LITERATURE, &c.

The British Magazines.

From Chambers's Edinburgh Journal.

POETS AND POESY.

Few chance-breathed syllables! ye bring to me
A joy full deep, though voiceless it must be.

How many thoughts an idly-spoken word
Doth oft awaken! even as when a bird
Lights on a flowery spray—in some sweet spot,
Quiet and shady, where winds wanton not
Amid the young green leaves, nor ever creep
To kiss the bright buds from their balmy sleep—
The fair flowers then all nod and dance, and fling
Their treasured odour o'er that gay bird's wing!
And scarcely can our slumbering thoughts be stirred
By the soft breathing of a dearer word
Than this one—poesy.

Oh glorious light,
That with thy splendour makest all things bright!
Thou loving angel! on whose brow the flowers
Still keep the bloom they wore in Eden's bowers!
Can there be those upon whose spirit all
Thy fair creations unreflected fall?
Alas! although in every soul doth rest
The capability of being blessed;
And each must have the latent power to prize
What it was formed to love, yet oft it lies
Self-shadowed 'mid the sunshine, with no thirst
For fadeless light, no deep desire to burst
Its weary bondage, and to rise above
The cloud that shuts out beauty, truth and love:
The elements of Heaven, where not one tear
May dim the joy so faintly dreamed of here.

But few although her worshippers may be,
And only maskers some who bend the knee,
Yet beauty is eternal! though on earth
Made visible in things of mortal birth.
Thus though some lyre which hymns her praise be flung
To drear decay, unlaurelled and unstrung;
Though the deep music of some minstrel's lay,
With his own life, unhonored pass away;
The soul of poesy still lives! still breathes
Its melodies to gentle hearts, and wreathes
For them its fairy flowers; still bath its spell
The power to wake the lovely things that dwell,
Unseen, around us in the mystic air,
Yea, even as Music liveth ever there!
Though silent oft the spirit-voice must be,
Till, with a trembling hand, man sets it free;
By genius, almost divinely taught
To vocalise his heart's unworded thought.

Oh priest of Beauty! dweller 'mid the blaze
Of that eternal light, whose faintest rays
Can, even on earth's most perishable things,
Shed bloom like that an angel's pinion flings!
Rejoice! rejoice! that thus to thee are given
The splendours of an intellectual heaven.
Yet, poet! when from thine unclouded skies
Recalled a while by still unbroken ties,
Thou, with thy fellow-man, again dost tread
The common earth, let no vain tears be shed,
That thus thy human heart must often share
The weary lot which others always bear.
But strive thou rather ever to reveal
To all the glories thou hast power to feel;
Nor deem thou that the blessings of thy God
Are for thyself alone on thee bestowed.
Fear not, and faint not! though too oft thy strain
Seem breathed, like winds o'er desert wastes, in vain;
Hearts yet shall feel the magic of thy lay,
And own that in thy soul is shrined a ray
Divine, though tinged over with the hue
Of thine own thought—the urn it streameth through.

Oh! never till life's 'silver cord' is broken,
May poet's words to me be vainly spoken!
Aye to earth's crownless kings my spirit bends,
And owns the sceptre whose mild sway extends
Wide as humanity can spread its love,
Or as its wandering fancies e'er can rove;
Far as its chainless thought can reach, and high
As its most soaring hope may dare to fly.

We all owe homage to the mighty few,
Who—since the days when human life was new,
And Time's broad flood was but an infant stream,
Bright with the radiance of the sun's first beam—
Have, as they floated down its tide, flung in
The gems they toiled from their own thoughts to win;
And scattered o'er the waters leaves and flowers,
That by the river bloomed; those wreathes are ours,
Ours every sparkling jewel! for true thought
Is deathless: 'twere too sad to deem that aught
Had perished utterly! Though many a name
Was breathed too faintly by the lip of Fame
For us to catch its tone; though many a lay,
Heart echoed oft, hath seemed to pass away;
Ere it grew silent, all its soul it gave
To those whose name and words outlive the grave.
A spirit-life have thoughts by poets breathed;
Oh! let us prize the wealth they have bequeathed;
Nor idly murmur, though it be not ours
To give to after-times bright gems or flowers.

From the London People's Journal.

THE MISREPRESENTED MAN.

