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Henry Hallam

From a Painting by Thomas Phillips R.A. in the possession of Mr. Murray

INTRODUCTION

TO THE

LITERATURE OF EUROPE,

IN THE

FIFTEENTH, SIXTEENTH, AND SEVENTEENTH CENTURIES.

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De modo autem hujusmodi historiæ conscribendæ, illud imprimis monemus, ut materia et copia ejus, non tantum ab historiis et criticis petatur, verum etiam per singulas annorum centurias, aut etiam minora intervalla, seriatim libri præcipui, qui eo temporis spatio conscripti sunt, in consilium adhibeantur; ut ex eorum non perlectione (id enim infinitum quiddam esset), sed degustatione, et observatione argumenti, styli, methodi, genius illius temporis literarius, veluti incantatione quadam, a mortuis evocetur.—BACON *de Augm. Scient.*

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PREFACE

TO

THE FIRST EDITION.

THE advantages of such a synoptical view of literature as displays its various departments in their simultaneous condition through an extensive period, and in their mutual dependency, seem too manifest to be disputed. And, as we possess little of this kind in our own language, I have been induced to undertake that to which I am, in some respects at least, very unequal, but which no more capable person, as far as I could judge, was likely to perform. In offering to the public this introduction to the literary history of three centuries—for I cannot venture to give it a title of more pretension—it is convenient to state my general secondary sources of information, exclusive of the acquaintance I possess with original writers; and, at the same time, by showing what has already been done, and what is left undone, to furnish a justification of my own undertaking.

The history of literature belongs to modern, and chiefly to almost recent times. The nearest approach to it that the ancients have left us is contained in a single chapter of Quintilian, the first of the tenth book, wherein he passes rapidly over the names and characters of the poets, orators, and historians of Greece and Rome. This, however, is but a sketch; and the valuable work of Diogenes Laertius preserves too little of chronological order to pass for a history of ancient philosophy, though it has supplied much of the materials for all that has been written on that subject.

In the sixteenth century, the great increase of publications, and the devotion to learning which distinguished that period, might suggest the scheme of a universal literary history. Conrad Gesner, than whom no one, by extent and variety of erudition, was more fitted for the

labour, appears to have framed a plan of this kind. What he has published, the Bibliotheca Universalis, and the Pandectæ Universales, are, taken together, the materials that might have been thrown into an historical form; the one being an alphabetical catalogue of authors and their writings; the other a digested and minute index to all departments of knowledge, in twenty-one books, each divided into titles, with short references to the texts of works on every head in his comprehensive classification. The order of time is therefore altogether disregarded. Possevin, an Italian Jesuit, made somewhat a nearer approach to this in his Bibliotheca Selecta, published at Rome in 1593. Though his partitions are rather encyclopædic than historical, and his method, especially in the first volume, is chiefly argumentative, he gives under each chapter a nearly chronological catalogue of authors, and sometimes a short account of their works.

Lord Bacon, in the second book De Augmentis Scientiarum, might justly deny, notwithstanding these defective works of the preceding century, that any real history of letters had been written; and he compares that of the world, wanting this, to a statue of Polypheme deprived of his single eye. He traces the method of supplying this deficiency in one of those luminous and comprehensive passages which bear the stamp of his vast mind; the origin and antiquities of every science, the methods by which it has been taught, the sects and controversies it has occasioned, the colleges and academies in which it has been cultivated, its relation to civil government and common society, the physical or temporary causes which have influenced its condition, form, in his plan, as essential a part of such a history, as the lives of famous authors, and the books they have produced.

No one has presumed to fill up the outline which Bacon himself could but sketch; and most part of the seventeenth century passed away with few efforts on the part of the learned to do justice to their own occupation; for we can hardly make an exception for the Prodromus Historiæ Literariæ (Hamburg, 1659) of Lambecius, a very learned German, who, having framed a magnificent scheme of a universal history of letters, was able to carry it no farther than the times of Moses and Cadmus. But, in 1688, Daniel Morhof, professor at Kiel in Holstein,

published his well-known Polyhistor, which received considerable additions in the next age at the hands of Fabricius, and is still found in every considerable library.

Morhof appears to have had the method of Possevin in some measure before his eyes; but the lapse of a century, so rich in erudition as the seventeenth, had prodigiously enlarged the sphere of literary history. The precise object, however, of the Polyhistor, as the word imports, is to direct, on the most ample plan, the studies of a single scholar. Several chapters, that seem digressive in an historical light, are to be defended by this consideration. In his review of books in every province of literature, Morhof adopts a sufficiently chronological order; his judgments are short, but usually judicious; his erudition so copious, that later writers have freely borrowed from the Polyhistor, and, in many parts, added little to its enumeration. But he is far more conversant with writers in Latin than the modern languages; and, in particular, shows a scanty acquaintance with English literature.

Another century had elapsed, when the honour of first accomplishing a comprehensive synopsis of literary history in a more regular form than Morhof, was the reward of Andrès, a Spanish Jesuit, who, after the dissolution of his order, passed the remainder of his life in Italy. He published at Parma, in different years, from 1782 to 1799, his Origine, Progresso, e Stato attuale d'ogni Litteratura. The first edition is in five volumes quarto; but I have made use of that printed at Prato, 1806, in twenty octavo volumes. Andrès, though a Jesuit, or perhaps because a Jesuit, accommodated himself in some measure to the tone of the age wherein his book appeared, and is always temperate, and often candid. His learning is very extensive in surface, and sometimes minute and curious, but not, generally speaking, profound; his style is flowing, but diffuse and indefinite; his characters of books have a vagueness unpleasant to those who seek for precise notions; his taste is correct, but frigid; his general views are not injudicious, but display a moderate degree of luminousness or philosophy. This work is, however, an extraordinary performance, embracing both ancient and modern literature in its full extent, and, in

many parts, with little assistance from any former publication of the kind. It is far better known on the Continent than in England, where I have not frequently seen it quoted; nor do I believe it is common in our private libraries.

A few years after the appearance of the first volumes of Andrès, some of the most eminent among the learned of Germany projected a universal history of modern arts and sciences on a much larger scale. Each single province, out of eleven, was deemed sufficient for the labours of one man, if they were to be minute and exhaustive of the subject: among others, Bouterwek undertook poetry and polite letters; Buhle speculative philosophy; Kästner the mathematical sciences; Sprengel anatomy and medicine; Heeren classical philology. The general survey of the whole seems to have been assigned to Eichhorn. So vast a scheme was not fully executed; but we owe to it some standard works, to which I have been considerably indebted. Eichhorn published, in 1796 and 1799, two volumes, intended as the beginning of a General History of the Cultivation and Literature of modern Europe, from the twelfth to the eighteenth century. But he did not confine himself within the remoter limit; and his second volume, especially, expatiates on the dark ages that succeeded the fall of the Roman empire. In consequence, perhaps, of this diffuseness, and also of the abandonment, for some reason with which I am unacquainted, of a large portion of the original undertaking, Eichhorn prosecuted this work no farther in its original form. But, altering slightly its title, he published, some years afterwards, an independent universal "History of Literature" from the earliest ages to his own. This is comprised in six volumes, the first having appeared in 1805, the last in 1811.

The execution of these volumes is very unequal. Eichhorn was conversant with oriental, with theological literature, especially of his own country, and in general with that contained in the Latin language. But he seems to have been slightly acquainted with that of the modern languages, and with most branches of science. He is more specific, more chronological, more methodical in his distribution than Andrès: his reach of knowledge, on the other hand, is less comprehensive; and

though I could praise neither highly for eloquence, for taste, or for philosophy, I should incline to give the preference in all these to the Spanish Jesuit. But the qualities above mentioned render Eichhorn, on the whole, more satisfactory to the student.

These are the only works, as far as I know, which deserve the name of general histories of literature, embracing all subjects, all ages, and all nations. If there are others, they must, I conceive, be too superficial to demand attention. But in one country of Europe, and only in one, we find a national history so comprehensive as to leave uncommemorated no part of its literary labour. This was first executed by Tiraboschi, a Jesuit born at Bergamo, and in his later years librarian of the Duke of Modena, in twelve volumes quarto: I have used the edition published at Rome in 1785. It descends to the close of the seventeenth century. In full and clear exposition, in minute and exact investigation of facts, Tiraboschi has few superiors; and such is his good sense in criticism, that we must regret the sparing use he has made of it. But the principal object of Tiraboschi was biography. A writer of inferior reputation, Corniani, in his Secoli della litteratura Italiana dopo il suo risorgimento (Brescia, 9 vols., 1804–1813), has gone more closely to an appreciation of the numerous writers whom he passes in review before our eyes. Though his method is biographical, he pursues sufficiently the order of chronology to come into the class of literary historians. Corniani is not much esteemed by his countrymen, and does not rise to a very elevated point of philosophy; but his erudition appears to me considerable, his judgments generally reasonable; and his frequent analyses of books give him one superiority over Tiraboschi.

The Histoire Littéraire de l'Italie, by Ginguéné, is well known: he had the advantage of following Tiraboschi; and could not so well, without his aid, have gone over a portion of the ground, including in his scheme, as he did, the Latin learning of Italy; but he was very conversant with the native literature of the language, and has, not a little prolixly, doubtless, but very usefully, rendered much of easy access to Europe, which must have been sought in scarce volumes, and

was in fact known by name to a small part of the world. The Italians are ungrateful, if they deny their obligations to Ginguéné.

France has, I believe, no work of any sort, even an indifferent one, on the universal history of her own literature; nor can we claim for ourselves a single attempt of the most superficial kind. Warton's History of Poetry contains much that bears on our general learning; but it leaves us about the accession of Elizabeth.

Far more has been accomplished in the history of particular departments of literature. In the general history of philosophy, omitting a few older writers, Brucker deserves to lead the way. There has been of late years some disposition to depreciate his laborious performance, as not sufficiently imbued with a metaphysical spirit, and as not rendering with clearness and truth the tenets of the philosophers whom he exhibits. But the Germany of 1744 was not the Germany of Kant and Fichte; and possibly Brucker may not have proved the worse historian for having known little of recent theories. The latter objection is more material; in some instances he seems to me not quite equal to his subject. But upon the whole he is of eminent usefulness; copious in his extracts, impartial and candid in his judgments.

In the next age after Brucker, the great fondness of the German learned both for historical and philosophical investigation produced more works of this class than I know by name, and many more than I have read. The most celebrated, perhaps, is that of Tennemann; but of which I only know the abridgment, translated into French by M. Victor Cousin, with the title Manuel de l'Histoire de Philosophie. Buhle, one of the society above mentioned, whose focus was at Göttingen, contributed his share to their scheme in a History of Philosophy from the revival of letters. This I have employed through the French translation in six volumes. Buhle, like Tennemann, has very evident obligations to Brucker; but his own erudition was extensive, and his philosophical acuteness not inconsiderable.

The history of poetry and eloquence, or fine writing, was published by Bouterwek, in twelve volumes octavo. Those parts which relate to his own country, and to Spain and Portugal, have been of more use to me than

the rest. Many of my readers must be acquainted with the Littérature du Midi, by M. Sismondi; a work written in that flowing and graceful style which distinguishes the author, and succeeding in all that it seeks to give,—a pleasing and popular, yet not superficial or unsatisfactory, account of the best authors in the southern languages. We have nothing historical as to our own poetry but the prolix volumes of Warton. They have obtained, in my opinion, full as much credit as they deserve: without depreciating a book in which so much may be found, and which has been so great a favourite with the literary part of the public, it may be observed that its errors as to fact, especially in names and dates, are extraordinarily frequent, and that the criticism, in points of taste, is not of a very superior kind.

Heeren undertook the history of classical literature,—a great desideratum, which no one had attempted to supply. But unfortunately he has only given an introduction, carrying us down to the close of the fourteenth century, and a history of the fifteenth. These are so good, that we must much lament the want of the rest; especially as I am aware of nothing to fill up the vacuity. Eichhorn, however, is here of considerable use.

In the history of mathematical science, I have had recourse chiefly to Montucla, and, as far as he conducts us, to Kästner, whose catalogue and analysis of mathematical works is far more complete, but his own observations less perspicuous and philosophical. Portal's History of Anatomy, and some other books, to which I have always referred, and which it might be tedious to enumerate, have enabled me to fill a few pages with what I could not be expected to give from any original research. But several branches of literature, using the word, as I generally do, in the most general sense for the knowledge imparted through books, are as yet deficient in any thing that approaches to a real history of their progress.

The materials of literary history must always be derived in great measure from biographical collections, those, especially, which intermix a certain portion of criticism with mere facts. There are some, indeed, which are almost entirely of this description. Adrian Baillet, in his Jugemens des Sçavans, published in 1685, endeavoured to collect the suffrages of former critics on

the merits of all past authors. His design was only executed in a small part, and hardly extends beyond grammarians, translators, and poets; the latter but imperfectly. Baillet gives his quotations in French, and sometimes mingles enough of his own to raise him above a mere compiler, and to have drawn down the animosity of some contemporaries. Sir Thomas Pope Blount is a perfectly unambitious writer of the same class. His Censura celebriorum autorum, published in 1690, contains nothing of his own, except a few short dates of each author's life, but diligently brings together the testimonies of preceding critics. Blount omits no class, nor any age; his arrangement is nearly chronological, and leads the reader from the earliest records of literature to his own time. The polite writers of modern Europe, and the men of science, do not receive their full share of attention; but this volume, though not, I think, much in request at present, is a very convenient accession to any scholar's library.

Bayle's Dictionary, published in 1697, seems at first sight an inexhaustible magazine of literary history. Those who are conversant with it know that it frequently disappoints their curiosity; names of great eminence are sought in vain, or are very slightly treated; the reader is lost in episodical notes perpetually frivolous, and disgusted with an author who turns away at every moment from what is truly interesting to some idle dispute of his own time, or some contemptible indecency. Yet the numerous quotations contained in Bayle, the miscellaneous copiousness of his erudition, as well as the good sense and acuteness he can always display when it is his inclination to do so, render his dictionary of great value, though I think chiefly to those who have made a tolerable progress in general literature.

The title of a later work by Père Niceron, Mémoires pour servir à l'histoire des hommes illustres de la république des lettres, avec un catalogue raisonné de leurs ouvrages, in forty-three volumes 12mo., published at Paris from 1727 to 1745, announces something rather different from what it contains. The number of "illustrious men" recorded by Niceron is about 1600, chiefly of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The names, as may be anticipated, are frequently very insignificant;

and, in return, not a few of real eminence, especially when Protestant, and above all English, are overlooked, or erroneously mentioned. No kind of arrangement is observed; it is utterly impossible to conjecture in what volume of Niceron any article will be discovered. A succinct biography, though fuller than the mere dates of Blount, is followed by short judgments on the author's works, and by a catalogue of them, far more copious, at least, than had been given by any preceding bibliographer. It is a work of much utility; but the more valuable parts have been transfused into later publications.

The English Biographical Dictionary was first published in 1761. I speak of this edition with some regard, from its having been the companion of many youthful hours; but it is rather careless in its general execution. It is sometimes ascribed to Birch; but I suspect that Heathcote had more to do with it. After several successive enlargements an edition of this dictionary was published in thirty-two volumes, from 1812 to 1817, by Alexander Chalmers, whose name it now commonly bears. Chalmers was a man of very slender powers, relatively to the magnitude of such a work; but his life had been passed in collecting small matters of fact, and he has added much of this kind to British biography. He inserts, beyond any one else, the most insignificant names, and quotes the most wretched authorities. But as the faults of excess, in such collections, are more pardonable than those of omission, we cannot deny the value of his Biographical Dictionary, especially as to our own country, which has not fared well at the hands of foreigners.

Coincident nearly in order of time with Chalmers, but more distinguished in merit, is the Biographie Universelle. The eminent names appended to a large proportion of the articles contained in its fifty-two volumes are vouchers for the ability and erudition it displays. There is doubtless much inequality in the performance; and we are sometimes disappointed by a superficial notice, where we had a right to expect most. English literature, though more amply treated than had been usual on the Continent, and with the benefit of Chalmers's contemporaneous volumes, is still not fully appre-

ciated: our chief theological writers, especially, are passed over almost in silence. There seems, on the other hand, a redundancy of modern French names; those, above all, who have, even obscurely and insignificantly, been connected with the history of the Revolution; a fault, if it be one, which is evidently gaining ground in the supplementary volumes. But I must speak respectfully of a work to which I owe so much, and without which, probably, I should never have undertaken the present.

I will not here characterise several works of more limited biography; among which are the Bibliotheca Hispana Nova of Antonio, the Biographia Britannica, the Bibliothèque Française of Goujet; still less is there time to enumerate particular lives, or those histories which relate to short periods, among the sources of literary knowledge. It will be presumed, and will appear by my references, that I have employed such of them as came within my reach. But I am sensible that, in the great multiplicity of books of this kind, and especially in their prodigious increase on the Continent of late years, many have been overlooked from which I might have improved these volumes. The press is indeed so active, that no year passes without accessions to our knowledge, even historically considered, upon some of the multifarious subjects which the present volumes embrace. An author who waits till all requisite materials are accumulated to his hands, is but watching the stream that will run on for ever; and though I am fully sensible that I could have much improved what is now offered to the public by keeping it back for a longer time, I should but then have had to lament the impossibility of exhausting my subject. ΕΠΟΙΕΙ, the modest phrase of the Grecian sculptors, well expresses the imperfection that attaches to every work of literary industry or of philosophical investigation. But I have other warnings to bind up my sheaves while I may,—my own advancing years, and the gathering in the heavens.

I have quoted, to my recollection, no passage which I have not seen in its own place; though I may possibly have transcribed in some instances, for the sake of convenience, from a secondary authority. Without cen-

suring those who suppress the immediate source of their quotations, I may justly say that in nothing I have given to the public has it been practised by myself. But I have now and then inserted in the text characters of books that I have not read on the faith of my guides; and it may be the case that intimation of this has not been always given to the reader.

It is very likely that omissions, not, I trust, of great consequence, will be detected; I might in fact say that I am already aware of them; but perhaps these will be candidly ascribed to the numerous ramifications of the subject, and the necessity of writing in a different order from that in which the pages are printed. And I must add that some omissions have been intentional; an accumulation of petty facts, and especially of names to which little is attached, fatigues unprofitably the attention; and as this is very frequent in works that necessarily demand condensation, and cannot altogether be avoided, it was desirable to make some sacrifice in order to palliate the inconvenience. This will be found, among many other instances, in the account of the Italian learned of the fifteenth century, where I might easily have doubled the enumeration, but with little satisfaction to the reader.

But, independently of such slighter omissions, it will appear that a good deal is wanting in these volumes, which some might expect in a history of literature. Such a history has often contained so large a proportion of biography, that a work in which it appears very scantily, or hardly at all, may seem deficient in necessary information. It might be replied, that the limits to which I have confined myself, and beyond which it is not easy perhaps, in the present age, to obtain readers, would not admit of this extension; but I may add that any biography of the authors of these centuries, which is not servilely compiled from a few known books of that class, must be far too immense an undertaking for one man, and, besides its extent and difficulty, would have been particularly irksome to myself, from the waste of time, as I deem it, which an inquiry into trifling facts entails. I have more scruple about the omission of extracts from some of the poets and best writers in prose, without which they can be judged very

unsatisfactorily; but in this also I have been influenced by an unwillingness to multiply my pages beyond a reasonable limit. But I have, in some instances, gone more largely into analyses of considerable works than has hitherto been usual. These are not designed to serve as complete abstracts, or to supersede, instead of exciting, the reader's industry; but I have felt that some books of traditional reputation are less fully known than they deserve.

Some departments of literature are passed over, or partially touched. Among the former are books relating to particular arts, as agriculture or painting; or to subjects of merely local interest, as those of English law. Among the latter is the great and extensive portion of every library, the historical. Unless where history has been written with peculiar beauty of language, or philosophical spirit, I have generally omitted all mention of it; in our researches after truth of fact, the number of books that possess some value is exceedingly great, and would occupy a disproportionate space in such a general view of literature as the present. For a similar reason, I have not given its numerical share to theology.

It were an impertinence to anticipate, for the sake of obviating, the possible criticism of a public which has a right to judge, and for whose judgments I have had so much cause to be grateful, nor less so to dictate how it should read what it is not bound to read at all; but perhaps I may be allowed to say, that I do not wish this to be considered as a book of reference on particular topics, in which point of view it must often appear to disadvantage; and that, if it proves of any value, it will be as an entire and synoptical work.

ADVERTISEMENT TO THE FOURTH EDITION.

The text of this work has been revised, and such errors as the Author detected have been removed. The few additional notes are distinguished by the dates of the publication of the different editions in the years 1842, 1847, and 1853.

MEMOIR OF MR. HALLAM,

BY

THE VERY REV. DEAN MILMAN.

HENRY HALLAM, Esq., was born at Windsor (A.D. 1777). His father was Canon of Windsor and Dean of Bristol; the latter preferment he resigned during his lifetime. Mr. Hallam was educated at Eton, and to Eton he felt, and evinced throughout life, strong and grateful attachment. Both his sons were likewise educated there. Classical learning, then almost the exclusive study in that school, found a congenial mind in Mr. Hallam, and to the last he took great delight in its cultivation. Already at Eton he had become a sound and accurate scholar. Some of his verses, printed in the 'Musæ Etonenses,' are among the best in that collection, and show his command of pure and vigorous Latin, some fancy, and more thought than is usual in boyish compositions. From Eton he passed to Christ Church, Oxford. If his academic career was undistinguished, it was because in his time the University offered hardly any opportunities of distinction. But he remained a faithful member of the University. At the height of his fame he undertook the office of Examiner in Modern History; and Christ Church did herself credit by enrolling his name (he was already Doctor of Laws) among her honorary students created under the new academic system. Soon after he left the University, Mr. Hallam commenced the study of the Law. He entered himself as a member of the Inner Temple, became a Bencher, and took so much pleasure in the society of his legal

friends that, almost to the close of his life, he availed himself of the privileges and discharged the duties of that dignity. Some independent fortune, which was gradually increased, and an office under Government, in the Stamp Department,—an office which he held till the dissolution of the Board,—happily placed him above the necessity of striving for the emoluments of his profession, while those legal studies were an admirable preparation for his future career. Had he devoted himself to the practice of the Law, there can be no doubt that, although he may not have had the bold and ready eloquence, the pliancy, quickness, and versatility of a consummate advocate, yet his profound, accurate, and comprehensive learning, his indefatigable industry, his sagacity in penetrating to the depths of an abstruse subject, his grave, calm wisdom, which had so much of the true judicial character, might have led him to the highest honours and rank in the Law. It is well, however, for his country, for the cause of letters, and indeed of Constitutional Law itself, that he left the dignity of the Bench or of the Woolsack to his eminent contemporaries, and became—what no other man of his day could have become—the Historian of Constitutional Government and Law. In that character, and in that of a man of letters, he has acquired fame and influence as extensive as the world-wide English language, and indeed throughout the whole of Europe, where his works are generally known by translations. Mr. Hallam became, by deliberate choice and predilection, a man of letters in the highest and noblest sense. His dignified mind, and we may add his independent circumstances, as they had placed him above following the Law, so also raised him above following literature as a profession. He was in the enviable position that, while he sought and obtained the fame, he could disdain the drudgery of authorship; and there was no fear that such a mind would degenerate into indolence, or indulge in the

serene voluptuousness of literary leisure. He was a man of books, but not of books only; he took great delight in society, in which he mingled freely; and his own house was open not only to many attached friends, and to his legal contemporaries, but to statesmen, men of letters, of art, and of science, and to cultivated foreigners, whom he received with easy hospitality. There were few distinguished men in England, or even in Europe, who were not proud of his acquaintance; with many he lived on terms of the most intimate friendship.

Mr. Hallam became early a Member of the Royal Society. Though not strictly to be called a man of science, yet his active and comprehensive mind was sufficiently grounded in the principles of most of the exact sciences, especially of mathematics, to follow out their progress with intelligent judgment, and to watch their rapid advance with the utmost interest. In the proceedings of this, and of other kindred societies, particularly the Antiquarian, as well as in the administration of the British Museum, of which he was an elected Trustee, he took part; and always, from his remarkable range of knowledge and sound practical habits, with great advantage.

But though Mr. Hallam had thus early taken up his position as a man of letters, he did not come forward as an author till of mature age, and then, with a publication which had demanded years of industrious research and of multifarious inquiry. It was the grave and deliberate work of a man conscious of great powers, one also (which is more rare) fully conscious of the responsibility attached to such powers, and who well knew that the best faculties and attainments may be wasted, as to permanent usefulness and enduring fame, by that hasty ambition which grasps too eagerly after popular applause, and wearies the public mind by incessant demands on its attention. Till this time Mr. Hallam was only known by his general reputation as a well-

read and accomplished scholar, and by some articles in the 'Edinburgh Review.' The conductor of that journal, then at its height of power and fame (as appears from recent publications), fully appreciated the value of his aid, the extent and the variety of his attainments; one of his articles on Scott's 'Dryden' was remarkable as blending the courtesy due to a man like Walter Scott with free and independent judgment of his opinions, and at the same time as giving a just but discriminate criticism on the most unequal of our great poets.

It was not till past his fortieth year (A.D. 1818) that Mr. Hallam announced himself to the world as an author; but his 'View of Europe during the Middle Ages' placed him at once in the highest rank of historic writers. Of the great qualifications of a historian, except that of flowing, rapid, living narrative (precluded by the form of his work, which unavoidably took that of historical disquisition), none appeared to be wanting. There was profound research into original sources of knowledge, where they existed; the judicious choice of secondary authorities, which always met with generous and grateful appreciation; sagacity in tracing the course of events and the motives of men; thorough independence of judgment, which cared not what idols it threw down in the pursuit of truth; singular firmness with unaffected candour; above all, an honesty of purpose, which almost resembled a passion (the only passion which he betrayed); a style manly, clear, vigorous,—if inartificial, sometimes unharmonious, yet sound idiomatic English,—an apt vehicle for the English good sense which was the characteristic of the whole. There was no brilliant paradox, no ingenious theory to which all the facts must be warped: all was sober, solid, veracious. The 'View' was received not only with respect, and with the acclamation of all qualified to judge of such a work, but even with popularity, considering its subject and extent, surprising. It was emphatically described by a high

authority of the day as a book which every scholar should read, and every statesman study. Like all great works of the kind, it created and supplied a want in the public mind. The History of the Middle Ages up to this time was a wilderness, which few were disposed or able to penetrate. There had been much laborious investigation, much ingenious speculation on parts of the subject; but it was a labyrinth which wanted a clue,—darkness which repelled, confusion which bewildered. The 'View' was as remarkable for its completeness and comprehensiveness as for its depth and accuracy. Though the subjects on which Mr. Hallam dwelt at greatest extent, and it seemed with greatest predilection (as, indeed, of the most importance), were the rise, growth, and development of the governments, laws, civil, political, and religious institutions of the European family of nations, yet the book likewise entered with great though proportionate fulness on the progress of customs, inventions, language, letters, poetry, arts, and sciences. It was enlivened by many passages of fine criticism; the note on Dante, for instance, may be read with high interest, after all that has been subsequently written on the great Italian poet. Since the publication of Mr. Hallam's work, awakened curiosity, the study of the philosophy of history, chiefly by Continental writers, and, above all, religious zeal, have investigated almost every point relating to the Middle Ages with emulous ardour and industry: yet Mr. Hallam's work has stood the test, and still maintains its ground. Mr. Hallam himself, with the modesty inseparable from true wisdom, and only anxious for the promulgation of sound truth, instead of narrow jealousy of trespassers upon his province, watched with careful interest every advance in knowledge on those subjects which he had treated almost without a guide. In a supplemental volume, afterwards incorporated with the original work, he collected from every quarter of Europe whatever in his judgment might

throw a broader and clearer light on these dark places of mediæval history.

Nearly ten years elapsed before the publication of Mr. Hallam's second great work, 'The Constitutional History of England,' in July, 1827. This was in some respects a continuation of part of the former book, which, among the other polities of Europe, had traced the growth and expansion of the British Constitution during the Middle Ages. It may be almost enough to say of this work, that by common consent it has become the standard authority on this all-important subject. It is constantly appealed to in the Houses of Parliament; it is the text-book in the Universities as well as in the higher schools; and this, from a general infelt acknowledgment of its truthfulness, which overawes and convinces against their will those to whom its doctrines may at first sight seem unacceptable. Nor was this from a cold, stately assumption of superiority to the great questions which have divided Englishmen in all ages. Throughout the work, in which every event which has stirred the passions of men, every character illustrious for good or for evil in our annals, passes in review, and is summoned to judgment, though Mr. Hallam holds avowedly and without disguise his own strong opinions, those of a calm, conscientious Whig of the old school, still there is an enforced impression that nothing could tempt him to be an unfair partisan; that he seeks, and only seeks—and seeks without fear, without compromise, without awe of great names, without respect for popular idolatry—right and truth, justice and humanity, sound law, tolerant religion. If there has grown up a more general accordance of sentiment and opinion on English Constitutional History; if extreme differences have died away, and, so far as past times are concerned, the old party watchwords have nearly sunk into oblivion; if there has been greater general sympathy for the wise and good, more unanimous reprobation of the base and bad, this

may in some degree be attributed to the influence of 'The Constitutional History of England.'

After another interval of nearly the same length (in Sept. 1838 and July 1839) appeared the 'Introduction to the Literature of the 15th, 16th, and 17th Centuries.' This view of the intellectual development of the world during the most active and prolific period in the history of the human mind, if with Mr. Hallam a work of labour (to most others it had been a work of intense labour), was yet a work of love. It was the overflow of a mind full to abundance of the best reading on almost all subjects, a disburthening, as it were, and a relief from the stores of knowledge accumulated during a long life. If it be hardly possible for a single mind to achieve a history of literature during three centuries (the work bore the modest title of 'Introduction to the Literature of Europe'), yet much is gained by the unity of the work, by the proportion, harmony, and order in the distribution of its parts: and if one mind was capable of passing a fair judgment on such different productions of human thought and imagination, it was that of Mr. Hallam. How well he had read the best authors may be tested by his criticisms on Shakspeare, on Ariosto, on Cervantes, and on some of our older poets; his power of grappling with more profound and abstruse subjects by his estimate of Locke; while writers of a more dry and uninviting class, scholars, even grammarians, pass before us, if with less minute investigation, with much more than a dull and barren recension of their names.

Only one other work, a small one, bears the name of Mr. Hallam; and that, though printed for private distribution, having been liberally communicated to his numerous friends, may justify at least a passing allusion. It records a melancholy chapter in an otherwise uneventful life to which men of letters might have looked with respectful envy. It pleased Divine Providence to try this wise and blameless man with almost unexampled

domestic affliction. He married an excellent lady, the daughter of Sir Abraham Elton. Of many children, four only, two sons and two daughters, grew up to mature age. The eldest son was one whom such a father (for Mr. Hallam, with not much outward show, was a man of the deepest and most tender affections) could look upon with pride, with love, and with hope allotted to few distinguished men. What was the promise of Arthur Hallam may be known from the volume of his 'Remains' printed by his father; what he was in disposition as well as in mind, from the exquisite 'In Memoriam' of Mr. Tennyson. The blow which bereft Mr. Hallam of this son was frightfully sudden. His eldest daughter and his wife followed the first-born to the grave. One son remained; he too, if of less originally speculative and poetic temperament than the elder, with great acquirements and endowments, was gifted also with a gentleness and tenderness of disposition, singularly fitted to be the consolation, the surviving hope of such a father. He too was carried off with almost equal suddenness. One daughter remains, married to Colonel Farnaby Cator, and has children. Bowed but not broken by these sorrows, Mr. Hallam preserved his vigorous faculties to the last, and closed his long and honoured life in calm Christian peace.

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INTRODUCTION

TO THE

LITERATURE OF EUROPE

IN THE FIFTEENTH, SIXTEENTH, AND SEVENTEENTH CENTURIES.

PART I.

ON THE LITERATURE OF THE FIFTEENTH AND FIRST HALF OF THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY.

CHAPTER I.

ON THE GENERAL STATE OF LITERATURE IN THE MIDDLE AGES TO THE END OF THE FOURTEENTH CENTURY.

Loss of ancient Learning in the Fall of the Roman Empire — First Symptoms of its Revival — Improvement in the Twelfth Century — Universities and Scholastic Philosophy — Origin of Modern Languages — Early Poetry — Provençal, French, German, and Spanish — English Language and Literature — Increase of Elementary Knowledge — Invention of Paper — Roman Jurisprudence — Cultivation of Classical Literature — Its Decline after the Twelfth Century — Less visible in Italy — Petrarch.

1. Although the subject of these volumes does not comprehend the literary history of Europe anterior to the commencement of the fifteenth century, a period as nearly coinciding as can be expected in any arbitrary division of time with what is usually denominated the revival of letters, it appears necessary to prefix such a general retrospect of the state of knowledge for some preceding ages as will illustrate its subsequent progress. In this, however, the reader is not to expect a regular history of mediæval literature, which would be nothing less than the extension of a

Retrospect of learning in middle ages necessary.

scheme already perhaps too much beyond my powers of execution.[a]

Loss of learning in fall of Roman empire.

2. Every one is well aware that the establishment of the barbarian nations on the ruins of the Roman empire in the West was accompanied or followed by an almost universal loss of that learning which had been accumulated in the Latin and Greek languages, and which we call ancient or classical—a revolution long prepared by the decline of taste and knowledge for several preceding ages, but accelerated by public calamities in the fifth century with overwhelming rapidity. The last of the ancients, and one who forms a link between the classical period of literature and that of the middle ages, in which he was a favourite author, is Boethius, a man of fine genius, and interesting both from his character and his death. It is well known that, after filling the dignities of consul and senator in the court of Theodoric, he fell a victim to the jealousy of a sovereign from whose memory, in many respects glorious, the stain of that blood has never been effaced. The Consolation of Philosophy, the chief work of Boethius, was written in his prison. Few books are more striking from the circumstances of their production. Last of the classic writers, in style not impure, though displaying too lavishly that poetic exuberance which had distinguished the two or three preceding centuries, in elevation of sentiment equal to any of the philosophers, and mingling a Christian sanctity with their lessons, he speaks from his prison in the swan-like tones of dying eloquence. The philosophy that consoled him in bonds was soon required in the sufferings of a cruel death. Quenched in his blood, the lamp he had trimmed with a skilful hand gave no more light; the language of Tully and Virgil soon ceased to be spoken; and many ages were to pass away before learned diligence restored its purity, and the union of genius with imitation taught a few modern writers to surpass in eloquence the Latinity of Boethius.

