

dreams of youth, passed away. The aged poet has not unfrequently to complain, that as he rises in years, his "visions float less palpably before him." Those, on the contrary, which science conjures up, grow in distinctness, as, in the process of slow acquirement, form after form is evoked from out the obscurity of the past, and one restoration is added to another.

There were at this time several collier villages in the neighborhood of Edinburgh, which have since disappeared. They were situated on what were called the "edge-coals,"—those steep seams of the Mid-Lothian Coal Basin, which, lying low in the system, have got a more vertical tilt against the trap eminences of the south and west than the upper seams in the middle of the field, and which, as they could not be followed in their abrupt descent beyond a certain depth, are now regarded, for at least the practical purposes of the miner, and until the value of coal shall have risen considerably, as wrought out. One of these villages, whose foundations can no longer be traced, occurred in the immediate vicinity of Niddry Mill. It was a wretched assemblage of dingy, low-roofed, tile-covered hovels, each of which perfectly resembled all the others, and was inhabited by a rude and ignorant race of men, that still bore about them the soil and stain of recent slavery. Curious as the fact may seem, all the older men of that village, though situated little more than four miles from Edinburgh, had been born slaves. Nay, eighteen years later (in 1842), when Parliament issued a commission to inquire into the nature and results of female labor in the coal-pits of Scotland, there was a collier still living that had never been twenty miles from the Scottish capital, who could state to the Commissioners that both his father and grandfather had been slaves,—that he himself had been born a slave,—and that he had wrought for years in a pit in the neighborhood of Musselburgh ere the colliers got their freedom. Father and grandfather had been parishioners of the late Dr. Carlyle of Inveresk. They were contemporary with Chatham and Cowper, and Burke and Fox; and at a time when Granville Sharpe could have stepped forward and effectually protected, in vir-