THE
# PEOPLE'S MAGAZINE,
AND WEEKLY JOURNAL.

VOL. I. MONTREAL, WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 30, 1846. No. 13

## SPECIMENS OF OLD ENGLISH POETS.

### No. IV.—MILTON.

[The argument between temperance and intemperance, or luxury, has frequently been carried on with much ability, but never, we suppose, in such musical numbers as the poem entitled Comus presents. The following is the passage where it occurs ]

*Comus.* O foolishness of men! that lend their ears
To those budge doctors of the Stoic fur,
And fetch their precepts from the Cynic tub,
Praising the lean and sallow abstinence.
Wherefore did nature pour her bounties forth
With such a full and unwithdrawing hand,
Covering the earth with odours, fruits, and flocks,
Thronging the seas with spawn innumerable,
But all to please and sate the curious taste?
And set to work millions of spinning worms,
That in their green shops weave the smooth-hair'd silk,
To deck her sons, and that no corner might
Be vacant of her plenty, in her own loins
She hutch'd th' all worship'd ore, and precious gems
To store her children with: if all the world
Should in a pet of temp'rance feed on pulse,
Drink the clear stream, and nothing wear but frieze,
Th' All-giver would be unthank'd, would be unprais'd;
Not half His riches known, and yet despis'd,
And we should serve Him as a grudging master,
As a penurious niggard of His wealth,
And live like Nature's bastards, not her sons,
Who would be quite surcharg'd with her own weight,
And strangled with her waste fertility.
Th' earth cumber'd, and the wing'd air darkt with plumes,
The herds would over-multitude their lords;
The sea o'erfraught would swell; and th' unsought diamonds
Would so imblaze the forehead of the deep,
And so bestud with stars, that they below
Would grow inur'd to light, and come at last
To gaze upon the sun with shameless brows.

*Lady.* I had not thought to have unlock'd my lip
In this unhallow'd air, but that this juggler
Would think to charm my judgment, as mine eyes,
Obtruding false rules, prankt in reason's garb.
I hate, when vice can bolt her arguments,
And virtue has no tongue to check her pride.
Impostor, do not charge most innocent nature,
As if she would her children should be riotous
With her abundance; she, good cateress,
Means her provision only to the good,
That live according to her sober laws,
And holy dictate of spare temperance:
If every just man that now pines with want,
Had but a moderate and beseeming share
Of that which lewdly-pamper'd luxury
Now heaps upon some few with vast excess,
Nature's full blessings would be well dispens'd
In unsuperfluous even proportion,
And she no whit encumber'd with her store;
And then the Giver would be better thank'd,
His praise due paid; for swinish gluttony
Ne'er looks to Heav'n amidst his gorgeous feast,
But with besotted base ingratitude
Crams, and blasphemes his feeder. Shall I go on?
Or have I said enough? To him that dares
Arm his profane tongue with contemptuous words,
Against the sun-clad pow'r of chastity,
Fain would I something say, yet to what end?
Thou hast not ear nor soul to apprehend
The sublime notion, and high mystery,
That must be utter'd to unfold the sage
And serious doctrine of virginity,
And thou art worthy that thou shouldst not know
More happiness than this thy present lot.

---

## THE MICROSCOPE—ANIMALCULES.

*Extracted from an article in the Foreign Quarterly and Westminster Review.*

The vast number of animalcules with which the microscope has made us acquainted, were first detected in water in which vegetable matters, such as hay, grass, etc., had been allowed to macerate; and as they were almost invariably found in such infusions, it was considered by early investigators that they were peculiar to them; hence the general term infusoria was given to them; and although it is now known that these vegetable infusions have no relation to the origin of such creatures, except in so far as they provide a proper medium for the development of their ova, every where present; yet, for the sake of convenience, the general term infusoria is still retained by naturalists. Perhaps the best general idea of the appearance of some of these animalcules to an observer, for the first time, will be given by the following extract from Dr. Mantell's work:—

From some water containing aquatic plants, collected from a pond on Clapham Common, I select a small twig, to which are attached a few delicate flakes, apparently of slime or jelly; some minute fibres standing erect here and there on the twig are also dimly visible to the naked eye. This twig, with a drop or two of water, we will put between two thin plates of glass, and place under the field of view of a microscope, having lenses that magnify the image of an object two hundred times in linear dimensions. Upon looking through the instrument we find the fluid swarming with animals of various shapes and magnitudes Some are darting through the water with great rapidity, while others are pursuing and devouring creatures more infinitesimal than themselves. Many are attached to the twig by long delicate threads (the vorticeliæ); several have their bodies enclosed in a transparent tube, from one end of which the animal partly protrudes, and then recedes (the floscullariæ); while numbers are covered by an elegant shell or case (the brachionus). The minutest kinds (the monads), many of which are so small that millions might be contained in a single drop of water, appear like mere animated globules, free, single, and of various colors, sporting about in every direction. Numerous species resemble pearly or opaline cups or vases, fringed round the margin with delicate fibres, that are in constant oscillation (the vorticellæ). Some of these are attached by spiral tendrils; others are united by a slender stem to one common trunk, appearing like a bunch of harebells (the carchesium); others are of a globular form, and grouped together in a definite pattern on a tabular or spherical membraneous case for a certain period of their existence, and ultimately become detached and locomotive (the gonium and volvox); while many are permanently clustered together, and die if separated from the parent mass. No organs of progressive motion, similar to those of beasts, birds, or fishes, are observable in these beings; yet they traverse the water with rapidity, without the aid of limbs or fins; and though many species are destitute of eyes, yet all possess an accurate perception of the presence of other bodies, and pursue and capture their prey with unerring purpose.—Thoughts on Animalcules, pp. 9, 10.

Much as has been done in this department of science, our knowledge of the infusory beings is still limited; but there is every reason to believe that they do not take their station among the links of the animal chain according to their dimensions, but from their structure. The simplest and smallest is as much an animal as the proudest examples of nature's works;