Boethius—his Consolation of Philosophy.

[a] The subject of the following chapter has been already treated by me in another work, the History of Europe during the Middle Ages. I have not thought it necessary to repeat all that is there said: the reader, if he is acquainted with those volumes, may consider the ensuing pages partly as supplemental, and partly as correcting the former where they contain anything inconsistent.

3. The downfall of learning and eloquence after the death of Boethius in 524 was inconceivably rapid. His contemporary Cassiodorus, Isidore of Seville, and Martianus Capella, the earliest but worst of the three, by very indifferent compilations, and that encyclopedic method which Heeren observes to be an usual concomitant of declining literature, superseded the use of the great ancient writers, with whom, indeed, in the opinion of Meiners, they were themselves acquainted only through similar productions of the fourth and fifth centuries. Isidore speaks of the rhetorical works of Cicero and Quintilian as too diffuse to be read.[b] The authorities upon which they founded their scanty course of grammar, logic, and rhetoric, were chiefly obscure writers, no longer extant; but themselves became the oracles of the succeeding period, wherein the trivium and quadrivium, a course of seven sciences, introduced in the sixth century, were taught from their jejune treatises.[c]

Rapid decline of learning in sixth century.

4. This state of general ignorance lasted, with no very sensible difference, on a superficial view, for about five centuries, during which every sort of knowledge was almost wholly confined to the ecclesiastical order; but among them, though instances of gross ignorance were exceedingly frequent, the necessity of preserving the Latin language, in which the Scrip-

A portion remains in the church.

[b] Meiners, Vergleichung der Sitten, &c., des mittelalters mit denen unsers Jahrhunderts, 3 vols., Hanover, 1793, vol. ii. p. 333. Eichhorn, Allgemeine Geschichte der Cultur und Litteratur, vol. ii. p. 29. Heeren, Geschichte des studium der classischen Litteratur, Göttingen, 1797. These three books, with the Histoire Littéraire de la France, Brucker's History of Philosophy, Turner's and Henry's Histories of England, Muratori's 43rd Dissertation, Tiraboschi, and some few others, who will appear in the notes, are my chief authorities for the dark ages. But none, in a very short compass, is equal to the third discourse of Fleury, in the 13th volume of the 12mo. edition of his Ecclesiastical History.

[c] The trivium contained grammar, logic, and rhetoric; the quadrivium, arithmetic, geometry, music, and astronomy, as in these two lines, framed to assist the memory:—

"GRAMM. loquitur; DIA. vera docet; RHET. verba colorat; MUS. canit; AR. numerat; GEO. ponderat; AST. colit astra."

But most of these sciences, as such, were hardly taught at all. The arithmetic, for instance, of Cassiodorus or Capella, is nothing but a few definitions mingled with superstitious absurdities about the virtues of certain numbers and figures. Meiners, ii. 339; Kästner, Geschichte der Mathematik, p. 8.

The arithmetic of Cassiodorus occupies little more than two folio pages, and does not contain one word of the common rules. The geometry is much the same; in two pages we have some definitions and axioms, but nothing farther. His logic is longer and better, extending to sixteen folio pages. The grammar is very short and trifling, the rhetoric the same.

tures, the canons, and other authorities of the church, and the regular liturgies were written, and in which alone the correspondence of their well-organised hierarchy could be conducted, kept flowing, in the worst seasons, a slender but living stream; and though, as has been observed, no great difference may appear, on a superficial view, between the seventh and eleventh centuries, it would easily be shown that, after the first prostration of learning, it was not long in giving signs of germinating afresh, and that a very slow and gradual improvement might be dated farther back than is generally believed.[d]

Prejudices of the clergy against profane learning.

5. Literature was assailed in its downfall by enemies from within as well as from without. A prepossession against secular learning had taken hold of those ecclesiastics who gave the tone to the rest. It was inculcated in the most extravagant degree by Gregory I., the founder, in a great measure, of the papal supremacy, and the chief authority in the dark ages.[e] It is even found in Alcuin, to whom so much is due, and it gave way very gradually in the revival of literature. In some of the monastic foundations, especially in that of Isidore, though himself a man of considerable learning, the perusal of heathen authors was prohibited. Fortunately Benedict, whose order became the most widely diffused, while he enjoined his brethren to read, copy, and collect books, was silent as to their nature, concluding, probably, that they would be wholly religious. This in course of time became the means of preserving and multiplying classical manuscripts.[f]

[d] M. Guizot confirms me in a conclusion to which I had previously come, that the seventh century is the *nadir* of the human mind in Europe, and that its movement in advance began before the end of the next, or, in other words, with Charlemagne. Hist. de la Civilisation en France, ii. 345. A notion probably is current in England, on the authority of the older writers, such as Cave or Robertson, that the greatest darkness was later; which is true as to England itself. It was in the seventh century that the barbarians were first tempted to enter the church and obtain bishoprics, which had, in the first age after their invasion, been reserved to Romans. Fleury, p. 18.

[e] Gregory has been often charged, on the authority of a passage in John of Salisbury, with having burned a library of heathen authors. He has been warmly defended by Tiraboschi, iii. 102. Even if the assertion of our countryman were more positive, he is of too late an age to demand much credit. Eichhorn, however, produces vehement expressions of Gregory's disregard for learning, and even for the observance of grammatical rules, ii. 443.

[f] Heeren, p. 59; Eichhorn, ii. 11, 12 40, 49, 50

6. If, however, the prejudices of the clergy stood in the way of what we more esteem than they did, the study of philological literature, it is never to be forgotten that but for them the records of that very literature would have perished. If they had been less tenacious of their Latin liturgy, of the vulgate translation of Scripture, and of the authority of the fathers, it is very doubtful whether less superstition would have grown up, but we cannot hesitate to pronounce that all grammatical learning would have been laid aside. The influence of the church upon learning, partly favourable, partly the reverse, forms the subject of Eichhorn's second volume, whose comprehensive views and well-directed erudition, as well as his position in a great protestant university, give much weight to his testimony; but we should remember also that it is, as it were, by striking a balance that we come to this result; and that in many respects the clergy counteracted that progress of improvement which in others may be ascribed to their exertions.

Their usefulness in preserving it.

7. It is not unjust to claim for these islands the honour of having first withstood the dominant ignorance, and even led the way in the restoration of knowledge. As early as the sixth century a little glimmer of light was perceptible in the Irish monasteries; and in the next, when France and Italy had sunk in deeper ignorance, they stood, not quite where national prejudice has sometimes placed them, but certainly in a very respectable position.[5] That island both drew students from the continent, and sent forth men of comparative eminence into its schools and churches. I do not find, however, that they contributed much to the advance of secular, and especially of grammatical, learning. This is rather due to England, and to the happy influence of Theodore, archbishop of Canterbury, an Asiatic Greek by birth, sent hither by the pope in 668, through whom and his companion Adrian, some knowlege of the Latin and even Greek languages was propagated in the Anglo-Saxon church. The Venerable Bede, as he was afterwards

First appearances of reviving learning in Ireland and England.

[5] Eichhorn, ii. 176, 188. See also the first volume of Moore's History of Ireland, where the claims of his country are stated favourably, and with much learning and industry, but not with extravagant partiality.

styled, early in the eighth century, surpasses every other name of our ancient literary annals; and though little more than a diligent compiler from older writers, may perhaps be reckoned superior to any man whom the world (so low had the East sunk like the West) then possessed. A desire of knowledge grew up; the school of York, somewhat later, became respectable, before any liberal education had been established in France; and from this came Alcuin, a man fully equal to Bede in ability though not in erudition.[h] By his assistance, and that of one or two Italians, Charlemagne laid in his vast dominions the foundations of learning, according to the standard of that age, which dispelled, at least for a time, some part of the gross ignorance wherein his empire had been enveloped.[i]

Few schools before the age of Charlemagne.

8. The praise of having originally established schools belongs to some bishops and abbots of the sixth century. They came in place of the imperial schools overthrown by the barbarians.[k] In the downfall of that temporal dominion, a spiritual aristocracy was providentially raised up to save from extinction the remains of learning, and religion itself. Some of those schools seem to have been preserved in the south of Italy, though merely, perhaps, for elementary instruction; but in France the barbarism of the latter Merovingian period was so complete that, before the reign of Charlemagne, all liberal studies had come to an end.[m] Nor was Italy in a much better state at his accession, though he called two or three scholars

h Eichhorn, ii. 188, 207, 263; Hist. Litt. de la France, vols. iii. and iv.; Henry's History of England, vol. iv.; Turner's History of Anglo-Saxons. No one, however, has spoken so highly or so fully of Alcuin's merits as M. Guizot, in his Histoire de la Civilisation en France, vol. ii. p. 344-385.

[The writings of Alcuin are not highly appreciated by the learned and judicious author of Biographia Britannica Literaria, especially in relation to their influence upon English literature. The truth is, that Alcuin was a polite scholar for the age in which he lived, but no real poet. "He has, on the whole," says Mr. Wright, "more simplicity and less pretension in his poetry than his predecessor Aldhelm, and so far he is more pleasing; but, unfortunately, when the latter was turgid and bombastic, the former too often went into the opposite extreme of being flat and spiritless." P. 46. This criticism seems not unjust. Alcuin, however, is an easy versifier, and has caught the tone of Ovid, sometimes of Virgil, with some success.—1847.]

i Besides the above authors, see, for the merits of Charlemagne, as a restorer of letters, his Life by Gaillard and Andrès, Origine, &c., della Litteratura, i. 165.

k Eichhorn, ii. 5, 45. Guizot (vol. ii. p. 116) gives a list of the episcopal schools in France before Charlemagne.

m Ante ipsum Carolum regem in Gallia nullum fuerat studium liberalium artium. Monachus Engolimensis, apud Launoy de Scholis celebrioribus

from thence to his literary councils. The libraries were destroyed, the schools chiefly closed; wherever the Lombard dominion extended, illiteracy was its companion.[n]

Beneficial effects of those established by him.

9. The cathedral and conventual schools, created or restored by Charlemagne, became the means of preserving that small portion of learning which continued to exist. They flourished most, having had time to produce their fruits, under his successors Louis the Debonair, Lothaire, and Charles the Bald.[o] It was, doubtless, a fortunate circumstance that the revolution of language had now gone far enough to render Latin unintelligible without grammatical instruction. Alcuin, and others who, like him, endeavoured to keep ignorance out of the church, were anxious, we are told, to restore orthography, or, in other words, to prevent the written Latin from following the corruptions of speech. They brought back also some knowledge of better classical authors than had been in use. Alcuin's own poems could at least not have been written by one unacquainted with Virgil:[p] the faults are numerous, but the style is not always inelegant; and from this time, though quotations from the Latin poets, especially Ovid and Virgil, and sometimes from Cicero, are not very frequent, they occur sufficiently to show that manuscripts had been brought to this side of the Alps. They were, however, very rare: Italy was still, as might be expected, the chief depository of ancient writings; and Gerbert speaks of the facility of obtaining them in that country.[q]

The tenth century more progressive than usually supposed.

10. The tenth century used to be reckoned by mediæval historians the darkest part of this intellectual night. It was the iron age which they vie with one another in describing as lost in the most consummate ignorance. This, however, is much rather applicable to Italy and

[n] Tiraboschi; Eichhorn; Heeren.

[o] The reader may find more of the history of these schools in a little treatise by Launoy, De Scholis celebrioribus a Car. Mag. et post Car. Mag. instauratis; also in Hist. Litt. de la France, vols. iii. and iv.; Crevier, Hist. de l'Université de Paris, vol. i.; Brucker's Hist. Phil. iii.; Muratori, Dissert. xliii.; Tiraboschi, iii. 158; Eichhorn, 261, 295; Heeren; and Fleury.

[p] A poem by Alcuin, De Pontificibus Ecclesiæ Eboracensis, is published in Gale's XV. Scriptores, vol. iii.

[q] Nosti quot scriptores in urbibus aut in agris Italiæ passim habeantur. Gerbert. Epist. 130, apud Heeren, p. 166.

England than to France and Germany. The former were both in a deplorable state of barbarism;[r] and there are, doubtless, abundant proofs of ignorance in every part of Europe. But, compared with the seventh and eighth centuries, the tenth was an age of illumination in France; and Meiners, who judged the middle ages somewhat perhaps too severely, but with a penetrating and comprehensive observation, of which there had been few instances, has gone so far as to say that "in no age, perhaps, did Germany possess more learned and virtuous churchmen of the episcopal order than in the latter half of the tenth and beginning of the eleventh century."[s] Eichhorn points out indications of a more extensive acquaintance with ancient writers in several French and German ecclesiastics of this period.[t] In the eleventh century this continued to increase; and towards its close we find more vigorous and extensive attempts at throwing off the yoke of barbarous ignorance, and either retrieving what had been lost of ancient learning or supplying its place by the original powers of the mind.

Want of genius in the dark ages.

11. It is the most striking circumstance in the literary annals of the dark ages, that they seem to us still more deficient in native than in acquired ability. The mere ignorance of letters has sometimes been a little exaggerated, and admits of certain qualifications; but a tameness and mediocrity, a servile habit of merely compiling from others, runs through the writers of these centuries. It is not only that much was lost, but that there was nothing to compensate for it—nothing of original genius in the province of imagination; and but two extraordinary men, Scotus Erigena and Gerbert, may be said to stand out from the crowd in literature and philosophy. It must be added, as to the former, that his writings contain, at least in such extracts as I have seen, unintelligible rhapsodies of mysticism, in which, perhaps, he should not even have the credit of originality. Eichhorn, however, bestows

[r] [See Tiraboschi for the one, and Turner's History of Anglo-Saxons for the other. But I do not know that England was *more* dark in the tenth century than in the ninth.—1842.]

[s] Vergleichung der Sitten, ii. 384. The eleventh century he holds far more advanced in learning than the sixth. Books were read in the latter which no one looked at in the earlier. P. 399.

[t] Allg. Gesch. ii. 335, 398.

great praise on Scotus, and the modern historians of philosophy treat him with respect.[u]

12. It would be a strange hypothesis that no man endowed with superior gifts of nature lived in so many ages. Though the pauses of her fertility in these high endowments are more considerable, I am disposed to think, than any previous calculation of probabilities would lead us to anticipate, we could not embrace so extreme a paradox. Of military skill, indeed, and civil prudence, we are not now speaking. But, though no man appeared of genius sufficient to burst the fetters imposed by ignorance and bad taste, some there must have been who, in a happier condition of literature, would have been its legitimate pride. We perceive, therefore, in the deficiencies of these writers, the effect which an oblivion of good models and the prevalence of a false standard of merit may produce in repressing the natural vigour of the mind. Their style, where they aim at eloquence, is inflated and redundant, formed upon the model of the later fathers, whom they chiefly read—a feeble imitation of that vicious rhetoric which had long overspread the Latinity of the empire.[x] Prevalence of bad taste.

[u] Extracts from John Scotus Erigena will be found in Brucker, Hist. Philosophiæ, vol. iii. p. 619; in Meiners, ii. 373; or more fully in Turner's History of England, vol. i. 447, and Guizot, Hist. de la Civilisation en France, iii. 137, 178. The reader may consult also Buhle, Tennemann, and the article on Thomas Aquinas in the Encyclopædia Metropolitana, ascribed to Dr. Hampden. But, perhaps, Mr. Turner is the only one of them who has seen, or at least read, the metaphysical treatise of John Scotus, entitled De Divisione Naturæ, in which alone we find his philosophy. It is very rare out of England, nor common in it.

[x] Fleury, l. xlv. § 19, and Troisième Discours (in vol. xiii.), p. 6. Turner's History of England, iv. 137, and History of Anglo-Saxons, iii. 403. It is sufficient to look at any extracts from these writers of the dark ages to see the justice of this censure. Fleury, at the conclusion of his excellent third discourse, justly and candidly apologises for these five ages as not wholly destitute of learning, and far less of virtue. They have been he says, outrageously depreciated by the humanists of the sixteenth century, who thought good Latin superior to everything else; and by protestant writers, who laid the corruptions of the church on its ignorance. Yet there is an opposite extreme into which those who are disgusted with the commonplaces of superficial writers sometimes run; an estimation of men by their relative superiority above their own times, so as to forget their position in comparison with a fixed standard.

An eminent living writer, who has carried the philosophy of history, perhaps, as far as any other, has lately endeavoured, at considerable length, to vindicate in some measure the intellectual character of this period. (Guizot, vol. ii. p. 123-224.) It is with reluctance that I ever differ from M. Guizot; but the passages adduced by him (especially if we exclude those of the fifth century, the poems of Avitus, and the homilies of Cæsarius) do not appear adequate to redeem the age by any signs of genius they display. It must always

13. It might naturally be asked whether fancy and feeling were extinct among the people, though a false taste might reign in the cloister. Yet it is here that we find the most remarkable deficiency, and could appeal scarce to the vaguest tradition or the most doubtful fragment in witness of any poetical talent worthy of notice, except a little in the Teutonic languages. The Anglo-Saxon poetry has occasionally a wild spirit, rather impressive, though it is often turgid and always rude. The Scandinavian, such as the well-known song of Regner Lodbrog, if that be as old as the period before us, which is now denied, displays a still more poetical character. Some of the earliest German poetry, the song on the victory of Louis III. over the Normans in 883, and, still more, the poem in praise of Hanno, archbishop of Cologne, who died in 1075, are warmly extolled by Herder and Bouterwek.[y] In the Latin verse of these centuries we find, at best, a few lines among many which show the author to have caught something of a classical style; the far greater portion is very bad.[z]

Deficiency of poetical talent.

be a question of degree; for no one is absurd enough to deny the existence of a relative superiority of talent, or the power of expressing moral emotions, as well as relating facts, with some warmth and energy. The legends of saints, an extensive though quite neglected portion of the literature of the dark ages, to which M. Guizot has had the merit of directing our attention, may probably contain many passages, like those he had quoted, which will be read with interest; and it is no more than justice that he has given them in French, rather than in that half-barbarous Latin which, though not essential to the author's mind, never fails, like an unbecoming dress, to show the gifts of nature at a disadvantage. But the questions still recur: Is this in itself excellent? Would it indicate, wherever we should meet with it, powers of a high order? Do we not make a tacit allowance in reading it, and that very largely, for the mean condition in which we know the human mind to have been placed at the period? Does it instruct us, or give us pleasure?

In what M. Guizot has said of the moral influence of these legends, in humanizing a lawless barbarian race (p. 157), I should be sorry not to concur; it is a striking instance of that candid and catholic spirit with which he has always treated the mediæval church.

[y] Herder, Zerstreute Blatter, vol. v. p. 169, 184. Heinsius, Lehrbuch der Deutschen Sprachwissenschaft, iv. 29. Bouterwek, Geschichte der Poesie und Beredsamkeit, vol. ix. p. 78, 82. The author is unknown; aber dem unbekannten sichert sein Werk die Unsterblichkeit, says the latter critic. One might raise a question as to the capacity of an anonymous author to possess immortal fame. Nothing equal to this poem, he says, occurs in the earlier German poetry; it is an outpouring of genius, not without faults, but full of power and feeling: the dialect is still Frankish, but approaches to Swabian. Herder calls it "a truly Pindaric song." He has given large extracts from it in the volume above quoted, which glows with his own fine sense of beauty.

[z] Tiraboschi supposes Latin versifiers to have been common in Italy. Le Città al pari che le campagne risuonavan di versi. iii. 207.

The

14. The very imperfect state of language, as an instrument of refined thought in the transition of Latin to the French, Castilian, and Italian tongues, seems the best means of accounting in any satisfactory manner for this stagnation of the poetical faculties. The delicacy that distinguishes in words the shades of sentiment, the grace that brings them to the soul of the reader with the charm of novelty united to clearness, could not be attainable in a colloquial jargon, the offspring of ignorance, and indeterminate possibly in its forms, which those who possessed any superiority of education would endeavour to avoid. We shall soon have occasion to advert again to this subject.

Imperfect state of language may account for this.

15. At the beginning of the twelfth century we enter upon a new division in the literary history of Europe. From this time we may deduce a line of men conspicuous, according to the standard of their times, in different walks of intellectual pursuit, and the commencement of an interesting period, the later middle ages, in which, though ignorance was very far from being cleared away, the natural powers of the mind were developed in considerable activity. We shall point out separately the most important circumstances of this progress, not all of them concurrent in efficacy with each other, for they were sometimes opposed, but all tending to arouse Europe from indolence and to fix its attention on literature. These are, 1st. The institution of universities and the methods pursued in them; 2nd. The cultivation of the modern languages, followed by the multiplication of books and the extension of the art of writing; 3rd. The investigation of the Roman law; and, lastly, The return to the study of the Latin language in its ancient models of purity. We shall thus come down to the fifteenth century, and judge better of what is meant by the revival of letters when we apprehend with more exactness their previous condition.

Improvement at beginning of twelfth century.

Leading circumstances in progress of learning.

16. Among the Carlovingian schools it is doubtful

The specimens he afterwards produces, p. 219, are miserable. Hroswitha, abbess of Gandersheim, has, perhaps, the greatest reputation among these Latin poets. She wrote, in the tenth century, sacred comedies in imitation of Terence, which I have not seen, and other poetry which I saw many years since, and thought very indifferent.

whether we can reckon one at Paris; and though there are some traces of public instruction in that city about the end of the ninth century, it is not certain that we can assume it to be more ancient. For two hundred years more, indeed, it can only be said that some persons appear to have come to Paris for the purposes of study.[a] The commencement of this famous university, like that of Oxford, has no record. But it owes its first reputation to the sudden spread of what is usually called the scholastic philosophy.

Origin of the university of Paris.

17. There had been hitherto two methods of treating theological doctrines: one, that of the fathers, who built them on Scripture, illustrated and interpreted by their own ingenuity, and in some measure also on the traditions and decisions of the church; the other, which is said by the Benedictines of St. Maur to have grown up about the eighth century (though Mosheim seems to refer it to the sixth), using the fathers themselves, that is, the chief writers of the first six hundred years, who appear now to have acquired that distinctive title of honour as authority, conjointly with Scripture and ecclesiastical determinations, by means of extracts or compends of their writings. Hence about this time we find more frequent instances of a practice which had begun before—that of publishing *Loci communes* or *Catenæ patrum*, being only digested extracts from the authorities under systematic heads.[b] Both these methods were usually called positive theology.

Modes of treating the science of theology.

18. The scholastic theology was a third method; it was in its general principle an alliance between faith and

[a] Crevier, i. 13-75.

[b] Fleury, 3me discours, p. 48. (Hist. Eccles. vol. xiii. 12mo. ed.) Hist. Litt. de la France, vii. 147. Mosheim, in Cent. vi. et post. Muratori, Antichità Italiane, dissert. xliii. p. 610. In this dissertation, it may be observed by the way, Muratori gives the important fragment of Caius a Roman presbyter before the end of the second century (as some place him), on the canon of the New Testament, which has not been quoted, as far as I know, by any English writer, nor, which is more remarkable, by Michaelis. It will be found in Eichhorn, Einleitung in das Neue Testament, iv. 35 [and I have learned, since the publication of my first edition, that it is printed in Routh's Reliquiæ Sacræ. —1842].

Upon this great change in the theology of the church, which consisted principally in establishing the authority of the fathers, the reader may see M. Guizot, Hist. de la Civilisation, iii. 121. There seem to be but two causes for this: the one, a consciousness of ignorance and inferiority to men of so much talent as Augustin and a few others; the other, a constantly growing jealousy of the free exercise of reason, and a determination to keep up unity of doctrine.

reason—an endeavour to arrange the orthodox system of the church, such as authority had made it, according to the rules and methods of the Aristotelian dialectics, and sometimes upon premises supplied by metaphysical reasoning. Lanfranc and Anselm made much use of this method in the controversy with Berenger as to transubstantiation, though they did not carry it so far as their successors in the next century.[c] The scholastic philosophy seems chiefly to be distinguished from this theology by a larger infusion of metaphysical reasoning, or by its occasional inquiries into subjects not immediately related to revealed articles of faith.[d] The origin of this philosophy, fixed by Buhle and Tennemann in the ninth century, or the age of Scotus Erigena, has been brought down by Tiedemann, Meiners, and Hampden[e] so low as the thirteenth. But Roscelin of Compiègne, a little before 1100, may be accounted so far the founder of the schoolmen, that

Scholastic philosophy; its origin.

Roscelin.

[c] Hist. Litt. de la France, ubi suprà; Tennemann, Manuel de l'Hist. de la Philosophie, i. 332; Crevier, i. 100; Andrès, ii. 15.

[d] A Jesuit of the sixteenth century thus shortly and clearly distinguishes the positive from the scholastic, and both from natural or metaphysical theology. At nos theologiam scholasticam dicimus, quæ certiori methodo et rationibus imprimis ex divina Scriptura, ac traditionibus seu decretis patrum in conciliis definitis veritatem eruit, ac discutiendo comprobat. Quod cum in scholis præcipue argumentando comparetur, id nomen sortita est. Quamobrem differt a positiva theologia, non re sed modo, quemadmodum item alia ratione non est eadem cum naturali theologia, quo nomine philosophi metaphysicen nominarunt. Positiva igitur non ita res disputandas proponit, sed pæne sententiam ratam et firmam ponit, præcipue in pietatem incumbens. Versatur autem et ipsa in explicatione Scripturæ sacræ, traditionum, conciliorum et sanctorum patrum. Naturalis porro theologia Dei naturam per naturæ argumenta et rationes inquirit, cum supernaturalis, quam scholasticam dicimus, Dei ejusdem naturam, vim, proprietates, cæterasque res divinas per ea principia vestigat, quæ sunt hominibus revelata divinitus. Possevin, Bibliotheca Selecta, l. 3, c. i.

Both positive and scholastic theology were much indebted to Peter Lombard, whose Liber Sententiarum is a digest of propositions extracted from the fathers, with no attempt to reconcile them. It was therefore a prodigious magazine of arms for disputation.

[e] The first of these, according to Tennemann, begins the list of schoolmen with Hales; the two latter agree in conferring that honour on Albertus Magnus. Brucker inclines to Roscelin, and has been followed by others. It may be added, that Tennemann divides the scholastic philosophy into four periods, which Roscelin, Hales, Ockham, and the sixteenth century terminate; and Buhle into three, ending with Roscelin, Albertus Magnus, and the sixteenth century. It is evident that, by beginning the scholastic series with Roscelin, we exclude Lanfranc and even Anselm, the latter of whom was certainly a deep metaphysician, since to him we owe the subtle argument for the existence of a Deity, which Des Cartes afterwards revived. Buhle, 679. This argument was answered at the time by one Gaunelo; so that metaphysical reasonings were not unknown in the eleventh century. Tennemann, 344.

the great celebrity of their disputations and the rapid increase of students are to be traced to the influence of his theories, though we have no proof that he ever taught at Paris. Roscelin also, having been the first to revive the famous question as to the reality of universal ideas, marks, on every hypothesis, a new era in the history of philosophy. The principle of the schoolmen in their investigations was the expanding, developing, and, if possible, illustrating and clearing from objection, the doctrines of natural and revealed religion, in a dialectical method, and by dint of the subtlest reason. The questions which we deem altogether metaphysical, such as that concerning universal ideas, became theological in their hands.[f]

Progress of scholasticism; increase of university of Paris.

19. Next in order of time to Roscelin came William of Champeaux, who opened a school of logic at Paris in 1109; and the university can only deduce the regular succession of its teachers from that time.[g] But his reputation was soon eclipsed and his hearers drawn away by a more potent magician, Peter Abelard, who taught in the schools of Paris in the second decad of the twelfth century. Wherever Abelard retired, his fame and his disciples followed him—in the solitary walls of the Paraclete as in the thronged streets of the capital.[h] And the impulse given was so powerful, the fascination of a science which now appears arid and unproductive was so intense,

[f] Brucker, though he contains some useful extracts and tolerable general views, was not well versed in the scholastic writers. Meiners (in his Comparison of the Middle Ages) is rather superficial as to their philosophy, but presents a lively picture of the schoolmen in relation to literature and manners. He has also, in the Transactions of the Göttingen Academy, vol. xii. p. 26-47, given a succinct, but valuable, sketch of the Nominalist and Realist Controversy. Tennemann, with whose Manuel de la Philosophie alone I am conversant, is said to have gone very deeply into the subject in his larger history of Philosophy. Buhle appears superficial. Dr. Hampden, in his Life of Thomas Aquinas, and view of the scholastic philosophy, published in the Encyclopædia Metropolitana, has the merit of having been the only Englishman, past or present, so far as I know, since the revival of letters, who has penetrated far into the wilderness of scholasticism. Mr. Sharon Turner has given some extracts in the fourth volume of his History of England.

[M. Cousin, in the fourth volume of his Fragmens Philosophiques, has gone more fully than any one into the philosophy of Roscelin, and especially of Abelard. This is reprinted from the Introduction to the unpublished works of Abelard, edited by M. Cousin in the great series of Documens Inédits.—1847.]

[g] Crevier, i. 3.

[h] Hist. Litt. de la France, vol. xii. Brucker, iii. 750.

that from this time for many generations it continued to engage the most intelligent and active minds. Paris, about the middle of the twelfth century, in the words of the Benedictines of St. Maur, to whom we owe the 'Histoire Littéraire de la France,' was another Athens—the number of students (hyperbolically speaking, as we must presume) exceeding that of the citizens. This influx of scholars induced Philip Augustus some time afterwards to enlarge the boundaries of the city; and this again brought a fresh harvest of students, for whom in the former limits it had been difficult to find lodgings. Paris was called, as Rome had been, the country of all the inhabitants of the world; and we may add, as, for very different reasons, it still claims to be.[i]

Universities founded. Oxford.

20. Colleges, with endowments for poor scholars, were founded in the beginning of the thirteenth century, or even before, at Paris and Bologna, as they were afterwards at Oxford and Cambridge, by munificent patrons of letters; charters incorporating the graduates and students collectively under the name of universities were granted by sovereigns, with privileges perhaps too extensive, but such as indicated the dignity of learning and the countenance it received.[k] It ought, however, to be remembered that

[i] Hist. Litt. de la France, ix. 78. Crevier, i. 274.

[k] Fleury, xvii. 13, 17; Crevier; Tiraboschi, &c. A University, universitas doctorum et scholarium, was so called either from its incorporation or from its professing to teach all subjects, as some have thought. Meiners, ii. 405. Fleury, xvii. 15. This excellent discourse of Fleury, the fifth, relates to the ecclesiastical literature of the later middle ages.

[The first privilege granted to Bologna was by Frederic Barbarossa in 1158. But it gives an appeal to the bishops, not to the rector of the university, in case any scholar had cause of complaint against his teacher. In fact there was no rector, nor, properly speaking, any university, till near the end of the twelfth century. Savigny, Gesch. des Römischen Rechts, iii. 152. And as at Bologna nothing was taught but jurisprudence for some time afterwards, it is doubted by some whether that school could be called a university, which ought to be a place of general instruction. Tiraboschi, v. 253. Upon the whole, the precedence must be allowed, I think, to Paris; but even there we cannot trace the university, as strictly such, so high as 1200. En ces temps là, l'ensemble des écoles Parisiennes était appelé *studium generale* bien plûtot qu'*universitas*; ce dernier nom leur fut appliqué, peut-être pour la première fois, dans l'affaire d'Amaury de Chartres et de ses disciples en 1209. Il n'est point employé dans le diplome de Philippe Auguste, donné en 1201, à l'occasion d'une rixe violente entre les écoliers et les bourgeois de Paris. Discours sur l'état de lettres au treizième siècle, in Hist. Litt. de la France, vol. xvi. p. 46, par Daunou.

The university of Toulouse was incorporated with the same privileges as that of Paris by a bull of Gregory IX. in 1238; which seems to have been acknowledged as sufficient in France on several other occasions. Montpellier, which had for some time been a flourish-

these foundations were not the cause, but the effect, of that increasing thirst for knowledge, or the semblance of knowledge, which had anticipated the encouragement of the great. The schools of Charlemagne were designed to lay the basis of a learned education, for which there was at that time no sufficient desire.[m] But in the twelfth century the impetuosity with which men rushed to that source of what they deemed wisdom, the great university of Paris, did not depend upon academical privileges or eleemosynary stipends, which came afterwards, though these were undoubtedly very effectual in keeping it up. The university created patrons, and was not created by them. And this may be said also of Oxford and Cambridge in their incorporate character, whatever the former may have owed, if in fact it owed anything, to the prophetic munificence of Alfred. Oxford was a school of great resort in the reign of Henry II., though its first charter was only granted by Henry III. Its earlier history is but obscure, and depends chiefly on a suspicious passage in Ingulphus, against which we must set the absolute silence of other writers.[n] It became in the thirteenth century second only to Paris in the multitude of its students and the celebrity of its scholastic disputations. England indeed, and especially through Oxford, could show more names of the first class in this line than any other country.[o]

ing school of medicine, acquired the rights of an university before the end of the thirteenth century; but no other is of equal antiquity. Id. p. 57, 59.—1842.]

[m] These schools, established by the Carlovingian princes in convents and cathedrals, declined, as it was natural to expect, with the rise of the universities. Meiners, ii. 406. Those of Paris, Oxford, and Bologna contained many thousand students.

