

disturbing the old gentleman in his solitary retreat, he appeared not the least displeased with the visit, but disposed to gratify the curiosity of his new and unexpected visitor, by readily replying to interrogatories, as to his motive in thus preferring a secluded life, (for he had intimated that he there dwelt entirely alone,) to that of mingling with human society, which he assured the writer, was in consequence of the heavy afflictions that he had been doomed to experience in early life, which alone first led him to select this retired and *then* unfrequented spot, as the place of his permanent residence; and having erected with his own hands, the humble hut in which he then dwelt, he had remained the only living occupant thereof for upwards of fifty years!—And, on the enquiry how and in what manner he subsisted, and obtained the necessaries of life, at so advanced an age, he replied, that “at a short distance therefrom, he had under cultivation a small patch of land, which produced him his vegetables, and that he too possessed a good cow, with some few other domestic animals; and in addition to which, the fruits of his labour in his most vigorous days had not yet become quite exhausted, and he could not but flatter himself that, with prudence, they might prove even sufficient to serve him for the remainder of his life, which, it was but reasonable to suppose, was then drawing to a close!”—And to the writer’s further inquiry that “alone and defenceless, (as he appeared to be,) if he was not under some apprehension that at an unexpected moment he might be visited by robbers, with the view of dispossessing him of his little wealth?” the old man unhesitatingly replied, “well, indeed, I might be really as *defenceless* as you represent me, but not so, I have the means of *defence* at hand that I was early taught to believe was sufficient to protect me against an attack of a host of the *vilest* foes! And if you will tarry but a moment, friend, (continued he) I will show you what it is, and then you may judge for yourself!”—As he had previously hinted that hunting had once been his favourite amusement, the writer here supposed that his boasted means of *defence*, could be no other (probably) than the possession of some ancient, highly prized, and doubtless well charged *fowling-piece*! and great therefore was his surprise to behold the Old Patriarch on his return, presenting the *Holy Bible*, with the remark that “that was his *safeguard*, by which he had been taught that