

PIETY PORTRAYED.

THE progress of a human being in his passage through time to eternity, only requires to be exhibited with fidelity, in order to become an interesting object to a contemplative mind, whatever may have been his moral or intellectual qualities. Conquest achieved or object attained, conscience cowering under the tyranny of the passions, or asserting her dignity by subjecting them to her sway, are equally instinctive, provided we are informed by what steps virtuous or vicious habits were superinduced; by what stratagems temptation prevailed; or by what efforts and expedients evil was vanquished and good obtained. The moral warfare in which each has to engage, is pregnant with consequences which reach to eternity, and possesses an intrinsic and essential importance, totally independent of the peculiar circumstances with which it may be surrounded. The history of the humblest and least eventful life, which faithfully revealed the secret causes that contributed to form and determine the character, might be studied with profit by the great and the noble. Whatever tends to enlarge our acquaintance with any of our race, is an accession to the most valuable part of our knowledge; and although to know ourselves has ever been deemed of the very utmost consequence, perhaps the power of self-examination is never executed with so much vigour, as when it is called into action by the exhibition of individual character. The improvement derived from narrative in this view, will be proportioned to the degree in which the objects described, the scenes delineated, and the incidents related, bear a resemblance to those with which the reader is conversant.