[n] Giraldus Cambrensis, about 1180, seems the first unequivocal witness to the resort of students to Oxford, as an established seat of instruction. But it is certain that Vacarius read there on the civil law in 1149, which affords a presumption that it was already assuming the character of a university. John of Salisbury, I think, does not mention it. In a former work I gave more credence to its foundation by Alfred than I am now inclined to do. Bologna, as well as Paris, was full of English students about 1200. Meiners, ii. 428.

[o] Wood expatiates on what he thought the glorious age of the university. "What university, I pray, can produce an invincible Hales, an admirable Bacon, an excellent well-grounded Middleton, a subtle Scotus, an approved Burley, a resolute Baconthorpe, a singular Ockham, a solid and industrious Holcot, and a profound Bradwardin? all which persons flourished within the compass of one century. I doubt that neither Paris, Bologna, or Rome, that grand mistress of the Christian world, or any place else, can do what the renowned Bellosite (Oxford) hath done. And without doubt all impartial men may receive it for an undeniable truth that the most subtle arguing

21. Andrès is inclined to derive the institution of collegiate foundations in universities from the Saracens. He finds no trace of these among the ancients; while in several cities of Spain, as Cordova, Granada, Malaga, colleges for learned education both existed and obtained great renown. These were sometimes unconnected with each other, though in the same city, nor had they, of course, those privileges which were conferred in Christendom. They were therefore more like ordinary schools or gymnasia than universities; and it is difficult to perceive that they suggested anything peculiarly characteristic of the latter institutions, which are much more reasonably considered as the development of a native germ, planted by a few generous men, above all by Charlemagne, in that inclement season which was passing away.[p]

Collegiate foundations not derived from the Saracens.

22. The institution of the Mendicant orders of friars, soon after the beginning of the thirteenth century, caused a fresh accession, in enormous numbers, to the ecclesiastical state, and gave encouragement to the scholastic philosophy. Less acquainted, generally, with grammatical literature than the Benedictine monks, less accustomed to collect and transcribe books, the disciples of Francis and Dominic betook themselves to disputation, and found a substitute for learning in their own ingenuity and expertness.[q] The greatest of the schoolmen were the Dominican Thomas Aquinas, and the Franciscan Duns Scotus. They were founders of rival sects, which wrangled with each other for two or three centuries. But the authority of their writings, which were incredibly voluminous, especially those of the former,[r] impeded in some measure the

Scholastic philosophy promoted by Mendicant Friars.

in school divinity did take its beginning in England and from Englishmen; and that also from thence it went to Paris, and other parts of France, and at length into Italy, Spain, and other nations, as is by one observed. So that, though Italy boasted that Britain takes her Christianity first from Rome, England may truly maintain that from her (immediately by France) Italy first received her school divinity." Vol. i. p. 159, A.D. 1168.

[If the authenticity of the History of Croyland Abbey, under the name of Ingulfus, cannot be maintained, as both Sir Francis Palgrave and Mr. Wright contend, the antiquity of the University of Oxford must, I fear, fall to the ground. See Biographia Britannica Litteraria, vol. ii. p. 28. Whether Vacarius were the first lecturer, or chose that town because a school had already been established therein, seems not determinable, though the latter is more likely.—1847.]

[p] Andrès, ii. 129.

[q] Meiners, ii. 615, 629.

[r] The works of Thomas Aquinas are

growth of new men; and we find, after the middle of the fourteenth century, a diminution of eminent names in the series of the schoolmen, the last of whom that is much remembered in modern times was William Ockham.[8] He revived the sect of the Nominalists, formerly instituted by Roscelin, and, with some important variations of opinion, brought into credit by Abelard, but afterwards overpowered by the great weight of leading schoolmen on the opposite side—that of the Realists. The disciples of Ockham, as well as himself, being politically connected with the party in Germany unfavourable to the high pretensions of the court of Rome, though they became very numerous in the universities, passed for innovators in ecclesiastical as well as philosophical principles. Nominalism itself indeed was reckoned by the adverse sect cognate to heresy. No decline, however, seems to have been as yet perceptible in the spirit of disputation, which probably, at the end of the fourteenth century, went on as eagerly at Paris, Oxford, and Salamanca, the great scenes of that warfare, as before, and which in that age gained much ground in Germany through the establishment of several universities.

Character of this philosophy.

23. Tennemann has fairly stated the good and bad of the scholastic philosophy. It gave rise to a great display of address, subtlety, and sagacity, in the explanation and distinction of abstract

published in seventeen volumes folio; Rome, 1570: those of Duns Scotus in twelve; Lyons, 1639. It is presumed that much was taken down from their oral lectures; some part of these volumes is of doubtful authenticity. Meiners, ii. 718. Biogr. Univ.

[8] "In them (Scotus and Ockham), and in the later schoolmen generally, down to the period of the Reformation, there is more of the parade of logic, a more formal examination of arguments, a more burthensome importunity of syllogizing, with less of the philosophical power of arrangement and distribution of the subject discussed. The dryness again inseparable from the scholastic method is carried to excess in the later writers, and perspicuity of style is altogether neglected." Encyclopædia Metropol. part xxxvii. p. 805.

The introduction of this excess of logical subtlety, carried to the most trifling sophistry, is ascribed by Meiners to Petrus Hispanus, afterwards Pope John XXI., who died in 1271. ii. 705. Several curious specimens of scholastic folly are given by him in this place. They brought a discredit upon the name, which has adhered to it, and involved men of fine genius, such as Aquinas himself, in the common reproach.

The barbarism of style, which amounted almost to a new language, became more intolerable in Scotus and his followers than it had been in the older schoolmen. Meiners, 722. It may be alleged, in excuse of this, that words are meant to express precise ideas; and that it was as impossible to write metaphysics in good Latin as the modern naturalists have found it to describe plants and animals.

ideas, but at the same time to many trifling and minute speculations, to a contempt of positive and particular knowledge, and to much unnecessary refinement.[t] Fleury well observes that the dry technical style of the schoolmen, affecting a geometrical method and closeness, is in fact more prolix and tedious than one more natural, from its formality in multiplying objections and answers.[u] And as their reasonings commonly rest on disputable postulates, the accuracy they affect is of no sort of value. But their chief offences were the interposing obstacles to the revival of polite literature, and to the free expansion of the mind. Italy was the land where the schoolmen had least influence, though many of the Italians who had a turn for those discussions repaired to Paris.[x] Public schools of theology were not opened in Italy till after 1360.[y] Yet we find the disciples of Averroes numerous in the university of Padua about that time.

It prevails least in Italy.

24. II. The universities were chiefly employed upon this scholastic theology and metaphysics, with the exception of Bologna, which dedicated its attention to the civil law, and of Montpellier, already famous as a school of medicine. The laity in general might have remained in as gross barbarity as before, while topics so removed from common utility were treated in an unknown tongue. We must therefore look to the rise of a truly native literature in the several languages of western Europe, as a more essential cause of its intellectual improvement; and this will render it necessary to give a sketch of the origin and early progress of those languages and that new literature.

Literature in modern languages.

25. No one can require to be informed that the Italian, Spanish, and French languages are the principal of many dialects deviating from each other in the gradual corruption of the Latin, once universally spoken by the subjects of Rome in her western provinces. They have undergone this process of change in various degrees, but always from similar causes; partly from the retention of barbarous words belonging to their original languages, or the introduction

Origin of the French, Spanish, and Italian languages.

[t] Manuel de la Philosophie, i. 337. Eichhorn, ii. 396.

[u] See 5me discours, xvii. 30-50.

[x] Tiraboschi, v. 115.

[y] Id. 137, 160. De Sade, Vie de Petrarque, iii. 757.

of others through the settlement of the northern nations in the empire; but in a far greater proportion from ignorance of grammatical rules, or from vicious pronunciation and orthography. It has been the labour of many distinguished writers to trace the source and channels of these streams which have supplied both the literature and the common speech of the south of Europe; and perhaps not much will be hereafter added to researches which, in the scarcity of extant documents, can never be minutely successful. Du Cange, who led the way in the admirable preface to his Glossary; Le Bœuf, and Bonamy, in several memoirs among the transactions of the Academy of Inscriptions about the middle of the last century; Muratori, in his 32nd, 33rd, and 40th dissertations on Italian antiquities; and, with more copious evidence and successful industry than any other, M. Raynouard, in the first and sixth volumes of his Choix des Poésies des Troubadours, have collected as full a history of the formation of these languages as we could justly require.

Corruption of colloquial Latin in the Lower Empire.

26. The pure Latin language, as we read it in the best ancient authors, possesses a complicated syntax and many elliptical modes of expression, which give vigour and elegance to style, but are not likely to be readily caught by the people. If, however, the citizens of Rome had spoken it with entire purity, it is to be remembered that Latin, in the later times of the republic, or under the empire, was not, like the Greek of Athens or the Tuscan of Florence, the idiom of a single city, but a language spread over countries in which it was not originally vernacular, and imposed by conquest upon many parts of Italy, as it was afterwards upon Spain and Gaul. Thus we find even early proofs that solecisms of grammar, as well as barbarous phrases and words unauthorised by use of polite writers, were very common in Rome itself; and in every succeeding generation, for the first centuries after the Christian era, these became more frequent and inevitable.[z] A vulgar Roman dialect, called *quoti-*

[z] [As the word "barbarous" is applied at present with less strictness, it may be worth while to mention that, in Latin, it meant only words borrowed from the languages of barbarians. This of course did not include Greek; for though the adoption of Greek words in Latin writers was sometimes reckoned

dianus by Quintilian, *pedestris* by Vegetius, *usualis* by Sidonius, is recognised as distinguishable from the pure Latinity to which we give the name of classical. But the more ordinary appellation of this inferior Latin was *rusticus*; it was the country language or *patois*, corrupted in every manner, and, from the popular want of education, incapable of being restored, because it was not perceived to be erroneous.[a] Whatever may have been the case before the fall of the Western Empire, we have reason to believe that in the sixth century the colloquial Latin had undergone, at least in France, a considerable change even with the superior class of ecclesiastics. Gregory of Tours confesses that he was habitually falling into that sort of error, the misplacing inflexions and prepositions, which constituted the chief original difference of the rustic tongue from pure Latinity. In the opinion indeed of Raynouard, if we take his expressions in their natural meaning, the Romance language, or that which afterwards was generally called Provençal, is as old as the establishment of the Franks in Gaul. But this is perhaps not reconcileable with the proofs we have of a longer continuance of Latin. In Italy it seems probable that the change advanced more slowly. Gregory the Great, however, who has been reckoned as inveterate an enemy of learning as ever lived, speaks with superlative contempt of a regard to grammatical purity in writing.

an affectation, it could not pass for a barbarism. But perhaps the provincial dialects of Italy were included; for it is said by Quintilian that sometimes barbarous phrases had been uttered by the audience in the theatres; theatra exclamâsse barbarè.—1847.]

[a] Du Cange, preface, pp. 13, 29. Rusticum igitur sermonem non humiliorem paulo duntaxat, et qui sublimi opponitur, appellabant; sed eum etiam, qui magis reperet, barbarismis solœcismisque scateret, quam apposite Sidonius squamam sermonis Celtici, &c. vocat.—Rusticum, qui nullis vel grammaticæ vel orthographiæ legibus astringitur. This is nearly a definition of the early Romance language; it was Latin without grammar or orthography.

The squama sermonis Celtici, mentioned by Sidonius, has led Gray, in his valuable remarks on rhyme, vol. ii. p. 53, as it has some others, into the erroneous notion that a real Celtic dialect, such as Cæsar found in Gaul, was still spoken. But this is incompatible with the known history of the French language; and Sidonius is one of those loose declamatory writers whose words are never to be construed in their proper meaning; the common fault of Latin authors from the third century. Celticus sermo was the patois of Gaul, which, having once been Gallia Celtica, he still called such. That a few proper names, or similar words, and probably some others, in French are Celtic, is well known.

Quintilian has said that a vicious orthography must bring on a vicious pronunciation. Quod male scribitur, male etiam dici necesse est. But the converse of this is still more true, and was in fact the great cause of giving the new Romance language its *visible* form.

It was a crime in his eyes for a clergyman to teach grammar; yet the number of laymen who were competent or willing to do so had become very small.

27. It may render this more clear if we mention a few of the growing corruptions which have in fact transformed the Latin into French and the sister tongues. The prepositions were used with no regard to the proper inflexions of nouns and verbs. These were known so inaccurately, and so constantly put one for another, that it was necessary to have recourse to prepositions instead of them. Thus *de* and *ad* were made to express the genitive and dative cases, which is common in charters from the sixth to the tenth century. Again, it is a real fault in the Latin language, that it wants both the definite and indefinite article: *ille* and *unus*, especially the former, were called in to help this deficiency. In the forms of Marculfus, published towards the end of the seventh century, *ille* continually occurs as an article; and it appears to have been sometimes used in the sixth. This, of course, by an easy abbreviation, furnished the articles in French and Italian. The people came soon to establish more uniformity of case in the noun, either by rejecting inflexions or by diminishing their number. Raynouard gives a long list of old French nouns formed from the Latin accusative by suppressing *em* or *am*.[b] The active auxiliary verb, than which nothing is more distinctive of the modern languages from the Latin, came in from the same cause, the disuse, through ignorance, of several inflexions of the tenses; to which we must add, that here also the Latin language is singularly deficient, possessing no means of distinguishing the second perfect from the first, or "I have seen" from "I saw." The

[b] See a passage of Quintilian, l. 9, c. 4, quoted in Hallam's Middle Ages, chap. ix.

In the grammar of Cassiodorus, a mere compilation from old writers, and in this instance from one Cornutus, we find another remarkable passage, which I do not remember to have seen quoted, though doubtless it has been so, on the pronunciation of the letter *M*. To utter this final consonant, he says, before a word beginning with a vowel, is wrong, durum ac barbarum sonat; but it is an equal fault to omit it before one beginning with a consonant; par enim atque idem est vitium, ita cum vocali sicut cum consonante *M* literam, exprimere. Cassiodorus, De Orthographia, cap. 1. Thus we perceive that there was a nicety as to the pronunciation of this letter, which uneducated persons would naturally not regard. Hence in the inscriptions of a low age we frequently find this letter omitted; as in one quoted by Muratori, Ego L. Contius me bibo [vivo] archa [archam] feci, and it is very easy to multiply instances. Thus the neuter and the accusative terminations were lost.

auxiliary verb was early applied in France and Italy to supply this defect; and some have produced what they think occasional instances of its employment even in the best classical authors.

28. It seems impossible to determine the progress of these changes, the degrees of variation between the polite and popular, the written and spoken Latin, in the best ages of Rome, in the decline of the empire, and in the kingdoms founded upon its ruins; or, finally, the exact epoch when the grammatical language ceased to be generally intelligible. There remains, therefore, some room still for hypothesis and difference of opinion. The clergy preached in Latin early in the seventh century, and we have a popular song of the same age on the victory obtained by Clotaire II. in 622 over the Saxons.[c] This has been surmised by some to be a translation, merely because the Latin is better than they suppose to have been spoken. But, though the words are probably not given quite correctly, they seem reducible, with a little emendation, to short verses of an usual rhythmical cadence.[d]

Continuance of Latin in seventh century.

29. But in the middle of the eighth century we find the rustic language mentioned as distinct from Latin;[e] and in the council of Tours held in 813 it is ordered that homilies shall be explained to the people in their own tongue, whether rustic

It is changed to a new language in eighth and ninth.

[c] Le Bœuf, in Mém. de l'Acad. des Inscript. vol. xvii.—[Liron, in a dissertation on the origin of the French language, published in his Singularités Historiques, i. 103, contends, from a passage in the life of St. Eligius, that Latin was the vulgar tongue as late as 670. But the passage quoted is perhaps not conclusive. He supposes that Latin became unintelligible in the reign of Pepin, or the first years of Charlemagne, p. 116. But this is running too close; and even if he could be so exact as to any one part of France, we have no reason whatever to suppose that the corruptions of language went on with equal steps in every province.—1842.]

[d] Turner, in Archæologia, vol. xiv. 173; Hallam's Middle Ages, chap. ix.; Bouterwek, Gesch. der Französischen Poesie, p. 18, observes, that there are many fragments of popular Latin songs preserved. I have not found any quoted, except one, which he gives from La Ravaillère, which is simple and rather pretty; but I know not whence it is taken. It seems the song of a female slave, and is perhaps nearly as old as the destruction of the empire:—

At quid jubes, pusiole,
Quare mandas, filiole,
Carmen dulce me cantare
Cum sim longe exul valde
Intra mare,
O cur jubes canere?

Intra seems put for trans. The metre is rhymed trochaic; but that is consistent with antiquity. It is, however, more pleasing than most of the Latin verse of this period, and is more in the tone of the modern languages. As it is not at all a hackneyed passage, I have thought it worthy of quotation.

[e] Acad. des Inscript. xvii. 713.

Roman or Frankish. In 842 we find the earliest written evidence of its existence, in the celebrated oaths taken by Louis of Germany and his brother Charles the Bald, as well as by their vassals, the former in Frankish or early German, the latter in their own current dialect. This, though with somewhat of a closer resemblance to Latin, is accounted by the best judges a specimen of the language spoken south of the Loire, afterwards variously called the Langue d'Oc, Provençal, or Limousin, and essentially the same with the dialects of Catalonia and Valencia.[f] It is decidedly the opinion of M. Raynouard, as it was of earlier inquirers, that the general language of France in the ninth century was the southern dialect, rather than that of the north, to which we now give the exclusive name of French, and which they conceive to have deviated from it afterwards.[g] And he has employed great labour to prove that, both in Spain and Italy, this language was generally spoken with hardly so much difference from that of France as constitutes even a variation of dialect; the articles, pronouns, and auxiliaries being nearly identical; most probably not with so much difference as would render the native of one country by any means unintelligible in another.[h]

[f] Du Cange, p. 35; Raynouard, passim. M. de la Rue has called it "un Latin expirant." Recherches sur les Bardes d'Armorique. Between this and "un Français naissant" there may be only a verbal distinction; but in accuracy of definition I should think M. Raynouard much more correct. The language of this oath cannot be called Latin without a violent stretch of words; no Latin scholar, as such, would understand it, except by conjecture. On the other hand, most of the words, as we learn from M. R., are Provençal of the twelfth century. The passage has been often printed, and sometimes incorrectly. M. Roquefort, in the preface to his Glossaire de la Langue Romane, has given a tracing from an ancient manuscript of Nitard, the historian of the ninth century, to whom we owe this important record of language.

[g] The chief difference was in orthography; the Northerns wrote Latin words with an *e* where the South retained *a*; as charitet, caritat; veritet, veritat; appelet; apelat. Si l'on rétablissait dans les plus anciens textes Français les *a* primitifs en place des *e*, on aurait identiquement la langue des troubadours. Raynouard, Observations sur le Roman du Rou, 1829, p. 5.

[h] The proofs of this similarity occupy most part of the first and sixth volumes in M. Raynouard's excellent work.

[The theory of M. Raynouard, especially so far as it involves the existence of a primitive Romance tongue, akin to the Provençal, itself derived from Latin, but spoken simultaneously, or nearly so, in Spain and Italy as well as France, and the mother of the Neo-Latin languages, has been opposed in the very learned Histoire de la Formation de la Langue Française, by M. Ampère.—1847.]

It is a common error to suppose that French and Italian had a double source, barbaric as well as Latin; and that the northern nations, in conquering those

30. Thus, in the eighth and ninth centuries, if not before, France had acquired a language, unquestionably nothing else than a corruption of Latin (for the Celtic or Teutonic words that entered into it were by no means numerous, and did not influence its structure), but become so distinct from its parent, through modes of pronunciation as well as grammatical changes, that it requires some degree of practice to trace the derivation of words in many instances. It might be expected that we should be able to adduce, or at least prove to have existed, a series of monuments in this new form of speech. It might naturally appear that poetry, the voice of the heart, would have been heard wherever the joys and sufferings, the hopes and cares of humanity, wherever the countenance of nature, or the manners of social life, supplied their boundless treasures to its choice; and among untutored nations it has been rarely silent. Of the existence of verse, however, in this early period of the new languages, we find scarce any testimony, a doubtful passage in a Latin poem of the ninth century excepted,[1] till we come to a production on the captivity of Boethius, versified chiefly from passages in his Consolation, which M. Ray- Early specimens of French. Poem on Boethius.

regions, brought in a large share of their own language. This is like the old erroneous opinion, that the Norman Conquest infused the French which we now find in our own tongue. There are certainly Teutonic words both in French and Italian, but not sufficient to affect the proposition that these languages are merely Latin in their origin. These words in many instances express what Latin could not; thus *guerra* was by no means synonymous with *bellum*. Yet even Roquefort talks of "un jargon composé de mots Tudesques et Romains," Discours Préliminaire, p. 19; forgetting which he more justly remarks afterwards, on the oath of Charles the Bald, that it shows "la langue Romane est entièrement composée de Latin." A long list could, no doubt, be made of French and Italian words that cannot easily be traced to any Latin with which we are acquainted; but we may be surprised that it is not still longer.

[1] In a Latin eclogue quoted by Paschasius Radbert (ob. 865) in the Life of St. Adalhard, abbot of Corbie (ob. 826), the Romance poets are called upon to join the Latins in the following lines:—

"Rustica concelebret Romana Latinaque lingua,
Saxo, qui, pariter plangens, pro carmine dicat;
Vertite huc cuncti, cecinit quam maximus ille,
Et tumulum facite, et tumulo superaddite carmen."

Raynouard, Choix des Poésies, vol. ii. p. cxxxv. These lines are scarcely intelligible; but the quotation from Virgil, in the ninth century, perhaps deserves remark, though, in one of Charlemagne's monasteries, it is not by any means astonishing. Nennius, a Welsh monk, as some think, of the same age, who can hardly write Latin at all, has quoted another line:—

"Purpurea intexti tollant aulæa Britanni."

Gale, XV. Scriptores, iii. 102.

nouard, though somewhat wishing to assign a higher date, places about the year 1000. This is printed by him from a manuscript formerly in the famous abbey of Fleury, or St. Benoît-sur-Loire, and now in the public library of Orleans. It is a fragment of 250 lines, written in stanzas of six, seven, or a greater number of verses of ten syllables, sometimes deviating to eleven or twelve; and all the lines in each stanza rhyming masculinely with each other. It is certainly by much the earliest specimen of French verse;[k] even if it should only belong, as Le Bœuf thought, to the eleventh century.

Provençal grammar.

31. M. Raynouard has asserted what will hardly bear dispute, that "there has never been composed any considerable work in any language, till it has acquired determinate forms of expressing the modifications of ideas according to time, number, and person," or, in other words, the elements of grammar.[m] But whether the Provençal or Romance language were in its infancy so defective, he does not say; nor does the grammar he has given lead us to that inference. This grammar, indeed, is necessarily framed in great measure out of more recent materials. It may be suspected, perhaps, that a language formed by mutilating the words of another, could not for many ages be rich or flexible enough for the variety of poetic expression. And the more ancient forms would long retain their prerogative in writing: or, perhaps, we can only say, that the

[k] Raynouard, vol. ii. p. 5, 6, and preface, p. cxxvii.

[m] Observations philologiques et grammaticales sur le Roman du Rou (1829), p. 26. Two ancient Provençal grammars, one by Raymond Vidal in the twelfth century, are in existence. The language, therefore, must have had its determinate rules before that time.

M. Raynouard has shown with a prodigality of evidence, the regularity of the French or Romance language in the twelfth century, and its retention of Latin forms, in cases when it had not been suspected. Thus it is a fundamental rule, that, in nouns masculine, the nominative ends in *s* in the singular, but wants it in the plural; while the oblique cases lose it in the singular, but retain it in the plural. This is evidently derived from the second declension in Latin. As, for example,—

Sing. Li princes est venus, et a este sacrez rois.
Plu. Li evesque et li plus noble baron se sont assemble.

Thus also the possessive pronoun is always *mes, tes, ses* (meus, tuus, suus), in the nominative singular; *mon, ton, son* (meum, &c.), in the oblique regimen. It has been through ignorance of such rules that the old French poetry has seemed capricious, and destitute of strict grammar; and, in a philosophical sense, the simplicity and extensiveness of M. Raynouard's discovery entitle it to the appellation of beautiful. [It has, however, been since shown to require some limitation.]

absence of poetry was the effect, as well as the evidence, of that intellectual barrenness, more characteristic of the dark ages than their ignorance.

Latin retained in use longer in Italy.

32. In Italy, where we may conceive the corruption of language to have been less extensive, and where the spoken patois had never acquired a distinctive name like *lingua Romana* in France, we find two remarkable proofs, as they seem, that Latin was not wholly unintelligible in the ninth and tenth centuries, and which therefore modify M. Raynouard's hypothesis as to the simultaneous origin of the Romance tongue. The one is a popular song of the soldiers, on their march to rescue the emperor Louis II. in 881, from the violent detention in which he had been placed by the duke of Benevento; the other, a similar exhortation to the defenders of Modena in 924, when that city was in danger of siege from the Hungarians. Both of these were published by Muratori in his fortieth dissertation on Italian Antiquities; and both have been borrowed from him by M. Sismondi, in his Littérature du Midi.[n] The former of these poems is in a loose trochaic measure, totally destitute of regard to grammatical inflexions. Yet some of the leading peculiarities of Italian, the article and the auxiliary verb, do not appear. The latter is in accentual iambics, with a sort of monotonous termination in the nature of rhyme; and in very much superior Latinity, probably the work of an ecclesiastic.[o] It is difficult to account for either of these, especially the former, which is merely a military song, except on the supposition that the Latin language was not grown wholly out of popular use.

33. In the eleventh century, France still affords us but few extant writings. Several, indeed, can be shown

[n] Vol. i. p. 23, 27.

[o] I am at a loss to know what Muratori means by saying, "Son versi di dodici sillabe, ma computata la ragione de' tempi, vengono ad essere uguali a gli endecasilliabi." P. 551. He could not have understood the metre, which is perfectly regular, and even harmonious, on the condition only, that no "ragione de' tempi," except such as accentual pronunciation observes, shall be demanded. The first two lines will serve as a specimen:—

"O tu, qui servas armis ista mœnia,
Noli dormire, moneo, sed vigila."

This is like another strange observation of Muratori in the same dissertation, that, in the well-known lines of the emperor Adrian to his soul, "Animula vagula, blandula," which could perplex no schoolboy, he cannot discover "un' esatta norma di metro;" and, therefore, takes them to be merely rhythmical.

French of eleventh century.

to have once existed. The Romance language, comprehending the two divisions of Provençal and Northern French, by this time distinctly separate from each other, was now, say the authors of the Histoire Littéraire de la France, employed in poetry, romances, translations, and original works in different kinds of literature; sermons were preached in it, and the code, called the Assises de Jérusalem, was drawn up under Godfrey of Bouillon in 1100.[p] Some part of this is doubtful, and especially the age of these laws. They do not mention those of William the Conqueror, recorded in French by Ingulfus. Doubts have been cast by a distinguished living critic on the age of this French code, and upon the authenticity of the History of Ingulfus itself; which he conceives, upon very plausible grounds, to be a forgery of Richard II.'s time: the language of the laws indeed appears to be very ancient, but not probably distinguishable at this day from the French of the twelfth century.[q] It may be said in general that, except one or two translations from books of Scripture, very little now extant has been clearly referred to an earlier period.[r]

[p] Vol. vii. p. 107.

[q] [The French laws in Ingulfus are ascertained to be a translation from the Latin, made in the thirteenth century.]

[r] Roquefort, Glossaire de la Langue Romane, p. 25, and Etat de la Poésie Française, p. 42 and 206, mentions several religious works in the Royal Library, and also a metrical romance in the British Museum, lately published in Paris, on the fabulous voyage of Charlemagne to Constantinople. [But this romance is now referred by its editor, M. Michel, to the beginning of the twelfth century. And the translations of the books of Kings, mentioned in the text, are so far from being clearly referrible to an earlier period, that their editor, M. le Roux de Lincy, in Documens Inédits, 1841, though wavering a little, evidently inclines to place them about the same time. In fact, we are not able to prove satisfactorily that any Norman French, except the version of Boethius above mentioned, belongs to the eleventh century. Roquefort and De la Rue assumed too much as to this. It may be mentioned here that M. Michel distinguishes six dialects of Northern French in use during the twelfth century; spoken and written in Picardy, in Normandy, in the Isle of France, in Burgundy and some central provinces, in Lorraine, and, finally, in Poitou and Anjou; the last of which had a tinge of the Langue d'Oc. Id. Introduction, p. 59.—1847.] Raynouard has collected a few fragments in Provençal. But I must dissent from this excellent writer in referring the famous poem of the Vaudois, La Nobla Leyczon, to the year 1100. Choix des Poésies des Troubadours, vol. ii. p. cxxxvii. I have already observed that the two lines which contain what he calls la date de l'an 1100 are so loosely expressed as to include the whole ensuing century. (Hallam's Middle Ages, chap. ix.) And I am now convinced that the poem is not much older than 1200. It seems probable that they reckoned 1100 years on a loose computation, not from the Christian era, but from the time when the passage of Scripture to which these lines allude was written. The allusion may be to 1 Pet. i. 20. But it is clear that, at the time of the composition of this

Yet we may suspect that the language was already employed in poetry, and had been gradually ramifying itself by the shoots of invention and sentiment; since, at the close of this age, and in the next, we find a constellation of gay and brilliant versifiers, the Troubadours of southern France, and a corresponding class to the north of the Loire.

34. These early poets in the modern languages chiefly borrowed their forms of versification from the Latin. It is unnecessary to say, that metrical composition in that language, as in Greek, was an arrangement of verses corresponding by equal or equivalent feet; all syllables being presumed to fall under a known division of long and short, the former passing for strictly the double of the latter in quantity of time. By this law of pronunciation all verse was measured; and to this not only actors, who were assisted by an accompaniment, but the orators also endeavoured to conform. But the accented, or, if we choose rather to call them so, emphatic syllables, being regulated by a very different though uniform law, the uninstructed people, especially in the decline of Latinity, pronounced, as we now do, with little or no regard to the metrical quantity of syllables, but according to their

Metres of modern languages.

poem, not only the name of *Vaudois* had been imposed on those sectaries, but they had become subject to persecution. We know nothing of this till near the end of the century. This poem was probably written in the south of France, and carried afterwards to the Alpine valleys of Piedmont, from which it was brought to Geneva and England in the seventeenth century. La Nobla Leyczon is published at length by Raynouard. It consists of 479 lines, which seem to be rhythmical or aberrant Alexandrines; the rhymes uncertain in number, chiefly masculine. The poem censures the corruptions of the church, but contains little that would be considered heretical; which agrees with what contemporary historians relate of the original Waldenses. Any doubts as to the authenticity of this poem are totally unreasonable. M. Raynouard, an indisputably competent judge, observes, "Les personnes qui l'examineront avec attention jugeront que le manuscrit n'a pas été interpolé." P. cxliii.

I will here reprint, more accurately than before, the two lines supposed to give the poem the date of 1100:—

"Ben ha mil et cent ancz compli entièrement,
Que fo scripta l'ora car sen al derier temps."

Can M. Raynouard, or any one else, be warranted by this in saying, *La date de l'an* 1100, qu'on lit dans ce poème, mérite toute confiance?

[The writings ascribed to the ancient Waldenses have lately been investigated with considerable acuteness and erudition in the British Magazine, and the spuriousness of the greater part seems demonstrated. But those who consider Leger as a forger do not appear to doubt the authenticity of this poem, La Nobla Leyczon, though they entirely agree with me as to its probable date near the end of the twelfth century.—1842.]

accentual differences. And this gave rise to the popular or rhythmical poetry of the Lower Empire; traces of which may be found in the second century, and even much earlier, but of which we have abundant proofs after the age of Constantine.* All metre, as Augustin says, was rhythm, but all rhythm was not metre: in rhythmical verse, neither the quantity of syllables, that is, the time allotted to each by metrical rule, nor even in some degree their number, was regarded, so long as a cadence was retained in which the ear could recognise a certain approach to uniformity. Much popular poetry, both religious and profane, and the public hymns of the church, were written in this manner; the distinction of long and short syllables, even while Latin remained a living tongue, was lost in speech, and required study to attain it. The accent or emphasis, both of which are probably, to a certain extent, connected with quantity and with each other, supplied its place; the accented syllable being, perhaps, generally lengthened in ordinary speech; though this is not the sole cause of length, for no want of emphasis or lowness of tone can render a syllable of many letters short. Thus we find two species of Latin verse: one metrical, which Prudentius, Fortunatus, and others aspired to write; the other rhythmical, somewhat licentious in number of syllables, and wholly accentual in its pronunciation. But this kind was founded on the former, and imitated the ancient syllabic arrangements. Thus the trochaic, or line in which the stress falls on the uneven syllables, commonly alternating by eight and seven, a very popular metre from its spirited flow, was adopted in military songs, such as that already mentioned of the Italian soldiers in the ninth century. It was also common in religious chants. The line of eight syllables, or dimeter iambic, in which the cadence falls on the even places, was still more frequent in ecclesiastical verse. But these are the most ordinary forms of versification in the early French or Provençal, Spanish, and Italian languages. The line of eleven syllables,

* The well-known lines of Adrian to Florus, and his reply, "Ego nolo Florus esse," &c., are accentual trochaics, but not wholly so, for the last line, Scythicas pati pruinas, requires the word *pati* to be sounded as an iambic. They are not the earliest instance extant of disregard to quantity; for Suetonius quotes some satirical lines on Julius Cæsar.

which became in time still more usual than the former, is nothing else than the ancient hendecasyllable, from which the French, in what they call masculine rhymes, and ourselves more generally, from a still greater deficiency of final vowels, have been forced to retrench the last syllable. The Alexandrine of twelve syllables might seem to be the trimeter iambic of the ancients. But Sanchez has very plausibly referred its origin to a form more usual in the dark ages, the pentameter; and shown it in some early Spanish poetry.[t] The Alexandrine, in the southern languages, had generally a feminine termination, that is, in a short vowel; thus becoming of thirteen syllables, the stress falling on the penultimate, as is the usual case in a Latin pentameter verse, accentually read in our present mode. The variation of syllables in these Alexandrines, which run from twelve to fourteen, is accounted for by the similar numerical variety in the pentameter.[u]

Origin of rhyme in Latin.

