

THE SPECTACLE E'E IN VERSE.

It is the manuscript book of poems, however, which interested me most. It was compiled by John Thomson, son of the Archibald Thomson, before mentioned, who dwelt in the little cottage known for long, I believe, as the "Limeman's Cottage," and who died young. The book is a veritable little mine, and contains, in addition to versicles of his own, some that were apparently the work of a Stra'ven bard. One of the poems completely charmed me. It is entitled "The Auld Cotton Mill," and deals with the Spectacle E'e falls. Apparently it had been wed to the old melody, then a favourite with country people, *i.e.*, "The Auld Quarry Knowe." Here are three verses of the poem:—

Whaur Kype its bonnie crystal stream
Sends loupin' doon the lynn,
Wi' splash and dash frae rock tae rock,
Mid muckle spray and din.
Weel sheltered frae the simmer's heat,
And wintry winds sae chill,
Stauns snug among the rocks and trees
The auld cotton mill.

And oh! sic bonnie floers we pu'd
Aroon that cherished spot:
The jagged brier, the scented thyme,
And wee forget-me-not;
While primrose sweet, and violets fair,
Gar'd a' oor he'rt-strings thrill
As we made them intae posies, by
The auld cotton mill.

But noo oor youthfu' happy days
They a' hae sped awa',
And ither bairnies speel the cliffs
Abin the waterfa'.
But aye we liked tae daunner there,
And think wi' pleasure still
On the glesome days we spent beside
The auld cotton mill.

But the auld cotton mill is now a ruin, and the "Limeman's Cottage" on the Stonehouse-Stra'ven road, where John Thomson, and many another Thomson lived and died, is now no more. The snell winds of December ruffle the beech trees; the last leaf flutters down upon a heap of broken stone and powdered mortar; no light shines through the gloom. Another old landmark has gone!