

such an acquaintance with the biography of eminent men, much real experience of the world may be gained, as we may compare the scenes and characters we read of, with those we meet in the active business of life. And by this means we may form a more correct estimate than we could otherwise have done, were the principle neglected—to compare the past with the present, if we would judge of the future.

The pictures which biography places before our view, are not alone those which should excite emulation, but many which will not fail to excite disgust. If a Hampden and a Fox, a Washington and a Franklin call forth our highest respect—a Nero and a Napoleon, a Sylla and a Monk deserve our detestation.

In this study we may find the truly good character as well as the darkly vile. But the discriminating mind will distinguish that course which brings present respect and pleasing recollection—from that which can never fail to bring the secret hate and open contempt of an impartial world—and though virtue may live and die unnoticed—vice seldom escapes infamy.

J. M.

*For the Youth's Monitor.*

(SCRAPS AND SKETCHES FROM MY PORTFOLIO.)

MR. EDITOR—It appears that my “Melancholy” Essay did not much please you—and perchance the present will meet no better fate. But if you should conclude to give these trifles insertion in your valuable Miscellany, you will much oblige yours, &c. CAM.

AMBITION.

Alas! alas! how devious are the ways of mortals! For the possession of momentary power, we become call-

ous; our feelings are deadened—the fountain of generous thought is dried up; and the ever craving and insatiable appetite of ambition, like a canker-worm, gnaws away all beauty, and bids, with an iron tongue, the angel of peace and love to flee.

How dark! how deadly has been the course of ambition. Her gory car is red with the blood of the brave and noble; like a ghoul she preys on the remains of her worshippers; like the serpent she charms them to death!—How many noble beings allured by the false tale of glory and of greatness, have bowed at her shrine; themselves the sacrifice! their reward the midnight gloom of the tomb! nay, perchance their bones have bleached and whitened on some barren sand, fattening the sterile soil, with their life blood, merely because it is mis-called glorious! The boon they so eagerly coveted never bestowed; their memory has flitted from the earth like some forgotten dream.

Like lava rushing from the crater's mouth, such is the onward burning course of ambition; and like volcanic fire, it burns every green and fertile spot; sears every fine and honourable feeling; unquenched and unquenchable it hurries its votary, its victim from conquest to conquest—from power to empire, till dizzy with the height—maddened by his unequal elevation, he falls, and his height but renders his fall more terrible.

Intellect becomes its pander; love shrinks at its stern and harsh front; mercy hears the clang of steel, and the thunder of battle, and flees; justice is forgotten; reason prostrated; and in their place ambition usurps the throne of the human heart; his ministers are rapine and murder; and the music of his palace is the wail of the widow and the cry of the orphan; the dying groans of freedom; and the last moans of expiring hope.

But not alone to “the gory fields of war,” has ambition been restrained.—