35. I have dwelt, perhaps tediously, on this subject, because vague notions of a derivation of modern metrical arrangements, even in the languages of Latin origin, from the Arabs or Scandinavians, have sometimes gained credit. It has been imagined also, that the peculiar characteristic of the new poetry, rhyme, was borrowed from the Saracens of Spain.[x] But the Latin language abounds so much in consonances, that those who have been accustomed to write verses in it well know the difficulty of avoiding them, as much as an ear formed on classical models demands; and as this

[t] The break in the middle of the Alexandrine, it will occur to every competent judge, has nothing analogous to it in the trimeter iambic, but exactly corresponds to the invariable law of the pentameter.

[u] Roquefort, Essai sur la Poésie Française dans le 12me et 13me siècles, p. 66. Galvani, Osservazioni sulla Poesia de' Trovatori. (Modena, 1829.) Sanchez, Poesias Castellanas anteriores al 15mo siglo, vol. i. p. 122.

Tyrwhitt had already observed, "The metres which the Normans used, and which we seem to have borrowed from them, were plainly copied from the Latin rhythmical verses, which, in the declension of that language, were current in various forms among those who either did not understand, or did not regard, the true quantity of syllables; and the practice of rhyming is probably to be deduced from the same original." Essay on the Language and Versification of Chaucer, p. 51.

[x] Andrès, with a partiality to the Saracens of Spain, whom, by a singular assumption, he takes for his countrymen, manifested in almost every page, does not fail to urge this. It had been said long before by Huet, and others who lived before these subjects had been thoroughly investigated. Origine e Progresso, &c., ii. 194. He has been copied by Ginguéné and Sismondi.

gingle is certainly pleasing in itself, it is not wonderful that the less fastidious vulgar should adopt it in their rhythmical songs. It has been proved by Muratori, Gray, and Turner, beyond the possibility of doubt, that rhymed Latin verse was in use from the end of the fourth century.[y]

Provençal and French poetry.

36. Thus, about the time of the first crusade, we find two dialects of the same language, differing by that time not inconsiderably from each other, the Provençal and French, possessing a regular grammar, established forms of versification (and the early troubadours added several to those borrowed from the Latin[z]), and a flexibility which gave free scope to the graceful turns of poetry. William, duke of Guienne, has the glory of leading the van of surviving Provençal songsters. He was born in 1070, and may probably have composed some of his little poems before he joined the crusaders in 1096. If these are genuine, and no doubt of them seems to be entertained, they denote a considerable degree of previous refinement in the language.[a] We do not, I believe, meet with any other troubadour till after the middle of the twelfth century. From that time till about the close of the thirteenth, and especially before the fall of the house of Toulouse in 1228, they were numerous almost as the gay insects of spring; names of illustrious birth are mingled in the list with those whom genius has saved from obscurity: they were the delight of a luxurious nobility, the pride of southern France, while the great fiefs of Toulouse and Guienne were in their splendour. Their style soon extended itself to the northern dialect. Abelard was the first of recorded name, who taught the banks of the Seine to resound a tale of love; and it was of Eloise that he sung.[b] "You composed," says that gifted and noble-

[y] Muratori, Antichità Italiane, Dissert. 40. Turner, in Archæologia, vol. xiv., and Hist. of England, vol. iv. p. 328, 653. Gray has gone as deeply as any one into this subject; and though, writing at what may be called an early period of metrical criticism, he has fallen into a few errors, and been too easy of credence, unanswerably proves the Latin origin of rhyme. Gray's Works by Mathias, vol. ii. p. 30-54.

[z] See Raynouard, Roquefort, and Galvani for the Provençal and French metres, which are very complicated.

[a] Raynouard, Choix des Poésies des Troubadours, vol. ii. Auguis, Recueil des Anciens Poètes Français, vol. i.

[b] Bouterwek, on the authority of La Ravaillère, seems to doubt whether these poems of Abelard were in French or Latin. Gesch. der Französischen Poesie, p. 18. I believe this would be thought

spirited woman, in one of her letters to him, "many verses in amorous measure, so sweet both in their language and their melody, that your name was incessantly in the mouths of all, and even the most illiterate could not be forgetful of you. This it was chiefly that made women admire you. And as most of these songs were on me and my love, they made me known in many countries, and caused many women to envy me. Every tongue spoke of your Eloise; every street, every house resounded with my name."[c] These poems of Abelard are lost; but in the Norman, or northern French language, we have an immense number of poets belonging to the twelfth and the two following centuries. One hundred and twenty-seven are known by name in the twelfth alone, and above two hundred in the thirteenth.[d]

quite paradoxical by any critic at present.

[c] Duo autem, fateor, tibi specialiter inerant, quibus feminarum quarumlibet animos statim allicere poteras, dictandi videlicet et cantandi gratia; quæ cæteros minimè philosophos assecutos esse novimus. Quibus quidem quasi ludo quodam laborem exercitii recreans philosophici pleraque amatorio metro vel rithmo composita reliquisti carmina, quæ præ nimiâ suavitate tam dictaminis quam cantûs sæpius frequentata tuum in ore omnium nomen incessanter tenebant, ut etiam illiteratos melodiæ dulcedo tui non sineret immemores esse. Atque hinc maxime in amorem tui feminæ auspirabant. Et cum horum pars maxima carminum nostros decantaret amores, multis me regionibus brevi tempore nunciavit, et multarum in me feminarum accendit invidiam. And in another place: Frequenti carmine tuam in ore omnium Heloissam ponebas: me platæ omnes, me domus singulæ resonabant. Epist. Abælardi et Heloissæ. These epistles of Abelard and Eloisa, especially those of the latter, are, as far as I know, the first book that gives any pleasure in reading which had been produced in Europe for 600 years, since the Consolation of Boethius. But I do not press my negative judgment. We may at least say that the writers of the dark ages, if they have left anything intrinsically very good, have been ill-treated by the learned, who have failed to extract it. Pope, it may be here observed, has done great injustice to Eloisa in his unrivalled epistle, by putting the sentiments of a coarse and abandoned woman into her mouth. Her refusal to marry Abelard arose not from an abstract predilection for the name of mistress above that of wife, but from her disinterested affection, which would not deprive him of the prospect of ecclesiastical dignities to which his genius and renown might lead him. She judged very unwisely, as it turned out, but from an unbounded generosity of character. He was, in fact, unworthy of her affection, which she expresses in the tenderest language. Deum testem invoco, si me Augustus universo præsidens mundo matrimonii honore dignaretur, totumque mihi orbem confirmaret in perpetuum præsidendum, charius mihi et dignius videretur tua dici meretrix quam illius imperatrix.

[d] Auguis, Discours Préliminaire, p. 2; Roquefort, Etat de la Poésie Française aux 12me et 13me siècles; Hist. Litt. de la France, xvi. 239.

[It ought to have been observed that comparatively few of the poets of the twelfth century are extant; most of them are Anglo-Norman. At least ten times as much French verse of the thirteenth has been preserved. Hist. Litt. de la France, p. 239. Notre prose et notre poésie Française existaient avant 1200, mais c'est au treizième siècle qu'elles commencèrent à prendre un caractère national. Id. p. 254.—1847.]

Thibault, king of Navarre and count of Champagne, about the middle of the next, is accounted by some the best, as well as noblest, of French poets; but the spirited and satirical Rutebouf might contest the preference.

37. In this French and Provençal poetry, if we come to the consideration of it historically, descending from an earlier period, we are at once struck by the vast preponderance of amorous ditties. The Greek and Roman muses, especially the latter, seem frigid as their own fountain in comparison. Satires on the great, and especially on the clergy, exhortations to the crusade, and religious odes, are intermingled in the productions of the troubadours; but love is the prevailing theme. This tone they could hardly have borrowed from the rhythmical Latin verses, of which all that remain are without passion or energy. They could as little have been indebted to their predecessors for a peculiar gracefulness, an indescribable charm of gaiety and ease, which many of their lighter poems display. This can only be ascribed to the polish of chivalrous manners, and to the influence of feminine delicacy on public taste. The well known dialogue, for example, of Horace and Lydia, is justly praised; nothing extant of this amœbean character, from Greece or Rome, is nearly so good. But such alternate stanzas, between speakers of different sexes, are very common in the early French poets; and it would be easy to find some quite equal to Horace in grace and spirit. They had even a generic name, *tensons*, contentions; that is, dialogues of lively repartee, such as we are surprised to find in the twelfth century, an age accounted by many almost barbarous. None of these are prettier than what are called *pastourelles*, in which the poet is feigned to meet a shepherdess, whose love he solicits, and by whom he is repelled (not always finally) in alternate stanzas.[e] Some of these may be read in

[e] These have, as Galvani has observed, an ancient prototype in the twenty-seventh pastoral of Theocritus, which Dryden has translated with no diminution of its freedom. Some of the Pastourelles are also rather licentious, but that is not the case with the greater part. M. Raynouard, in an article of the Journal des Savans for 1824, p. 613, remarks the superior decency of the southern poets, scarcely four or five transgressing in that respect; while many of the fabliaux in the collections of Barbazan and Méon are of the most coarse and stupid ribaldry, and such that even the object of exhibiting ancient

Roquefort, Etat de la Poésie Française dans le 12me et 13me siècles; others in Raynouard, Choix des Poésies des Troubadours; in Auguis, Recueil des Anciens Poètes Français; or in Galvani, Osservazioni sulla Poesia de' Trovatori.

38. In all these light compositions which gallantry or gaiety inspired, we perceive the characteristic excellences of French poetry, as distinctly as in the best vaudeville of the age of Louis XV. We can really sometimes find little difference, except an obsoleteness of language, which gives them a kind of poignancy. And this style, as I have observed, seems to have been quite original in France, though it was imitated by other nations.[f] The French poetry, on the other hand, was deficient in strength and ardour. It was also too much filled with monotonous commonplaces; among which the tedious descriptions of spring, and the everlasting nightingale, are eminently to be reckoned. These, perhaps, are less frequent in the early poems, most of which are short, than they became in the prolix expansion adopted by the allegorical school in the fourteenth century. They prevail, as is well known, in Chaucer, Dunbar, and several other of our own poets.

39. The metrical romances, far from common in Provençal,[g] but forming a large portion of what was written in the northern dialect, though occasionally picturesque, graceful, or animated, are seldom free from tedious or prosaic details. The

Metrical romances. Havelok the Dane.

manners and language scarcely warranted their publication in so large a number.

[A good many pastourelles, but all variations of the same subject, are published by M. Michel, in his Théâtre Français au Moyen Age, p. 31. These are in northern dialects, and may be referred to the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. Robin and Marion are always the shepherd or peasant and his rustic love; and a knight always interferes, with or without success, to seduce or outrage Marion. We have nothing corresponding to these in England.—1847.]

[f] Andrès, as usual with him, whose prejudices are all that way, derives the Provençal style of poetry from the Arabians; and this has been countenanced, in some measure, by Ginguéné and Sismondi. Some of the peculiarities of the Troubadours, their tensons, or contentions, and the envoi, or termination of a poem, by an address to the poem itself or the reader, are said to be of Arabian origin. In assuming that rhyme was introduced by the same channel, these writers are probably mistaken. But I have seen too little of Oriental, and, especially, of Hispano-Saracenic poetry, to form any opinion how far the more essential characteristics of Provençal verse may have been derived from it. One seems to find more of Oriental hyperbole in the Castilian poetry.

[g] It has been denied that there are any metrical romances in Provençal. But one called the Philomena, on the fabulous history of Charlemagne, is

earliest of these extant seems to be that of Havelok the Dane, of which an abridgment was made by Geoffrey Gaimar, before the middle of the twelfth century. The story is certainly a popular legend from the Danish part of England, which the French versifier has called, according to the fashion of romances, "a Breton lay." If this word meant any thing more than relating to Britain, it is a plain falsehood; and upon either hypothesis, it may lead us to doubt, as many other reasons may also, what has been so much asserted of late years, as to the Armorican origin of romantic fictions; since the word Breton, which some critics refer to Armorica, is here applied to a story of mere English birth.[h] It cannot,

written after 1173, though not much later than 1200. Journal des Savans, 1824. [The Philomena is in prose; but it has been pointed out to me that four metrical romances in Provençal have been brought to light by Raynouard and others.—1842.]

h The Recherches sur les Bardes d'Armorique, by that respectable veteran M. de la Rue, are very unsatisfactory. It does not appear that the Bretons have so much as a national tradition of any romantic poetry, nor any writings in their language older than 1450. The authority of Warton, Leyden, Ellis, Turner, and Price has rendered this hypothesis of early Armorican romance popular; but I cannot believe that so baseless a fabric will endure much longer. Is it credible that tales of aristocratic splendour and courtesy sprung up in so poor and uncivilised a country as Bretagne? Traditional stories they might, no doubt, possess, and some of these may be found in the Lais de Marie, and other early poems; but not romances of chivalry. I do not recollect, though speaking without confidence, that any proof has been given of Armorican traditions about Arthur earlier than the history of Geoffrey: for it seems too much to interpret the word *Britones* of them rather than of the Welsh. Mr. Turner, I observe, without absolutely recanting, has much receded from his opinion of an Armorican original for Geoffrey of Monmouth.

[It is not easy to perceive how the story of Arthur, as a Welsh prince and conqueror, should have originated in Britany, which may have preserved some connexion with Cornwall, but none, as far as we know, with Wales. The Armoricans, at least, had no motive for inventing magnificent fables in order to swell the glory of a different, though cognate people. Mr. Wright conceives that Arthur was a mythic personage in Britany, whose legend was confounded by Geoffrey with real history. But this wholly annihilates the historical basis, and requires us not only to reject Nennius as a spurious or interpolated writer, which is Mr. Wright's hypothesis, but to consider all the Welsh poems which contain allusions to Arthur as posterior to the time of Geoffrey. "The legends of the British kings," he says, "appear to have been brought over from Bretagne, and not to have had their origin among the Welsh; although we begin to observe traces of the legends relating to Arthur and Merlin before Geoffrey of Monmouth wrote, yet even the Welsh of that time appear to have rejected his narrative as fabulous." Biogr. Britann. Littéraire, vol. ii. p. 145. If we can depend at all on the stories of the Mabinogion, which a lady has so honourably brought before the English public, the traditional legends concerning Arthur prevailed in Wales in an earlier age than that of Geoffrey; and perhaps William of Malmesbury alluded to them rather than to the recent forgery, in the words Hic est Arthurus de quo Britonum nugæ hodieque delirant; dignus plane, quem non fallaces somniarent fabulæ, sed veraces prædicarent historiæ, quippe qui labantem patriam diu sustinuerit, in-

however, be doubted, from the absurd introduction of Arthur's name in this romance of Havelok, that it was written after the publication of the splendid fables of Geoffrey.[i]

40. Two more celebrated poems are by Wace, a native of Jersey; one, a free version of the history lately published by Geoffrey of Monmouth; the other, a narrative of the Battle of Hastings and Conquest of England. Many other romances followed. Much has been disputed for some years concerning these, as well as the lays and fabliaux of the northern trouveurs; it is sufficient here to observe, that they afforded a copious source of amusement and interest to those who read or listened, as far as the French language was diffused; and this was far beyond the boundaries of France. Not only was it the common spoken tongue of what is called the court, or generally of the superior ranks, in England, but in Italy and in Germany, at least throughout the thirteenth century. Brunetto Latini wrote his philosophical compilation, called Le Trésor, in French, "because," as he says, "the language was more agreeable and usual than any other." Italian, in fact, was hardly employed in prose at that time. But for those whose education had not gone so far, the romances and tales of France began to be rendered into German as early as the latter part of the twelfth century, as they were long afterwards into English, becoming the basis of those popular songs which illustrate the period of the Swabian emperors, the great house of Hohenstauffen, Frederic Barbarossa, Henry VI., and Frederic II. Diffusion of French language.

41. The poets of Germany, during this period of extraordinary fertility in versification, were not less numerous than those of France and Provence.[k] From Henry of

fractosque civium mentes ad bellum acuerit. De Gestis Reg. Angl., l. i. Arthur's victory at Mount Baden in 516, and his death in 537, are mentioned in the Annales Cambriæ, prepared by the late Mr. Petrie for publication; a brief chronicle, which seems, in part at least, considerably older than the twelfth century, if not almost contemporary.—1847.]

[i] The romance of Havelok was printed by Sir Frederick Madden in 1829, but not for sale. His Introduction is of considerable value. The story of Havelok is that of Curan and Argentile, in Warner's Albion's England, upon which Mason founded a drama. Sir F. Madden refers the English translation to some time between 1270 and 1290. The manuscript is in the Bodleian Library. The French original has since been reprinted in France, as I learn from Brunet's Supplément au Manuel du Libraire. Both this and its abridgment, by Geoffrey Gaimar, are in the British Museum.

[k] Bouterwek, p. 95. [Gervinus, in his Poetische Litteratur der Deutschen,

German poetry of Swabian period.

Veldek to the last of the lyric poets, soon after the beginning of the fourteenth century, not less than two hundred are known by name. A collection made in that age by Rudiger von Manasse of Zurich contains the productions of one hundred and forty; and modern editors have much enlarged the list.[m] Henry of Veldek is placed by Eichhorn about 1170, and by Bouterwek twenty years later; so that at the utmost we cannot reckon the period of their duration more than a century and a half. But the great difference perceptible between the poetry of Henry and that of the old German songs proves him not to have been the earliest of the Swabian school; he is as polished in language and versification as any of his successors; and, though a northern, he wrote in the dialect of the house of Hohenstauffen. Wolfram von Eschenbach, in the first years of the next century, is perhaps the most eminent name of the Minne-singers, as the lyric poets were denominated, and is also the translator of several romances. The golden age of German poetry was before the fall of the Swabian dynasty, at the death of Conrad IV. in 1254. Love, as the word denotes, was the peculiar theme of the Minne-singers; but it was chiefly from the northern or southern dialects of France, especially the latter, that they borrowed their amorous strains.[n] In

has gone more fully than his predecessor Bouterwek into the history of German mediæval poetry, which was more abundant, perhaps, than in any other country. Ottfried, about 883, turned the Gospels into German verse; we here find rhyme instead of the ancient alliteration. But in the next two centuries we have chiefly Latin poetry, though some of it apparently derived from old lays of the Hunnish or Burgundian age. In the beginning of the twelfth century the vernacular poetry revived in a number of chivalric stories, of which Alexander and Charlemagne were generally the heroes. The Franconian emperors did not encourage letters. But under the Swabian line poetry eminently flourished. Several epics besides the Nibelungen Lied belong to the latter part of the twelfth century or beginning of the next, and are much superior in spirit and character to anything that followed.—1853.]

[m] Bouterwek, p. 98. This collection was published in 1758 by Bodmer.

[n] Herder, Zerstreute Blatter, vol. v. p. 206. - Eichhorn, Allg. Geschichte der Cultur, vol. i. p. 226. Heinsius, Teut, oder Lehrbuch der Deutschen Sprachwissenschaft, vol. iv. pp. 32-80. Weber's Illustrations of Northern Antiquities, 1814. This work contains the earliest analysis, I believe, of the Nibelungen Lied. But, above all, I have been indebted to the excellent account of German poetry by Bouterwek, in the ninth volume of his great work, the History of Poetry and Eloquence since the Thirteenth Century. In this volume the mediæval poetry of Germany occupies nearly four hundred closely printed pages. I have since met with a pleasing little volume on the Lays of the Minne-singers, by Mr. Edgar Taylor. It contains an account of the chief of those poets, with translations, perhaps in too modern a

the latter part of the thirteenth century we find less of feeling and invention, but a more didactic and moral tone, sometimes veiled in Æsopic fables, sometimes openly satirical. Conrad of Würtzburg is the chief of the later school; but he had to lament the decline of taste and manners in his own age.

42. No poetry, however, of the Swabian period is so national as the epic romances, which drew their subjects from the highest antiquity, if they did not even adopt the language of primæval bards, which, perhaps, though it has been surmised, is not compatible with their style. In the two most celebrated productions of this kind, the Helden Buch, or Book of Heroes, and the Nibelungen Lied, the Lay of the Nibelungen, a fabulous people, we find the recollections of an heroic age, wherein the names of Attila and Theodoric stand out as witnesses of traditional history, clouded by error and coloured by fancy. The Nibelungen Lied, in its present form, is by an uncertain author, perhaps about the year 1200;° but it

style, though it may be true that no other would suit our modern taste.

A species of love-song, peculiar, according to Weber (p. 9), to the Minnesingers, are called Watchmen's Songs. These consist in a dialogue between a lover and the sentinel who guards his mistress. The latter is persuaded to imitate 'Sir Pandarus of Troy;' but, when morning breaks, summons the lover to quit his lady; who, in her turn, maintains that "it is the nightingale, and not the lark," with almost the pertinacity of Juliet.

Mr. Taylor remarks that the German poets do not go so far in their idolatry of the fair as the Provençals, p. 127. I do not concur altogether in his reasons; but as the Minne-singers imitated the Provençals, this deviation is remarkable. I should rather ascribe it to the hyperbolical tone which the Troubadours had borrowed from the Arabians, or to the susceptibility of their temperament.

° Weber says,—"I have no doubt whatever that the romance itself is of very high antiquity, at least of the eleventh century, though, certainly, the present copy has been considerably modernised." Illustrations of Northern Romances, p. 26. But Bouterwek does not seem to think it of so ancient a date; and I believe it is commonly referred to about the year 1200. Schlegel ascribes it to Henry von Offerdingen. Heinsius, iv. 52.

It is highly probable that the "barbara et antiquissima carmina," which, according to Eginhard, Charlemagne caused to be reduced to writing, were no other than the legends of the Nibelungen Lied, and similar traditions of the Gothic and Burgundian time. Weber, p. 6. I will here mention a curious Latin epic poem on the wars of Attila, published by Fischer in 1780. He conceives it to be of the sixth century; but others have referred it to the eighth. [Raynouard (Journal des Savans, Aug. 1833) places it in the tenth. And my friend the Hon. and Rev. W. Herbert, in the notes to his poem on Attila (1837), a production displaying an union of acuteness and erudition with great poetical talents, has, probably with no knowledge of Raynouard's judgment, come to the same determination, from the mention of Iceland, under the name of Thile, which was not discovered till 861. "The poem resembles in style and substance the later Scandinavian sagas, and it is probably a Latin version of some such prose narra-

comes, and as far as we can judge with little or no interpolation of circumstances, from an age anterior to Christianity, to civilization, and to the more refined forms of chivalry. We cannot well think the stories later than the sixth or seventh centuries. The German critics admire the rude grandeur of this old epic; and its fables, marked with a character of barbarous simplicity wholly unlike that of later romance, are become in some degree familiar to ourselves.

Decline of German poetry.

43. The loss of some accomplished princes, and of a near intercourse with the south of France and with Italy, as well as the augmented independence of the German nobility, only to be maintained by unceasing warfare, rendered their manners, from the latter part of the thirteenth century, more rude than before. They ceased to cultivate poetry, or to think it honourable in their rank. Meantime a new race

tive; and the spelling of Thule, Thile, seems to have been derived from the Scandinavian orthography Thyle. At the end of the tenth century the Scandinavians, who were previously illiterate, began to study in Italy, and the discovery of Iceland would have transpired through them. It is probable that this may be the earliest work in which the name Thule has been applied to Iceland, and it is most likely a production of the tenth century. The MS. is said to be of the thirteenth." It appears, however, by M. Raynouard's article that the MS. in the Royal Library at Paris contains a dedication to an archbishop of Rome near the close of the tenth century, which, in the absence of any presumption to the contrary, may pass for the date of the poem.—1842.] The heroes are Franks; but the whole is fabulous, except the name of Attila and his Huns. I do not know whether this has any connexion with a history of Attila by a writer named Casola, existing in manuscript at Modena, and being probably a translation in prose from Latin into Provençal. A translation of this last into Italian was published by Rossi at Ferrara in 1568: it is a very scarce book, but I have seen two copies of it. Weber's Illustrations, p. 23. Eichhorn, Allg. Gesch. ii. 178. Galvani, Osservazioni sulla Poesia de' Trovatori, p. 16.

The Nibelungen Lied seems to have been less popular in the middle ages than other romances; evidently because it relates to a different state of manners. Bouterwek, p. 141. Heinsius observes that we must consider this poem as the most valuable record of German antiquity, but that to overrate its merit, as some have been inclined to do, can be of no advantage. [The Nibelungen Lied is placed by Gervinus about 1210. It was not liked by the clergy, doubtless on account of its heathenish character, nor by the courtly poets, who thought it too rude; and in fact the style is much behind that of the age. The sources of this poem are unknown: that the author had traditional legends, and probably lays, to guide him, will of course hardly be doubted; little more than a few great names—Attila, Theodoric, Gunther—belong to real history; but the whole complexion of the poem is so different from that of the twelfth century, that we must believe the poet to have imbued himself by some such means with the spirit of times long past. No disparagement, but the reverse, to the genius of him who, in these respects, as well as in his animated and picturesque language, so powerfully reminds us of the father of poetry. The Nibelungen Lied has been lately modernised in German, and is read perhaps with more pleasure in that form, though it displays less of its original raciness.—1853.]

of poets, chiefly burghers of towns, sprang up about the reign of Rodolph of Hapsburg, before the lays of the Minne-singers had yet ceased to resound. These prudent, though not inspired, votaries of the muse, chose the didactic and moral style as more salutary than the love songs, and more reasonable than the romances. They became known in the fourteenth century by the name of Meister-singers, but are traced to the institutions of the twelfth century, called singing-schools, for the promotion of popular music, the favourite recreation of Germany. What they may have done for music I am unable to say; it was in an evil hour for the art of poetry that they extended their jurisdiction over her. They regulated verse by the most pedantic and minute laws, such as a society with no idea of excellence but conformity to rule would be sure to adopt; though nobler institutions have often done the same, and the Master-burghers were but prototypes of the Italian academicians. The poetry was always moral and serious, but flat. These Meister-singers are said to have originated at Mentz, from which they spread to Augsburg, Strasburg, and other cities, and in none were more renowned than Nuremburg. Charles IV., in 1378, incorporated them by the name of Meistergenoss-schaft, with armorial bearings and peculiar privileges. They became, however, more conspicuous in the sixteenth century; scarce any names of Meister-singers before that age are recorded; nor does it seem that much of their earlier poetry is extant.[p]

Poetry of France and Spain.

44. The French versifiers had by this time, perhaps, become less numerous, though several names in the same style of amatory song do some credit to their age. But the romances of chivalry began now to be written in prose; while a very celebrated poem, the Roman de la Rose, had introduced an unfortunate taste for allegory into verse, from which France did not extricate herself for several generations. Meanwhile the Provençal poets, who, down to the close of the thirteenth century, had flourished in the south, and whose language many Lombards adopted, came to

[p] Bouterwek, ix. 271-291. Heinsius, iv. 86-98. See also the Biographie Universelle, art. Folcz; and a good article in the Retrospective Review, vol. x. p. 113. [See also Gervinus, Poetische Litteratur der Deutschen, p. 112 and post.]

an end: after the re-union of the fief of Toulouse to the crown, and the possession of Provence by a northern line of princes, their ancient and renowned tongue passed for a dialect, a patois of the people. It had never been much employed in prose, save in the kingdom of Aragon, where, under the name of Valencian, it continued for two centuries to be a legitimate language, till political circumstances of the same kind reduced it, as in southern France, to a provincial dialect. The Castilian language, which, though it has been traced higher in written fragments, may be considered to have begun, in a literary sense, with the poem of the Cid, not later, as some have thought, than the middle of the twelfth century, was employed by a few extant poets in the next age, and in the fourteenth was as much the established vehicle of many kinds of literature in Spain as the French was on the other side of the mountains.[q] The names of Portuguese poets not less early than any in Castile are recorded; fragments are mentioned by Bouterwek as old as the twelfth century, and there exists a collection of lyric poetry in the style of the Troubadours, which is referred to no late part of the next age.[r] Nothing has

[q] Sanchez, Coleccion de Poesias Castellanas anteriores al siglo 15mo.; Velasquez, Historia della Poesia Español, which I only know by the German translation of Dieze (Göttingen, 1769), who has added many notes; Andrès, Origine d' ogni Litteratura, ii. 158; Bouterwek's History of Spanish and Portuguese Literature. I shall quote the English translation of this work.

[r] This very curious fact in literary history has been brought to light by Lord Stuart of Rothesay, who printed at Paris, in 1823, twenty-five copies of a collection of ancient Portuguese songs, from a manuscript in the library of the College of Nobles at Lisbon. An account of this book, by M. Raynouard, will be found in the Journal des Savans for August, 1825; and I have been favoured by my noble friend the editor with the loan of a copy, though my ignorance of the language prevented me from forming an exact judgment of its contents. In the preface the following circumstances are stated. It consists of seventy-five folios, the first part having been torn off, and the manuscript attached to a work of a wholly different nature. The writing appears to be of the fourteenth century, and in some places older. The idiom seems older than the writing: it may be called, if I understand the meaning of the preface, as old as the beginning of the thirteenth century, and certainly older than the reign of Denis, pode appellidarse coevo do seculo xiii, e de certo he anterior ao reynado de D. Deniz. Denis king of Portugal reigned from 1279 to 1325. It is regular in grammar, and for the most part in orthography, but contains some Gallicisms, which show either a connexion between France and Portugal in that age, or a common origin in the southern tongues of Europe; since certain idioms found in this manuscript are preserved in Spanish, Italian, and Provençal, yet are omitted in Portuguese dictionaries. A few poems are translated from Provençal, but the greater part are strictly Portuguese, as the mention of places, names, and manners shows. M. Raynouard, however, observes, that the thoughts and forms of

been published in the Castilian language of this amatory style older than 1400.

45. Italy came last of those countries where Latin had been spoken to the possession of an independent language and literature. No industry has hitherto retrieved so much as a few lines of real Italian till near the end of the twelfth century; and there is not much before the middle of the next. Several poets, however, whose versification is not wholly rude, appeared soon afterwards. The Divine Comedy of Dante seems to have been commenced before his exile from Florence in 1304. The Italian language was much used in prose during the times of Dante and Petrarch, though very little before. Early Italian language.

46. Dante and Petrarch are, as it were, the morning stars of our modern literature. I shall say nothing more of the former in this place: he does not stand in such close connexion as Petrarch with the fifteenth century, nor had he such influence over the taste of his age. In this respect Petrarch has as much Dante and Petrarch.

versification are similar to those of the Troubadours. The metres employed are usually of seven, eight, and ten syllables, the accent falling on the last; but some lines occur of seven, eight, or eleven syllables, accented on the penultimate, and these are sometimes interwoven, at regular intervals, with the others.

The songs, as far as I was able to judge, are chiefly, if not wholly, amatory; they generally consist of stanzas, the first of which is written (and printed) with intervals for musical notes, and in the form of prose, though really in metre. Each stanza has frequently a burden of two lines. The plan appeared to be something like that of the Castilian glosas of the fifteenth century, the subject of the first stanza being repeated, and sometimes expanded, in the rest. I do not know that this is found in any Provençal poetry. The language, according to Raynouard, resembles Provençal more than the modern Portuguese does. It is a very remarkable circumstance that we have no evidence, at least from the letter of the Marquis of Santillana early in the fifteenth century, that the Castilians had any of these love-songs till long after the date of this Cancioneiro; and that we may rather collect from it, that the Spanish amatory poets chose the Gallician or Portuguese dialect in preference to their own. Though the very ancient collection to which this note refers seems to have been unknown, I find mention of one by Don Pedro, count of Barcelos, natural son of king Denis, in Dieze's notes on Velasquez. Gesch. der Span. Dichtkunst, p. 70. This must have been in the first part of the fourteenth century.

* Tiraboschi, iii. 323, doubts the authenticity of some inscriptions referred to the twelfth century. The earliest genuine Italian seems to be a few lines by Ciullo d'Alcamo, a Sicilian, between 1187 and 1193, vol. iv. p. 340. [Muratori thinks it probable that Italian might be written sometimes in the twelfth century. Quando cio precisamente avvenisse, noi non sappiamo, perchè l' ignoranza e barbarie di que' tempi non ne lasciò memoria, o non compose tale opere, che meritassero di vivere infino ai tempi nostri. Della perfetta Poesia, v. i. p. 6.—1842.]

the advantage over Dante, as he was his inferior in depth of thought and creative power. He formed a school of poetry, which, though no disciple comparable to himself came out of it, gave a character to the taste of his country. He did not invent the sonnet; but he, perhaps, was the cause that it has continued in fashion for so many ages.[1] He gave purity, elegance, and even stability to the Italian language, which has been incomparably less changed during near five centuries since his time than it was in one between the age of Guido Guinizzelli and his own; and none have denied him the honour of having restored a true feeling of classical antiquity in Italy, and consequently in Europe.

Change of Anglo-Saxon to English.

47. Nothing can be more difficult than to determine, except by an arbitrary line, the commencement of the English language; not so much, as in those of the Continent, because we are in want of materials, but rather from an opposite reason, the possibility of tracing a very gradual succession of verbal changes that ended in a change of denomination. We should probably experience a similar difficulty if we knew equally well the current idiom of France or Italy in the seventh and eighth centuries. For when we compare the earliest English of the thirteenth century with the Anglo-Saxon of the twelfth, it seems hard to pronounce why it should pass for a separate language, rather than a modification or simplification of the former. We must conform, however, to usage, and say that the Anglo-Saxon was converted into English: 1. by contracting or otherwise modifying the pronunciation and orthography of words; 2. by omitting many inflections, especially of the noun, and consequently making more use of articles and auxiliaries; 3. by the introduction of French derivatives; 4. by using less inversion and ellipsis, especially in poetry. Of these the second alone, I think, can be considered as sufficient to describe a new form of language; and this was brought about so gradually that we are not relieved from much of our difficulty whether some compositions shall pass for the latest

[1] Crescimbeni (Storia della vulgar Poesia, vol. ii. p. 269) asserts the claim of Guiton d'Arezzo to the invention of the regular sonnet, or at least the perfection of that in use among the Provençals.

offspring of the mother or the earliest fruits of the daughter's fertility."

