

in a duel. Francis Tyrrell who appears to be the true Lord Etherington, from documents in possession of the same Touchwood, leaves Britain in a state of melancholy, and is never more heard of. The other Dramatis Personæ who are of any importance, are properly disposed of. Such are the outlines of a story which the author has dressed up in his usual pleasing form : and by intermixing it with a variety of characters at a watering place, has succeeded in producing a work in interest perhaps little inferior to any of his former.

Where so much has been said in praise, it may savour of the spirit of hypercriticism to offer any thing in the shape of blame. But such as are unable to discover defects, are equally incapable of appreciating beauties. And without any pretensions to superior power of discrimination, we do not hesitate in saying, the writer has in the work before us rather too much extended the delineations of his characters. And, although these are written in a style which his high descriptive powers never allows to become irksome, still some of them might have been curtailed, without the reader's becoming less acquainted with them. This department occupies too large a space in the book, and is in other respects objectionable. Some readers have their time completely at their command ; others are liable to frequent interruptions. The too long descriptions of characters are apt to make the latter lose sight of the thread of the subject, without conveying to them a whit more intimate knowledge of a character, than they could obtain, from an introduction in fewer words.

On perusing *St. Ronan's Well*, many readers will be apt to recognise the descendants of old acquaintances formerly introduced by this writer. There are traits in the character of the Reverend Josiah Cargill, which entitle him to rank as a descendant of the Dominie Sampson family ; and it would appear the author had a secret dread that Meg Dods should be discovered as the great-great-grand-child of Dame Quickly. Although the characters here are in general well sustained, and never inconsistent in their action, we do not think the language of Captain McTurk so uniform as we usually find from the pen of this author, and which is also remarked by the writer himself, though not very satisfactorily accounted for. All these, however, and all the defects which the most fastidious critical eye can discover, may only be compared to a few dim floating nebulae on a clear sky, which even when congregated into one mass, only shows the superior brilliancy of the whole by contrast with the slight opacity they produce in one part.