

town ; and after the time spent in landing and walking round to the spot, there was the solitary figure still, standing motionless as when first seen. It was Chalmers,—the same expression of dreamy enjoyment impressed on his features as I had witnessed in the little skiff, and with his eyes turned on the sea and the opposite land. It was a lovely morning. A faint breeze had just begun to wrinkle in detached belts and patches the mirror-like blackness of the previous calm, in which the broad Frith had lain sleeping since day-break ; and the sun light danced on the new-raised wavelets ; while a thin long wreath of blue mist, which seemed coiling its tail like a snake round the distant Inchkeith, was slowly raising the folds of its dragon-like neck and head from off the Scottish capital, dim in the distance, and unveiling fortalice, and tower, and spire, and the noble curtain of blue hills behind. And there was Chalmers, evidently enjoying the exquisiteness of the scene, as only by the true poet scenery can be enjoyed. Those striking metaphors which so abound in his writings, and which so often, without apparent effort, lay the material world before the reader, show how thoroughly he must have drunk in the beauties of nature ; the images retained in his mind became, like words to the ordinary man, the signs by which he thought, and, as such, formed an important element in the power of his thinking. I have seen his *Astronomical Discourses* disparagingly dealt with by a slim and meagre critic, as if they had been but the chapters of a mere treatise on astronomy, —a thing which, of course, any ordinary man could write,—mayhap even the critic himself. The *Astronomical Discourses*, on the other hand, no one could have written save Chalmers. Nominally a series of sermons, they in reality represent, and in the present century form perhaps the only worthy representatives of, that school of philosophic poetry to which, in ancient literature, the work of Lucretius belonged, and of which, in the literature of our own country, the “*Seasons*” of Thomson, and Akenside’s “*Pleasures of the Imagination*,” furnish adequate examples. He would, I suspect, be no discriminating critic who would deal with the “*Seasons*” as if they formed