A STORY FOR DISAFFECTED PERSONS.

By Cornelius Colville.

Those of my readers who are acquainted with the sayings of the great lexicographer, the pompous, the verbose Dr. Johnson, will, peradventure, remember an observation of his anent the most desirable place for a man fond of retirement and seclusion to live in. It was the opinion of that sapient man, that the great metropolis, the babel-tongued London, was the most eligible spot for such a purpose. The assertion may probably appear somewhat paradoxical; but when we consider what an immense mass of people reside in London, how various their callings, how many thousands of objects there are calculated to distract their attention, and to render it impossible for them to fix it for any length of time upon any single object, the remark of the great critic will no longer appear so inconsistent or so far from truth as many at first would suppose it to be. I can, however, myself vouch for its truth, for I have experienced the inconvenience of the prying curiosity of the world; I have been scandalised and talked about in quarters where my name ought not to have been mentioned except with respect. I have had motives attributed to me by which I was never actuated; and, in short, from the usage I have experienced, from the liberties which have been taken with my reputation, I conceive I have a fair claim to the title of "The Misrepresented Man."

I have been a person of retiring habits from my earliest years, and always anxious to escape observation. I am pacific in my disposition, unostentatious in my deportment, a hater of scandal, and have never been known to engage in theological or political controversy. Sooner than quarrel with a man, I will at once acquiesce in his opinions; sooner than incur a bad name, I will make any sacrifice that may be required. I hate contention; I abhor to be on bad terms with the meanest person. I have always longed for quietness; and am so averse to disputes, that I would willingly consent to the continuance of any abuse rather than be involved in any dilemma in seeking to remove it. Is such a man fit for the world? No.

I was born in a large manufacturing town in the county of Lancashire. An ample fortune left me by my father rendered a profession superfluous. I was, therefore, brought up as a gentleman; and as I found no very laborious duties attached to my position, I did not repine or complain at the blindness of Fortune; but, on the contrary, thought when she assigned to me my situation in society, she must have had both her eyes wide open, and been remarkably discriminating into the bargain.

My easy circumstances, my social habits, my generosity (if I may be permitted to say so), had drawn round me several persons of my own age. My confidence, however, was betrayed, and my generosity abused. Besides, I had accidentally discovered that I had several times been the subject of conversation in circles where I was partially known. Sometimes I had been ridiculed for some weakness; at others censured for some insignificant foible appertaining to my character.

To give some idea of the treatment I was exposed to, I will mention a circumstance or two. Poodles had professed the greatest friendship for me. I made him my confidant; revealed to him secrets known only to myself; and how was I repaid for my condescension—for my unsuspecting candour? I had the satisfaction of knowing on the first interruption to our friendship, that my private affairs were the talk of the whole place.

'Ha, ha, Tweedledee,' said my *quondam* friend Smiggs; 'why, I'm told you are the author of the enraptured letter to the beautiful Miss Price, and that those affecting verses, entitled 'My Heart,' which lately appeared in the 'Sighing Syren,' proceeded from your pen.'

'Who told you this, sir?' I inquired.

'Told me. It is the talk of the whole town—you'll be a standing joke for the next three months.'

I made no farther inquiry. I knew who had published my shame to the world—Poodles was the man. The subsequent conduct of Smiggs was, perhaps, if anything, worse. I had at various times lent him sums of money, and when I pressed him for payment, he was angry. We quarrelled; and out of revenge he abused me to everybody he knew. These acts disgusted me with society; they infused into my heart a spirit of misanthropy which I could not repress. In a fit of rage I determined to quit my native place for ever, betake myself to some country village, where I was not known, and shut myself up entirely from the world. I did so; and proceed to relate what befel me thereupon.

I took up my residence at a small place called Woodfarm. I was fortunate to secure a comfortable little cottage situated in the outskirts of the village. It was called 'Peace Arbour.' The locality was healthy and picturesque; and from its isolation, I fancied I should be free from all molestation. I engaged a clean, tidy-looking girl as housekeeper, to attend upon me; and as I had previously determined to injure nobody by word or deed, expected the same kindness to be shown to myself.

The first few months passed away very pleasantly. Somewhat against my inclination, I had become acquainted with two or three persons of the village, though I maintained the utmost reserve towards the inhabitants generally.

