

a different manner, but as decidedly as in Milton, and alike beyond the necessities or the reach of prose. This peculiar region of poetry seems to have formed a sort of inextricable wilderness to the more prosaic class of critics. Lord Kames, though a coarse, was an eminently sensible man ; and his "Elements of Criticism" is a work that contains many striking things. What, however, the French critic termed "comparisons with a tail," seem fairly to have puzzled him. He could no more understand why similes should have caudal appendages, than his brother Judge, Lord Monboddo, could understand why men should want them. And so he instances as a mere "phantom simile, that ought to have no quarter given it," the very exquisite one which Coriolanus employs in describing Valeria,—

"The noble sister of Pœplicola,
The moon of Rome ; chaste as the icicle
That's curdled by the frost from purest snow,
And hangs on Dian's temple."

The shrewd magistrate, who, to employ the delicate periphrase of Hector in the "Antiquary," used to address his learned compeers on the bench by the name ordinarily used to designate "a female dog," could not understand why the temple of Dian should be introduced into this comparison, or what right the icicle had in it at all ; and so he ruled that it was palpably illegal for Shakspeare to write what he, a Judge and a critic, could not intelligently read. The conclusion of Professor Masson on the respective provinces of poesy and prose is worthy of being carefully pondered by the reader.

"In the whole vast field of the speculative and the didactic," says the Professor,— "a field in which the soul of man may win triumphs nowise inferior, let illiterate poetasters babble as they will, to those of the mightiest sons of song,—prose is the legitimate monarch, receiving verse but as a visitor and guest, who will carry back bits of rich ore, and other specimens of the land's produce ; that, in the great business of record also, prose is pre-eminent, verse but voluntarily assisting ; that in the