48. The Anglo-Norman language is a phrase not quite so unobjectionable as the Anglo-Norman constitution; and, as it is sure to deceive, we might better lay it aside altogether.[x] In the one instance there was a real fusion of laws and government, to which we can find but a remote analogy, or rather none at all, in the other. It is probable, indeed, that the converse of foreigners might have something to do with those simplifications of the Anglo-Saxon grammar which appear about the reign of Henry II., more than a century after the Conquest; though it is also true that languages of a very artificial structure, like that of England before that revolution, often became less complex in their forms, without any such violent process as an amalgamation of two different races.[y] What is commonly called the Saxon Chronicle is continued to the death of Stephen in 1154, and in the same language, though with some loss of its purity. Besides the neglect of several grammatical rules, French words now and then obtrude themselves, but not very frequently, in the latter pages of this Chronicle. Peterborough, however, was quite an English monastery; its endowments, its abbots, were Saxon; and the political spirit the Chronicle breathes, in some passages, is that of

[w] It is a proof of this difficulty, that the best masters of our ancient language have lately introduced the word Semi-Saxon, which is to cover everything from 1150 to 1250. See Thorpe's preface to Analecta Anglo-Saxonica, and many other recent books.

[x] A popular and pleasing writer has drawn a little upon his imagination in the following account of the language of our forefathers after the Conquest:—"The language of the church was Latin; that of the king and nobles, Norman; that of the people, Anglo-Saxon; *the Anglo-Norman jargon was only employed in the commercial intercourse between the conquerors and the conquered.*" Ellis's Specimens of Early English Poets, vol. i. p. 17. What was this jargon? and where do we find a proof of its existence? and what was the commercial intercourse hinted at? I suspect Ellis only meant, what has often been remarked, that the animals which bear a Saxon name in the field acquire a French one in the shambles. But even this is more ingenious than just; for muttons, beeves, and porkers are good old words for the living quadrupeds. [It has of late years been more usual to call the French poetry written in English, Anglo-Norman.—1842.]

[y] "Every branch of the low German stock from whence the Anglo-Saxon sprung, displays the same simplification of its grammar." Price's preface to Warton, p. 110. He, therefore, ascribes little influence to the Norman conquest or to French connexions. [It ought, however, to be observed, that the simplifications of the Anglo-Saxon grammar had begun before the reign of Henry II.; the latter part of the Saxon Chronicle affords full proof of this.—1847.]

the indignant subjects, *servi ancor frementi*, of the Norman usurpers. If its last compilers, therefore, gave way to some innovations of language, we may presume that these prevailed more extensively in places less secluded, and especially in London.

49. We find evidence of a greater change in Layamon, a translator of Wace's romance of Brut from the French. Layamon's age is uncertain; it must have been after 1155, when the original poem was completed, and can hardly be placed below 1200. His language is accounted rather Anglo-Saxon than English; it retains most of the distinguishing inflections of the mother-tongue, yet evidently differs considerably from that older than the Conquest by the introduction, or at least more frequent employment, of some new auxiliary forms, and displays very little of the characteristics of the ancient poetry, its periphrases, its ellipses, or its inversions. But though translation was the means by which words of French origin were afterwards most copiously introduced, very few occur in the extracts from Layamon hitherto published; for we have not yet the expected edition of the entire work. He is not a mere translator, but improves much on Wace. The adoption of the plain and almost creeping style of the metrical French romance, instead of the impetuous dithyrambics of Saxon song, gives Layamon at first sight a greater affinity to the new English language than in mere grammatical structure he appears to bear.[z]

Progress of English language.

50. Layamon wrote in a village on the Severn;[a] and it is agreeable to experience that an obsolete structure of language should be retained in a distant province, while it has undergone some change among the less rugged inhabitants of a capital. The disuse of Saxon forms crept on by degrees; some metrical lives of saints, apparently written not far from the year 1250,[b] may be deemed English; but the first

[z] See a long extract from Layamon in Ellis's Specimens. This writer observes, that "it contains no word which we are under the necessity of referring to a French root." *Duke* and *Castle* seem exceptions; but the latter word occurs in the Saxon Chronicle before the Conquest, A.D. 1052.

[a] [I believe that Ernley, of which Layamon is said to have been priest, is Over Arley, near Bewdley.—1842.]

[Sir F. Madden says Lower Arley, another village a few miles distant.—1847.]

[b] Ritson's Dissertat. on Romance; Madden's Introduction to Havelok; Notes

specimen of it that bears a precise date is a proclamation of Henry III., addressed to the people of Huntingdon-

of Price, in his edition of Warton. Warton himself is of no authority in this matter. Price inclines to put most of the poems quoted by Warton near the close of the thirteenth century.

It should here be observed, that the language underwent its metamorphosis into English by much less rapid gradations in some parts of the kingdom than in others. Not only the popular dialect of many counties, especially in the north, retained long, and still retains, a larger proportion of the Anglo-Saxon peculiarities, but we have evidence that they were not everywhere disused in writing. A manuscript in the Kentish dialect, if that phrase is correct, bearing the date of 1340, is more Anglo-Saxon than any of the poems ascribed to the thirteenth century, which we read in Warton, such as the legends of saints or the Ormulum. This very curious fact was first made known to the public by Mr. Thorpe, in his translation of Cædmon, preface, p. xii.; and an account of the manuscript itself, rather fuller than that of Mr. T., has since been given in the catalogue of the Arundel MSS. in the British Museum.

[The edition of Layamon alluded to in the text has now been published by Sir Frederick Madden, at the expense of the Society of Antiquaries, and will prove an important accession to the history of our language, being by much the most extensive remains of that period denominated Semi-Saxon. The date of this long poem is now referred by the editor to the reign of John at the beginning of the thirteenth century. A passage, formerly quoted by Mr. Sharon Turner, but which had escaped my recollection, manifestly was written after the death of Henry II. in 1189, and probably after that of his queen Eleanor in 1203. Mr. Turner has, therefore, inclined to the same period as Sir Frederick Madden; and others had acceded to his opinion. The chief objection, and, indeed, the only one, may be the antiquity of Layamon's language, compared with the Ormulum, a well-known but hitherto unpublished poem of a certain Orm, and with another poem, which has been printed, entitled the Owl and the Nightingale. Nothing can exhibit a transitional state of language better than the great work of Layamon, consisting of near 30,000 lines. These are all short, and, though very irregular, coming far nearer to the old Anglo-Saxon than to the octo-syllabic French rhythm. Some of them are rhymed, but in a much larger proportion the alliterative euphony of the northern nations is preferred. The publication of the entire poem enables us to correct some of the judgments founded on mere extracts; thus I should qualify what is said in the text, that Layamon "adopted the plain and almost creeping style of the metrical French romance." His poem has more spirit and fire, in the Scandinavian and Anglo-Saxon style, than had been supposed. Upon the whole, Layamon must be reckoned far more of the older than the newer formation; he is an *eocene*, or at most a *miocene;* while his contemporaries, as they seem to be, belong philologically to a later period.

The poem of the Owl and the Nightingale is supposed by its editor, Mr. Stevenson, to have been written soon after the death of Henry II., who is mentioned in it. But I do not see why the passage leads us to more than that no other king of that name had reigned. We need not, therefore, go higher than the age of John. The Ormulum contains, I believe, no evidence of its date; but the language is very decidedly more English, the versification more borrowed from Norman models than that of Layamon. Since it is natural to presume that the change of language would not be alike in all parts of England, and even that individuals might continue to preserve forms which were going into comparative disuse, we cannot rely on these varieties as indicating difference of age. The editor of Layamon informs us that the French words in the older copy of that writer do not amount to fifty. The hypothesis, if we are to use such a word, that the transition of our language from Saxon to English took place more rapidly in some districts than in others, acquires strong confirmation from a few lines preserved

shire in 1258, but doubtless circular throughout England.[c] A triumphant song, composed probably in London, on the victory obtained at Lewes by the confederate barons in 1264, and the capture of Richard Earl of Cornwall, is rather less obsolete in its style than this proclamation, as might naturally be expected. It could not have been written later than that year, because in the next the tables were turned on those who now exulted by the complete discomfiture of their party in the battle of Evesham. Several pieces of poetry, uncertain as to their precise date, must be referred to the latter part of this century. Robert of Gloucester, after the year 1297, since he alludes to the canonisation of St. Louis,[d] turned the chronicle of Geoffrey of Monmouth into English verse; and, on comparing him with Layamon, a native of nearly the same part of England, and a writer on the same subject, it will appear that a great quantity of French had flowed into the language since the loss of Normandy. The Anglo-Saxon inflections, terminations, and orthography had also undergone a very considerable change. That the intermixture of French words was very slightly owing to the Norman conquest will appear probable by observing at least as frequent an use of them in the earliest specimens of the Scottish dialect, especially a song on the death of Alexander III. in 1285. There is a good deal of French in this, not borrowed, probably, from England, but directly from the original sources of imitation.

English of the 14th century. Chaucer. Gower.

51. The fourteenth century was not unproductive of men, both English and Scotch, gifted with the powers of poetry. Laurence Minot, an author unknown to Warton, but whose poems on the wars of Edward III. are referred by their publisher Ritson to 1352, is perhaps the first original poet in our language that has survived, since such of his

in Roger de Hoveden and Benedict Abbas about the year 1190. They seem to be printed inaccurately, and I shall consequently omit them here; but the language is English of Henry III.'s reign. It is possible that it has been a little modernised in the manuscripts of these historians.—1847.]

[c] Henry's Hist. of Britain, vol. viii., appendix. "Between 1244 and 1258," says Sir F. Madden, "we know, was written the versification of part of a meditation of St. Augustine, as proved by the age of the prior, who gave the manuscript to the Durham library," p. 49. This, therefore, will be strictly the oldest piece of English to the date of which we can approach by more than conjecture.

[d] Madden's Havelok, p. 52.

predecessors as are now known appear to have been merely translators, or, at best, amplifiers, of a French or Latin original. The earliest historical or epic narrative is due to John Barbour, archdeacon of Aberdeen, whose long poem in the Scots dialect, The Bruce, commemorating the deliverance of his country, seems to have been completed in 1373. But our greatest poet of the middle ages, beyond comparison, was Geoffrey Chaucer; and I do not know that any other country, except Italy, produced his equal in variety of invention, acuteness of observation, or felicity of expression. A vast interval must be made between Chaucer and any other English poet; yet Gower, his contemporary, though not, like him, a poet of nature's growth, had some effect in rendering the language less rude, and exciting a taste for verse; if he never rises, he never sinks low; he is always sensible, polished, perspicuous, and not prosaic in the worst sense of the word. Longlands, the supposed author of Piers Plowman's Vision, with far more imaginative vigour, has a more obsolete and unrefined diction.

General disuse of French in England.

52. The French language was spoken by the superior classes of society in England from the Conquest to the reign of Edward III., though it seems probable that they were generally acquainted with English, at least in the latter part of that period. But all letters, even of a private nature, were written in Latin till the beginning of the reign of Edward I., soon after 1270, when a sudden change brought in the use of French.[e] In grammar schools boys were made to construe their Latin into French; and in the statutes of Oriel College, Oxford, we find a regulation so late as 1328, that the students shall converse together, if not in Latin, at least in French.[f] The minutes of the corporation of London, recorded in the

[e] I am indebted for this fact, which I have ventured to generalise, to the communication of Mr. Stevenson, late sub-commissioner of public records. [I find, however, that letters, even in France, are said to have been written only in Latin to the end of the century. On n'écrivait encore que très peu de lettres en langue Française. Discours sur l'Etat des Lettres au 13me Siècle, in Hist. Littéraire de la France, vol. xvi. p. 168. It is probable, therefore, that I have used too strong words as to the general usage.—1842.]

[f] Si qua inter se proferant, colloquio Latino vel saltem Gallico perfruantur. Warton, i. 6. In Merton College statutes, given in 1271, Latin alone is prescribed.

Town Clerk's office, were in French, as well as the proceedings in Parliament, and in the courts of justice; and oral discussions were perhaps carried on in the same language, though this is not a necessary consequence. Hence the English was seldom written, and hardly employed in prose, till after the middle of the fourteenth century. Sir John Mandeville's Travels were written in 1356. This is our earliest English book.[g] Wicliffe's translation of the Bible, a great work that enriched the language, is referred to 1383. Trevisa's version of the Polychronicon of Higden was in 1385, and the Astrolabe of Chaucer in 1392. A few public instruments were drawn up in English under Richard II.; and about the same time, probably, it began to be employed in epistolary correspondence of a private nature. Trevisa informs us that when he wrote (1385) even gentlemen had much left off to have their children taught French, and names the schoolmaster (John Cornwall) who soon after 1350 brought in so great an innovation as the making his boys read Latin into English.[h] This change from the common use of French in the upper ranks seems to have taken place as rapidly as a similar revolution has lately done in Germany. By a statute of 1362 (36 E. III., c. 15), all pleas in courts of justice are directed to be pleaded and judged in English, on account of French being so much unknown. But the laws, and, generally speaking, the records of Parliament, continued to be in the latter language for many years; and we learn from Sir John Fortescue, a hundred years afterwards, that this statute itself was not fully enforced.[i] The French language, if we take his words literally, even in the reign of Edward IV., was spoken in affairs of mercantile

[g] [This is only true as to printed books. For there are several copies of a translation of the Psalter and Church Hymns, by Rolle, commonly called the hermit of Hampole, who has subjoined a comment on each verse. Rolle is said by Mr. Sharon Turner to have died in 1349; we must therefore place him a little before Mandeville. Even in him we find a good deal of French and Latin, which indeed he seems to have rather studiously sought, in order "that they that knowes noght the Latyne be the Ynglys may come to many Latyne wordis."—Baber's preface to Wicliffe's translation of New Testament.—1847.]

[h] The passage may be found quoted in Warton, ubi supra, or in many other books.

[i] "In the courts of justice they formerly used to plead in French, till, in pursuance of a law to that purpose, that custom was *somewhat restrained*, but not hitherto quite disused." De Laudibus Legum Angliæ, c. xlviii. I quote from Waterhouse's translation; but the Latin runs *quam plurimum* restrictus est.

account, and in many games, the vocabulary of both being chiefly derived from it.[k]

State of European languages about 1400.

53. Thus by the year 1400 we find a national literature subsisting in seven European languages, three spoken in the Spanish peninsula, the French, the Italian, the German, and the English, from which last the Scots dialect need not be distinguished. Of these the Italian was the most polished, and had to boast of the greatest writers; the French excelled in their number and variety. Our own tongue, though it had latterly acquired much copiousness in the hands of Chaucer and Wicliffe, both of whom lavishly supplied it with words of French and Latin derivation, was but just growing into a literary existence. The German, as well as that of Valencia, seemed to decline. The former became more precise, more abstract, more intellectual (*geistig*), and less sensible (*sinnlich*) (to use the words of Eichhorn), that is, less full of ideas derived from sense, and of consequence less fit for poetry; it fell into the hands of lawyers and mystical theologians. The earliest German prose, a few very ancient fragments excepted, is the collection of Saxon laws (Sachsenspiegel), about the middle of the thirteenth century; the next the Swabian collection (Schwabenspiegel), about 1282.[m] But these forming hardly a part of literature, though Bouterwek praises passages of the latter for religious eloquence, we may deem John Tauler, a Dominican friar of Strasburg, whose influence in propagating what was called the mystical theology gave a new tone to his country, to be the first German writer in prose. "Tauler" says a modern historian of literature, "in his German sermons mingled many expressions invented by himself, which were the first attempt at a philosophical language, and displayed surprising eloquence for the age wherein he lived. It may be justly said of him that he first gave to prose that direction in which Luther afterwards advanced so far."[n] Tauler died in 1361. Meantime, as has been said before, the nobility abandoned their love of verse, which the burghers took up diligently, but with little spirit or

[k] De Laudibus Legum Angliæ, c. xlviii.

[m] Bouterwek, p. 163. There are some novels at the end of the thirteenth, or beginning of the fourteenth, century. Ib.

[n] Heinsius, iv. 76.

genius; the common language became barbarous and neglected, of which the strange fashion of writing half Latin, half German verses is a proof.[o] This had been common in the darker ages: we have several instances of it in Anglo-Saxon, and also after the Conquest, nor was it rare in France; but it was late to adopt it in the fourteenth century.

Ignorance of reading and writing in darker ages.

54. The Latin writers of the middle ages were chiefly ecclesiastics. But of these in the living tongues a large proportion were laymen. They knew, therefore, how to commit their thoughts to writing; and hence the ignorance characteristic of the darker ages must seem to be passing away. This, however, is a very difficult, though interesting question, when we come to look nearly at the gradual progress of rudimental knowledge. I can offer but an outline, which those who turn more of their attention towards the subject will be enabled to correct and complete. Before the end of the eleventh century, and especially after the ninth, it was rare to find laymen in France who could read and write.[p] The case was probably not better any where else except in Italy. I should incline to except Italy on the authority of a passage in Wippo, a German writer soon after the year 1000, who exhorts the emperor Henry II. to cause the sons of the nobility to be instructed in letters, using the example of the Italians, with whom, according to him, it was a universal practice.[q] The word clerks or clergymen became in this and other countries synonymous with one who could write or even read; we all know the original meaning

[o] Eichhorn, Allg. Gesch., i. 240.

[p] Hist. Litt. de la France, vii. 2. Some nobles sent their children to be educated in the schools of Charlemagne, especially those of Germany, under Raban, Notker, Bruno, and other distinguished abbots. But they were generally destined for the church. Meiners, ii. 377. The signatures of laymen are often found to deeds of the eighth century, and sometimes of the ninth. Nouv. Traité de la Diplomatique, ii. 422. The ignorance of the laity, according to this authority, was not strictly parallel to that of the church.

[q] Tunc fac edictum per terram Teutonicorum
Quilibet ut dives sibi natos instruat omnes
Litterulis, legemque suam persuadeat illis,
Ut cum principibus placitandi venerit usus,
Quisque suis libris exemplum proferat illis.
Moribus his dudum vivebat Roma decenter,
His studiis tantos potuit vincere tyrannos.
Hoc servant Itali post prima crepundia cuncti.

I am indebted for this quotation to Meiners, i. 344.

of benefit of clergy, and the test by which it was claimed. Yet from about the end of the eleventh, or at least of the twelfth century, many circumstances may lead us to believe that it was less and less a conclusive test, and that the laity came more and more into possession of the simple elements of literature.

Reasons for supposing this to have diminished after 1100.

55. I. It will of course be admitted that all who administered or belonged to the Roman law were masters of reading and writing, though we do not find that they were generally ecclesiastics, even in the lowest sense of the word, by receiving the tonsure. Some, indeed, were such. In countries where the feudal law had passed from unwritten custom to record and precedent, and had grown into as much subtlety by diffuseness as the Roman, which was the case of England from the time of Henry II., the lawyers, though laymen, were unquestionably clerks or learned. II. The convenience of such elementary knowledge to merchants, who, both in the Mediterranean and in these parts of Europe, carried on a good deal of foreign commerce, and indeed to all traders, may induce us to believe that they were not destitute of it; though it must be confessed that the word clerk rather seems to denote that their deficiency was supplied by those employed under them. I do not, however, conceive that the clerks of citizens were ecclesiastics.[r] III. If we could rely on a passage in Ingulfus, the practice in grammar schools of construing Latin into French was as old as the reign of the Conqueror;[s] and it seems unlikely that this should have been confined to children educated for the English church. IV. The poets of the north and south of France were often men of princely or noble birth, sometimes ladies; their versification is far too artificial to be deemed the rude product of an illiterate mind; and to these, whose capacity of holding the pen few will dispute, we must surely add a numerous class of readers, for whom their poetry was designed. It

[r] The earliest recorded bills of exchange, according to Beckmann, Hist. of Inventions, iii. 430, are in a passage of the jurist Baldus, and bear date in 1328. But they were by no means in common use till the next century. I do not mention this as bearing much on the subject of the text.

[s] Et pueris etiam in scholis principia literarum Gallicè et non Anglicè traderentur.

may be surmised that the itinerant minstrels answered this end, and supplied the ignorance of the nobility. But many ditties of the troubadours were not so well adapted to the minstrels, who seem to have dealt more with metrical romances. Nor do I doubt that these also were read in many a castle of France and Germany. I will not dwell on the story of Francesca of Rimini, because no one perhaps is likely to dispute that a Romagnol lady in the age of Dante would be able to read the tale of Lancelot. But that romance had long been written; and other ladies doubtless had read it, and possibly had left off reading it in similar circumstances, and as little to their advantage. The fourteenth century abounded with books in French prose, nor were they by any means wanting in the thirteenth, when several translations from Latin were made;[1] the extant copies of some are not very few; but no argument against their circulation could have been urged from their scarcity in the present day. It is not of course pretended that they were diffused as extensively as printed books have been. V. The fashion of writing private letters in French, instead of Latin, which, as has been mentioned, came in among us soon after 1270, affords perhaps a presumption that they were written in a language intelligible to the correspondent, because he had no longer occasion for assistance in reading them, though they were still generally from the hand of a secretary. But at what time this disuse of Latin began on the continent of Europe I cannot exactly determine.

Increased knowledge of writing in fourteenth century.

56. The art of reading does not imply that of writing; it seems likely that the one prevailed before the other. The latter was difficult to acquire, in consequence of the regularity of characters preserved by the clerks and their complex system of abbreviations, which rendered the cursive hand-writing introduced about the end of the eleventh century almost as operose to those who had not much experience of it as the more stiff characters of older manuscripts. It certainly appears that even autograph signatures are not found till a late period. Philip the

[1] Hist. Litt. de la France, xvi. 144. treizième siècle qu'elles commencèrent Notre prose et notre poésie Française à prendre un caractère national. Id. existaient avant 1200; mais c'est au 254.

Bold, who ascended the French throne in 1272, could not write, though this is not the case with any of his successors. I do not know that equal ignorance is recorded of any English sovereign, though we have, I think, only a series of autographs beginning with Richard II. It is said by the authors of Nouveau Traité de la Diplomatique, Benedictines of laborious and exact erudition, that the art of writing had become rather common among the laity of France before the end of the thirteenth century: out of eight witnesses to a testament in 1277 five could write their names; at the beginning of that age it is probable, they think, that not one could have done so.[w] Signatures to deeds of private persons, however, do not begin to appear till the fourteenth, and were not in established use in France till about the middle of the fifteenth, century.[x] Indorsements upon English deeds, as well as mere signatures, by laymen of rank, bearing date in the reign of Edward II., are in existence; and there is an English letter from the lady of Sir John Pelham to her husband in 1399, which is probably one of the earliest instances of female penmanship. By the badness of the grammar we may presume it to be her own.[y]

[w] Vol. ii. p. 423. Charters in French are rare at the beginning of the thirteenth century, but become common under Philip III. Hist. Litt. de la France, xvi. 155.

[x] Ibid. p. 434 et post.

[y] I am indebted for a knowledge of this letter to the Rev. Joseph Hunter, who recollected to have seen it in an old edition of Collins's Peerage. Later editions have omitted it as an unimportant redundancy, though interesting even for its contents, independently of the value it acquires from the language. On account of its scarcity, being only found in old editions now not in request, I shall insert it here; and till any other shall prefer a claim, it may pass for the oldest private letter in the English language. I have not kept the orthography, but have left several incoherent and ungrammatical phrases as they stand. It was copied by Collins from the archives of the Newcastle family.

My dear Lord,—I recommend me to your high lordship with heart and body and all my poor might, and with all this I thank you as my dear lord dearest and best beloved of all earthly lords I say for me, and thank you my dear lord with all this that I say before of your comfortable letter that ye sent me from Pontefract that come to me on Mary Magdalene day; for by my troth I was never so glad as when I heard by your letter that ye were strong enough with the grace of God for to keep you from the malice of your enemies. And dear Lord if it like to your high lordship that as soon as ye might that I might hear of your gracious speed; which as God Almighty continue and increase. And my dear lord if it like you for to know of my fare, I am hereby laid in manner of a siege with the county of Sussex, Surrey, and a great parcel of Kent, so that I may nought out no none victuals get me but with much hard. Wherefore my dear if it like you by the advice of your wise counsel for to get remedy of the salvation of your castle and withstand the malice of the shires aforesaid. And also that ye be fully informed of their great malice workers in these shires which that haves so despitefully wrought to you, and to your castle, to your men,

Average state of knowledge in England.

57. Laymen, among whom Chaucer and Gower are illustrious examples, received occasionally a learned education; and indeed the great number of gentlemen who studied in the inns of court is a conclusive proof that they were not generally illiterate. The common law required some knowledge of two languages. Upon the whole we may be inclined to think that in the year 1400, or at the accession of Henry IV., the average instruction of an English gentleman of the first class would comprehend common reading and writing, a considerable familiarity with French, and a slight tincture of Latin; the latter retained or not, according to his circumstances and character, as school learning is at present. This may be rather a favourable statement; but after another generation it might be assumed, as we shall see, with more confidence as a fair one.[z]

Invention of paper.

58. A demand for instruction in the art of writing would increase with the frequency of epistolary correspondence, which, where of a private or secret nature, no one would gladly conduct by the intervention of a secretary. Better education, more refined manners, a closer intercourse of social life, were the primary causes of this increase in private correspondence. But it was greatly facilitated by the invention, or rather, extended use of paper as the vehicle of writing instead of parchment; a revolution, as it may be called, of high importance, without which both the art of writing would have been much less practised, and the invention of

and to your tenants for this country have they wasted for a great while. Farewell my dear lord, the Holy Trinity you keep from your enemies, and ever send me good tidings of you. Written at Pevensey in the castle on St Jacob day last past,

By your own poor
J. PELHAM.

To my true Lord.

[Sir Henry Ellis says: "We have nothing earlier than the fifteenth century which can be called a familiar letter."—Original Letters, first series, vol. i. This of Lady Pelham, however, is an exception, and perhaps others will be found; at least it cannot now be doubtful that some were written, since a lady is not likely to have set the example. Sir H. E., nevertheless, is well warranted in saying that letters previous to the reign of Henry V. were usually written in French or Latin.—1847.]

[z] It might be inferred from a passage in Richard of Bury, about 1343, that none but ecclesiastics could read at all. He deprecates the putting of books into the hands of *laici*, who do not know one side from another. And in several places it seems that he thought they were meant for "the tonsured" alone. But a great change took place in the ensuing half century; and I do not believe he can be construed strictly even as to his own time.

printing less serviceable to mankind. After the subjugation of Egypt by the Saracens, the importation of the papyrus, previously in general use, came in no long time to an end; so that, though down to the end of the seventh century all instruments in France were written upon it, we find its place afterwards supplied by parchment; and under the house of Charlemagne, there is hardly an instrument upon any other material.[a] Parchment, however, a much more durable and useful vehicle than papyrus,[b] was expensive, and its cost not only excluded the necessary waste which a free use of writing requires, but gave rise to the unfortunate practice of erasing manuscripts in order to replace them with some new matter. This was carried to a great extent, and has occasioned the loss of precious monuments of antiquity, as is now demonstrated by instances of their restoration.

59. The date of the invention of our present paper, manufactured from linen rags, or of its introduction into Europe, has long been the subject of controversy. That paper made from cotton was in use sooner, is admitted on all sides. Some charters written upon that material not later than the tenth century were seen by Montfaucon; and it is even said to be found in papal bulls of the ninth.[c] The Greeks, however, from whom the west of Europe is conceived to have borrowed this sort of paper, did not much employ it in manuscript books, according to Montfaucon, till the twelfth century, from which time it came into frequent use among them. Muratori had seen no writing upon this material older than 1100, though, in deference to Montfaucon, he admits its occasional employment earlier.[d] It certainly was not greatly used in Italy before the thirteenth century. Among the Saracens

Linen paper, when first used.

Cotton paper.

[a] Montfaucon, in Acad. des Inscript., vol. vi. But Muratori says that the papyrus was little used in the seventh century, though writings on it may be found as late as the tenth, Dissert. xliii. This dissertation relates to the condition of letters in Italy as far as the year 1100, as the xlivth does to their subsequent history.

[b] Heeren justly remarks (I do not know that others have done the same), of how great importance the general use of parchment, to which, and afterwards to paper, the whole perishable papyraceous manuscripts were transferred, has been to the preservation of literature. P. 74.

[c] Mém. de l'Acad. des Inscriptions, vi. 604. Nouveau Traité de Diplomatique, i. 517. Savigny, Gesch. des Römischen Rechts, iii. 534.

[d] Dissert. xliii.

of Spain, on the other hand, as well as those of the East, it was of much greater antiquity. The Greeks called it *charta Damascena*, having been manufactured or sold in the city of Damascus. And Casiri, in his catalogue of the Arabic manuscripts in the Escurial, desires us to understand that they are written on paper of cotton or linen, but generally the latter, unless the contrary be expressed.[e] Many in this catalogue were written before the thirteenth, or even the twelfth century.

Linen paper as old as 1100.

60. This will lead us to the more disputed question as to the antiquity of linen paper. The earliest distinct instance I have found, and which I believe has hitherto been overlooked, is an Arabic version of the Aphorisms of Hippocrates, the manuscript bearing the date of 1100. This Casiri observes to be on linen paper, not as in itself remarkable, but as accounting for its injury by wet. It does not appear whether it were written in Spain, or, like many in that catalogue, brought from Egypt or the East.[f]

Known to Peter of Clugni.

61. The authority of Casiri must confirm beyond doubt a passage in Peter, abbot of Clugni, which has perplexed those who place the invention of linen paper very low. In a treatise against the Jews, he speaks of books, ex pellibus arietum, hircorum, vel vitulorum, sive ex biblis vel juncis Orientalium paludum, aut ex *rasuris veterum pannorum*, seu ex aliâ quâlibet forte viliore materia compactos. A late English writer contends that nothing can be meant by the last words, "unless that all sorts of inferior substances capable of being so applied, among them, perhaps, hemp and the remains of cordage, were used at this period in the manufacture of paper."[g] It certainly at least seems reasonable to interpret the words "ex rasuris veterum pannorum," of linen rags; and when I add that Peter Cluniacensis passed a considerable time in Spain about 1141, there can remain, it seems, no rational doubt that the Saracens of the peninsula were acquainted with that species of paper, though perhaps it was as yet unknown in every other country.

[e] Materiæ, nisi membraneus sit codex, nulla mentio: cæteros bombycinos, ac, maximam partem, chartaceos esse colligas. Præfatio, p. 7.

[f] Casiri, N. 787. Codex anno Christi 1100, chartaceus, &c.

[g] See a memoir on an ancient manuscript of Aratus, by Mr. Ottley, in Archæologia, vol. xxvi.

62. Andrès asserts, on the authority of the Memoirs of the Academy of Barcelona, that a treaty between the kings of Aragon and Castile, bearing the date of 1178, and written upon linen paper, is extant in the archives of that city.[h] He alleges several other instances in the next age; when Mabillon, who denies that paper of linen was then used in charters, which, indeed, no one is likely to maintain, mentions, as the earliest specimen he had seen in France, a letter of Joinville to St. Louis, which must be older than 1270. Andrès refers the invention to the Saracens of Spain, using the fine flax of Valencia and Murcia; and conjectures that it was brought into use among the Spaniards themselves by Alfonso X. of Castile.[i] and in 12th and 13th centuries.

63. In the opinion of the English writer to whom we have above referred, paper, from a very early period, was manufactured of mixed materials, which have sometimes been erroneously taken for pure cotton. We have in the Tower of London a letter addressed to Henry III. by Raymond, son of Raymond VI., Count of Toulouse, and consequently between 1216 and 1222, when the latter died, upon very strong paper, and certainly made, in Mr. Ottley's judgment, of mixed materials; while in several of the time of Edward I., written upon genuine cotton paper of no great thickness, the fibres of cotton present themselves everywhere at the backs of the letters so distinctly that they seem as if they might even now be spun into thread.[k] Paper of mixed materials.

64. Notwithstanding this last statement, which I must confirm by my own observation, and of which no one can doubt who has looked at the letters themselves, several writers of high authority, such as Tiraboschi and Savigny, persist not only in fixing the invention of linen paper very low, even after the middle of the fourteenth century, but in Invention of paper placed by some too low.

h Vol. ii. p. 73. Andrès has gone much at length into this subject, and has collected several important passages which do not appear in my text. The letter of Joinville has been supposed to be addressed to Louis Hutin in 1314, but this seems inconsistent with the writer's age.

i Vol. ii. p. 84. He cannot mean that it was never employed before Alfonso's time, of which he has already given instances.

k Archæologia, ibid. I may however observe, that a gentleman as experienced as Mr. Ottley himself inclines to think the letter of Raymond written on paper wholly made of cotton, though of better manufacture than usual.

maintaining that it is undistinguishable from that made of cotton, except by the eye of a manufacturer.[m] Were this indeed true, it would be sufficient for the purpose we have here in view, which is not to trace the origin of a particular discovery, but the employment of a useful vehicle of writing. If it be true that cotton paper was fabricated in Italy of so good a texture that it cannot be discerned from linen, it must be considered as of equal utility. It is not the case with the letters on cotton paper in our English repositories; most, if not all, of which were written in France or Spain. But I have seen in the Chapter House at Westminster a letter written from Gascony about 1315, to Hugh Despencer, upon thin paper, to all appearance made like that now in use, and with a water-mark. Several others of a similar appearance, in the same repository, are of rather later time. There is also one in the King's Remembrancer's Office of the 11th of Edward III. (1337 or 1338), containing the accounts of the King's ambassadors to the count of Holland, and probably written in that country. This paper has a water-mark, and if it is not of linen, is at least not easily distinguishable. Bullet declares that he saw at Besançon a deed of 1302 on linen paper: several are alleged to exist in Germany before the middle of the century; and Lambinet mentions, though but on the authority of a periodical publication, a register of expenses from 1323 to 1354, found in a church at Caen, written on two hundred and eight sheets of that substance.[n] One of the Cottonian manuscripts (Galba, B. I.) is called Codex Chartaceus in the catalogue. It contains a long series of public letters, chiefly written in the Netherlands, from an early part of the reign of Edward III. to that of Henry IV. But upon

[m] Tiraboschi, v. 85. Savigny, Gesch. des Römischen Rechts, iii. 534. He relies on a book I have not seen, Webrs vom Papier, Hall, 1789. This writer, it is said, contends that the words of Peter of Clugny, ex rasuris veterum pannorum, mean cotton paper. Heeren, p. 208. Lambinet, on the other hand, translates them, without hesitation, "chiffons de linge." Hist. de l'Origine de l'Imprimerie, i. 93.

