

place in our literature : we are introduced to shepherds in abundance, Hobbinols, Diggon Davies, and Colin Clouts ; and find much reference made to "huts where poor men lie ;" but it is the poor men of the classical Pastoral, who were in reality neither poor nor men, but mere fictions of the poets, —the inhabitants of a Utopia filled with crooks, and pipes, and garlands of flowers. There have been many criticisms on the Pastoral,—some of these by the first names in our literature,—Pope, Addison, and Johnson ; but the true secret of the origin of this, the least natural and interesting of all the departments of poetry, we have not yet seen indicated. Like the silver mask of the veiled prophet that gleamed far amid the darkness of the night, and yet covered a countenance too horrible to be bared to the eye, it formed in the ancient literature the mask that at once concealed and represented the face of the people,—a face scarred and deformed by a cruel system of domestic slavery, and so unfit to be uncovered. In every truly national literature the people *must* be exhibited ; and if they cannot be exhibited as they are, they must be exhibited as they are not. Hence the pastoral poetry of Rome and Greece : it was the silver mask of a veiled people ; and that of England and the other nations of Europe was simply a tame imitation of it. About the middle of the last century the Pastoral proper died out of inanity, and the people began to be exhibited,—first in Scotland by Allan Ramsay, who, though he retained in his exquisite drama the old pastoral outlines, looked intelligently around him, and, drawing his materials fresh from among the humble class, out of which he had arisen, gave life, and truth, and nature, to the dead blank form. It was perhaps in Scotland that the people *could* be first represented as they really were. The vitalities of the national religion had already placed them on a high moral platform, and the national scheme of education—a result of the national religion—had developed their