One day, one of these persons called upon me. He was a pleasant, easy, good-natured fellow, about fifty.

'How do you do, Mr Tweedledee?' he inquired.

'Thank you, I'm quite well.'

'We were greatly disappointed, my good sir,' he observed, 'that you did not come to take tea with us yesterday evening, as you promised.'

'Why, sir, did you expect me?' I inquired.

'Why, sir, didn't I invite you?'

'It is very true you invited me, but you forget, sir—the fact seems to have escaped your memory—it was very wet—it rained in torrents.'

'Rained. Mr Tweedledee—certainly it rained, sir, I'm quite aware of it; but you cannot shelter yourself by a shower of rain—'

'I beg your pardon, sir, but people usually shelter themselves from a shower of rain.'

'Allow me, sir, to finish my observation. I say you cannot shelter yourself by a shower of rain from a charge of discourtesy and ingratitude.'

'I am truly sorry, Mr Pippintree, that I have disappointed you; but under the circumstances, I never supposed for a moment that you could expect me.'

'Of course we expected you—we prepared for you, sir. I am not the only one, it seems, who has to complain of your conduct; for it is pretty well circulated in the place, that you are a very disagreeable person. Some say that you are proud, some that you are vindictive; but all agree that you are unsocial and repulsive.'

'I unsocial, I proud, I vindictive! It's a mistake, sir—you must be in error. I'm one of the most harmless men in the village.'

'I have always thought you so, Mr Tweedledee; but people will talk—they will talk, sir.'

'To be sure, sir, they will talk; but I don't know any reason why I should be the subject of their talk; I who have always conducted myself so circumspectly; I who have never spoken disrespectfully of any body; I who have been so willing to oblige and assist.'

'Very true, sir, but people can't shut their ears to these reports.'

When old Mr Pippintree had departed, I was so enraged at what I had just heard that I determined to quit the place at once, and endeavor to find a residence amongst a people more charitably disposed than those amongst whom I was at present living. I did not remain in this mind more than a few days, I had become quite enamoured of my residence—well pleased with the one or two *soi-disant* friends I possessed, and therefore I felt the more inclined to become a permanent resident of the locality.

Other circumstances, however, speedily transpired, which imperatively, in my opinion, called for my removal.

I was returning in the stage coach one night, from a neighboring town, whither I had gone to transact some business. I was the only inside passenger for some miles. At length, when we had come within three or four miles of my habitation, two middle aged ladies, with faded complexions, entered the vehicle. I was rather fatigued, and in a dozing kind of humour, and was reclining in a corner of the coach, with my head almost entirely concealed by my cloak. I felt disinclined to talk, and therefore made no observation when they entered.

The ladies presently commenced a conversation among themselves. One of them complained that Woodfarm was very dull; no balls, no concerts—no kind of amusement, indeed, going forward. The other wondered what the fashions would be for the ensuing spring. From these matters they proceeded to speak of the inhabitants. The stout lady had heard that Miss Gimp was really to be married at Christmas, and that the house was already taken; but her companion had heard a different version of the story, for she had been informed that the match had been broken off, and that Miss Gimp had been appointed governess in the family of a clergyman, residing in the neighboring county. Several families during the conversation were mentioned, and among the rest the Slingsbys, the Gadflys, and the Bagloves. The Slingsbys had an execution in the house; to be sure, what could they expect?—it was impossible that such extravagance could last. The Gadflys were going to entertain a large party on New Year's eve; they hoped it would be more select than the last one. The Bagloves were going to enlarge their house and make extensive alteration: they feared they were going beyond their income, and dreaded to think of the consequences.

'Do you know the person that is going to live at 'Peace Arbour'?' asked the stout lady.

'Only by report. He is very unsocial, I suppose.'

'Good looking?'

'Oh, quite the reverse; plain, ugly, I would say. (A wicked falsehood, for I have more than once been thought handsome.)

'His temper is most violent,' continued the same speaker—'and he uses his servant shamefully'—never spoke a cross word to her in my life.

'Is he married?' the stout lady inquired.

'He reports himself to be single; but it is said that he has two wives, one in London, the other in Liverpool'—(what a wicked world.)

