

drums in particular,—doubts do occasionally come across me whether there be in reality any such thing as tune. My friend William Ross was, on the contrary, a born musician. When a little boy, he had constructed for himself a fife and clarionet of young shoots of elder, on which he succeeded in discoursing sweet music ; and, addressing himself at another and later period to both the principles and practices of the science, he became one of the best flute-players in the district. Notwithstanding my dulness of ear, I do cherish a pleasing recollection of the sweet sounds that used to issue from his little room in the outhouse, every milder evening as I approached, and of the soothed and tranquil state in which I ever found him on these occasions, as I entered. I could not understand his music, but I saw that, mentally at least, though, I fear, not physically,—for the respiratory organs were weak,—it did him great good.

There was, however, one special province in which our tastes thoroughly harmonized. We were both of us, if not alike favored, at least equally devoted, lovers of the wild and beautiful in nature ; and many a moon-light walk did we take together this winter among the woods and rocks of the Hill. It was once said of Thomson, by one who was himself not at all morbidly poetic in his feelings, that “ he could not have viewed two candles burning but with a poetical eye.” It might at least be said of my friend, that he never saw a piece of fine or striking scenery without being deeply moved by it. As for the mere candles, if placed on a deal-dresser or shop-counter, they might have failed to touch him ; but if burning in some *lyke-wake* beside the dead, or in some vaulted crypt or lonely rock-cave, he also could not have looked other than poetically on them. I have seen him awed into deep solemnity, in our walks, by the rising moon, as it peered down upon us over the hill, red and broad, and cloud-encircled, through the interstices of some clump of dark firs ; and have observed him become suddenly silent, as, emerging from the moonlight woods, we looked into a rugged dell, and saw far beneath, the slim rippling streamlet gleaming in the light, like a narrow