

her, "Youth," says she, "arise and I will show thee wonders that thou never saw. Thy longing is for Wisdom; see'st thou yonder mount, upon whose golden top there stands a diamond throne? thither let us go." So saying, we were instantly on the throne. "Ferdinand," said she, "look and be wise. I am the goddess of Wisdom, and this is my temple.—In thy soliloquizing I heard thee doubt my worth and lament the fate of man. Lo! here I am—I show thee all my glories." When recovered from my overwhelming excitement, I looked and saw in the universal brightness that prevailed, millions of worlds turning round in inconceivable swiftness. Each had a creation of its own, different in every respect, but every thing in them seemed tending to, or striving for pleasure and happiness..... Methought I saw generations of men rise and fall like the leaves on the forest, tumbling one by one to nothing. At times, they fell more thickly, as when the wind takes the forest by the head and shakes it. I inquired the reason and was answered: "These, Youth, are the fruits of famine, wars and pestilence, which at times disturb the general harmony of the universal race of man." Throughout the boundless expanse of light, the world seemed gathered in groups, whirling round a common luminous centre varied in shape and size. A mysterious hamony resulted from their whirl; overwhelming ineffable in pathos. I turned round and a gigantic statue stood before me: on its forehead was written in dazzling letters "*Man.*" A halo appeared to encircle it, in which were seen the name of every vice and every virtue in our natures; their cause and their end. *Self-love* threw a dusky gloom over all, and from it the root of all sprung out. *Good* and *Evil* stood over it locked hand in hand; and *Fate* was written on its forehead. *Knowledge* held in her hand the pictures of an infant, gazing on a world. I turned my eyes on high and the dazzling glaring name, *Mystery*, blinded me at once. I looked round, all had vanished—all was gloom. I sprang in the horror of my situation, and awoke.... The shades of night had already half obscured the woods. The last rays of the sun left a brilliant crimson cloud athwart the western horizon, which still served to light me onward. I hastened my steps, and whilst ascending a small hill, I saw on the top of it, with folded arms in sullen meditation, a man. His appearance was forbidding, wild, and death-like, as the sun's reflected ray shone upon and lighted up the features of his face.... Could I have escaped unnoticed, I would eagerly have done it; but the sound of my footsteps had aroused the hermit from his reverie. As he turned his countenance towards me, his long grey beard, the paleness of his face and the dim glare of his eye, quite disconcerted me with fear. His figure too was

broad and athletic, and his *contour* that of a philosophical recluse. I hesitated for a moment, when taking courage I proceeded on my way past the stranger. "Young stranger, whence or whither are you journeying at this late hour among such solitude?" says he, addressing himself to me. When I had named the place of my destination, he replied, "Youth you have mistaken your road; the place you seek lies not thither. You seem dejected and confused; night is lowering around you, and thy home is afar off. I will lead thee to a safe retreat—my cave in yonder mountain; and ere the woodland music sounds its knell tomorrow morn, thy way shall be disclosed." This was spoken in gentle, placid tones, that fell like magic on my ear. The snowy locks of the old man, the serenity of his countenance, and the natural simplicity and dignity of his manner, threw a mysterious interest about him, and wholly subdued my inclination to pursue my journey. I complied with his wish, partly out of curiosity and partly from despair of finding my way home, through a wide woody tract of country. We advanced in silence for some time, over hill and dale, until under a huge rock, over which there poured a small cataract of water, we descended into an unknown cave, which led into the finest natural room I had ever seen. Here the philosopher bade me rest, whilst stirring up the embers of his fire, the smoke of which escaped through a crevice in the rock, he put on more wood and lit his lamp. The floor of his room was covered with the finest dry moss, the rest was as nature had formed it.... A slab of stone, resting on two others was his table, and his chair and bed were the mossy rock. An old fashioned lamp served him as a thing in which to make a light. A tea-cup, a knife, a hatchet, and an ink-stand, were his only visible furniture. In one corner there rested a huge pile of papers, with a few old books. "Youth," says the old man, breaking the silence, "partake of my fare which is but roots and water;" placing at the same time before me, many seemingly wholesome roots. I, however, felt more anxious to learn something of the history of this curious person, than to share in his frugal bounty; and with the excuse that I was not hungry, amused myself with surveying him as he sat in silence by me. There was an unnaturalness about him, an indifference and wildness, that rendered him an object of wonder. Observing a tear trickle down the old man's cheek, and seeing him deeply affected in mind, I broke our silence by inquiring what might be the cause of his sorrow. Recovering himself he resumed:

"My son, forty years have seen me regularly watching the sitting sun on the lonely hill on which you found me, but ne'er before did a man appear to me thus. In all that time I have rarely appeared in the precincts of civ-