

THE  
COTTAGER'S FRIEND,  
AND  
GUIDE OF THE YOUNG.

---

---

VOL. I.]

JUNE, 1854.

[No. 5.

---

---

SKETCHES IN GENERAL BIOGRAPHY.

JOSEPH ADDISON, ESQ.

Some years ago, the *Spectator* was more generally read than it is at present. It is a book, however, which has taken its place among the *English classics*, and will always be read so long as the language in which it was written endures. Now that what may be termed the *dashing style* is with many so much in favour, with others, the *style of passion*, and perhaps with most, the exciting articles on *party politics* which are furnished by the editors of party newspapers, (and how few newspapers are now to be found which are not devoted to the interests of party,) the simple, calm, yet truly elegant, and English style of the *Spectator*, in which are given discussions on questions of criticism, or such as belong to what sometimes are termed *minor morals*, are considered, will find comparatively few admirers. Still, the *Spectator* will always be an English book for English readers. Even in cottages, odd volumes (now and then, complete sets) may sometimes be found; and, as age increases, and the judgment improves, and the conviction becomes stronger, that as London streets are not paved with gold, so likewise the politics of society will always furnish matters of complaint to those who search for them, the papers of the *Spectator* will, almost unawares, increase in the interest felt in their perusal; and if the education movement goes on, and produces the effects which are anticipated from it, (and we hope that it will do both,) the day of *Spectator* reading will come round again, and often, after, perhaps, a hard day's work, or a day of fatiguing and anxious attention to business, will a little quiet relaxation be sought, in the perusal of the unexciting, but instructive and interesting, papers of the *Spectator*. At all events, it is one of those English books of which *odd volumes* are often found, even now, on the cottager's shelf; and a brief account of the principal author will not, we think, be unaccep-