Andrès has pointed out, p. 70, that Maffei merely says he has seen no paper of linen earlier than 1300, and no instrument on that material older than one of 1367, which he found among his own family deeds. Tiraboschi, overlooking this distinction, quotes Maffei for his own opinion as to the lateness of the invention.

[n] Lambinet, ubi supra. [Linen paper, it is said, in Hist. Littéraire de la France, xvi. 38, is used in some proceedings against the Templars in 1309; but the author knows of none earlier. He does not mention cotton paper at all; writing was on vellum or parchment.—1842.]

examination I find the title not quite accurate; several letters, and especially the earliest, are written on parchment, and paper does not appear at soonest till near the end of Edward's reign.[o] Sir Henry Ellis has said that "very few instances indeed occur before the fifteenth century of letters written upon paper."[p] The use of cotton paper was by no means general, or even, I believe, frequent, except in Spain and Italy, perhaps also in the south of France. Nor was it much employed, even in Italy, for books. Savigny tells us there are few manuscripts of law books among the multitude that exist which are not written on parchment.

65. It will be manifest from what has been said how greatly Robertson has been mistaken in his position, that "in the eleventh century the art of making paper, in the manner now become universal, was invented, by means of which not only the number of manuscripts increased, but the study of the sciences was wonderfully facilitated."[q] Even Ginguéné, better informed on such subjects than Robertson, has intimated something of the same kind. But paper, whenever or wherever invented, was very sparingly used, and especially in manuscript books, among the French, Germans, or English, or linen paper, even among the Italians, till near the close of the period which this chapter comprehends. Upon the "study of the sciences" it could as yet have had very little effect. The vast importance of the invention was just beginning to be discovered. It is to be added, as a remarkable circumstance, that the earliest linen paper was of very good manufacture, strong and handsome, though perhaps too much like card for general convenience; and every one is aware that the first printed books are frequently beautiful in the quality of their paper.

Not at first very important.

66. III. The application of general principles of justice to the infinitely various circumstances which may arise in the disputes of men with each other is in itself an admirable discipline of the moral and intellectual faculties. Even where the

Importance of legal studies.

[o] Andrès, p. 68, mentions a note written in 1342, in the Cotton library, as the earliest English specimen of linen paper. I do not know to what this refers; in the above-mentioned Codex Chartaceus is a letter of 1341, but it is on parchment.

[p] Ellis's Original Letters, i. 1.

[q] Hist. of Charles V., vol. i. note 10. Heeren inclines to the same opinion, p. 200.

primary rules of right and policy have been obscured in some measure by a technical and arbitrary system, which is apt to grow up, perhaps inevitably, in the course of civilisation, the mind gains in precision and acuteness, though at the expense of some important qualities; and a people wherein an artificial jurisprudence is cultivated, requiring both a regard to written authority, and the constant exercise of a discriminating judgment upon words, must be deemed to be emerging from ignorance. Such was the condition of Europe in the twelfth century. The feudal customs, long unwritten, though latterly become more steady by tradition, were in some countries reduced into treatises; we have our own Glanvil, in the reign of Henry II., and in the next century much was written upon the national laws in various parts of Europe. Upon these it is not my intention to dwell; but the importance of the civil law in its connexion with ancient learning, as well as with moral and political science, renders it deserving of a place in any general account either of mediæval or modern literature.

Roman laws never wholly unknown.

67. That the Roman laws, such as they subsisted in the western empire at the time of its dismemberment in the fifth century, were received in the new kingdoms of the Gothic, Lombard, and Carlovingian dynasties, as the rule of those who by birth and choice submitted to them, was shown by Muratori and other writers of the last century. This subject has received additional illustration from the acute and laborious Savigny, who has succeeded in tracing sufficient evidence of what had been in fact stated by Muratori, that not only an abridgment of the Theodosian code, but that of Justinian, and even the Pandects, were known in different parts of Europe long before the epoch formerly assigned for the restoration of that jurisprudence.[r] The popular story, already much

[r] It can be no disparagement to Savigny, who does not claim perfect originality, to say that Muratori, in his 44th dissertation, gives several instances of quotations from the Pandects in writers older than the capture of Amalfi.

[The most decisive proof that Savigny has adduced for the use of the Pandects before the twelfth century is from a work bearing the name of Petrus, called Exceptiones Legum Romanorum, which he supposes to have been written at Valence before the time of Gregory VII. The Pandects are herein cited so copiously, as to leave no doubt that Peter was acquainted with the entire collection. In other instances, it might be doubted whether the quotation implies

discredited, that the famous copy of the Pandects, now in the Laurentian library at Florence, was brought to Pisa from Amalfi, after the capture of that city by Roger king of Sicily with the aid of a Pisan fleet in 1135, and became the means of diffusing an acquaintance with that portion of the law through Italy, is shown by him not only to rest on very slight evidence, but to be unquestionably, in the latter and more important circumstance, destitute of all foundation.[s] It is still indeed an undetermined question whether other existing manuscripts of the Pandects are not derived from this illustrious copy, which alone contains the entire fifty books, and which has been preserved with a traditional veneration indicating some superiority; but Savigny has shown, that Peter of Valence, a jurist of the eleventh century, made use of an independent manuscript; and it is certain that the Pandects were the subject of legal studies before the siege of Amalfi.

68. Irnerius, by universal testimony, was the founder of all learned investigation into the laws of Justinian. He gave lectures upon them at Bologna, his native city, not long, in Savigny's opinion, after the commencement of the century.[t] And besides this oral instruction, he began the practice of making glosses, or short marginal explanations, on the law books, with the whole of which he was acquainted. We owe also to him, according to ancient opinion, though much controverted in later times, an epitome, called the Authentica, of what Gravina calls the prolix and difficult (salebrosis atque garrulis) Novels of Justinian, arranged according to the titles of the Code. The most eminent successors of this restorer of the Roman law during the same century were Martinus Gosias, Bulgarus, and Placentinus. They were, however, but a few among many interpreters, whose glosses have been partly though very imperfectly preserved. The love of equal liberty and just laws in the Italian cities rendered the profession of jurisprudence exceedingly honourable; the doctors of Bologna and other universities were frequently called to

Irnerius,—his first successors.

more than a partial knowledge. Savigny, Gesch. Römisch. Rechts, vol. ii. Appendix.—1847.]

[s] Savigny, Geschichte des Römischen Rechts in mittel Alter, iii. 83.

[t] Vol. iv. p. 16. Some have erroneously thought Irnerius a German.

the office of podestà, or criminal judge, in these small republics; in Bologna itself they were officially members of the smaller or secret council; and their opinions, which they did not render gratuitously, were sought with the respect that had been shown at Rome to their ancient masters of the age of Severus.

Their glosses.

69. A gloss, γλῶσσα, properly meant a word from a foreign language, or an obsolete or poetical word, or whatever requires interpretation. It was afterwards used for the interpretation itself; and this sense, which is not strictly classical, may be found in Isidore, though some have imagined Irnerius himself to have first employed it.[u] In the twelfth century it was extended from a single word to an entire expository sentence. The first glosses were interlinear; they were afterwards placed in the margin, and extended finally in some instances to a sort of running commentary on an entire book. These were called an Apparatus.[x]

Abridgments of law.

Accursius's Corpus Glossatum.

70. Besides these glosses on obscure passages, some lawyers attempted to abridge the body of the law. Placentinus wrote a summary of the Code and Institutes. But this was held inferior to that of Azo, which appeared before 1220. Hugolinus gave a similar abridgment of the Pandects. About the same time, or a little after, a scholar of Azo, Accursius of Florence, undertook his celebrated work, a collection of the glosses, which, in the century that had elapsed since the time of Irnerius, had grown to an enormous extent, and were of course not always consistent. He has inserted little probably of his own, but exercised a judgment, not perhaps a very enlightened one, in the selection of his authorities. Thus was compiled his Corpus Juris Glossatum, commonly called Glossa, or Glossa Ordinaria: a work, says Eichhorn, as remarkable for its barbarous style and gross mistakes in history as for the solidity of its judgments and practical distinctions. Gravina, after extolling the conciseness, acuteness, skill, and diligence in comparing remote passages, and in reconciling apparent inconsistencies, which distinguished Accursius, or rather those from whom he compiled, remarks the injustice of some mo-

[u] Alcuin defines glossa, "unius verbi vel nominis interpretatio." Ducange, præfat. in Glossar. p. 38.

[x] Savigny, iii. 519.

derns, who reproach his work with the ignorance inevitable in his age, and seem to think the chance of birth which has thrown them into more enlightened times, a part of their personal merit.[y]

71. Savigny has taken still higher ground in his admiration, as we may call it, of the early jurists, those from the appearance of Irnerius to the publication of the Accursian body of glosses. For the execution of this work indeed he testifies no very high respect; Accursius did not sufficient justice to his predecessors; and many of the most valuable glosses are still buried in the dust of unpublished manuscripts.[z] But the men themselves deserve our highest praise. The school of Irnerius rose suddenly; for in earlier writers we find no intelligent use, or critical interpretation, of the passages which they cite. To reflect upon every text, to compare it with every clause or word that might illustrate its meaning in the somewhat chaotic mass of the Pandects and Code, was reserved for these acute and diligent investigators. "Interpretation," says Savigny, "was considered the first and most important object of glossers, as it was of oral instructors. By an unintermitting use of the original law-books, they obtained that full and lively acquaintance with their contents which enabled them to compare different passages with the utmost acuteness, and with much success. It may be reckoned a characteristic merit of many glossers, that they keep the attention always fixed on the immediate subject of explanation, and, in the richest display of comparisons with other passages of the law, never deviate from their point into anything too indefinite and general; superior often in this to the most learned interpreters of the French and Dutch schools, and capable of giving a lesson even to ourselves. Nor did the glossers by any means slight the importance of laying a sound critical basis for interpretation, but on the contrary laboured earnestly in the recension and correction of the text."[a] Character of early jurists.

72. These warm eulogies afford us an instance, to which there are many parallels, of such vicissitudes in literary reputation, that the wheel of fame, like that of

[y] Origines Juris, p. 184. [z] Vol. v. p. 258-267.
[a] Vol. v. p. 199-211.

fortune, seems never to be at rest. For a long time it had been the fashion to speak in slighting terms of these early jurists; and the passage above quoted from Gravina is in a much more candid tone than was usual in his age. Their trifling verbal explanations of *etsi* by *quamvis*, or *admodum* by *valde;* their strange ignorance in deriving the name of the Tiber from the emperor Tiberius, in supposing that Ulpian and Justinian lived before Christ, in asserting that Papinian was put to death by Mark Antony, and even in interpreting *pontifex* by *papa* or *episcopus*, were the topics of ridicule to those whom Gravina has so well reproved.[b] Savigny, who makes a similar remark, that we learn, without perceiving it and without any personal merit, a multitude of things which it was impossible to know in the twelfth century, defends his favourite glossers in the best manner he can, by laying part of the blame on the bad selection of Accursius, and by extolling the mental vigour which struggled through so many difficulties.[c] Yet he has the candour to own that this rather enhances the respect due to the men, than the value of their writings; and, without much acquaintance with the ancient glossers, one may presume to think, that in explaining the Pandects, a book requiring, beyond any other that has descended to us, an extensive knowledge of the language and antiquities of Rome, their deficiencies, if to be measured by the instances we have given, or by the general character of their age, must require a perpetual exercise of our lenity and patience.

Decline of jurists after Accursius.

73. This great compilation of Accursius made an epoch in the annals of jurisprudence. It put an end in great measure to the oral explanations of lecturers which had prevailed before. It restrained at the same time the ingenuity of interpretation. The glossers became the sole authorities, so that it grew into a maxim,—No one can go wrong who follows a gloss; and some said, a gloss was worth a hundred texts.[d] In fact, the original was continually

[b] Gennari, author of Respublica Jurisconsultorum, a work of the last century, who, under colour of a fiction, gives rather an entertaining account of the principal jurists, exhibits some curious specimens of the ignorance of the Accursian interpreters, such as those in the text. See too the article Accursius in Bayle.

[c] v. 213.

[d] Bayle, ubi supra. Eichhorn, Gesch. der Litteratur, ii. 461. Savigny, v. 268.

unintelligible to a student. But this was accompanied, according to the distinguished historian of mediæval jurisprudence, by a decline of the science. The jurists in the latter part of the thirteenth century are far inferior to the school of Irnerius. It might be possible to seek a general cause, as men are now always prone to do, in the loss of self-government in many of the Italian republics. But Savigny, superior to this affectation of philosophy, admits that this is neither a cause adequate in itself, nor chronologically parallel to the decline of jurisprudence. We must therefore look upon it as one of those revolutions, so ordinary and so unaccountable, in the history of literature, where, after a period fertile in men of great talents, there ensues, perhaps with no unfavourable change in the diffusion of knowledge, a pause in that natural fecundity, without which all our endeavours to check a retrograde movement of the human mind will be of no avail. The successors of Accursius in the thirteenth century contented themselves with an implicit deference to the glosses; but this is rather a proof of their inferiority than its cause.[e]

74. It has been the peculiar fortune of Accursius, that his name has always stood in a representative capacity to engross the praise or sustain the blame of the great body of glossers from whom he compiled. One of those proofs of national gratitude and veneration was paid to his memory which it is the more pleasing to recount, that, from the fickleness and insensibility of mankind, they do not very frequently occur. The city of Bologna was divided into the factions of Lambertazzi and Gieremei. The former, who were Ghibelins, having been wholly overthrown and excluded, according to the practice of Italian republics, from all civil power, a law was made in 1306, that the family of Accursius, who had been on the vanquished side, should enjoy all the privileges of the victorious Guelf party, in regard to the memory of one "by whose means the city had been frequented by students, and its fame had been spread through the whole world."[f]

Respect paid to him at Bologna.

75. In the next century a new race of lawyers arose,

[e] Savigny, v. 320. [f] Ib. v. 263.

Scholastic jurists. Bartolus.

who, by a different species of talent, almost eclipsed the greatest of their predecessors. These have been called the scholastic jurists, the glory of the schoolmen having excited an emulous desire to apply their dialectic methods in jurisprudence.[g] Of these the most conspicuous were Bartolus and Baldus, especially the former, whose authority became still higher than that of the Accursian glossers. Yet Bartolus, if we may believe Eichhorn, content with the glosses, did not trouble himself about the text, which he was too ignorant of Roman antiquity, and even of the Latin language, unless he is much belied, to expound.[h] "He is so fond of distinctions," says Gravina, "that he does not divide his subject, but breaks it to pieces, so that the fragments are, as it were, dispersed by the wind. But whatever harm he might do to the just interpretation of the Roman law as a positive code, he was highly useful to the practical lawyer by the number of cases his fertile mind anticipated; for though many of these were unlikely to occur, yet his copiousness and subtlety of distinction is such that he seldom leaves those who consult him quite at a loss."[i] Savigny, who rates Bartolus much below the older lawyers, gives him credit for original thoughts, to which his acquaintance with the practical exercise of justice gave rise. The older jurists were chiefly professors of legal science, rather than conversant with forensic causes; and this has produced an opposition between theory and practice in the Roman law, to which we have not much analogous in our own, but the remains of which are said to be still discernible in the continental jurisprudence.[k]

76. The later expositors of law, those after the age of Accursius, are reproached with a tedious prolixity which

[g] The employment of logical forms in law is not new; instances of it may be found in the earlier jurists. Savigny, v. 330; vi. 6.

[h] Geschichte der Litteratur, ii. 449. Bartolus even said, *de verbibus* non curat jurisconsultus. Eichhorn gives no authority for this, but Meiners, from whom perhaps he took it, quotes Comnenus, Historia Archigymnasii Patavini. Vergleichung der Sitten, ii. 646. It seems however incredible.

[i] Origines Juris, p. 191.

[k] Savigny, vi. 138; v. 201. Of Bartolus and his school it is said by Grotius, Temporum suorum infelicitas impedimento sæpe fuit, quo minus recte leges illas intelligerent; satis solertes alioqui ad indagandam æqui bonique naturam; quo factum ut sæpe optimi sint condendi juris auctores, etiam tunc cum conditi juris mali sunt interpretes. Prolegomena in Jus Belli et Pacis.

the scholastic refinements of disputation were apt to produce. They were little more conversant with philological and historical literature than their predecessors, and had less diligence in that comparison of texts by which an acute understanding might compensate the want of subsidiary learning. In the use of language, the jurists, with hardly any exceptions, are uncouth and barbarous. The great school of Bologna had sent out all the earlier glossers. In the fourteenth century this university fell rather into decline; the jealousy of neighbouring states subjected its graduates to some disadvantage; and while the study of jurisprudence was less efficacious, it was more diffused. Italy alone produced great masters of the science; the professors in France and Germany during the middle ages have left no great reputation.[m]

Inferiority of jurists in fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.

77. IV. The universities, however, with their metaphysics derived from Aristotle through the medium of Arabian interpreters who did not understand him, and with the commentaries of Arabian philosophers who perverted him,[n] the

Classical literature and taste in dark ages.

[m] In this slight sketch of the early lawyers I have been chiefly guided, as the reader will have perceived, by Gravina and Savigny, and also by a very neat and succinct sketch in Eichhorn, Gesch. der Litteratur, ii. 448–464. The Origines Juris of the first have enjoyed a considerable reputation. But Savigny observes, with severity, that Gravina has thought so much more of his style than his subject, that all he says of the old jurists is perfectly worthless through its emptiness and want of criticism. iii. 72. Of Terrason's Histoire de la Jurisprudence Romaine he speaks in still lower terms.

[n] It has been a subject of controversy whether the physical and metaphysical writings of Aristotle were made known to Europe at the beginning of the thirteenth century, through Constantinople, or through Arabic translations. The former supposition rests certainly on what seems good authority—that of Rigord, a contemporary historian. But the latter is now more generally received, and is said to be proved in a dissertation which I have not seen, by M. Jourdain. Tennemann, Manuel de l'Hist. de la Philos., i. 355. These Arabic translations were themselves not made directly from the Greek, but from the Syriac. It is thought by Buhle that the Logic of Aristotle was known in Europe sooner.

[The prize essay of Jourdain, in 1817, entitled Recherches Critiques sur l'Age et l'Origine des Traductions Latines d'Aristote, was republished in 1843 by his son. The three points which he endeavours to establish are: 1. That the Organum of Aristotle alone was known before the thirteenth century. 2. That the other philosophical works were translated in the early part of that age. 3. That some of these translations are from the Greek, others from the Arabic. The last alone, and least important, of these propositions can be considered as sure. Cousin doubts whether the Analytics and some other parts of the Organum were known to the early schoolmen. But John of Salisbury refers to them, though they were certainly not often quoted. There had been a difference of opinion as to the Greek or Arabic original of all the Aristotelian writings besides the Logic; Muratori and Heeren maintaining the former.

development of the modern languages with their native poetry, much more the glosses of the civil lawyers, are not what is commonly meant by the revival of learning. In this we principally consider the increased study of the Latin and Greek languages, and in general of what we call classical antiquity. In the earliest of the dark ages, as far back as the sixth century, the course of liberal instruction, as has been said above, was divided into the trivium and the quadrivium; the former comprising grammar, logic, and rhetoric; the latter music, arithmetic, geometry, and astronomy. But these sciences, which seem tolerably comprehensive, were in reality taught most superficially or not at all. The Latin grammar, in its merest rudiments, from a little treatise ascribed to Donatus, and extracts of Priscian,[o] formed the only necessary part of the trivium in ecclesiastical schools. Even this seems to have been introduced afresh by Bede and the writers of the eighth century, who much excel their immediate predecessors in avoiding gross solecisms of grammar.[p] It was natural that in England, where Latin had never been a living tongue, it should be taught better than in countries which still affected to speak it. From the time of Charlemagne it was lost on the Conti-

Casiri and Buhle the latter. Jourdain seems on the whole to have settled the question, showing by the Greek or Arabic words and idioms in several translations extant in manuscript that they came from different sources. The Greek text of the Metaphysics had been brought to Europe and translated about 1220. But the Physics, the History of Animals, part of the Ethics, and several other works, were first made known through the Arabic (p. 212).

The age of these translations from Aristotle may be judged by their style: in those made before the tenth century, those, *e. gr.*, of Boethius, the Latin is pure, and free from Grecisms; those of the eleventh or later are quite literal, word for word, rarely the right one chosen; the construction more Greek than Latin. In those immediately from the Arabic, the orthography of Greek words is never correct; sometimes an Arabic word is left.

Writers of the thirteenth century mention translations of the philosophical works by Boethius. But as this could not be the great Boethius, Jourdain finds some traces of another bearing the name; or it may have been an error in referring a work to a known author.

The quotations from Aristotle in Albertus Magnus show that some were derived from Greek, some from Arabic. He says in one place, "Quod autem hæc vera sint quæ dicta sunt, testatur Aristotelis translatio Arabica quæ sic dicit. . . . Græca autem translatio discordat ab hoc, et, ut puto, est mendosa."—Jourdain, p. 38. By "Arabica translatio" he means, of course, a translation from the Arabic.

The translation of Aristotle's Metaphysics, published in 1483, is from the Greek.—1853.]

[o] Fleury, xvii. 18. Andrès, ix. 284.

[p] Eichhorn, Allg. Gesch. ii. 73. The reader is requested to distinguish, at least if he cares about references, Eichhorn's Allgemeine Geschichte der Cultur, from his Geschichte der Litteratur, with which, in future, we shall have more concern.

nent in common use, and preserved only through glossaries, of which there were many. The style of Latin in the dark period, independently of its want of verbal purity, is in very bad taste; but no writers seem to have been more inflated and empty than the English.[q] The distinction between the ornaments adapted to poetry and to prose had long been lost, and still more the just sense of moderation in their use. It cannot be wondered at that a vicious rhetoric should have overspread the writings of the ninth and tenth centuries, when there is so much of it in the third and fourth.

Improvement in tenth and eleventh centuries.

78. Eichhorn fixes upon the latter part of the tenth century as an epoch from which we are to deduce, in its beginnings, the restoration of classical taste; it was then that the scholars left the meagre introductions to rhetoric formerly used for the works of Cicero and Quintilian.[r] In the school of Paderborn, not long after 1000, Sallust and Statius, as well as Virgil and Horace, appear to have been read.[s] Several writers, chiefly historical, about this period, such as Lambert of Aschaffenburg, Ditmar, Wittikind, are tolerably exempt from the false taste of preceding times; and if they want a truly classical tone, express themselves with some spirit.[t] Gerbert, who by an uncommon quickness of parts shone in very different provinces of learning, and was beyond question the most accomplished man of the dark ages, displays in his epistles a thorough acquaintance with the best Latin authors and a taste for their excellences.[u] He writes with the feelings of Petrarch, but in a less auspicious period. Even in England, if we may quote again the famous passage of Ingulfus, the rhetorical works of Cicero, as well as some book which he calls Aristotle, were read at Oxford under Edward the Confessor. But we have no indisputable name in the eleventh century, not even that

[q] Fleury, xvii. 23. Ducange, preface to Glossary, p. 10. The Anglo-Saxon charters are distinguished for their pompous absurdity; and it is the general character of our early historians. One Ethelwerd is the worst; but William of Malmesbury himself, perhaps in some measure by transcribing passages from others, sins greatly in this respect.

[r] Allg. Gesch., ii. 79.

[s] Viguit Horatius magnus atque Virgilius, Crispus et Sallustius, et Urbanus Statius, ludusque fuit omnibus insudare versibus et dictaminibus jucundisque cantibus. Vita Meinwerci in Leibnitz Script. Brunsvic. apud Eichhorn, ii. 399.

[t] Eichhorn, Gesch. der Litteratur, i. 867. Heeren, p. 157.

[u] Heeren, p. 165. It appears that Cicero de Republicâ was extant in his time.

of John de Garlandiâ, whose Floretus long continued to be a text-book in schools. This is a poor collection of extracts from Latin authors. It is uncertain whether or not the compiler were an Englishman.[x]

Lanfranc and his schools.

79. It is admitted on all hands that a remarkable improvement, both in style and in the knowledge of Latin antiquity, was perceptible towards the close of the eleventh century. The testimony of contemporaries attributes an extensively beneficial influence to Lanfranc. This distinguished person, born at Pavia in 1005, and early known as a scholar in Italy, passed into France about 1042, to preside over a school at Bec in Normandy. It became conspicuous under his care for the studies of the age, dialectics and theology. It is hardly necessary to add that Lanfranc was raised by the Conqueror to the primacy of England, and thus belongs to our own history. Anselm, his successor both in the monastery of Bec and the see of Canterbury, far more renowned than Lanfranc for metaphysical acuteness, has shared with him the honour of having diffused a better taste for philological literature over the schools of France. It has, however, been denied by a writer of high authority, that either any knowledge or any love of classical literature can be traced in the works of the two archbishops. They are in this respect, he says, much inferior to those of Lupus, Gerbert, and others of the preceding ages.[y] His contemporaries, who extol the learning of Lanfranc in hyperbolical terms, do so in very indifferent Latin of their own; but it appears indeed more than doubtful whether the earliest of them meant to praise him for this peculiar species of literature.[z] The

[x] Hist. Litt. de la France, viii. 84. The authors give very inconclusive reasons for robbing England of this writer, who certainly taught here under William the Conqueror, if not before, but it is possible enough that he came over from France. They say there is no such surname in England as Garland, which happens to be a mistake; but the native English did not often bear surnames in that age.

[In this note I have been misled by the Histoire Littéraire de la France. John de Garlandiâ, the grammarian, author of the Floretus, lived in the thirteenth century. But there was a writer on arithmetic named Garland in the reign of William the Conqueror. See Wright's Biographia Britannica Literaria, vol. ii. p. 16.—1847.]

The Anglo-Saxon clergy were inconceivably ignorant, ut cæteris esset stupori qui grammaticam didicisset. Will. Malmesbury, p. 101. This leads us to doubt the Aristotle and Cicero of Ingulfus.

[y] Heeren, p. 185. There seems certainly nothing above the common in Lanfranc's epistles.

[z] Milo Crispinus, abbot of Westminster, in his Life of Lanfranc, says of him,

Benedictines of St. Maur cannot find much to say for him in this respect. They allege that he and Anselm wrote better than was then usual—a very moderate compliment; yet they ascribe a great influence to their public lectures, and to the schools which were formed on the model of Bec;[a] and perhaps we could not without injustice deprive Lanfranc of the credit he has obtained for the promotion of polite letters. There is at least sufficient evidence that they had begun to revive in France not long after his time.

Italy—Vocabulary of Papias.

80. The signs of gradual improvement in Italy during the eleventh century are very perceptible; several schools, among which those of Milan and the convent of Monte Casino are most eminent, were established; and some writers, such as Peter Damiani and Humbert, have obtained praise for rather more elegance and polish of style than had belonged to their predecessors.[b] The Latin vocabulary of Papias was finished in 1053. This is a compilation from the grammars and glossaries of the sixth and seventh centuries; but though many of his words are of very low Latinity, and his etymologies, which are those of his masters, absurd, he shows both a competent degree of learning and a regard to profane literature, unusual in the darker ages, and symptomatic of a more liberal taste.[c]

"Fuit quidam vir magnus Italia oriundus, quem Latinitas in antiquum scientiæ statum ab eo restituta tota supremum debito cum amore et honore agnoscit magistrum, nomine Lanfrancus."

This passage, which is frequently quoted, surely refers to his eminence in dialectics. The words of William of Malmesbury go farther. "Is literaturæ perinsignis liberales artes quæ jamdudum sorduerant, a Latio in Gallias vocans acumine suo expolivit."

[a] Hist. Litt. de la France, vii. 17, 107; viii. 304. The seventh volume of this long and laborious work begins with an excellent account of the literary condition of France in the eleventh century. At the beginning of the ninth volume we have a similar view of the twelfth.

[b] Bettinelli, Risorgimento d' Italia dopo il mille; Tiraboschi, iii. 248.

[c] The date of the vocabulary of Papias had been placed by Scaliger, who says he has as many errors as words, in the thirteenth century. But Gaspar Barthius, in his Adversaria, c. i., after calling him "veterum Glossographorum compactor non semper futilis," observes, that Papias mentions an emperor, Henry II., as then living, and thence fixes the era of his book in the early part of the eleventh century, in which he is followed by Bayle, art. Balbi. It is rather singular that neither of those writers recollected the usage of the Italians to reckon as Henry II. the prince whom the Germans call Henry III., Henry the Fowler not being included by them in the imperial list; and Bayle himself quotes a writer, unpublished in the age of Barthius, who places Papias in the year 1053. This date I believe is given by Papias himself. Tiraboschi, iii. 300. A pretty full account of the Latin glossaries, before and after Papias, will be found in the preface to Ducange, p. 38.

Influence of Italy upon Europe.

81. It may be said with some truth, that Italy supplied the fire from which other nations in this first, as afterwards in the second, era of the revival of letters, lighted their own torches. Lanfranc, Anselm, Peter Lombard, the founder of systematic theology in the twelfth century; Irnerius, the restorer of jurisprudence; Gratian, the author of the first compilation of canon law, the school of Salerno, that guided medical art in all countries, the first dictionaries of the Latin tongue, the first treatise of algebra, the first great work that makes an epoch in anatomy, are as truly and exclusively the boast of Italy as the restoration of Greek literature and of classical taste in the fifteenth century;[d] but if she were the first to propagate an impulse towards intellectual excellence in the rest of Europe, it must be owned that France and England, in this dawn of literature and science, went in many points of view far beyond her.

Increased copying of manuscripts.

82. Three religious orders, all scions from the great Benedictine stock, that of Clugni, which dates from the first part of the tenth century, the Carthusians, founded in 1084, and the Cistercians in 1098, contributed to propagate classical learning.[e] The monks of these foundations exercised themselves in copying manuscripts; the arts of calligraphy, and, not long afterwards, of illumination, became their pride; a more cursive handwriting and a more convenient system of abbreviations were introduced; and thus from the twelfth century we find a great increase of manuscripts, though transcribed mechanically as a monastic duty, and often with much incorrectness. The abbey of Clugni had a rich library of Greek and Latin authors; but few monasteries of the Benedictine rule were destitute of one; it was their pride to collect and their business to transcribe books.[f] These were, in a vast proportion, such as we do not highly value at the present day; yet almost all we do possess of Latin classical literature, with the exception of a small number of more ancient manuscripts, is owing to the industry of these monks. In that age there was perhaps less zeal

[d] Bettinelli, Risorgimento d' Italia, p. 71.
[e] Fleury; Hist. Litt. de la France, ix. 113.
[f] Ibid. p. 139.

for literature in Italy, and less practice in copying, than in France.[g] This shifting of intellectual exertion from one country to another is not peculiar to the middle ages; but, in regard to them, it has not always been heeded by those who, using the trivial metaphor of light and darkness, which it is not easy to avoid, have too much considered Europe as a single point under a receding or advancing illumination.

83. France and England were the countries where the revival of classical taste was chiefly perceived. In Germany no sensible improvement in philological literature can be traced, according to Eichhorn and Heeren, before the invention of printing, though I think this must be understood with exceptions, and that Otho of Frisingen, Saxo Grammaticus, and Gunther, author of the poem entitled Ligurinus (who belongs to the first years of the thirteenth century), might stand on an equal footing with any of their contemporaries. But in the schools which are supposed to have borrowed light from Lanfranc and Anselm a more keen perception of the beauties of the Latin language, as well as an exacter knowledge of its idiom, was imparted. John of Salisbury, himself one of their most conspicuous ornaments, praises the method of instruction pursued by Bernard of Chartres about the end of the eleventh century, who seems indeed to have exercised his pupils vigorously in the rules of grammar and rhetoric. After the first grammatical instruction out of Donatus and Priscian, they were led forward to the poets, orators, and historians of Rome; the precepts of Cicero and Quintilian were studied, and sometimes observed with affectation.[h] An admiration of the great classical writers, an excessive love of philology, and disdain of the studies that drew men from it, shine out in the two curious treatises of John of Salisbury. He is perpetually citing the poets, especially Horace, and had read most of Cicero. Such, at least, is the opinion of Heeren, who bestows also a good deal of praise upon his Latinity.[i] Eichhorn places him at the head of all his contemporaries. But no one has admired his style so much as Meiners, who declares that

John of Salisbury.

[g] Heeren, p. 197.
[h] Hist. Litt. de la France, vii. 16.
[i] P. 203. Hist. Litt. de la France, ix. 47. Peter of Blois also possessed a very respectable stock of classical literature.

he has no equal in the writers of the third, fourth, or fifth centuries, except Lactantius and Jerome.[k] In this I cannot but think there is some exaggeration; the style of John of Salisbury, far from being equal to that of Augustin, Eutropius, and a few more of those early ages, does not appear to me by any means elegant; sometimes he falls upon a good expression, but the general tone is not very classical. The reader may judge from the passage in the note.[m]

Improvement of classical taste in 12th century.

