

EPITAPHS.

An inscription on a tomb stone seldom gives a person a correct idea of the character of the deceased—but on the other hand, it seldom fails to present to the reader the distinguishing characteristics of the relative who furnished the melancholy tribute of affection. The aphorism “never speak ill of the dead,” is strictly observed when writing an epitaph—and those who are in the habit of visiting the village church-yards, and reading the simple inscriptions on the marble slabs around them, will acknowledge the correctness of the following sentiment, expressed by Shakspeare :

“Men’s evil manners live in brass;
Their virtues we write in water.”

We subjoin a few epitaphs, for the amusement of our readers, if they can derive amusement from so *grave* a subject :—

ON A MOSS COVERED GRAVE—STONE IN A COUNTRY CHURCH—YARD.

He was a good husband, and an excellent neighbour,
Fond of his children, and addicted to labour;
He died at last, and quitted this stage,
In the seventy-seventh year of his age.

ON ROGER NORTON.

Here lies, alas ! poor Roger Norton,
Whose sudden death was oddly brought on :
Trying one day his *corns* to mow off,
The razor slipped, and cut his toe off !
The toe—or rather what it grew to—
An inflammation quickly flew to ;
The part then took to mortifying—
Which was the cause of Roger’s dying.

ON FRANCIS BLACKWELL, AND MARY HIS WIFE.

Here lies a holy and a happy pair,
As once in grace, they now in glory share ;
They dared to suffer, and they feared to sin ;
They meekly bore the cross, the crown to win.
So lived on earth, as not afraid to die ;
So died, as heirs of immortality.
Reader, attend ! though dead, they speak to thee ;
Tread the same paths, the same thy end shall be.

ON TIMOTHY MUM, A TAPSTER.

Here Tim, the tapster, lies, who drew good beer,
But now, drawn to his end, he draws no more ;
Yes, still he draws from every friend a tear—
Water he draws, who drew good beer before.

ON MY WIFE.

Here lies my poor wife, without bed or blanket,
But dead as a door-nail—God be thanked.

ON JONATHAN CRUM.

Here lies the body of Jonathan Crum—
His soul has gone to kingdom come.

ON TIMOTHY DREW.

Here lies the body of Timothy Drew,
Who died 1st March, 1802.

ON TWO CHILDREN.

Here lies the bodies of two children dear ;
One buried in Dundee—the other here.

ON MYSELF.

If I’m not dead, I should be dead—for here
I have been buried at least a year.

ON THE CELEBRATED DR. THOMAS SHERIDAN.

Beneath this marble stone here lies
Poor Tom, more merry much than wise,
Who only lived for two great ends,
To spend his cash, and lose his friends ;
His darling wife of him bereft,
Is only grieved—there’s nothing left.

DAILY RETIREMENT.

The wisdom of all ages has recommended occasional retirement from the world for the purpose of moral and intellectual improvement. “There has been no man,” says a great authority, “eminent for extent of capacity or greatness of exploits, that has not left behind him some memorials of lonely wisdom and silent dignity.” It is in solitude that the statesman forms his plans, and the warrior prepares his conquests, and the scholar amasses his stores of intellectual wealth, and the man of science tries his experiments, and the moral philosopher watches the processes of his own thoughts, and endeavours to analyse and develop the laws which regulate the economy of the human mind. But retirement is peculiarly important for religious purposes, and for the culture of the graces and virtues of the Christian life. No eminence of religious character and excellence can be acquired, apart from a studious regard to the moral state of our own minds ; and however powerful may be the motives to the pursuit of holiness, it is certain that we can only be influenced by them in the degree in which they are made the subject of consecutive thought, and of voluntary attention. They who know any thing of the absorbing nature of the business and commerce of the world, knows that the heart needs a continual renewal of holy affections, and that what may be deemed the daily waste and expenditure of religious impression, must be perpetually repaired by frequent converse with God.

“And wisdom’s self
Oft seeks to sweet retired solitude,
Where, with her best nurse, Contemplation,
She plumes her feathers and lets go her wings,
That in the various bustle of resort
Were all too ruffled, and sometimes impair’d.”

WHAT SEEKEST THOU ?

Once it was asked, What seekest thou ?
And I the same, would ask you now.
’Tis suited both to youth and age,
To the unlearn’d and wiser sage ;
For each some object has in view,
A thirst for pleasure, something new.

Says one, I seek for happiness :
Nor means neglect obtaining this.
In childhood, sought it in my play,
In youth, in scenes amusing, gay ;
In manhood, in more busy life ;
In wedlock, hoped it with a wife.

In health, the sick say it is found,
In riches, that it does abound :
While some in change, variety,
Their only happiness can see :
And some in travelling far and near,
Go on and seek ; but ’tis not there.

Some seek it, to obtain a name ;
But find it not in empty fame,
While some will study well, pursue :
And these deserve our praises too :