

his command, the wind begins to roar through the confused mass of clouds and waves. Vapour and gloom no longer rule the atmosphere. The broken up deep sinks down beneath the breath of heaven, and at last hides its awful billows in the lowest caverns of the earth. Then, to hush the fears of the terrified beings who had survived the death of a world, with what a sublimity of beauty did God, upon the first dark cloud that rolled over the summit of Arrarat, plant his many coloured rainbow? 'I do set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be for a token.'

A death bed was spread in Egypt, and a venerable man laid him down to die. It was Jacob. 'He called to his sons, and said, Gather yourselves together, that I may tell you what shall befall you in the last days.' One by one the fathers of the tribes advanced, and heard the oracular words that destined them and theirs throughout futurity. Joseph approaches. His blessing is a sentence that casts every heathen oracle into midnight shadows. 'A fruitful bow by a well, whose branches run over the wall * * shot at by the archers,' * * a garland of blessings coming down from heaven above, coming up from the deep which lieth under, twined with love and fruitfulness, and reaching 'unto the utmost bound of the everlasting hills, on the head of Joseph, and on the crown of the head of him that was separate from his brethren.'

(To be continued)

MEGALOMANIA.

OBSCURITY.

To make any thing very terrible, obscurity seems in general to be necessary. When we know the full extent of a danger, when we can accustom our eyes to it, a great deal of the apprehension vanishes. Every one will be sensible of this, who considers how greatly night adds to our dread, in all cases of danger, and how much the notions of ghosts and goblins, of which none can form clear ideas, affect minds which give credit to the popular tales concerning such sorts of beings. Almost all the heathen temples were dark. Even in the barbarous temples of the American Indians they keep their idol in a dark part of the hut, which is consecrated to his worship. For this purpose, too, the Druids performed all their ceremonies in the bosom of the darkest woods.

and in the shade of the oldest and most spreading oaks. No person seems better to have understood the secret of heightening, or of setting terrible things, if I may use the expression, in their strongest light by the force of a judicious obscurity, than Milton. His description of death, in the second book, is admirably studied; it is astonishing with what a gloomy pomp, with what a significant and expressive uncertainty of strokes and colouring he has finished the portrait of the king of terrors:—

The other shape,
If shape it might be called that shape had none,
Distinguishable, in member, joint, or limb;
Or substance might be call'd that shadow seem'd,
For each seem'd either; black he stood as
night;
Fierce as ten furies - terrible as hell—
And shook a deadly dart. What seem'd his
head
The likeness of a kingly crown had on.

In this description all is dark, uncertain, confused, terrible, and sublime, to the last degree.

SOCIETY AND SOLITUDE.

The second branch of the social passions is that which administers to society in general. With regard to this, we observe, that society, merely as society, without any particular heightenings, give us no positive pleasure in the enjoyment; but absolute and entire solitude, that is, the total and perpetual exclusion from all society, is as great a positive pain as can almost be conceived. Therefore, in the balance between the pleasure of general society and the pain of absolute solitude, pain is the predominant idea. But the pleasure of any particular social enjoyment outweighs very considerably the uneasiness caused by the want of that particular enjoyment: so that the strongest sensations relative to the habitudes of particular society, are sensations of pleasure. Good company, lively conversations, and the endearments of a friendship, fill the mind with great pleasure; a temporary solitude, on the other hand, is itself agreeable. This may, perhaps, prove that we are creatures designed for contemplation as well as action; since solitude as well as society has its pleasures, as from the former observation we may discern, that an entire life of solitude contradicts the purposes of our being, since death itself is scarcely an idea of more terror.