

THOMSON'S SEASONS.

Thomson said of Thomson, that he looked upon nothing as a poet. "He could not," said he well, "have viewed these two candles burning with a poetical eye." This was just saying that to his eye this world was displayed in an open vision, arrayed in those bright forms of the imagination, in which it appears to us by glimpses, and that by him, all things were contemplated, at all times, from such a point of view, and seen in such a light, as all men like to see them in, but as they are beheld by many men only on rare and fortunate occasions. This is a gift, not an acquirement, and Thomson cannot lend us his eyes with which to view nature as he views it, still he can teach us to make a better use of our own, and call our attention to sights worth the seeing, which, but for discoveries, we might pass by unheeded. Thomson is therefore a delightful guide with whom to wander through the wide and variegated field of Nature, as he can both point out to us, what is most worth seeing in the different objects there meet our eye, and lead us to the spots where they can be seen to the greatest advantage.

It seems peculiarly desirable that the youth of our continent should be taught thus to look upon Nature, and the sights it presents under the different seasons of the year, and for this purpose no better instructor can be found than Thomson. By far the largest portion of the families of the Western World are engaged in agricultural pursuits, and by the necessity of circumstances, seek their happiness, as well as find their pleasure in the country. But, according to the saying, what is common is despised, and the pleasures of a country life are no where less esteemed than here, where they are within the easy reach of almost all, and to the greatest number, the only source where outward enjoyment is sought. There is a tendency amongst us, to look upon our fields as the tradesman looks upon his shop, and to regard them with no deeper interest than is awakened by the thought of the profit that may be drawn from them. We do not arrange home-stead, surrounded with trees and a well cultivated farm, with a suitably disposed, a pleasant garden plot, and kept in such a state of order and arrangement, as most conduces to convenience and pleasure, should not be as much an object of desire, as the aim of ambition to the farmer, as a commodious house elegantly furnished, is to the labourer in cities. He willingly expends the fruits of his labours in surrounding himself with such

elegances and comforts. The other style of luxury, might, we think, afford as much real and certainly no less rational enjoyment as this one. The drapery of Nature, and there is much left to man in the mode of arranging it, may surely be so disposed, as to do more than vie with the works of the cabinetmaker and upholsterer.

We are far from despising the beauties of art, but if the highest specimens of pure art are seen in her most successful imitations of nature, certainly the best results are obtained, when art impresses her designs on the body of nature itself, and man thus obtains for his dead works what he cannot himself bestow upon them, a living principle of growth and movement. A fine landscape painted upon canvass is nothing, when compared with beautiful grounds well laid out and adorned by art and man's device. Some fantastic enthusiasts have indeed endeavoured to represent nature as appearing to greatest advantage, when undeformed, as they say, by the hand of man. But it is not so. When we contemplate nature in her primeval solitudes, where she has not yet been visited by man, she appears rude, rugged, and unsightly; she does not deck herself in her fairest robes, and put on her sweetest smiles, till she is wooed by her destined lord, and all her beauties are drawn forth, and heightened by the fostering care of his guardian hand. Every farmer has it in his power to do a little in this way, and were the taste for doing it to become general, the whole country would be rendered more beautiful, as well as more fertile. But would not an addition of beauty be an addition of riches? Man's life does not consist in the *abundance* of the things he possesseth, but in the innocent enjoyments or necessary virtues to which they minister. It was evidently the design of the Great Creator, that man should adorn his earthly inheritance, as well as cultivate it, with a view to obtain from it, the substantial necessities of life. We read, that when he was placed in the garden of Eden, he was appointed to *dress* and to keep it. Nor has the curse doomed him to the sole necessity of seeking his food, in the sweat of his brow. If the earth bring forth thorns and thistles, which he must root out and destroy, to make room for a better produce, it brings forth also the lily and the rose, which displaying to him their beauties as they bloom in the waste wilderness or uncultivated valley, invite his careful hand to transplant them to his garden, and form a little paradise, amid the fields of his toil, to which he may retire, and resting from his labours, and wiping the sweat from his brow, thank God for an inheritance, still yielding much that is pleasant to the eye as well as good for food.