84. It is generally acknowledged that in the twelfth century we find several writers, Abelard, Eloisa, Bernard of Clairvaux, Saxo Grammaticus, William of Malmesbury, Peter of Blois, whose style, though never correct (which, in the absence of all better dictionaries than that of Papias, was impossible), and sometimes affected, sometimes too florid and diffuse, is not wholly destitute of spirit, and even of elegance;[n] the Latin poetry, instead of Leonine rhymes, or attempts at regular hexameters almost equally bad, becomes, in the hands of Gunther, Gualterus de

[k] Vergleichung der Sitten, ii. 586. He says nearly as much of Saxo Grammaticus and William of Malmesbury. If my recollection of the former does not deceive me, he is a better writer than our monk of Malmesbury.

[m] One of the most interesting passages in John of Salisbury is that above cited, in which he gives an account of the method of instruction pursued by Bernard of Chartres, whom he calls exundantissimus modernis temporibus fons literarum in Gallia. John himself was taught by some who trod in the steps of this eminent preceptor. Ad hujus magistri formam præceptores mei in grammatica, Gulielmus de Conchis, et Richardus cognomento Episcopus, officio nunc archidiaconus Constantiensis, vita et conversatione vir bonus, suos discipulos aliquando informaverunt. Sed postmodum ex quo opinio veritati præjudicium fecit, et homines videri quam esse philosophi maluerunt, professoresque artium se totam philosophiam brevius quam triennio aut quadriennio transfusuros auditoribus pollicebantur, impetu multitudinis imperitæ victi cesserunt. Exinde autem minus temporis et diligentiæ in grammaticæ studio impensum est. Ex quo contigit ut qui omnes artes, tam liberales quam mechanicas profitentur, nec primam noverint, sine qua frustra quis progredietur ad reliquas. Licet autem et aliæ disciplinæ ad literaturam proficiant, hæc tamen privilegio singulari facere dicitur literatum. Metalog. lib. i. c. 24.

[n] Hist. Litt. de la France, ix. 146. The Benedictines are scarcely fair towards Abelard (xii. 147), whose style, as far as I have seen, which is not much, seems equal to that of his contemporaries.

[The best writers of Latin in England, prose as well as verse, flourished under Henry II. and his sons. William of Malmesbury, who belongs to the reign of Stephen, though not destitute of some skill as well as variety, displays too much of the Anglo-Saxon Latinity, tumid and redundant. But Giraldus Cambrensis and William of Newbury were truly good writers: very few, indeed, even of the fourth century can be deemed to excel the latter. In verse, John de Hauteville, author of the Architrenius, Nigellus Wireker, and Alexander Neckam, are deserving of praise. Short extracts will be found in Wright.—1847.]

Insulis, Gulielmus Brito, and Joseph Iscanus, to whom a considerable number of names might be added, always tolerable, sometimes truly spirited;[o] and amidst all that still demands the most liberal indulgence we cannot but perceive the real progress of classical knowledge, and the development of a finer taste in Europe.[p]

85. The vast increase of religious houses in the twelfth century rendered necessary more attention to the rudiments of literature.[q] Every monk, as well as every secular priest, required a certain portion of Latin. In the ruder and darker ages many illiterate persons had been ordained; there were even kingdoms, as, for example, England, where this is said to have been almost general. But the canons of the church demanded of course such a degree of instruction as the continual use of a dead language made indispensable; and in this first dawn of learning there can be, I presume, no doubt that none received the higher orders, or became professed in a monastery for which the order of priesthood was necessary, without some degree of grammatical knowledge. Hence this kind of education in the rudiments of Latin was imparted to a greater number of individuals than at present.

Influence of increased number of clergy.

86. The German writers to whom we principally refer have expatiated upon the decline of literature after the middle of the twelfth century, unexpectedly disappointing the bright promise of that age, so that for almost two hundred years we find Europe fallen back in learning where we might have expected her progress.[r] This, however, is by no means true, in the most limited sense, as to the latter part of the twelfth century, when that purity of classical taste, which Eichhorn and others seem chiefly to have

Decline of classical literature in 13th century.

[o] Warton has done some justice to the Anglo-Latin poets of this century. The Trojan War and Antiocheis of Joseph Iscanus, he calls "a miracle in this age of classical composition." The style, he says, is a mixture of Ovid, Statius, and Claudian. Vol. i. p. 163. The extracts Warton gives seem to me a close imitation of the second. The Philippis of William Brito must be of the thirteenth century, and Warton refers the Ligurinus of Gunther to 1206.

[p] Hist. Litt. de la France, vol. ix.; Eichhorn, All. Gesch. der Cultur, ii. 30, 62; Heeren; Meiners.

[q] Hist. Litt. de la France, ix. 11.

[r] Meiners, ii. 605; Heeren, p. 228; Eichhorn, Allg. Gesch. der Litteratur, ii. 63-118.

The running title of Eichhorn's section, Die Wissenschaften verfallen in Barbarey, seems much too generally expressed.

had in their minds, was displayed in better Latin than had been written before. In a general view the thirteenth century was an age of activity and ardour, though not in every respect the best directed. The fertility of the modern languages in versification, the creation, we may almost say, of Italian and English in this period, the great concourse of students to the universities, the acute, and sometimes profound, reasonings of the scholastic philosophy, which was now in its most palmy state, the accumulation of knowledge, whether derived from original research or from Arabian sources of information, which we find in the geometers, the physicians, the natural philosophers of Europe, are sufficient to repel the charge of having fallen back, or even remained altogether stationary, in comparison with the preceding century. But in politeness of Latin style it is admitted that we find an astonishing and permanent decline both in France and England. Such complaints are usual in the most progressive times; and we might not rely on John of Salisbury when he laments the decline of taste in his own age.[s] But, in fact, it would have been rather singular if a classical purity had kept its ground. A stronger party, and one hostile to polite letters, as well as ignorant of them—that of the theologians and dialecticians—carried with it the popular voice in the church and the universities. The time allotted by these to philological literature was curtailed, that the professors of logic and philosophy might detain their pupils longer. Grammar continued to be taught in the university of Paris, but rhetoric, another part of the trivium, was given up; by which it is to be understood, as I conceive, that no classical authors were read, or, if at all, for the sole purpose of verbal explanation.[t] The thirteenth century, says Heeren, was one of the most unfruitful for the study of ancient literature.[u] He does not seem to except Italy, though there, as we shall soon see, the remark is hardly just. But in Germany the tenth century, Leibnitz declares, was a golden age of learning, compared with the thirteenth;[x] and France

[s] Metalogicus, l. i. c. 24. This passage has been frequently quoted. He was very inimical to the dialecticians, as philologers generally are.

[t] Crevier, ii. 376.

[u] P. 237.

[x] Introductio in Script. Brunsvic., § lxiii., apud Heeren, et Meiners, ii. 631.

itself is but a barren waste in this period.[y] The relaxation of manners among the monastic orders, which, generally speaking, is the increasing theme of complaint from the eleventh century, and the swarms of worse vermin, the mendicant friars, who filled Europe with stupid superstition, are assigned by Meiners and Heeren as the leading causes of the return of ignorance.[z]

87. The writers of the thirteenth century display an incredible ignorance, not only of pure idiom, but of the common grammatical rules. Those who attempted to write verse have lost all prosody, and relapse into Leonine rhymes and barbarous acrostics. The historians use a hybrid jargon intermixed with modern words. The scholastic philosophers wholly neglected their style, and thought it no wrong to enrich the Latin, as in some degree a living language, with terms that seemed to express their meaning. In the writings of Albertus Magnus, of whom Fleury says that he can see nothing great in him but his volumes, the grossest errors of syntax frequently occur, and vie with his ignorance of history and science. Through the sinister example of this man, according to Meiners, the notion that Latin should be written with regard to ancient models was lost in the universities for three hundred years; an evil, however, slight in comparison with what he inflicted on Europe by the credit he gave to astrology, alchemy, and magic.[a] Duns Scotus and his

Relapse into barbarism.

No one has dwelt more fully than this last writer on the decline of literature in the thirteenth century, out of his cordial antipathy to the schoolmen. P. 589 et post.

Wood, who has no prejudices against popery, ascribes the low state of learning in England under Edward III. and Richard II. to the misconduct of the mendicant friars, and to the papal provisions that impoverished the church.

[y] [Abelard, Peter of Blois, and others, might pass for models in comparison with Albertus, Aquinas, and the rest of the writers of the thirteenth century. La décadence est partout sensible; elle est progressive dans les cours des règnes de St. Louis, de Philippe III., et de Philippe IV.; et quoique le Français restât dans l'enfance, la Latinité déjà si vieille avant l'année 1200 vieillissait et dépérissait encore. Hist. Litt. de la France, xvi. 145.—1842.]

[z] Meiners, ii. 615; Heeren, 235.

[a] Meiners, ii. 692; Fleury, 5me discours, in Hist. Eccles., xvii. 44; Buhle, i 702. [A far better character of Albertus Magnus is given by Jourdain:—"Albert, considéré comme théologien ou philosophe, est sans doute l'un des hommes les plus extraordinaires de son siècle; je pourrais même dire l'un des génies les plus étonnants des âges passés." P. 302 His History of Animals "est un monument précieux, qui, présentant l'état des opinions et des connaissances du moyen âge, remplit une longue lacune, et lie l'ancienne histoire de la science à celle

disciples, in the next century, carried this much farther, and introduced a most barbarous and unintelligible terminology, by which the school metaphysics were rendered ridiculous in the revival of literature.[b] Even the jurists, who more required an accurate knowledge of the language, were hardly less barbarous. Roger Bacon, who is not a good writer, stands at the head in this century.[c] Fortunately, as has been said, the transcribing ancient authors had become a mechanical habit in some monasteries. But it was done in an ignorant and slovenly manner. The manuscripts of these latter ages, before the invention of printing, are by far the most numerous, but they are also the most incorrect, and generally of little value in the eyes of critics.[d]

No improvement in 14th century.

88. The fourteenth century was not in the slightest degree superior to the preceding age. France, England, and Germany were wholly destitute of good Latin scholars in this period. The age of Petrarch and Boccaccio, the age before the close of which classical learning truly revived in Italy, gave no sign whatever of animation throughout the rest of Europe; the genius it produced, and in this it was not wholly deficient, displayed itself in other walks of literature.[e] We may justly praise Richard of Bury for his zeal in collecting books, and still more for his munificence in giving his library to the university of Oxford, with special injunctions that they should be lent to scholars. But his erudition appears crude and uncritical, his style indifferent, and his thoughts superficial.[f] Yet I am not aware that he had any equal in England during this century.

Richard of Bury.

89. The patronage of letters, or collection of books, are not reckoned among the glories of Edward III., though, if any respect had been attached to learning in

des temps modernes." P. 325. His original source in this work was Aristotle's History of Animals, in Michael Scot's translation from the Arabic. The knowledge of Greek possessed by Albertus seems to have been rather feeble.—1853.]

[b] Meiners, ii. 721.

[c] Heeren, p. 245. [d] Id., p. 304.

[e] Heeren, p. 309; Andrès, iii. 10.

[f] The Philobiblon of Richard Aungerville, often called Richard of Bury, Chancellor of Edward III., is worthy of being read, as containing some curious illustrations of the state of literature. He quotes a wretched poem de Vetulâ as Ovid's, and shows little learning, though he had a great esteem for it. See a note of Warton, History of English Poetry, i. 146, on Aungerville.

his age and country, they might well have suited his magnificent disposition. His adversaries, John, and especially Charles V. of France, have more claims upon the remembrance of a literary historian. Several Latin authors were translated into French by their directions;[g] and Charles, who himself was not ignorant of Latin, began to form the Royal Library of the Louvre. We may judge from this of the condition of literature in his time. The number of volumes was about 900. Many of these, especially the missals and psalters, were richly bound and illuminated. Books of devotion formed the larger portion of the library. The profane authors, except some relating to French history, were in general of little value in our sight. Very few classical works are in the list, and no poets except Ovid and Lucan.[h] This library came, during the subsequent English wars, into the possession of the Duke of Bedford; and Charles VII. laid the foundations of that which still exists.[i]

Library formed by Charles V. at Paris.

90. This retrograde condition, however, of classical literature was only perceptible in Cisalpine Europe. By one of those shiftings of literary illumination to which we have alluded, Italy, far lower in classical taste than France in the twelfth century, deserved a higher place in the next. Tiraboschi says that the progress in polite letters was slow, but still some was made; more good books were transcribed, there were more readers, and of these some took on them to imitate what they read, so that gradually the darkness which overspread the land began to be dispersed. Thus we find that those who wrote at the end of the thirteenth century were less rude in style than their predecessors at its commencement.[k] A more elaborate account of the state of learning in the thir-

Some improvement in Italy during 13th century.

[g] Crevier, ii. 424. Warton has amassed a great deal of information, not always very accurate, upon the subject of early French translations. These form a considerable portion of the literature of that country in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. Hist. of English Poetry, ii. 414-430. See also De Sade, Vie de Pétrarque, iii. 548; and Crevier, Hist. de l'Univ. de Paris, ii. 424.

[h] Warton adds Cicero to the classical list; and I am sorry to say that, in my History of the Middle Ages, I have been led wrong by him. Bouvin, his only authority, expressly says, pas un seul manuscrit de Cicéron. Mém. de l'Acad des Inscript., ii. 693.

[i] Id. 701.

[k] Tiraboschi, iv. 420. The Latin versifiers of the thirteenth century were numerous, but generally very indifferent Id. 378.

teenth century will be found in the Life of Ambrogio Traversari, by Mehus; and several names are there mentioned, among whom that of Brunetto Latini is the most celebrated. Latini translated some of the rhetorical treatises of Cicero.[m] And we may perhaps consider as a witness to some degree of progressive learning in Italy at this time the Catholicon of John Balbi, a Genoese monk, more frequently styled Januensis. This book is chiefly now heard of because the first edition, printed by Gutenberg in 1460, is a book of uncommon rarity and price. It is, however, deserving of some notice in the annals of literature. It consists of a Latin grammar, followed by a dictionary, both perhaps superior to what we should expect from the general character of the times. They are at least copious; the Catholicon is a volume of great bulk. Balbi quotes abundantly from the Latin classics, and appears not wholly unacquainted with Greek, though I must own that Tiraboschi and Eichhorn have thought otherwise. The Catholicon, as far as I can judge from a slight inspection of it, deserves rather more credit than it has in modern times obtained. In the grammar, besides a familiarity with the terminology of the old grammarians, he will be found to have stated some questions as to the proper use of words, with *dubitari solet, multum quæritur;* which, though they are superficial enough, indicate that a certain attention was beginning to be paid to correctness in writing. From the great size of the Catholicon its circulation must have been very limited.[n]

Catholicon of Balbi.

91. In the dictionary, however, of John of Genoa, as in those of Papias and the other glossarists, we find little

[m] Mehus, p. 157; Tiraboschi, p. 418.

[n] Libellum hunc (says Balbi at the conclusion) ad honorem Dei et gloriosæ Virginis Mariæ, et beati Domini patris nostri et omnium sanctorum electorum, necnon ad utilitatem meam et ecclesiæ sanctæ Dei, ex diversis majorum meorum dictis multo labore et diligenti studio compilavi. Operis quippe ac studii mei est et fuit multos libros legere et ex plurimis diversos carpere flores.

Eichhorn speaks severely, and, I am disposed to think, unjustly, of the Catholicon, as without order and plan, or any knowledge of Greek, as the author himself confesses (Gesch. der Litteratur, ii. 238). The order and plan are alphabetical, as usual in a dictionary; and though Balbi does not lay claim to much Greek, I do not think he professes entire ignorance of it. Hoc difficile est scire et minimè mihi non bene scienti linguam Græcam:—apud Gradenigo, Litteratura Greco-Italiana, p. 104. I have observed that Balbi calls himself *philocalus*, which indeed is no evidence of much Greek erudition.

distinction made between the different gradations of Latinity. The Latin tongue was to them, except so far as the ancient grammarians whom they copied might indicate some to be obsolete, a single body of words; and, ecclesiastics as they were, they could not understand that Ambrose and Hilary were to be proscribed in the vocabulary of a language which was chiefly learned for the sake of reading their works. Nor had they the means of pronouncing, what it has cost the labour of succeeding centuries to do, that there is no adequate classical authority for innumerable words and idioms in common use. Their knowledge of syntax also was very limited. The prejudice of the church against profane authors had by no means wholly worn away: much less had they an exclusive possession of the grammar schools, most of the books taught in which were modern. Papias, Uguccio, and other indifferent lexicographers, were of much authority.[o] The general ignorance in Italy was still very great. In the middle of the fourteenth century we read of a man, supposed to be learned, who took Plato and Cicero for poets, and thought Ennius a contemporary of Statius.[p]

Imperfection of early dictionaries.

92. The first real restorer of polite letters was Petrarch. His fine taste taught him to relish the beauties of Virgil and Cicero, and his ardent praises of them inspired his compatriots with a desire for classical knowledge. A generous disposition to encourage letters began to show itself among the Italian princes. Robert, king of Naples, in the early part of this century, one of the first patrons of Petrarch, and several of the great families of Lombardy, gave this proof of the humanising effects of peace and prosperity.[q] It has been thought by some, that but for the appearance and influence of Petrarch at that period, the manuscripts themselves would have perished, as several had done in no long time before, so forgotten and abandoned to dust and vermin were those precious records in the

Restoration of letters due to Petrarch.

[o] Mehus; Muratori, Dissert. 44.

[p] Mehus, p. 211; Tiraboschi, v. 82.

[q] Tiraboschi, v. 20 et post. Ten universities were founded in Italy during the fourteenth century, some of which did not last long. Rome and Fermo in 1303; Perugia in 1307; Treviso about 1320; Pisa in 1339; Pavia not long after; Florence in 1348; Siena in 1357; Lucca in 1369; and Ferrara in 1391.

dungeons of monasteries.[r] He was the first who brought in that almost deification of the great ancient writers, which, though carried in following ages to an absurd extent, was the animating sentiment of solitary study—that through which its fatigues were patiently endured, and its obstacles surmounted. Petrarch tells us himself, that while his comrades at school were reading Æsop's Fables, or a book of one Prosper, a writer of the fifth century, his time was given to the study of Cicero, which delighted his ear long before he could understand the sense.[s] It was much at his heart to acquire a good style in Latin. And, relatively to his predecessors of the mediæval period, we may say that he was successful. Passages full of elegance and feeling, in which we are at least not much offended by incorrectness of style, are frequent in his writings. But the fastidious scholars of later times contemned these imperfect endeavours at purity. "He wants," says Erasmus, "full acquaintance with the language, and his whole diction shows the rudeness of the preceding age."[t] An Italian writer, somewhat earlier, speaks still more unfavourably. "His style is harsh, and scarcely bears the character of Latinity. His writings are indeed full of thought, but defective in expression, and display the marks of labour without the polish of elegance."[u]

Character of his style.

I incline to agree with Meiners in rating the style of Petrarch rather more highly.[x] Of Boccace the writer above quoted gives even a worse character. "Licentious and inaccurate in his diction, he has no idea of selection. All his Latin writings are hasty, crude, and unformed. He labours with thought, and struggles to give it utterance; but his sentiments find no adequate vehicle, and the lustre of his native talents is obscured by the depraved taste of the times." Yet his own mother-tongue owes its earliest model of grace and refinement to his pen.

[r] Heeren, 270.

[s] Et illa quidem ætate nihil intelligere poteram, sola me verborum dulcedo quædam et sonoritas detinebat ut quicquid aliud vel legerem vel audirem, raucum mihi dissonumque videretur. Epist. Seniles, lib. xv., apud De Sade, i. 36.

[t] Ciceronianus.

[u] Paulus Cortesius de hominibus doctis. I take the translations from Roscoe's Lorenzo de' Medici, c. vii.

[x] Vergleichung der Sitten, iii. 126. Meiners has expatiated for fifty pages, p. 94-147, on the merits of Petrarch in the restoration of classical literature; he seems unable to leave the subject. Heeren, though less diffuse, is not less panegyrical. De Sade's three quartos are certainly a little tedious.

93. Petrarch was more proud of his Latin poem called Africa, the subject of which is the termination of the second Punic war, than of the sonnets and odes, which have made his name immortal, though they were not the chief sources of his immediate renown. It is indeed written with elaborate elegance, and perhaps superior to any preceding specimen of Latin versification in the middle ages, unless we should think Joseph Iscanus his equal. But it is more to be praised for taste than correctness; and though in the Basle edition of 1554, which I have used, the printer has been excessively negligent, there can be no doubt that the Latin poetry of Petrarch abounds with faults of metre. His eclogues, many of which are covert satires on the court of Avignon, appear to me more poetical than the Africa, and are sometimes very beautifully expressed. The eclogues of Boccaccio, though by no means indifferent, do not equal those of Petrarch. His Latin poetry.

94. Mehus, whom Tiraboschi avowedly copies, has diligently collected the names, though little more than the names, of Latin teachers at Florence in the fourteenth century.[y] But among the earlier of these there was no good method of instruction, no elegance of language. The first who revealed the mysteries of a pure and graceful style was John Malpaghino, commonly called John of Ravenna, one whom in his youth Petrarch had loved as a son, and who not very long before the end of the century taught Latin at Padua and Florence.[z] The best scholars of the ensuing age were his disciples, and among them was Gasparin of Barziza, or, as generally called, of Bergamo, justly characterised by Eichhorn as the father of a pure and elegant Latinity.[a] The distinction between the genuine Latin language and that of the Lower Empire was from this generally recognised; and the writers who had been regarded as standards were thrown away with contempt. This is the proper era of the revival of letters, and nearly coincides with the beginning of the fifteenth century. John of Ravenna. Gasparin of Barziza.

[y] Vita Traversari, p. 348.

[z] A life of John Malpaghino of Ravenna is the first in Meiners' Lebensbeschreibungen berühmter Männer, 3 vols. Zurich, 1795; but it is wholly taken from Petrarch's Letters, and from Mehus's Life of Traversari, p. 348. See also Tiraboschi, v. 554.

[a] Geschichte der Litteratur, ii. 241.

95. A few subjects, affording less extensive observation, we have postponed to the next chapter, which will contain the literature of Europe in the first part of the fifteenth century. Notwithstanding our wish to preserve in general a strict regard to chronology, it has been impossible to avoid some interruptions of it without introducing a multiplicity of transitions incompatible with any comprehensive views; and which, even as it must inevitably exist in a work of this nature, is likely to diminish the pleasure, and perhaps the advantage, that the reader might derive from it.

CHAPTER II.

ON THE LITERATURE OF EUROPE FROM 1400 TO 1440.

Cultivation of Latin in Italy — Revival of Greek Literature — Vestiges of it during the Middle Ages — It is taught by Chrysoloras — his Disciples — and by learned Greeks — State of Classical Learning in other Parts of Europe — Physical Sciences — Mathematics — Medicine and Anatomy — Poetry in Spain, France, and England — Formation of new Laws of Taste in Middle Ages — Their Principles — Romances — Religious Opinions.

Zeal for classical literature in Italy.

1. GINGUÉNÉ has well observed, that the fourteenth century left Italy in the possession of the writings of three great masters of a language formed and polished by them, and of a strong relish for classical learning. But this soon became the absorbing passion—fortunately, no doubt, in the result, as the same author has elsewhere said, since all the exertions of an age were required to explore the rich mine of antiquity and fix the standard of taste and purity for succeeding generations. The ardour for classical studies grew stronger every day. To write Latin correctly, to understand the allusions of the best authors, to learn the rudiments at least of Greek, were the objects of every cultivated mind.

Poggio Bracciolini.

2. The first half of the fifteenth century has been sometimes called the age of Poggio Bracciolini, which it expresses not very inaccurately as to his literary life, since he was born in 1381 and died in 1459; but it seems to involve too high a compliment. The chief merit of Poggio was his diligence, aided by good fortune, in recovering lost works of Roman literature that lay mouldering in the repositories of convents. Hence we owe to this one man eight orations of Cicero, a complete Quintilian, Columella, part of Lucretius, three books of Valerius Flaccus, Silius Italicus, Ammianus Marcellinus, Tertullian, and several less important writers; twelve comedies of Plautus were also recovered

in Germany through his directions.[a] Poggio, besides this, was undoubtedly a man of considerable learning for his time, and still greater sense and spirit as a writer, though he never reached a very correct or elegant style.[b] And this applies to all those who wrote before the year 1440, with the single exception of Gasparin—to Coluccio Salutato, Guarino of Verona, and even Leonard Aretin.[c] Nor is this any disparagement to their abilities and

[a] Shepherd's Life of Poggio; Tiraboschi; Corniani; Roscoe's Lorenzo, ch. 1. Fabricius, in his Bibliotheca Latina mediæ et infimæ ætatis, gives a list not quite the same; but Poggio's own authority must be the best. The work first above quoted is for the literary history of Italy in the earlier half of the fifteenth century what Roscoe's Lorenzo is for the latter. Ginguéné has not added much to what these English authors and Tiraboschi had furnished.

[b] Mr. Shepherd has judged Poggio a little favourably, as became a biographer, but with sense and discrimination. His Italian translator, Tonelli (Firenze, 1825), goes much beyond the mark in extolling Poggio above all his contemporaries, and praising his "vastissima erudizione" in the strain of hyperbole too familiar to Italians. This vast learning, even for that time, Poggio did not possess: we have no reason to believe him equal to Guarino, Filelfo, or Traversari, much less to Valla. Erasmus however was led by his partiality to Valla into some injustice towards Poggio, whom he calls rabula adeo indoctus, ut etiamsi vacaret obscœnitate, tamen indignus esset qui legeretur, adeo autem obscœnus, ut etiamsi doctissimus esset, tamen esset a viris bonis rejiciendus. Epist. ciii. This is said too hastily; but in his Ciceronianus, where we have his deliberate judgment, he appreciates Poggio more exactly. After one of the interlocutors has called him vividæ cuiusdam eloquentiæ virum, the other replies: Naturæ satis erat, artis et eruditionis non multum; interim impuro sermonis fluxu, si Laurentio Vallæ credimus. Bebel, a German of some learning, rather older than Erasmus, in a letter quoted by Blount (Censura Auctorum in Poggio), praises Poggio very highly for his style, and prefers him to Valla. Paulus Cortesius seems not much to differ from Erasmus about Poggio, though he is more severe on Valla.

It should be added, that Tonelli's notes on the life of Poggio are useful; among other things, he points out that Poggio did not learn Greek of Emanuel Chrysoloras, as all writers on this part of literary history had hitherto supposed, but about 1423, when he was turned of forty.

[c] Coluccio Salutato belongs to the fourteenth century, and was deemed one of its greatest ornaments in learning. Ma a dir vero, says Tiraboschi, who admits his extensive erudition, relatively to his age, benchè lo stil di Coluccio abbia non rare volte energia e forza maggiore che quello della maggior parti degli altri scrittori di questi tempi, è certo però, che tanto è diverso da quello di Cicerone nella prosa, e ne' versi da quel di Virgilio, quanto appunto è diversa una scimia da un uomo. v. 537.

Cortesius, in the dialogue quoted above, says of Leonard Aretin:—Hic primus inconditam scribendi consuetudinem ad numerosum quendam sonum inflexit, et attulit hominibus nostris aliquid certe splendidius. . . . . Et ego video hunc nondum satis esse limatum, nec delicatiori fastidio tolerabilem. Atqui dialogi Joannis Ravennatis vix semel leguntur, et Coluccii Epistolæ, quæ tum in honore erant, non apparent; sed Boccaccii Genealogiam legimus, utilem illam quidem, sed non tamen cum Petrarchæ ingenio conferendam. At non videtis quantum his omnibus desit? p. 12. Of Guarino he says afterwards:—Genus tamen dicendi inconcinnum admodum est et salebrosum; utitur plerumque imprudens verbis poeticis, quod est maxime vitiosum; sed magis est in eo succus, quam color laudandus. Ma

industry. They had neither grammars nor dictionaries, in which the purest Latinity was distinguishable from the worst; they had to unlearn a barbarous jargon, made up with scraps of the Vulgate and of ecclesiastical writers, which pervades the Latin of the middle ages; they had great difficulty in resorting to purer models, from the scarcity and high price of manuscripts, as well as from their general incorrectness, which it required much attention to set right. Gasparin of Barziza took the right course, by incessantly turning over the pages of Cicero, and thus by long habit gained an instinctive sense of propriety in the use of language, which no secondary means at that time could have given him.

Latin style of that age indifferent.

3. This writer, often called Gasparin of Bergamo, his own birthplace being in the neighbourhood of that city, was born about 1370, and began to teach before the close of the century. He was transferred to Padua by the senate of Venice in 1407, and in 1410 accepted the invitation of Filippo Maria Visconti to Milan, where he remained till his death in 1431. Gasparin had here the good fortune to find Cicero de Oratore, and to restore the text of Quintilian by the help of the manuscript brought from St. Gall by Poggio, and another found in Italy by Leonard Aretin. His fame as a writer was acquired at Padua, and founded on his diligent study of Cicero.

Gasparin of Barziza.

4. It is impossible to read a page of Gasparin without perceiving that he is quite of another order of scholars from his predecessors. He is truly Ciceronian in his turn of phrases and structure of sentences, which never end awkwardly, or with a wrong arrangement of words, as is habitual with his contemporaries. Inexact expressions may of course be found, but they do not seem gross or numerous. Among his works are several orations which probably were actually delivered; they are the earliest models of that classical declamation which became so usual afterwards, and are elegant, if not very forcible. His Epistolæ ad Exercitationem accommodatæ was the first book printed at Paris. It contains a series of exercises for his pupils,

Merits of his style.

moria teneo, quendam familiarem meum suæ consuluisse, si nihil unquam scripsisset. p. 14.

probably for the sake of double translation, and merely designed to exemplify Latin idioms.[d]

Victorin of Feltre.

5. If Gasparin was the best writer of this generation, the most accomplished instructor was Victorin of Feltre, to whom the Marquis of Mantua entrusted the education of his own children. Many of the Italian nobility and some distinguished scholars were brought up under the care of Victorin in that city; and, in a very corrupt age, he was still more zealous for their moral than their literary improvement. A pleasing account of his method of discipline will be found in Tiraboschi, or more fully in Corniani, from a life written by one of Victorin's pupils named Prendilacqua.[e] "It could hardly be believed," says Tiraboschi, "that in an age of such rude manners a model of such perfect education could be found: if all to whom the care of youth is entrusted would make it theirs, what ample and rich fruits they would derive from their labours!" The learning of Victorin was extensive; he possessed a moderate library, and, rigidly demanding a minute exactness from his pupils in their interpretation of ancient authors as well as in their own compositions, laid the foundations of a propriety in style which the next age was to display. Traversari visited the school of Victorin, for whom he entertained a great regard, in 1433; it had then been for some years established.[f] No writings of Victorin have been preserved.

Leonard Aretin.

6. Among the writers of these forty years, after Gasparin of Bergamo, we may probably assign the highest place in politeness of style to Leonardo Bruni, more commonly called Aretino, from his birthplace, Arezzo. "He was the first," says Paulus Corte-

[d] Morhof, who says, primus in Italia aliquid balbutire cœpit Gasparinus, had probably never seen his writings, which are a great deal better in point of language than his own. Cortesius, however, blames Gasparin for too elaborate a style; nimia cura attenuabat orationem.

He once uses a Greek word in his letters; what he knew of the language does not otherwise appear; but he might have heard Guarino at Venice. He had not seen Pliny's Natural History, nor did he possess a Livy, but was in treaty for one. Epist., p. 200, A.D. 1415.

[e] Tiraboschi, vii. 306; Corniani, ii. 53; Heeren, p. 235. He is also mentioned with much praise for his mode of education, by his friend Ambrogio Traversari, a passage from whose Hodœporicon will be found in Heeren, p. 237. Victorin died in 1447, and was buried at the public expense, his liberality in giving gratuitous instruction to the poor having left him so.

[f] Mehus, p. 421.

sius, "who replaced the rude structure of periods by some degree of rhythm, and introduced our countrymen to something more brilliant than they had known before, though even he is not quite as polished as a fastidious delicacy would require." Aretin's History of the Goths, which, though he is silent on the obligation, is chiefly translated from Procopius, passes for his best work. In the constellation of scholars who enjoyed the sunshine of favour in the palace of Cosmo de' Medici, Leonard Aretin was one of the oldest and most prominent. He died at an advanced age in 1444, and is one of the six illustrious dead who repose in the church of Santa Croce.[g]

Revival of Greek language in Italy.

7. We come now to a very important event in literary history—the resuscitation of the study of the Greek language in Italy. During the whole course of the middle ages we find scattered instances of scholars in the west of Europe, who had acquired some knowledge of Greek—to what extent it is often a difficult question to determine. In the earlier and darker period we begin with a remarkable circumstance, already mentioned, of our own ecclesiastical history. The infant Anglo-Saxon churches, desirous to give a national form to their hierarchy, solicited the pope Vitalian to place a primate at their head. He made choice of Theodore, who not only brought to England a store of Greek manuscripts, but, through the means of his followers, imparted a knowledge of it to some of our countrymen. Bede, half a century afterwards, tells us, of course very hyperbolically, that there were still surviving disciples of Theodore and Adrian who understood the Greek and Latin languages as well as their own.[h] From these he derived,

Early Greek scholars of Europe.

[g] Madame de Staël unfortunately confounded this respectable scholar, in her Corinne, with Pietro Aretino. I remember well that Ugo Foscolo could never contain his wrath against her for this mistake.

[h] Hist. Eccles., l. v. c. 2. Usque hodie supersunt ex eorum discipulis, qui Latinam Græcamque linguam æque ac propriam in qua nati sunt, norunt. Bede's own knowledge of Greek is attested by his biographer Cuthbert; præter Latinam etiam Græcam comparaverat.

