

THE PILGRIM.


SLOW o'er the Apennine, with bleeding feet,
A patient Pilgrim wound his lonely way,
To deck the Lady of Loretto's seat
With all the little wealth his zeal could pay.
From mountain-tops cold died the ev'ning ray,
And, stretch'd in twilight, slept the vale below;
And now the last, last purple streaks of day
Along the melancholy West fade slow.
High o'er his head, the restless pines complain,
As on their summit rolls the breeze of night;
Beneath, the hoarse stream chides the rocks in vain:
The Pilgrim pauses on the dizzy height.
Then to the vale his cautious step he prest,
For there a hermit's cross was dimly seen,
Cresting the rock, and there his limbs might rest,
Cheer'd in the good man's cave, by faggot's sheen,

On leafy beds, nor guile his sleep molest.
Unhappy Luke! he trusts a treacherous clue!
Behind the cliff the lurking robber stood;
No friendly moon his giant shadow threw
Athwart the road, to save the Pilgrim's blood;
On as he went a vesper-hymn he sang,
The hymn, that nightly sooth'd him to repose.
Fierce on his harmless prey the ruffian sprang!
The Pilgrim bleeds to death, his eye-lids close,
Yet his meek spirit knew no vengeful care,
But, dying, for his murd'rer breath'd—a sainted pray'r!