

BY-GONE DAYS IN OUR VILLAGE

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By-Gone Days in Our Village by J. L. W.

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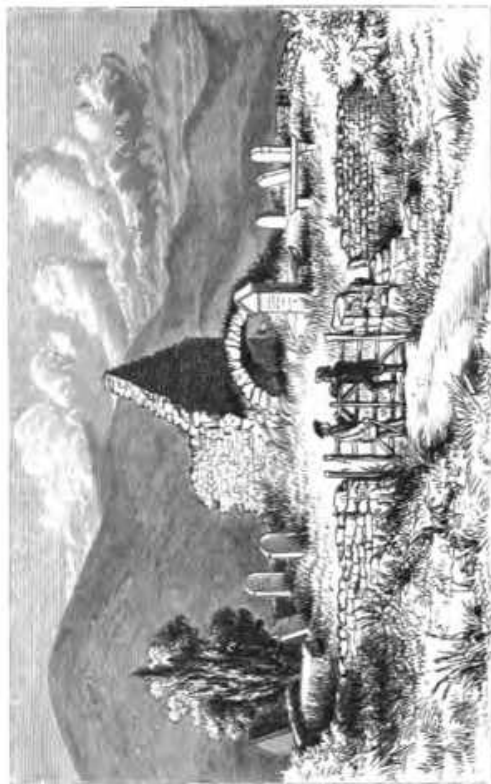
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PREFACE.

IN our times, Science, with its marvellous influence on everyday life, has advanced with such rapid strides, that if, amidst the hurry and excitement of the present, we take a backward glance at the past, a feeling of self-complacency is apt to steal over us, not unlike that which provoked the sorely tried patriarch's bitter retort, 'No doubt but ye are the people!' Yet when this glance is prolonged into a calm and deliberate survey, and taking leisure to contemplate narrowly the characters of our fathers, we consider the few advantages they enjoyed, the self-complacent feeling gives way to one of humility, and we blush to think we are not more worthy children of such sires.

We cannot regard those who have preceded us in this world's stage as we do the sad relics of humanity in the Egyptian Gallery, which possess merely a historic interest;—to us the former are living, moving beings, withdrawn, indeed, from our daily walk, but appearing in answer to our call, and refreshing our spirits with their pleasant, homely converse.

We spent our early days in a quiet rural district, where the manners and customs of the past lingered in much of their original simplicity, long after they were banished from the crowded city; and it is to this little world that we would now introduce the reader, trusting that the society, albeit for the most part lowly, may not be found altogether uninteresting.

J. L. W.

EDINBURGH, *October* 1863.

