

## MORAL.

*For the Youth's Monitor.*

## MY LEISURE HOURS.

**BIOGRAPHY** :—“ The desire of present praise, or the ambition of posthumous fame, may be considered as the strongest incentives of the human race. Whilst animated by such motives, the student is neither discouraged by any difficulty nor overpowered by whatever labour. Whether he trim the lamp or rise with the sun, he makes discoveries that are useful to men, or he composes writings, which as they instruct by their notions, or please by their elegance, either facilitate the acquirement of knowledge or smooth the asperities of life. He who in this manner spends days and nights benefitting mankind, is at least entitled to the recollection of posterity.”—*Chalmers' Life of Rudiman.*

There is in the life and experience of every man much that is interesting, and a great deal that is useful :—however humble and apparently unimportant the station he may occupy in society, as he forms one of the links of the great machine of life he may possess noble qualities, and have an observation of incidents which would be as interesting when portrayed as if they were the reminiscences of nobility. Nature has not exclusively bestowed strong mind, keen penetration, no sound judgment upon the higher circles of society—no more than crime is limited to their opposite ; and if any has added one single new idea to the general stock, he is entitled to receive from posterity, at least a share of their remembrance.

In the Biography of men, whose genius, honorable conduct and just views have reflected credit on the age and times in which they lived—their distinguishing characteristics must ever com-

prise a fund, from which the student who loves to enquire into the intricacies of human nature, will find much to draw from. There we may find genius stripped of its often gloomy yet grand attraction—the usual routine of life passes before us, and, as the telescope draws and brings almost to our view those magnificent and glorious orbs which illuminate the blue vault of heaven ; so biography places the splendour of genius before us in the plain simplicity of nature ; while we can gaze on the brightness and distinguish more clearly the spots, which often disfigure though they cannot altogether darken the brightness and the beauty of high intellect. In the study, the flight of time becomes annihilated—we become as it were acquainted with the personage we read of—his inmost thoughts are often unfolded to our view—and, through the shade which prominent faults casts upon a noble nature, we are enabled to perceive the glimmerings of stern purpose and unflinching resolve, with the peculiar traits that have marked him out, raised him above his fellows, & arrested for a time his memory from the doom of oblivion which is the unerring fate of mortality. And in our natural admiration of high character, we insensibly endeavour to imitate what we so highly revere. The innumerable names which have from time to time held a conspicuous place in the pages of history—of their lives little is remembered, and often their very names are forgotten—their deeds and precepts rest in the minds but of few. Yet notwithstanding in their often bright examples (both in ancient and modern times,) we may learn the means by which they rose and earned a name which survived them when their bones were mouldering and mixing with kindred dust.

And it must not be forgotten that in