

wise. It thrust out on every side an intelligent, energetic, trustworthy people, who made room for themselves everywhere. Continental Europe knew them in all its cities,—England, Ireland, the colonies, the whole world. Ere taking leave of their country, they stood on the elevation of the parish school and the parish church; and, discerning advantage at a great distance over the face of the globe, they bent their steps direct upon it. And in virtue of the same process, those who remained behind were fitted for improving to the utmost the resources within their reach at home. There are thousands of Scotchmen in the present day,—men with the same blood in their veins,—who are wasting their energies on the five points of the Charter, engaged in dreaming a disturbed and unhappy dream about unrealizable political privileges, which, even if attainable, would be useless; and precipitating themselves, meanwhile, on the poor-house. Let the reader just try to imagine a poor-law bastille existing under the more stringent and repulsive checks of the system, and filled with superannuated Chartists. Of all writers, Crabbe alone was fitted to do justice to the miseries of such a prison so filled. It would be truly “a hell upon earth.” The transition from a state in which aspirations after universal suffrage are deemed of but a lower and comparatively commonplace kind, and in which all existing institutions are denounced as far beneath the ideal of true liberty or the standard of free-born men, to a state compared with which the despotism of Turkey or Morocco would be liberal, and the degradation of ordinary slavery not at all subversive of the dignity of man’s nature, could be compared to only those transitions described by Milton,

“ When all the damned
Are brought to feel by turns the bitter change
Of fierce extremes,—extremes by change more fierce,—
From beds of raging fire to starve in ice.”