leaving me not a little delighted with this striking portrait of my boyish ardour.

'Fool!' exclaimed Mordant with a sulky frown, as soon as he was gone.—Then after muttering for some time to himself, 'And all this rhodomontade,' said he, 'about cutting people's throats for a foolish puppet of a girl! and then dressing out the affair with incomprehensible lies about dragons and enchanters, and such like stuff!'

THE BEAUTY.

While he was yet speaking Melville returned. He cast an indignant look at the cynic, and turning gaily to me, 'Well but my dear Apathus,' said he, 'I forgot the very purpose of my visit. You must go with me to-morrow to see the loveliest girl! And if you do not lose all your scepticism, and swear by the bright star of Hesperus and the sigh which stole from the bosom of Venus when first she tasted love, that she is a very angel of a girl, by Heaven, that robbed thee of all the sense of beauty, I will turn sceptic too.'

'Well, Sir,' said Mordant, departing, 'I will go and endeavour to find some
man