By gradual soft decay—
Where, stealing to that little lawn
From secret haunt and half-afraid,
The doe, in mute affection gay,
At close of eve leads forth her fawn
Amid the flowers to play.
And in that dell's soft bosom, lo!
Where smileth up a cheerful glow
Of water pure as air,
A tangled by two small streamlets spread
In beauty o'er its waveless bed,
Reflecting in that heaven so still
The birch-grove mid-way up the hill,
And summits green and bare.

How lone! beneath its veil of dew
That Morning's rosy fingers drew,
Seldom shepherd's foot hath prest
One primrose in its sunny rest.
The sheep at distance from the spring
May here her lambskins chance to bring,
Sporting with their shadows airy,
Each like tiny water-fair
Imaged in the lucid lake!
The hive-bee here doth sometimes make
Music, whose sweet murmurs tell,
Of his shelter'd straw-roof'd cell,
Standing 'mid some garden gay,
Near a cottage far away.
By the lake-side, on a stone
Stands the heron all alone,
Still as any lifeless thing!
Slowly moves his laggard wing,
And, cloud-like floating with the gale,
Leaves at last the quiet vale.

We take our leave of Mr. Wilson,
With an ardent wish that he may not
prove another victim to the wild and
fantastic theory which seems to be
operating upon the finest brains in
the country.

ST. VALENTINE'S EVE; 3 vol. by Mrs.
Opie.

EMMA; 3 vol. by the author of "Pride
and Prejudice."

We notice these two works together,
because we think they both evince
the truth of an observation we made
in our last number on the "Anti-
quary;" namely, that two or three
novels generally exhaust the inventive
faculties of authors in this line.
The "ST. VALENTINE'S EVE" is every
way unworthy Mrs. Opie; and
"EMMA" falls not only below "Pride
and Prejudice" (probably the most
pleasant novel of the last half dozen
years), but also of "Mansfield
Park," a later production by the
same author. With respect to Mrs.
Opie, in particular, we have been
woefully disappointed; and we should
scarcely have known her again, but
for the constancy of her attention to
that taking article of the ladies'
dress, a velvet pelisse, which gene-
rally makes its appearance in some
part of her pages. The principal
merit of Mrs. Opie's former pro-
ductions was pathos and simplicity;
in the present she has attempted
something more, and failed. Her
heroine, too, is in very bad taste;
for we are not to be misled by the
religious garb into which it has be-
come fashionable to dress the pat-
tterns of circulating libraries, into
admiration of folly and inconsisteny.
The pink of perfection of Mrs. Opie
absolutely distracts to desperation a
doting and a reasonably doubting
husband, and effects her own death
by keeping a silly oath made to hide
the follies of a reprobate, the disso-
lution of which was called by every
law of God and man. This is a
species of manufacturing woe we can
never subscribe to, and consequently
we have not a spark of sympathy
through the whole story, beyond the
three first chapters; and, to say the
truth, Mrs. O. cannot describe the
circles of fashion, and makes some
blunders with respect to the peerage,
we are surprised at—for instance,
an English earl in debt is congratu-
lated for being delivered from a
gaol, and the sister and daughter of
an earl (for such, as her nephew is
one, we suppose Mrs. Baynton to
be) is not entitled lady. These may
be deemed trifles, but they shew a
total want of acquaintance with the
circles described; and truly the
Shirleys act more like petty trades-
pole people than people of quality, and
—in short, the story is very poor,
and deserves no analysis. We must,
however, again advert to one thing
which we have already alluded to in
our observations on the work of Mr. Cunningham—the introduction of religion and texts of Scripture into novels. As in the present instance, silly and misconceived characters will run about in wordy devotion, and sacred texts and inferences will be open to derision. If a novelist wishes to exhibit his or her own religion in an exemplary character, let it be made the base not the surface of action, and shew its operation without being obtruded in common conversation—a pharaicaic practice, which in real life is as intolerable as it is deceptive, ill-judged, and irreverent.

As to "Emma," the falling off is of another kind, and we firmly believe unavoidable, just as a die ceases after a while to yield strong impressions. The talent of this author is displayed in an accurate description of country society, consisting of the middling gentry and those who move in the sphere around them; every body must acknowledge these form no inexhaustible magazine. But, after all, "Emma" is not only readable, but pleasantly so:—the personage so termed is a young lady of sprightliness and mind rather than of talent, who is led by a somewhat too high opinion of her own penetration to arrange matches, in her mind, for all her acquaintance, and whose pleasant castle-building always proves foundationless, and leaves her wondering and excusing herself until she finally stands corrected. Her succession of mistakes with respect to a simple young girl, whom she has taken under her especial protection, as to marriage, is described with great felicity; and the nature exhibited in the sketches of Harriet Smith and Robert Martin is truly pleasing. We have, however, to mention one defect which the author can avoid, which is thinking a foolish character will always entertain because it is natural. Thus a weak gabbling country spinster is made to talk in this novel with the nicest keeping; but she talks infinitely too much, or, rather, fills infinitely too many pages. The Mrs. Bennett of "Pride and Prejudice" was a truly humourous and natural sketch in something of the same way, and we fear has seduced—"Les longueurs, les longueurs, les longueurs!"—"Le sage entend à demi-mot."

FRAGMENTS, ANECDOTES, AND REMAINS,
ILLUSTRATIVE OF WOMAN,
HER CONDUCT, CHARACTER, AND ATTAINMENTS.

This head is opened to supply the place of Memoirs of eminent Women in Great Britain, which, though still abundant in material, began to fail in variety. The cause is obvious—the biography of a certain order of females only, was adopted for our pages, and it happens that such lives afford less diversity in detail, and consequently less scope for varied remark, than any other. Released from formal narrative, the field is infinitely wider, because we may frequently say much of those of whom we should not choose to say all—for we trust our moral purpose will be always the same. This department, as we arranged, will therefore form a kind of common place book for miscellaneous communication and remark, distinctly allusive to the sex; and, among other particulars, will embrace a selection of unpublished letters of eminent females, with which a correspondent has politely undertaken to furnish us, and to whom we hereby beg leave to intimate our thanks and acceptance.—Ed.

The following letters are the production of the wife of Elizabeth's favourite, the unfortunate Earl of Essex. The first of them exhibits the mournful but beautiful picture of a wife, in sickness and in