

be pursuing the proper business of a preface, which is, to state any explanatory circumstances that may be necessary in connection with the work in hand.

The "Recollections of Ferguson" are exquisitely painful — so much so that I would fain have begun with something brighter; but these two contributions being the most important, and likewise the first in order of a series, they seemed to fall into the beginning as their natural place. I have gone over the Life of Ferguson, which the reader may do for himself, to see whether there is any exaggeration in the "Recollections." I find them all perfectly faithful to the facts. The neglected bard, the stone cell, the straw pallet, the stone paid for by a brother bard out of his own straitened means are not flattering to the "Embro' Gentry"; but amid a great deal of flattery, a little truth is worth remembering. On the other hand it rejoices one to think that Ferguson's death-bed, on the heavenward side, was not dark. The returning reason, the comforts of the Word of Life, are glimpses of God's providence and grace that show gloriously amid the otherwise outer darkness of those depths.

The sort of literature of superstition revived or retained in "The Lykewake," there are a great many good people who think the world would be better without.

It chanced to me some three years ago, when residing in a sea-bathing village, and sitting one day on a green turf-bank overlooking the sea, to hear a conversation in which this point was brought very prominently forward. A party consisting of a number of