

tion of the seasons, but by the relations which the event bears in importance to all that has happened to us since. To him who has thought, or done, or suffered much, the level days of his childhood seem at an immeasurable distance, far off as the day of chivalry or the line of S. sestris. There are some recollections of such overpowering vastness, that their objects seem ever near; their size reduces all intermediate events, to nothing; and they peer upon us like 'a forked mountain, or blue promontory,' which being far off is yet nigh. How different from these appears some inconsiderable occurrence of more recent date, which a flash of thought redeems for a moment from long oblivion, which is seen amidst the dim confusion of half-forgotten things, like a little rock lighted up by a chance gleam of sunshine afar off in the mighty water! It is only because the mind is formed for eternity that it feels the shortness of its earthly sojourn.

### THE PRESENT, PAST AND FUTURE.

L. E. L.

"The present! is but a drop from the sea  
In the mighty depths of eternity.  
I love it not—it taketh its birth  
Too near the dull and common earth.  
It is worn with our wants, and steeped with our cares,  
The dreariest aspect of life it wears;  
Its griefs are so fresh, its wrongs are so near,  
That its evils of giant shape appear;  
The curse of the serpent, the sweat of the brow,  
Lie heavy on all things surrounding us now.  
Filled with repining, and envy, and strife,  
What is the present—the actual of life?  
The actual! it is as the clay to the soul,  
The working-day portion of life's wondrous whole!  
How much it needeth the light and the air  
To breathe their own being, the beautiful there!  
Like the soil that asks for the rain from the sky.  
And the soft west wind that goes wandering by,  
E'er the wonderful world within will arise,  
And rejoice in the smile of the summer's soft eyes.  
The present—the actual—were they our all—  
Too heavy our burden, too hopeless our thrall,  
But heaven, that spreadeth o'er all its blue cope,  
Hath given us memory; hath given us hope!  
And redeemeth the lot which the present hath cast,  
By the fame of the future, the dream of the past.  
The future! ah, there hath the spirit its home,  
In its distance is written the glorious to come.  
The great ones of earth lived but half for their day;  
The grave was their altar, the far-off their way.  
Step by step hath the mind its high empire won;  
We live in the sunshine of what it hath done."

No sophistry can avail in denying the power of a good or a bad conscience. It is, indeed peculiarly modified in various nations and in individuals, but it exists every where, an internal physical law in man, which should always be given its due weight and regarded as a law of nature.

### ON PASSION.

Grave divines, great statesmen, and deep philosophers, are put out of their way by very little things: nay, discreet, worthy people, without any pretensions but to good nature and common sense, readily surrender the happiness of their whole lives sooner than give up an opinion to which they have committed themselves, though in all likelihood it was the mere turn of a feather, which should they take in the argument.

Is it that we despise little things; that we are not prepared for them; that they take us in our careless, unguarded moments, and tease us out of our ordinary patience by their petty incessant, insect warfare, buzzing about and stinging us like knots; so that we can neither get rid of nor grapple with them, whereas we collect all our fortitude and resolution to meet evils of greater magnitude? Or is it that there is a certain stream of irritability that is continually fretting upon the wheels of life, which finds sufficient food to play with in straws and feathers, while great objects are too much for it, either choke it up, or divert its cause into serious and thoughtful interest?

One is always more vexed at losing a game by a single card, than if one has never had a chance of winning. The will here has a slight imaginary obstacle to surmount to attain its end, it should appear it had only an exceedingly trifling effort to make for this purpose, that it was absolutely in its power (*had it known*) it was so easy: this haunts their minds and will not let them rest, notwithstanding the absurdity of the reasoning.

The will acts in proportion to its fancied power; now in little or indifferent matter there seems no reason why it should not have its own way, and therefore a disappointment vexes it the more. It grows angry according to the insignificance of the occasion, and frets itself to death about an object, merely because from its very futility there can be supposed to be no real difficulty in the way of its attainment, nor any thing more required for this purpose than a determination of the will. The being balked of this throws the mind off its balance—and as nothing but an act of voluntary power still seems necessary to get rid of every impediment, we indulge our violence more and more, and heighten our impatience by degrees into a sort of frenzy. The object is the same as it was but we are no longer as we were. The blood is heated, the muscles are strained, the feelings are wound up to a pitch of agony with the vain strife: The temper is tried to the utmost it will bear. The more contemptible the object or the obstructions in the way to it, the more are we provoked at being hindered by them: it looks like witchcraft: we fancy there is a spell upon us, so that we are hampered by straws and entangled in cob-webs. We believe that there is a fatality about our affairs. It is evidently done on purpose to plague us. A Demon is at our elbow, to torment and defeat us in every thing, even in the smallest things. We see him sitting and