

faculties as thinking men. As the Pastoral gradually disappeared in England, the people began to be exhibited, at first very inadequately and partially, but with certain lineaments of truth. Fielding and Richardson were contemporary. The first, a debauchee and a Bow Street magistrate, had an eye for but what was bad and ridiculous in the popular character. If we except Joseph Andrews,—a sort of male Pamela, drawn rather to caricature Richardson than from any sympathy with good morals and right feeling in a humble hero,—there is not one of the people whom in his character as an artist he exhibits in his works, whom in his character as a magistrate he would not punish as a scoundrel. The staple of his humbler characters is vulgar rascality. Richardson did better as a man, but not greatly better as an artist. His Pamela is rather a picture drawn in his back-parlour from his own imagination, than an exhibition of a real character, representative of any section of the people. There is more truth in the humbler characters of Smollett; and, though enveloped in the ridiculous, not a few of them possess what the humbler characters of Fielding want,—right feeling and a moral sense. But even of his own countrymen of the humbler order Smollett could do little more than portray the externals: he was ignorant of the inner life of Scotland, and of those high principles which can impart dignity to even the poorest. A Bunyan or a Robert Burns would have constituted a phenomenon beyond his conception.

It was the part of this last-named genius to assert for the people their true place in British literature,—directly, no doubt, by many of his writings, but not less efficiently by his life, and by the light which his biography has thrown on his humble compeers. It is interesting to observe in the lives of our eminent men, how each brings out into full view a group of individuals of whom we would otherwise never have heard. Each, like the sun of a system, possessed in