

THE CONTRAST.

The Novel Reader.

She slumbered in the rocking chair
She'd occupied all day;
And in her lap, half-opened there,
The last now novel lay.
Upon the hearth the dying brands
Their latest radiance shed;
A blazing candle near her stands,
With a crown about its head.

Her hair, which long uncrimpt had been,
Was hanging loosely round;
A single curl, by a crooked pin,
By the side of her head was bound.
Her gown had once been white I ween,
But white it was not then;
Her ruffles too had once been clean,
And might be so again.

One slipshod foot the fender prest,
The other sought the floor;
And folded o'er her heaving breast,
A dull red shawl she wore.
The flickering light is fading fast,
Yet cares not she for mortal things—
For in her busy brain
The novelist's imaginings
Are acted o'er again.
But, while in this delicious nap
Her willing sense is bound,
The book, escaping from her lap,
Falls lumbering to the ground.

She wukes; but 'tis, alas, to see
The candle's quivering beam;
Nor in the blackened coals can she
Revive one friendly gleam.
Then groping through the passage far,
She steals with noiseless tread—
And leaving every door ajar,
Creeps shivering to bed.

The Bible Reader.

She to her chamber doth repair,
Now closed the busy day—
Where on her toilet, kept with care,
The precious Bible lay.
Though all is still around, no dread
Doth agitate her mind—
No superstitious fears of dead
Can there a harbor find.

She briefly first reviews the day
Which is for ever gone—
Through Christ, for pard'ning grace,
Gives thanks for mercies shown.
Encouraged by the good received,
Whatever may betide,
She hopes that every future need
Will be by God supplied.

One little moment she employs
To read the sacred word,
And meditate upon those joys
There promised by her Lord.
The gay world to their pleasures hasten,
She heedeth not their dissipation;—
Her contemplating mind
In the word of inspiration
Transporting joys doth find.
Christ's word doth richly in her dwell
And fills her with delight;
His precepts too she ponders well,
To guide her steps aright.

And if, in passing to that hour,
She had met an enemy,
Such are included in her prayer—
Lord, bless mankind and me!
At peace with God, with all mankind,
With hope of heaven blest,
Sweet thoughts revolving in her mind
She sinks a way to rest!

Read at the Annual Review.

The Mind—Its Dignity.

[The compositions, read at our Review last spring, have been published, not in the order of their supposed excellency. The following is the last of the series.—Ed.]

THE works of nature have ever been objects of admiration and delightful contemplation; and with good reason, for they body forth in characters not to be mistaken, the grandeur and glory of the Great First Cause—they truly bear the impress of the Deity. We hear His all-powerful voice in the thunder's reverberating peal; and gaze with wrapt wonder upon his goodness, as shadowed forth in the unnumbered gems beaming kindly upon us from the blue expanse above.

But, though nature bears His impress, it is in the mind of man that we behold the most striking example of His creative wisdom and power. Methinks it was a glorious morning, when God beheld the beauty of the world which He had made and called it good; but what greatness and excellence were added, when, at His fiat, man sprang into existence, endowed with dominion over all other living things, and with a soul, whose highest bliss was to drink continually of the streams of love flowing from his Father's throne. How glorious, then, the spirit's origin—a breath from the uncreated and all-sustaining Jehovah, giving man a position only a little lower than the angels, and crowning him with glory and immortality. How incomprehensible is the mind of man! In its contemplation we are lost in a vast profound. Philosophers have vainly sought to reveal all its hidden depths and mysterious workings. We know that it holds communion with the external world, and receives impressions from it. At its bidding visions of the past spring up before us, endowed with all the vividness of original perception; and it may be almost said to lift the veil of futurity and scan the records of coming ages. How these effects are produced, we know not—the facts alone we know.

Even in its lowliest mien, it shadows forth its divine Original, giving evidence of a higher pedigree, and more glorious destination than pertain to earth. But how transcendently beautiful its movements, when a Milton or a Pollok, soaring to the empyrean, or swooping down, with flight reversed, to dark *Avernian* regions, sweeps the strings of poesy. Uphorne on fancy's wing, we follow these sons of the laurel-crowned goddess, till worlds and systems roll beneath our heaven-aspiring gaze, our spirits are ravished with the visions of Paradise, and drink in heavenly melody. Nor is it in the lofty soarings of imagination alone, that the mind exhibits its majesty and power. If so, the vast expanse above, now fraught with so much interest to the astronomer, had been to us a sealed

“Book of eternal wonders; lit with gems
Of unknown glory. But now,
Though these orbs appear
Convolved and complex to the untutored eye,
Yet order and harmonious beauty, all,
To the instructed soul.”

To Newton's great, observing mind, the simple falling of an apple, revealed the laws by which the harmony of the universe is maintained. He saw, and, expanding with the mighty conception, his mind grasped the measuring line of the heavens, and, transferring his diagrams to earth, enabled even a Mrs. Somerville to verify the correctness of those demonstrations, by which the magnitudes, distances, weights, and revolutions of the heavenly orbs are determined. Illustrious examples of the power of mind, even in this, its infant state, might be multiplied to an indefinite extent. Witness it in Locke and Bacon, who, scorning to remain contented with the discoveries made by their ancestors concerning mind and matter, threaded out their most bewildering labyrinths, and irradiated their darkest recesses with the lamp of truth.

How splendid the achievements of mind in the arts, which lend their aid to the convenience of human life, and which diminish the evils and dangers of our existence.—It has arrested the airy lightning in its dazling course, and conducted it harmless to the ground. And more wondrous still—seizing this