

## TIME AND ETERNITY.

TIME is a mere parenthesis in the vast history of eternity, and cannot, therefore, teach its mysteries. Eternity must tell its own tale; and time, too, must be its own historian. But what is time, and to what shall we resemble it? An aged man, sweeping through the regions of the nether sky, with a scythe in one hand, and an hour-glass in the other; his head besprinkled with life's last snow-dust; and, at the same time, equipped with the youthful caduceus and talaria of an obsolete Mercury! "Yes," should be the universal answer. "But why not," would the sceptic perhaps inquire, "paint a blooming youth, whom wings would better suit, and who might better bear the keenness of the poles and the heats of the equator?" We dare not place such an one upon the canvas, or the child of yesterday would ask the moment of that being's birth, and the pedigree from whence he gained the universal tyranny which lays all prostrate in the dust. Nor could we paint a veteran tottering on the grave; for men would laugh at our presumption, and see time yet pursues an undiminished and untarnished warfare.—No; we must think time aged; for he throws antiquity on all things. Impatient of death's approach, he puts his hand into his girdle, and sprinkles the snowy seed upon the head not yet conigned to its mother dust. We must think him young; for his flight is as swift as ever, and such as alone the energy of youth could favor. We must place the scythe in his right hand; for with that he conquers all things, and cuts them down as the grass in the field. The hour-glass, too, must be about him; for the great characteristic of the moments is, that they pass away.—Then, what is time? A tyrant, whose existence was never doubted, and whom death has never overtaken. In him are youth and age combined; and, when stripped of his equipments, we see personified before us the youthfulness of an undying age. This may seem paradox; but what can we find in time that should subject him to his own laws; or what can we see in nature that should sympathise with him without a contradiction? Time is ever-dying, and yet never dead; ever flowing, still, like the sand in the horologe, unceasingly refilled.

Such is the parenthesis in eternity; and in what respects does it resemble it?

But list! the midnight-bell is tolling! Will this aid us in the mystery? Fresh moments speak upon its iron tongue, and, as each