



AN ORIGINAL THOUGHT.

BY MRS. ABBY.

Does the press wait for copy?—I shrink from the task ;—

One boon from the Genius of Fancy I ask ;
I want not a subject, I want not a rhyme,
Nor metaphors florid, nor figures sublime ;
Additional leisure I sigh not to claim,
And I feel I have more than due justice from Fame
I covet what cannot be borrowed or bought,
'The gift of a striking Original Thought !

Could Memory desert me, I yet might succeed ;—
Oh ! why was I suffered the poets to read ?
Would that Campbell and Moore could at once be
forgot !
Would my mind were not haunted by Wordsworth
and Scott !

When some brilliant idea I have carefully nursed,
I discover that "Shakspeare had thought of it first,"
And my path with such glittering phantoms is fraught,
That they really exclude one Original Thought !

The claims of the Annals I must not neglect,
And two Magazines contributions expect :
Before me the leaves of an Album unclosed,
(How I dread its bright pages of azure and rose !)
I must write an address for a Charity soon.
And set some new words to an old German tune ;
And how in the world are these works to be wrought,
When I cannot command one Original Thought !

Well I bow not beneath a peculiar disgrace,
'Tis the fate of the present poetical race,
To live in the sunshine of summers long o'er,
"Pensioned off," on the wit and the wisdom of yore ;
But since Fancy her slights may soon please to repair,
In her lottery still I will venture a share,
And perhaps, at this moment, the wheel may be
fraught
With that capital prize—an Original Thought !

INDUSTRY AND PUNCTUALITY.

We scarcely know of any other word in our language which has been so completely and so fatally misapplied as the word "genius." Young men too commonly suppose that genius, or, in other words, aptitude for a particular pursuit, conjoined to inclination for it, exempts them from aiming at any other requisite for success in it. They seem to suppose that there is something vulgar and unworthy in that steadfast application to any given pursuit, which they think proper to speak of as "plodding." And yet the history of almost every really eminent man, no matter in what pursuit he has signalised himself and served mankind, abounds with proofs, that to steady industry fully as much as to genius, have all really great human achievements been attributable. Great scholars, for instance, have always been, not merely laborious, but they have also studied both methodically and regularly ; they have had for every portion of the day its proper and allotted study, and in no wise would they allow any one portion of time to be encroached upon by the study to which another portion was especially appropriated in

their fixed plan of action. The numerous and, considering the barbarous state of learning in his time and country, the really marvellous attainments of Alfred the Great, King of England, were won far less by any very striking and brilliant original capacity than by his herculean powers of application, and by the steady resolution with which he applied the various portions of his day to the pursuits in which he found it necessary to engage ; and surely if he could do this, it would ill become the more humbly gifted and infinitely more humbly situated student of our own times to think industry and steadiness otherwise than necessary. Another important virtue which the inordinate admirers of the fits and starts which they call genius and think so brilliant an acquisition, are too commonly in the habit of both thinking meanly of and speaking meanly of is *punctuality* ; and yet there is not a quality of greater importance to the man who would be either useful or prosperous. Lord Nelson attributed his success in life far more to his punctuality than to his genius. Peter the Great, Frederick of Prussia, Washington, Napoleon—in short, all men of great merit and success have been distinguished for industry and punctuality. To those who never nerved themselves to the task of being industrious and punctual, the wonderful power of being so can scarcely be imagined.

THE MIND INDEPENDENT OF MATTER.

Man, at the age of twenty, retains not a particle of the matter in which his mind was invested when he was born. Nevertheless, at the age of eighty years, he is conscious of being the same individual he was as far back as his memory can go—that is to say, to the period when he was four or five years old. Whatever it be, therefore, in which this consciousness of identity resides, it cannot consist of a material substance, since, if it had been material, it must have been destroyed. It is, consequently, an ethereal spirit, and as it, remains the same, throughout all the alterations that take place in the body, it is not dependent on the body for its existence ; and is thus calculated to survive the ever-changing frame by which it is encircled. That frame becomes stiff, cold and motionless, when the circulation of the blood ceases ; it is consigned to the earth, and is separated by insects into a thousand other forms of matter ; but the mind undergoes no such transformation. It is unsalable by the worm. If matter, subject as it is to perpetual changes, does not, and cannot possibly, perish, how can the mind perish, which knows of no mutation ? There is no machinery prepared by which such an object could be accomplished ; nor could machinery be prepared for such a purpose, without an entire subversion of the laws of nature. But, as these laws have emanated from the wisdom of the Creator, they could not be altered, much less subverted, without

involving an inconsistency, into which it is impossible for Divine Wisdom to fall.

HAYDN AND NAPOLEON.—In 1805, as the celebrated composer, Haydn, was regarding, with no very agreeable feelings, the triumphal march of the French troops, as they took possession of the capital of his beloved country, he was not a little alarmed when he observed an officer and his guard stop at the door of his house, and demand an interview. The immortal composer of "The Creation" advanced to meet them, and with a trembling voice demanded for what purpose they sought him, adding, with great humility, "I am merely poor Haydn, the composer ; what crime can I have committed against the French Government ?" "None," replied the officer, smiling ; "on the contrary, I have received the orders of the Emperor Napoleon to place a sentinel at your door, in order to protect and honour an individual of such rare genius." The guard was continued while the French occupied Vienna ; and whenever the troops passed his door, the band played some of his most celebrated compositions.

Religion misunderstood is the source of all misery. It is the parent of hatred and dire malignity. It transforms the conscientious and best disposed by nature, into beings who appear bereft of every spark of humanity. It has made men pass through fire ; it has fastened them to the stake, and consumed their bones and marrow. It has been the mother of persecutions in every part of the world. Infancy and old age have alike been its victims. The strong and the weak have perished under its grasp. It has founded Inquisitions, and at this hour, it is the certain cause of misery to innumerable millions of our fellow men.

By nurturing feelings of gratitude for every good thing which we receive at the hands of God and of his ministering servants upon earth, we acquire greater strength and peace of mind to endure the evils of this life, as well as a greater disposition to thank well of, to forgive, and to assist our fellow-creatures in misfortune.

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