

THE BANKS OF ALMOND.

(VIDE PENNANT'S TOUR.)

TO MARY LADY CLARKE OF PENNYCUICKE.

**S**TILL was the night, and gently roll'd the wave,  
When Almond's banks a pensive poet fought,  
And free from care his rustic lay attun'd,  
When, lo! by some superior pow'r compell'd,  
The silver waves in equal parts divide,  
And thence two lovely virgin forms arise,  
(The fairest they of Caledonia's fair,)  
Who thus with accent soft the bard bespeak:  
" Be thine the task our hapless fate to sing,  
Whilst we, O Bard, thy rustic verse inspire,  
Still on these banks our pensive spirits stray,

And oft at evetide by the swains are seen.  
In ages past we were for friendship fam'd;  
Nor love, nor death, our friendship could destroy.  
One happy youth, by both alike belov'd,  
Was with our kindest, tenderest wishes blest'd;  
Whilst he for each with equal passion burnt.  
When from contagions dire we hither fled,  
For us, on yonder hill, a bower he built,  
And oft at evetide climb'd the steepy brae \*  
To meet the willing partners of his love ;  
But when at once the azure skies we sought,  
O'er our remains a simple tomb he rear'd,  
Then died, and join'd us in the realms of light.  
Oh! from our tender tale this moral learn,  
That real friendship lives beyond the grave;  
And when from earth remov'd it seeks the skies,

\* A Scotch expression.

It then for ever burns a flame serene,  
 And gilds the regions of eternal day."

The Almond's willing waves again divide,  
 And from his sight the lovely phantoms sink.

Was with our kinder, tenderest wishes blest;

Will be for each with equal passion blest.

When from contagion die we hither led,

For us, on yonder hill, a tower he built,

And off at eyetide climb'd the steepy base \*

To meet the willing partners of his love;

But when at once the azure skies we sought,

O'er our remains a simple tomb he rear'd,

Then died, and join'd us in the regions of light.

Oh! deem our tender tale this moral learn

That real friendship lives beyond the grave;

And when from earth remov'd it lacks the flesh,

It lives in O Earth, the world, the air, the sea,

\* A Scotch expression.

Will on earth's banks our spirits still be led,