

“III. The declaration of Chatterton to Mr. Barrett, concerning the first part of the Battle of Hastings, which he confessed *he had written himself*, is a presumption against the rest. He was then taken by surprise, but at other times preserved a degree of consistency in his falsehood.

“IV. Mr. Rudhall, an intimate acquaintance of Chatterton, declared to Mr. Croft, that he saw him (Chatterton) disguise several pieces of parchment with the appearances of age, and that Chatterton told him, that the parchment which Mr. Rudhall had assisted him in blacking and disguising, was the very parchment he had sent to the printer's, containing ‘the account of the Fryer's passing the old bridge.’

“V. The Rev. Mr. Catcott, brother to the Mr. Catcott before mentioned, affirmed, that having had a conversation one evening with Chatterton, he traced the very substance of this conversation, in a piece which that indefatigable genius produced sometime after as Rowley's.

“VI. Chatterton at first exhibited the Songs to Ælla in his own hand-writing; and afterwards in the parchment, which he gave to Mr. Barrett as the original, there were found several variations which it is supposed he had admitted through forgetfulness, or perhaps, as actual corrections, considering that the parchment was the copy which probably would be resorted to as a standard.

“VII. The hand-writing of the fragment containing the storic of W. Canyuge, is quite different from the hand-writing of that which contains ‘the accounte of W. Canyuge's feast;’ and neither of them is written in the usual record hand of the age to which they are attributed. Indeed in the ‘accounte of W. Canyuge's Feaste,’ the Arabian numerals, (63) are said to be perfectly modern, totally different from the figures used in the fifteenth century, and exactly such as Chatterton himself was accustomed to make.

“VIII. The very existence of any such person as Rowley is questioned, and upon apparently good ground. He is not so much as noticed by William of Worcester, who lived nearly about the supposed time of Rowley, was himself of Bristol, and makes frequent mention of Canyuge. ‘Bale, who lived two hundred years nearer to Rowley than we, and who, by unwearyed industry, dug a thousand bad authors out of obscurity,’ has never taken the least notice

of such a person; nor yet Leland, Pitts, Tanner, nor indeed any other literary biographer. That no copies of any of his works should exist, but those deposited in Redcliffe church, is also a circumstance not easy to be surmounted.

“IX. Objections are even made to the manner in which the poems are said to have been preserved. That title deeds relating to the church or even historical records might be lodged in the muniment room of Redcliffe church, is allowed to be sufficiently probable; but that *poems* should have been consigned to a chest with six keys, kept in a private room in a church with title deeds and conveyances, and that these keys should be entrusted, not to the heads of a college, or any literary society, but to aldermen and churchwardens, is a supposition replete with absurdity; and the improbability is increased, when we consider that these very papers passed through the hands of persons of some literature, of Chatterton's father in particular, who had a taste for poetry, and yet without the least discovery of their intrinsic value.

Internal Evidence.

“In point of style, composition, and sentiment, it is urged by Mr. Warton, and those who adopt the same side of the controversy, that the poems of Rowley are infinitely superior to every other production of the century, which is said to have produced them. Our ancient poets are minute and particular, they do not deal in abstraction and general exhibition, but dwell on realities; but the writer of these poems adopts ideal terms and artificial modes of explaining a fact, and employs to frequently the aid of metaphor and personification. Our ancient bards abound in unnatural conceptions, strange imaginations, and even the most ridiculous inconsistencies; but Rowley's poems present us with no incongruous combinations, no mixture of manners, institutions, usages, and character: they contain no violent or gross improprieties. One of the striking characteristics of old English poetry, is a continued tenor of disparity. In Gower, Chaucer, and Lydgate, elegant descriptions, ornamental images, &c., bear no proportion to pages of langour, mediocrity, prosaic and uninteresting details; but the poems in question are uniformly supported, and are throughout poetical and animated. Poetry, like other sciences (say these critics) has its gradual accessions and advancements; and the poems in question pos-