I sat very quietly listening to the ladies, without deigning to contradict anything that they advanced. For upwards of a quarter of an hour I was the topic of their conversation; and I can assure the reader that if I had not been so intimately acquainted with the subject of their discussion, I should have immediately concluded that he was one of the greatest villains under the sun.

The aspersions which had so unjustly been thrown upon my character, led me at once to depart from Woodfarm. I discharged my servant, and got rid of my house, and proceeded to a village a few miles distant, where I hoped the people would be more charitable, and likely to put a better construction upon the conduct and manners of a somewhat reserved and unpretending gentleman. In this I was deceived.

Although I had succeeded in casting off my habitual reserve; although I plunged headlong as it were into the very vortex of society; although I placed no bounds to my sociability, but conversed with everybody that chance threw in my way, till my conduct was not *comme il faut*.

'My good fellow,' said Wedgely (my particular friend) one day, 'allow me to give you a piece of advice.'

'My dear friend, I shall be happy to receive it,' I said; 'any counsel from you must be of good service, and well intended. Go on, my good sir.'

'You'll not be offended?'

'So far from that, I shall listen to what you have to say with the greatest attention and pay every respect to it.'

'You have not been long amongst us, Tweedledee; but as there is a likelihood of your permanently residing here, I would strongly advise you not to go so much into society.'

'My dear sir, I am astounded!—perplexed! What earthly objection can there be to my going into society?'

'There is an objection, Tweedledee; there is an objection, sir, a mighty objection.'

'I implore you to tell me the nature of it.'

'The fact of the matter is, sir, that people say you are actuated by unworthy motives in doing so.'

'Why, what are the motives attributed to me?'

'Why, sir, if the truth must be told, it is said that you are a needy adventurer, and that you are anxious to form an alliance with some of the rich heiresses in the village. It appears that the suspicions of several maiden aunts, decayed old uncles, and jealous fathers and mothers, are aroused. As a friend of yours, I deemed it my duty to put you on your guard.'

'Sir, I am deeply indebted to you; and as a proof that I esteem your advice, I shall leave this place forthwith.'

'Nonsense! you will not be so foolish. Why, sir, people will talk; it is the way of the world. Remain where you are; and convince those who may be prejudiced by the charge made against you, that you have been misrepresented.'

'No, sir, my determination is fixed—irretrievably fixed. I shall depart in the morning.'

'Then I must for ever regret that I have been so free in giving my advice, since it involves the loss of my best of friends!

'Although we shall be separated, we shall nevertheless be friends, Wedgely.'

Agreeably to my resolution, which no consideration could shake, I left the village—notwithstanding some regrets for one or two of the attached friends I had left behind, particularly Wedgely, who might truly be termed my *fidus Achates*.

I scarcely knew in what direction to bend my steps. I had already located myself in two different places, and, without any real cause, had incurred the hatred and disrespect of the inhabitants of both places. What could I infer from such painful experience? Why, simply that the same result would follow whithersoever I went. I was more disgusted with society now than ever; and came to the determination of returning to my native place, and taking a lodging a short distance from the town. This I accordingly did, and for several weeks excluded myself entirely from all society.

I was walking out one day, when a sweet little girl, about eight years of age, with a hoop in her hand, came running up to me in an ecstacy of joy, and took hold of my hand.

'Oh, Mr Tweedledee,' she exclaimed, 'where have you been? Fred. and I have been talking about you for the last six months.'

I recognised in the little girl the child of one of my oldest friends, from whom also I had been estranged.

'Well, Emmy, my dear, is that you? And how are papa and mama, love?'

'Oh, quite well, Mr Tweedledee, and so is Fred., and Polly, and the baby, and your old friend Fido: all quite well.'

'I'm very glad to hear it.'

'You can't think how Fred. and I have missed you; we have scarcely any body to play with now. Do come and play at ball with me in yonder field.'

'Not to-day, my child,' I said; 'some other day I will.'

'To-morrow, perhaps?'

'Yes, if you will promise not to tell papa and mama that you have seen me.'

She promised not to do so; and on the following day, about the same hour, I strolled in the same direction, and found both my young friends anxiously waiting my arrival. They were delighted to see me, and overjoyed at my condescension to play with them. I became quite enamoured of the society of these little people, and day after day we met for the