

an interest from his discoveries; and any account of it must arrest and detain the attention, if it but comprise an intelligible statement of the process by which he was led, from the falling apple, to an explanation of the movements of circling worlds.

But even this charm—the charm arising, not from exciting adventure, but from successful contemplation—the memoirs of a country clergyman can but rarely possess. Not that his profession unfits the mind for the profoundest scientific enquiry, or the highest literary attainment. It involves, on the contrary, the noblest exercise of intellect of which man is capable; calls him to reflect on the loftiest of all subjects; fills his soul with the grandeur of those heavenly relations, on which angels gaze admiring. Its tendency, therefore, is to expand, invigorate, and exalt the mind. But such meditations engross as well as strengthen; the soul is satisfied in them; and all the time that can possibly be devoted to them is deemed but a poor acknowledgment of their supreme importance. And then, again, the active exertions of a parish minister, among those to whom he is called to dispense the word of the gospel, are (if he would be faithful) so heavy and unremitting, that he cannot, except in very peculiar cases, press forward to the front rank among the candidates for literary and scientific fame. Unmarked, therefore, in general, by variety of incident, or by rapid and startling vicissitude,—and seldom, from the very nature of his labours, distinguished by any extraordinary effort to seize a pre-eminence among the men whom the world calls wise,—his days flow on with a quiet and unbroken tenor, and the history of his noiseless course can have little attraction for those readers—we fear,

the majority—with whom interest is measured by excitement.

But, happily, the true value of a life is to be estimated by no such standard. Our bounteous Creator intends that the best of his practical lessons in providence shall be for the benefit of the whole race; and he has therefore lodged them, not in those things which can happen only to a few, but in the peacefully persuasive example of a godly conversation, which may be held forth by many, and urged upon the imitation of all. Thus it is, that striking and surprising events are not, as every one's experience will attest, of necessity the most instructive. To a well regulated mind, they are not even the most pleasing. We may borrow an illustration of their effect from the more mechanical province of the poet's art. The wild and irregular measures of *Thalaba* may captivate for a while; but the tamer rhythm of blank verse or of our old heroic couplet will better bear the trial of the purest taste,—and the ever-varying cadence of the *Paradise Lost*, or the exquisite melody of the *Pleasures of Hope*, will continue to delight, long after the enchantment of the other has been broken. And in like manner,—if we may press so far the comparison of heavenly things with earthly,—the record of a holy life, revealing the upward breathings of a renewed spirit, may convey to the soul a soft and mellowed harmony, more truly and permanently delightful than the impression produced by all the marvels of the most eventful career. The subsiding flood always leaves a sediment behind it. Strong excitement is never free from the hazard of a recoil. And those of our pleasures, which are the most peaceful in their origin and character, are generally the most satisfying and enduring. The history of Napoleon's