

ness in any, while the whole corporeal system will give way beneath a severe pressure upon any one in particular. These are truths completely established with physiologists, and upon which it is undeniable that a great portion of human happiness depends.

## REMINISCENCES OF A TOUR TO ENGLAND.

### No. II.

BY THE REV. GEORGE GILFILLAN.

Let people talk as they please, places exert but a poor charm when compared to persons. Nay, when we proceed to analyse the interest of interesting places, we find it generally resolving itself into the glory which eminent persons leave as their legacy to them, or radiate forth upon them, ere they have left them for ever. Any city may be large, but no city can be great except through the presence or the memory of good or great inhabitants. Any country may be prosperous, wealthy, populous, or powerful, and yet continue a vast insipidity, a 'continent of mud,' if valour, or intellect, or patriotism, or genius of some notable kind, has not smiled upon its mountains and vales. This constitutes the difference between Pekin and London, between Holland and Scotland, between Edinburgh and Liverpool. Pekin is supposed to be larger than London, but one street of the latter involves more historic interest than all that huge capital of China, which to us resembles the fantastic piles which moonrise paints upon the clouds, as vague, half-formed, and far withdrawn. Holland is a smother and richer country than Scotland, but has drained away her genius as well as dyked off her sea-water, and the few names of distinction which her annals contain look less from being seen on such a dead flat and in such poor relief; the fame of one Scott or one Burns drowns them all, and their country with them, as in a spring-tide, just as one thought of 'state-ly Edinburgh, throned on crags,' with its innumerable associations, sinks all the windmills, spires, and docks of Liverpool into comparative insignificance. Indeed, some glorious countries of the world are greatly over-looked from the want of the consecration which must come either from the facts of a noble history or from the fictions of genius. These appear like monarchs as yet uncoron'd or even unacknowledged. Such a country is that surrounding and including the Himalayan Hills, which as yet has no diadem over its magnificent and varied beauty save that of its eternal snow. And how much need has Iceland of its poet, to bring out more fully its moonlike scenery of craters, caverns, wastes, and wildernesses, all burned and blasted into characters of the severest beauty and terror which earth reveals, as if Creation had begun and left Chaos to finish the prodigious work.

More instructive, therefore, as well as pleasing it is to write of persons than of places, *i. e.* if there be persons of whom it is worth while writing at all. And although Liverpool, as a large bustling utilitarian city, be not the proper soil for rearing rare and exotic plants, yet it has connected with it several names of very considerable interest. Of Roscoe and Mrs. Sandbach we have spoken in our former paper. Everybody remembers Wash-

ington Irving's graceful paper on Roscoe. His was the first name that occurred to him on landing from America—that large city seemed only the house where Roscoe dwelt. Such ever is the power of genius; it lights up a whole city as with a finer gas, and its abode, be it great or little, magnificent or mean, in the suburbs or in the heart, is the real centre, the true cross, of the town. Were we in Sheffield, its every dirty lane would be an avenue leading up to or down from the house of Ebenezer Elliott. Were we in Bristol, it would seem just a dim, dull, clumsy setting to the chapel of Robert Hall. Were we going to Nottingham, our first question (which likely few could answer) would be; where is Forest Side, where Bailey of Festus resides? And were we touching the pier at New York, we should cry out, even there, straightway for the nearest way to Concord, Massachusetts, where Emerson gloriously vegetates (for the man is an inspired tree, his veins seem full of sap not blood, and you take up his recent volume of poems, clad as it is in green, and smell to it as to a fresh leaf), he to us being almost the literature of America. And there have been periods in earth's history when, had a curious angel touched upon it, he would have gone immediately to some one dwelling, where lived its greatest or its best man; to the tent of which Paul of Tarsus had built for himself with his own hard hands; or at another time, to the village of Stafford-upon-Avon, where the largest soul that ever existed on earth was resting a little while ere death released it from its mortal labours; or, at a third, to the abode, neglected and perhaps filthy, where the blind wreck of an old schoolmaster was sitting, friendless and alone, and yet not alone, for the Father was with him, and into that blindness, as Noah into the ark of old, the 'Lord hath shut him in.' For why? The angel had heard of earth as Paul's seed-field; or he had heard of it as Shakspeare's earth, mirrored in his mind as in a map; or he had heard of it as Milton's prisonhouse, the dungeon of a spirit only a little lower than the angels, and soon to join their company. Where now would such a visiter repair to find ages greatest man? We have a notion, but without indicating it, suffice it to say, that we do not believe it either to the Universities of Oxford or of Edinburgh, still less to the House of Commons or to the House of Lords.

By the way, speaking of Washington Irving, this delightful writer passed, we were told, not long ago through Liverpool, on his way home from Spain. He wished to remain *incog.* but could not be hid. He was recognised, and as there was no time for a public demonstration, a few of his admirers entertained him privately, on board his vessel, and gave him three cheers, as the first breath of a favourable breeze to waft him across the Atlantic. A gentleman, one of this favoured few, gave us a most flattering picture of their guest's manners, appearance, and *tout ensemble.* We liked to hear it, for he is one of the recollections of our early childhood. We were permitted to read his 'Sketch Book' and his 'Salmagundi, as amiable equivoques between the essay and the novel, at a time when the Waverley tales, which were considered as little else than splendid sins, were sternly denied us. We liked even then, raw earthworms as we were, his peeps into American society and superstitions better than his imitations of Goldsmith and Addison, and we are apt to think and speak of Rip Van Winkle, Ichabod Crane, and the Little Man of Black, as old village cronies. We remember introducing his writings to an enthusiastic angler, who, smacking his lips as he was wont when he had captured