

The primrose, on the mossy brae,  
 Burst beauteous into life and day,  
 And smiled to hear thee sing!  
 The children clapped their tiny hands;  
 The shout rang through their little bands,  
 Hailing the bird of spring!  
 Thy lay made earth and air rejoice,  
 And nature heard thee as an angel's voice.

Again in the heavens thy hymn is heard,  
 Bird of the mournful song!  
 A lonely daisy yet decks the sward,  
 The last of the summer throng.  
 While here and there, upon the brae,  
 A pale primrose, languid as the ray  
 Of hope that vanisheth away  
 Upon the cheek of death

Untimely opens its golden wing,  
 Mistaking, as it hears thee sing,  
 That thou art come to tell of spring,  
 And not of winter's wrath.  
 But now thy strain is as one that grieves—  
 Thou singest the dirge of the falling leaves!

Again in the heavens thy hymn I hear,  
 Bird of the merry song!  
 Thou art ringing a lay in old winter's ear—  
 Ye bid him farewell and ye welcome him here—  
 Ye help the old man along!

Ye are singing to look on the fruits of the year  
 Gathered in, & in ripeness, with plenty around;  
 And ye pour o'er earth's fulness a rapturous  
 sound.

Ye are singing a strain that man should have  
 sung—

Man with ingratitude sealed on his tongue!  
 At seed-time, thy joyous and hope breathing lay,  
 To the ploughman was sung, as an anthem, all  
 day,

And now, at his harvest, ye greet him again,  
 And call him to join in thy thanksgiving strain!

Agnes wept as she pursued the foreboding  
 lines, which he had marked in what printers  
 call *italics*, in the second stanza, by drawing  
 a line under them. She felt interested in  
 the fate of Henry Cranstoun—deeply inter-  
 ested. We believe that, like the gentle Des-  
 dimona, she wished that

"Heaven had made her such a man;"

for, though the young writer to the signet  
 spoke not

"Of war, and broils, and battles,"

his tongue was the interpreter of nature—he  
 dwelt as an enthusiast on its beauties, its  
 mysteries, its benevolence, its glorious design;  
 and, through all, he would point

"Through Nature up to nature's God!"

It is a common saying, "that you cannot  
 put an old head upon young shoulders;" but,

if ever the truth of the saying might be dis-  
 puted, it was in the case of Henry Cranstoun.  
 The deaths of his brothers and his sisters  
 had rested upon his young mind—they had  
 struck it with awe—they had made him to  
 feel that he, too, must die—he, indeed, felt as  
 though the shadow of death were creeping  
 over him; and the thoughts and the hopes  
 of eternity early became the companions of  
 his spirit. He treasured up the words of the  
 inspired preacher, "Remember thy Creator  
 in the days of thy youth." He treasured  
 them up, and he practised them; and his  
 deportment gave him a deeper interest in the  
 eyes of the Northumbrian farmer and his  
 family.

William Percy was esteemed by his neigh-  
 bours as a church going and a good man.  
 He was kind to his servants; he paid every  
 man his own; he was an affectionate hus-  
 band, and a fond father; the poor turned not  
 away murmuring from his door; and every  
 Sunday night, he knelt with his wife and his  
 daughter, before his Maker, in worship, as  
 though it were a duty which was to be dis-  
 charged but once in seven days. Now, it  
 was late on a Saturday night when Henry  
 Cranstoun arrived at their house; and, on  
 the following evening, he joined in the devo-  
 tions of the family. But Monday night came,  
 and the supper passed, and the Bibles were  
 not brought. Henry inquired—

"Is it not time for worship?"

The question went to the conscience of the  
 farmer—he felt that before his Creator, who  
 preserved him, who gave him every breath  
 he drew, he had nelt with his family but  
 once a week. "Is not He the Almighty of all  
 time and of all eternity?" asked his con-  
 science; "and have I not served Him as  
 though He were Lord of the Sabbath only?  
 I forsake Him for a week—where should I  
 be if He left me but for a moment?"

"Agnes, love," said he aloud "bring the  
 books."

She cheerfully obeyed; and the Bibles  
 were laid upon the table. The psalm was  
 read, and the voice of praise was heard; and  
 as the hinds in the adjoining houses heard  
 the sound, they followed the example of their  
 master. Hitherto, like their employer, they  
 had lifted their voices in thanksgiving but  
 once a week; as if a few minutes spent in  
 praise and in prayer, and in the reading of  
 a chapter, were all that was necessary for  
 example to a family, or for gratitude to Him  
 who sustained, protected, and gave them  
 being from moment to moment. I should