[Bede's acquaintance with Greek is attested still better by many proofs which his own works contain. Aldhelm was also a Greek scholar. See Wright's Biograph. Literaria, vol. i. p. 40, 51, 275. But when Mr. W. adds, "We might bring many passages together which seem *almost* to prove that Homer continued to be read in the schools till the end of the thirteenth century," I must withhold my assent till the passages have been both produced and well sifted. —1847.]

A manuscript in the British Museum (Cotton, Galba, i. 18) is of some import-

no doubt, his own knowledge, which may not have been extensive; but we cannot expect more, in such very unfavourable circumstances, than a superficial progress in so difficult a study. It is probable that the lessons of Theodore's disciples were not forgotten in the British and Irish monasteries. Alcuin has had credit, with no small likelihood, if not on positive authority, for an acquaintance with Greek;[i] and as he, and perhaps others from these islands, were active in aiding the efforts of Charlemagne for the restoration of letters, the slight tincture of Greek which we find in the schools founded by that emperor may have been derived from their instruction. It is, however, an equally probable hypothesis that it was communicated by Greek teachers, whom it was easy to procure. Charlemagne himself, according to Eginhard, could read though he could not speak the Greek language. Thegan reports the very same, in nearly the same words, of Louis the Debonair.[k] The former certainly intended that it should be taught in some of his schools;[m] and the Benedictines of St. Maur, in their long and laborious Histoire Littéraire de la France, have enumerated as many as seventeen persons within France, or at least the dominions of the Carlovingian house, to whom they ascribe,

Under Charlemagne and his successors.

ance in relation to this, if it be truly referred to the eighth century. It contains the Lord's Prayer in Greek, written in Anglo-Saxon characters, and appears to have belonged to some one of the name of Athelstan. Mr. Turner (Hist. of Anglo-Saxons, vol. iii. p. 396) has taken notice of this manuscript, but without mentioning its antiquity. The manner in which the words are divided shows a perfect ignorance of Greek in the writer; but the Saxon is curious in another respect, as it proves the pronunciation of Greek in the eighth century to have been modern or Romaic, and not what we hold to be ancient.

[i] C'était un homme habile dans le Grec comme dans le Latin. Hist. Litt. de la Fr. iv. 8.

[M. Jourdain observes that Thomas Aquinas understood Greek, and that he criticises the translations of Aristotle. Recherches Critiques, p. 393. But we ought not to acquiesce in this general position without examining the proofs. I doubt much whether Thomas Aquinas could read Aristotle in the original.—1853.]

[k] The passages will be found in Eichhorn, Allg. Gesch. ii. 265 and 290. That concerning Charlemagne is quoted in many other books. Eginhard says, in the same place, that Charles prayed in Latin as readily as in his own language; and Thegan, that Louis could speak Latin perfectly.

[m] Osnabrug has generally been named as the place where Charlemagne peculiarly designed that Greek should be cultivated. It seems, however, on considering the passage in the Capitularies usually quoted (Baluze, ii. 419), to have been only one out of many. Eichhorn thinks that the existence of a Greek school at Osnabrug is doubtful, but that there is more evidence in favour of Saltzburg and Ratisbon. Allg. Gesch. der Cultur, ii. 383. The words of the Capitulary are, Græcas et Latinas Scholas in perpetuum manere ordinavimus.

on the authority of contemporaries, a portion of this learning.[n] These were all educated in the schools of Charlemagne, except the most eminent in the list, John Scotus Erigena. It is not necessary by any means to suppose that he had acquired by travel the Greek tongue, which he possessed sufficiently to translate, though very indifferently, the works attributed in that age to Dionysius the Areopagite.[o] Most writers of the ninth century, according to the Benedictines, make use of some Greek words. It appears by a letter of the famous Hincmar, archbishop of Rheims, who censures his nephew Hincmar of Laon for doing this affectedly, that glossaries, from which they picked those exotic flowers, were already in use. Such a glossary in Greek and Latin, compiled under Charles the Bald for the use of the church of Laon, was, at the date of the publication of the Histoire Littéraire de la France, near the middle of the last century, in the library of St. Germain des Prés.[p] We may thus perceive the means of giving the air of more learning than was actually possessed, and are not to infer from these sprinklings of Greek in mediæval writings, whether in their proper characters or Latinised, which is much more frequent, that the poets and profane or even ecclesiastical writers were accessible in a French or English monastery. Neither of the Hincmars seems to have understood the Greek language; and Tiraboschi admits that he cannot assert any Italian writer of the ninth century to be acquainted with it.[q]

In the tenth and eleventh centuries.

8. The tenth century furnishes not quite so many proofs of Greek scholarship. It was, however, studied by some brethren in the abbey of St. Gall, a celebrated seat of learning for those times, and the library of which, it is said, still bears witness, in its copious collection of manuscripts, to the early intercourse between the scholars of Ireland and those of the Continent. Baldric, bishop of Utrecht,[r]

[n] Hist. Litt. de la France, vol. v. Launoy had commenced this enumeration in his excellent treatise on the schools of Charlemagne; but he has not carried it quite so far. See, too, Eichhorn, Allg. Gesch. ii. 420; and Gesch. der Litt. i. 824. Meiners thinks that Greek was better known in the ninth century, through Charlemagne's exertions, than for five hundred years afterwards, ii. 367.

[o] Eichhorn, ii. 237; Brucker; Guizot.

[p] Hist. Litt. de la France, vol. iv.; Ducange, præf. in Glossar. p. 40.

[q] iii. 206.

[r] Baldric lived under Henry the Fowler. His

Bruno of Cologne, and Gerbert, besides a few more whom the historians of St. Maur record, possessed a tolerable acquaintance with the Greek language. They mention a fact that throws light on the means by which it might occasionally be learned. Some natives of that country, doubtless expatriated catholics, took refuge in the diocese of Toul, under the protection of the bishop, not long before 1000. They formed separate societies, performing divine service in their own language, and with their own rites.[s] It is probable, the Benedictines observe, that Humbert, afterwards a cardinal, acquired from them that knowledge of the language by which he distinguished himself in controversy with their countrymen.[t] This great schism of the church, which the Latins deeply felt, might induce some to study a language from which alone they could derive authorities in disputation with these antagonists. But it had also the more unequivocal effect of drawing to the west some of those Greeks who maintained their communion with the church of Rome. The emigration of these into the diocese of Toul is not a single fact of the kind, and it is probably recorded from the remarkable circumstance of their living in community. We find from a passage in Heric, a prelate in the reign of Charles the Bald, that this had already begun—at the commencement, in fact, of the great schism.[u] Greek bishops and Greek monks are mentioned as settlers in France during the early part of the eleventh century. This was especially in Normandy, under the protection of Richard II., who died in 1028. Even monks from Mount Sinai came to Rouen to share in his liberality.[x] The Benedictines ascribe the preservation of some taste for the Greek and Oriental tongues to these strangers. The list, however, of the learned in them is very short, considering the erudition of these fathers, and their disposition to make the most of all they met with. Greek

His biographer says:—Nullum fuit studiorum liberalium genus in omni Græca et Latina eloquentia quod ingenii sui vivacitatem aufugeret. Launoy, p. 117; Hist. Litt. vi. 50.

[s] Vol. vi. p. 57.

[t] Vol. vii. p. 528.

[u] Ducange, præfat. in Glossar., p. 41.

[x] Hist. Litt. de la France, vii. 69, 124 et alibi. A Greek manuscript in the Royal Library at Paris, containing the Liturgy according to the Greek ritual, was written in 1022, by a monk named *Helie* (they do not give the Latin name), who seems to have lived in Normandy. If this stands for Elias, he was probably a Greek by birth.

books are mentioned in the few libraries of which we read in the eleventh century.[y]

9. The number of Greek scholars seems not much more considerable in the twelfth century, notwithstanding the general improvement of that age. The Benedictines reckon about ten names, among which we do not find that of Bernard.[z] They are inclined also to deny the pretensions of Abelard;[a] but, as that great man finds a very hostile tribunal in these fathers, we may pause about this, especially as they acknowledge Eloise to have understood both the Greek and Hebrew languages. She established a Greek mass for Whitsunday in the Paraclete convent, which was sung as late as the fifteenth century; and a Greek missal in Latin characters was still preserved there.[b] Heeren speaks more favourably of Abelard's learning, who translated passages from Plato.[c] The pretensions of John of Salisbury are slighter; he seems proud of his Greek, but betrays gross ignorance in etymology.[d] In the twelfth.

10. The thirteenth century was a more inauspicious period for learning; yet here we can boast not only of John Basing, archdeacon of St. Alban's, who returned from Athens about 1240, laden, if we are bound to believe this literally, with Greek books, but of Roger Bacon and Robert Grostête, bishop of Lincoln. It is admitted that Bacon had some acquaintance with Greek; and it appears by a passage in Matthew Paris that a Greek priest who had obtained a benefice at St. Alban's gave such assistance to Grostête as enabled him to translate the Testament of the Twelve Patriarchs into In the thirteenth.

[y] Hist. Litt. de la France, vii. p. 48.

[z] Id., p. 94, 151. Macarius, abbot of St. Fleury, is said to have compiled a Greek lexicon, which has been several times printed under the name of Beatus Benedictus. [It is one of the glossaries which follow the Thesaurus of Henry Stephens. Journal des Savans, May, 1829. —1842.]

[a] Hist. Litt. de la France, xii. 147. [Mr. Cousin, who has paid more attention than any one to the writings of Abelard, thinks that he was ignorant of Greek beyond a few words; probably Eloise had not much surpassed her preceptor. Fragmens Philosophiques, vol. iv. p. 687, or Introduction aux Œuvres d'Abelard, in Documens Inédits, p. 44. Abelard only says of her, that she was Græcæ non expers literaturæ; afterwards, indeed, he uses the words, peritiam adepta.—1847.]

[b] Id. xii. 642.

[c] P. 204. His Greek was, no doubt, rather scanty, and not sufficient to give him an insight into ancient philosophy; in fact, if his learning had been greater, he could only read such manuscripts as fell into his hands; and there were very few then in France. Vide supra.

[d] Ibid. John derives analytica from ἀνὰ and λέξις.

Latin.[e] This is a confirmation of what has been suggested above as the probable means by which a knowledge of that language, in the total deficiency of scholastic education, was occasionally imparted to persons of unusual zeal for learning. And it leads us to another reflection, that by a knowledge of Greek, when we find it asserted of a mediæval theologian like Grostête, we are not to understand an acquaintance with the great classical authors who were latent in Eastern monasteries, but the power of reading some petty treatise of the fathers, or, as in this instance, an apocryphal legend, or at best perhaps some of the later commentators on Aristotle. Grostête was a man of considerable merit, but has had his share of applause.

Little appearance of it in the 14th century.

11. The titles of mediæval works are not unfrequently taken from the Greek language, as the Polycraticus and Metalogicus of John of Salisbury, or the Philobiblon of Richard Aungerville of Bury. In this little volume, written about 1343, I have counted five instances of single Greek words. And, what is more important, Aungerville declares that he had caused Greek and Hebrew grammars to be drawn up for students.[f] But we have no other record of such grammars. It would be natural to infer from this passage that some persons, either in France or England, were occupied in the study of the Greek language. And yet we find nothing to corroborate this presumption; all ancient learning was neglected in the fourteenth century; nor do I know that one man on this side of the Alps, except Aungerville himself, is reputed to have been versed in Greek during that period. I cannot speak positively as to Berchœur, the most learned man in France. The council of Vienne, indeed, in

[e] Matt. Par., p. 520. See also Turner's History of England, iv. 180. It is said in some books that Grostête made a translation of Suidas. But this is to be understood merely of a legendary story found in that writer's lexicon. Pegge's Life of Grostête, p. 291. The entire work he certainly could not have translated, nor is it at all credible that he had a copy of it. With respect to the doubt I have hinted in the text as to the great number of manuscripts said to be brought to England by John Basing, it is founded on their subsequent non appearance. We find very few, if any, Greek manuscripts in England at the end of the fifteenth century.

Michael Scott, "the wizard of dreaded fame," pretended to translate Aristotle; but is charged with having appropriated the labours of one Andrew, a Jew, as his own. Meiners, ii. 664.

[f] C. x.

1311, had ordered the establishment of professors in the Greek, Hebrew, Chaldaic, and Arabic languages, at Avignon, and in the universities of Paris, Oxford, Bologna, and Salamanca. But this decree remained a dead letter.

Some traces of Greek in Italy.

12. If we now turn to Italy, we shall find, as is not wonderful, rather more frequent instances of acquaintance with a living language in common use with a great neighbouring people. Gradenigo, in an essay on this subject,[g] has endeavoured to refute what he supposes to be the universal opinion, that the Greek tongue was first taught in Italy by Chrysoloras and Guarino at the end of the fourteenth century; contending that, from the eleventh inclusive, there are numerous instances of persons conversant with it; besides the evidence afforded by inscriptions in Greek characters found in some churches, by the use of Greek psalters and other liturgical offices, by the employment of Greek painters in churches, and by the frequent intercourse between the two countries. The latter presumptions have in fact considerable weight; and those who should contend for an absolute ignorance of the Greek language, oral as well as written, in Italy, would go too far. The particular instances brought forward by Gradenigo are about thirty. Of these the first is Papias, who has quoted five lines of Hesiod.[h] Lanfranc had also a considerable acquaintance with the language.[i] Peter Lombard, in his Liber Sententiarum, the systematic basis of scholastic theology, introduces many Greek words, and explains them rightly.[k] But this list is not very long; and when we find the surname Bifarius given to one Ambrose of Bergamo in the eleventh century, on account of his capacity of speaking both languages, it may be conceived that the accomplishment was somewhat rare. Mehus, in his very learned life of Traversari, has mentioned two or three names, among whom is the emperor Frederic II. (not indeed strictly an Italian), that do not appear in Gradenigo.[m] But

[g] Ragionamento Istorico-critico sopra la Litteratura Greco-Italiana. Brescia, 1759.

[h] P. 37. These are very corruptly given, through the fault of a transcriber; for Papias has translated them into tolerable Latin verse.

[i] Hist. Litt. de la France, vii. 144.

[k] Meiners, iii. 11.

[m] P. 155, 217, &c. Add to these authorities, Muratori, dissert. 44; Brucker, iii. 644, 647; Tiraboschi, v. 393.

Tiraboschi conceives, on the other hand, that the latter has inserted some on insufficient grounds. Christine of Pisa is mentioned, I think, by neither; she was the daughter of an Italian astronomer, but lived at the court of Charles V. of France, and was the most accomplished literary lady of that age.[n]

Corruption of Greek language itself.

13. The intercourse between Greece and the west of Europe, occasioned by commerce and by the crusades, had little or no influence upon literature. For, besides the general indifference to it in those classes of society which were thus brought into some degree of contact with the Eastern Empire, we must remember that, although Greek, even to the capture of Constantinople by Mahomet II., was a living language in that city, spoken by the superior ranks of both sexes with tolerable purity, it had degenerated among the common people, and almost universally among the inhabitants of the provinces and islands, into that corrupt form, or rather new language, which we call Romaic.[o] The progress of this innovation went on by steps very similar to those by which the Latin was transformed in the West, though it was not so rapid or complete. A manuscript of the twelfth century, quoted by Du Cange from the Royal Library at Paris, appears to be the oldest written specimen of the modern Greek that has been produced; but the oral change had been gradually going forward for several preceding centuries.[p]

14. The Byzantine literature was chiefly valuable by illustrating, or preserving in fragments, the historians,

[n] Tiraboschi, v. 388, vouches for Christine's knowledge of Greek. She was a good poetess in French, and altogether a very remarkable person.

[o] Filelfo says, in one of his epistles, dated 1441, that the language spoken in Peloponnesus "adeo est depravata, ut nihil omnino sapiat priscæ illius et eloquentissimæ Græciæ." At Constantinople the case was better; "viri eruditi sunt nonnulli, et culti mores, et sermo etiam nitidus." In a letter of Coluccio Salutato, near the end of the fourteenth century, he says that Plutarch had been translated de Græco in Græcum vulgare. Mehus, p. 294. This seems to have been done at Rhodes. I quote this to remove any difficulty that others may feel, for I believe the Romaic Greek is much older. The progress of corruption in Greek is sketched in the Quarterly Review, vol. xxii., probably by the pen of the Bishop of London. Its symptoms were very similar to those of Latin in the West—abbreviation of words, and indifference to right inflexions. See also Col. Leake's Researches in the Morea. Eustathius has many Romaic words; yet no one in the twelfth century had more learning.

[p] Du Cange, præfatio in Glossarium mediæ et infimæ Græcitatis.

philosophers, and, in some measure, the poets of antiquity. Constantinople and her empire produced abundantly men of erudition, but few of genius or of taste. But this erudition was now rapidly on the decline. No one was left in Greece, according to Petrarch, after the death of Leontius Pilatus, who understood Homer; words not, perhaps, to be literally taken, but expressive of what he conceived to be their general indifference to the poet; and it seems very probable that some ancient authors, whom we should most desire to recover, especially the lyric poets of the Doric and Æolic dialects, have perished, because they had become unintelligible to the transcribers of the Lower Empire; though this has also been ascribed to the scrupulousness of the clergy. An absorbing fondness for theological subtilties, far more trifling among the Greeks than in the schools of the West, conspired to produce a neglect of studies so remote as heathen poetry. Aurispa tells Ambrogio Traversari that he found they cared little about profane literature. Nor had the Greek learning ever recovered the blow that the capture of Constantinople by the crusaders in 1204, and the establishment for sixty years of a Latin and illiterate dynasty, inflicted upon it.[q] We trace many classical authors to that period, of whom we know nothing later, and the compilations of ancient history by industrious Byzantines came to an end. Meantime the language, where best preserved, had long lost the delicacy and precision of its syntax; the true meaning of the tenses, moods, and voices of the verb was overlooked or guessed at; a kind of Latinism, or something at least not ancient in structure and rhythm, shows itself in their poetry; and this imperfect knowledge of their once beautiful language is unfortunately too manifest in the grammars of the Greek exiles of the fifteenth century, which have so long been the groundwork of classical education in Europe.

Character of Byzantine literature.

15. We now come to the proper period of the restoration of Greek learning. In the year 1339, Barlaam, a Calabrian by birth, but long resident in Greece, and deemed one of the most learned men of that age, was entrusted by the

Petrarch and Boccace learn Greek.

[q] An enumeration—and it is a long one—of the Greek books not wholly lost till this time will be found in Heeren, p. 125, and also in his Essai sur les Croisades.

emperor Cantacuzenus with a mission to Italy.[r] Petrarch, in 1342, as Tiraboschi fixes the time, endeavoured to learn Greek from him, but found the task too arduous, or rather had not sufficient opportunity to go on with it.[s] Boccaccio, some years afterwards, succeeded better with the help of Leontius Pilatus, a Calabrian also by birth,[t] who made a prose translation of Homer for his use, and for whom he is said to have procured a public appointment as teacher of the Greek language at Florence in 1361. He remained here about three years; but we read nothing of any other disciples; and the man himself was of too unsocial and forbidding a temper to conciliate them.[u]

Few acquainted with the language in their time.

16. According to a passage in one of Petrarch's letters, fancifully addressed to Homer, there were at that time not above ten persons in Italy who knew how to value the old father of the poets; five at the most in Florence, one in Bologna, two in Verona, one in Mantua, one in Perugia, but none at Rome.[x] Some pains have been thrown away in attempting to retrieve the names of those to whom he alludes: the letter shows, at least, that there was very little pretension to Greek learning in his age; for I am not convinced that he meant all these ten persons, among whom he seems to reckon himself, to be considered as skilled in that tongue. And we must not be led away by the instances partially collected by Gradenigo out of the whole mass of extant records, to lose sight of the great general fact that Greek literature was lost in Italy for seven hundred years, in the words of Leonard Aretin, before the arrival of Chrysoloras.

[r] Mehus; Tiraboschi, v. 398; De Sade, i. 406; Biog. Univ., Barlaam.

[s] Incubueram alacri spe magnoque desiderio, sed peregrinæ linguæ novitas et festina præceptoris absentia præciderunt propositum meum. It has been said, and probably with some truth, that Greek, or at least a sort of Greek, was preserved as a living language in Calabria; not because Greek colonies had once been settled in some cities, but because that part of Italy was not lost to the Byzantine empire till about three centuries before the time of Barlaam and Pilatus. They, however, had gone to a better source; and I should have great doubts as to the goodness of Calabrian Greek in the fourteenth century, which, of course, are not removed by the circumstance that in some places the church service was performed in that language. Heeren, I find, is of the same opinion. P. 287.

[t] Many have taken Pilatus for a native of Thessalonica: even Hody has fallen into this mistake, but Petrarch's letters show the contrary.

[u] Hody de Græcis illustribus, p. 2; Mehus, p. 273; De Sade, iii. 625. Gibbon has erroneously supposed this translation to have been made by Boccace himself.

[x] De Sade, iii. 627; Tiraboschi, v. 371. 400; Heeren, 294.

The language is one thing, and the learning contained in it is another. For all the purposes of taste and erudition there was no Greek in western Europe during the middle ages; if we look only at the knowledge of bare words, we have seen there was a very slender portion.

17. The true epoch of the revival of Greek literature in Italy, these attempts of Petrarch and Boccace having produced no immediate effect, though they evidently must have excited a desire for learning, cannot be placed before the year 1395,[y] when Emanuel Chrysoloras, previously known as an ambassador from Constantinople to the western powers in order to solicit assistance against the Turks, was induced to return to Florence as public teacher of Greek. He passed from thence to various Italian universities, and became the preceptor of several early Hellenists.[z] The first, and perhaps the most eminent and useful of these, was Guarino Guarini of Verona, born in 1370. He acquired his knowledge of Greek under Chrysoloras at Constantinople, before the arrival of the latter in Italy. Guarino, upon his return, became professor of rhetoric, first at Venice and other cities of Lombardy, then at Florence, and ultimately at Ferrara, where he closed a long life of unremitting and useful labour in 1460. John Aurispa of Sicily came to the field rather later, but his labours were not less profitable. He brought back to Italy 238 manu-

It is taught by Chrysoloras about 1395.

His disciples.

[y] This is the date fixed by Tiraboschi; others refer it to 1391, 1396, 1397, or 1399.

[z] Literæ per hujus belli intercapedines mirabile quantum per Italiam increvere; accedente tunc primum cognitione literarum Græcarum, quæ septingentis jam annis apud nostros homines desierant esse in usu. Retulit autem Græcam disciplinam ad nos Chrysoloras Byzantinus, vir domi nobilis ac literarum Græcarum peritissimus. Leonard Aretin apud Hody, p. 28. See also an extract from Manetti's Life of Boccace, in Hody, p. 61.

Satis constat Chrysoloram Byzantinum transmarinam illam disciplinam in Italiam advexisse; quo doctore adhibito primum nostri homines totius exercitationes atque artis ignari, cognitis Græcis literis, vehementer sese ad eloquentiæ studia excitaverunt. P. Cortesius de hominibus doctis, p. 6.

The first visit of Chrysoloras had produced an inclination towards the study of Greek. Coluccio Salutato, in a letter to Demetrius Cydonius, who had accompanied Chrysoloras, says, Multorum animos ad linguam Helladum accendisti, ut jam videre videar multos fore Græcarum literarum post paucorum annorum curricula non tepide studiosos. Mehus, p. 356.

The Erotemata of Chrysoloras, an introduction to Greek grammar, was the first, and long the only, channel to a knowledge of that language, save oral instruction. It was several times printed, even after the grammars of Gaza and Lascaris had come more into use. An abridgment, by Guarino of Verona, with some additions of his own, was printed at Ferrara in 1509. Ginguéné, iii. 283.

scripts from Greece about 1423, and thus put his country in possession of authors hardly known to her by name. Among these were Plato, Plotinus, Diodorus, Arrian, Dio Cassius, Strabo, Pindar, Callimachus, Appian. After teaching Greek at Bologna and Florence, Aurispa also ended a length of days under the patronage of the house of Este, at Ferrara. To these may be added, in the list of public instructors in Greek before 1440, Filelfo, a man still more known by his virulent disputes with his contemporaries than by his learning; who, returning from Greece in 1427, laden with manuscripts, was not long afterwards appointed to the chair of rhetoric, that is, of Latin and Greek philology, at Florence; and, according to his own account, excited the admiration of the whole city.[a] But his vanity was excessive, and his contempt of others not less so. Poggio was one of his enemies; and their language towards each other is a noble specimen of the decency with which literary and personal quarrels were carried on.[b] It has been observed that Gianozzo Manetti, a contemporary scholar, is less known than others, chiefly because the mildness of his character spared him the altercations to which they owe a part of their celebrity.[c]

[a] Universa in me civitas conversa est; omnes me diligunt, honorant omnes, ac summis laudibus in cœlum efferunt. Meum nomen in ore est omnibus. Nec primarii cives modo, cum per urbem incedo, sed nobilissimæ fœminæ honorandi mei gratiâ loco cedunt, tantumque mihi deferunt, ut me pudeat tanti cultûs. Auditores sunt quotidie ad quadringentos, vel fortassis et amplius; et hi quidem magna in parte viri grandiores et ex ordine senatorio. Philelph. Epist. ad ann. 1428.

[b] Shepherd's Life of Poggio, ch. vi. and viii.

[c] Hody was, perhaps, the first who threw much light on the early studies of Greek in Italy; and his book, De Græcis illustribus, linguæ Græcæ instauratoribus, will be read with pleasure and advantage by every lover of literature; though Mehus, who came with more exuberant erudition to the subject, has pointed out a few errors. But more is to be found as to its native cultivators, Hody being chiefly concerned with the Greek refugees, in Bayle, Fabricius, Niceron, Mehus, Zeno, Tiraboschi, Meiners, Roscoe, Heeren, Shepherd, Corniani, Ginguéné, and the Biographie Universelle, whom I name in chronological order.

As it is impossible to dwell on the subject within the limits of these pages, I will refer the reader to the most useful of the above writings, some of which, being merely biographical collections, do not give the connected information he would require. The Lives of Poggio and of Lorenzo de' Medici will make him familiar with the literary history of Italy for the whole fifteenth century, in combination with public events, as it is best learned. I need not say that Tiraboschi is a source of vast knowledge to those who can encounter two quarto volumes. Ginguéné's third volume is chiefly borrowed from these, and may be read with great advantage. Finally, a clear, full, and accurate account of those times will be found in Heeren. It will be understood that all these works relate to the revival of Latin as well as Greek.

18. Many of these cultivators of the Greek language devoted their leisure to translating the manuscripts brought into Italy. The earliest of these was Peter Paul Vergerio (commonly called the elder, to distinguish him from a more celebrated man of the same names in the sixteenth century), a scholar of Chrysoloras, but not till he was rather advanced in years. He made, by order of the emperor Sigismund, and therefore not earlier than 1410, a translation of Arrian, which is said to exist in the Vatican library; but we know little of its merits.[d] A more renowned person was Ambrogio Traversari, a Florentine monk of the order of Camaldoli, who employed many years in this useful labour. No one of that age has left a more respectable name for private worth; his epistles breathe a spirit of virtue, of kindness to his friends, and of zeal for learning. In the opinion of his contemporaries he was placed, not quite justly, on a level with Leonard Aretin for his knowledge of Latin, and he surpassed him in Greek.[e] Yet neither his translations, nor those of his contemporaries, Guarino of Verona, Poggio, Leonardo Aretino, Filelfo, who, with several others, rather before 1440, or not long afterwards, rendered the historians and philosophers of Greece familiar to Italy, can be extolled as correct, or as displaying what is truly to be called a knowledge of either language. Vossius, Casaubon, and Huet speak with much dispraise of most of these early translations from Greek into Latin. The Italians knew not enough of the original, and the Greeks were not masters enough of Latin. Gaza, upon the whole, "than whom no one is more successful," says Erasmus, "whether he renders Greek into Latin, or Latin into Greek," is reckoned the most elegant, and Argyropulus the most exact. But George of Trebizond,

Translations from Greek into Latin.

[d] Biogr. Univ.: Vergerio. He seems to have written very good Latin, if we may judge by the extracts in Corniani, ii. 61.

[e] The Hodœporicon of Traversari, though not of importance as a literary work, serves to prove, according to Bayle (Camaldoli, note D), that the author was an honest man, and that he lived in a very corrupt age. It is an account of the visitation of some convents belonging to his order. The Life of Ambrogio Traversari has been written by Mehus very copiously, and with abundant knowledge of the times; it is a great source of the literary history of Italy. There is a pretty good account of him in Niceron, vol. xix., and a short one in Roscoe; but the fullest biography of the man himself will be found in Meiners, Lebensbeschreibungen berühmter Männer, vol. ii. p. 222-307.

Filelfo, Leonard Aretin, Poggio, Valla, Perotti, are rather severely dealt with by the sharp critics of later times.[f] For this reproach does not fall only on the scholars of the first generation, but on their successors, except Politian, down nearly to the close of the fifteenth century. Yet, though it is necessary to point out the deficiencies of classical erudition at this time, lest the reader should hastily conclude that the praises bestowed upon it are less relative to the previous state of ignorance, and the difficulties with which that generation had to labour, than they really are, this cannot affect our admiration and gratitude towards men who, by their diligence and ardour in acquiring and communicating knowledge, excited that thirst for improvement, and laid those foundations of it, which rendered the ensuing age so glorious in the annals of literature.

Public encouragement delayed.

19. They did not uniformly find any great public encouragement in the early stages of their teaching. On the contrary, Aurispa met with some opposition to philological literature at Bologna.[g] The civilians and philosophers were pleased to treat the innovators as men who wanted to set showy against solid learning. Nor was the state of Italy and of the papacy during the long schism very favourable to their object. Ginguéné remarks that patronage was more indispensable in the fifteenth century than it had been in the last. Dante and Petrarch shone out by a paramount force of genius; but the men of learning required the encouragement of power in order to excite and sustain their industry.

20. That encouragement, however it may have been

[f] Baillet, Jugemens des Savans, ii. 376, &c.; Blount, Censura Auctorum, in nominibus nuncupatis; Hody, sæpies; Niceron, vol. ix. in Perotti; see also a letter of Erasmus in Jortin's Life, ii. 425.

Filelfo tells us of a perplexity into which Ambrogio Traversari and Carlo Marsupini, perhaps the two principal Greek scholars in Italy after himself and Guarino, were thrown by this line of Homer:—

Βούλομ' ἐγὼ λαὸν σόον ἔμμεναι, ἢ ἀπόλεσθαι.

The first thought it meant populum aut salvum esse aut perire; which Filelfo justly calls, inepta interpretatio et prava. Marsupini said ἢ ἀπόλεσθαι was aut ipsum perire. Filelfo, after exulting over them, gives the true meaning. Phileph. Epist. ad ann. 1449.

Traversari complains much, in one of his letters, of the difficulty he found in translating Diogenes Laertius, lib. vii. epist. ii.; but Meiners, though admitting many errors, thinks this one of the best among the early translations, ii. 290.

[g] Tiraboschi, vii. 301.

delayed, had been accorded before the year 1440. Eugenius IV. was the first pope who displayed an inclination to favour the learned. They found a still more liberal patron in Alfonso, king of Naples, who, first of all European princes, established the interchange of praise and pension, both, however, well deserved, with Filelfo, Poggio, Valla, Beccatelli, and other eminent men. This seems to have begun before 1440, though it was more conspicuous afterwards until his death in 1458. The earliest literary academy was established at Naples by Alfonso, of which Antonio Beccatelli, more often called Panormita from his birthplace, was the first president, as Pontano was the second. Nicolas of Este, marquis of Ferrara, received literary men in his hospitable court. But none were so celebrated or useful in this patronage of letters as Cosmo de' Medici, the Pericles of Florence, who, at the period with which we are now concerned, was surrounded by Traversari, Niccolo Niccoli, Leonardo Aretino, Poggio; all ardent to retrieve the treasures of Greek and Roman learning. Filelfo alone, malignant and irascible, stood aloof from the Medicean party, and poured his venom in libels on Cosmo and the chief of his learned associates. Niccolì, a wealthy citizen of Florence, deserves to be remembered among these; not for his writings, since he left none; but on account of his care for the good instruction of youth, which has made Meiners call him the Florentine Socrates, and for his liberality as well as diligence in collecting books and monuments of antiquity. The public library of St. Mark was founded on a bequest by Niccolì, in 1437, of his own collection of eight hundred manuscripts. It was, too, at his instigation, and that of Traversari, that Cosmo himself, about this time, laid the foundation of that which, under his grandson, acquired the name of the Laurentian library.[h]

But fully accorded before 1440.

21. As the dangers of the Eastern Empire grew more imminent, a few that had still endeavoured to preserve in Greece the purity of their language, and the speculations of ancient philosophy, turned their eyes towards a haven that

Emigration of learned Greeks to Italy.

[h] I refer to the same authorities, but especially to the Life of Traversari in Meiners, Lebensbeschreibungen, ii. 294. The suffrages of older authors are collected by Baillet and Blount.

seemed to solicit the glory of protecting them. The first of these that is well known was Theodore Gaza, who fled from his birthplace, Thessalonica, when it fell under the Turkish yoke in 1430. He rapidly acquired the Latin language by the help of Victorin of Feltre.[1] Gaza became afterwards, but not, perhaps, within the period to which this chapter is limited, rector of the university of Ferrara. In this city Eugenius IV. held a council in 1438, removed next year, on account of sickness, to Florence, in order to reconcile the Greek and Latin churches. Though it is notorious that the appearances of success which attended this hard bargain of the strong with the weak were very fallacious, the presence of several Greeks, skilled in their own language, and even in their ancient philosophy, Pletho, Bessarion, Gaza, stimulated the noble love of truth and science that burned in the bosoms of enlightened Italians. Thus, in 1440, the spirit of ancient learning was already diffused on that side the Alps: the Greek language might be learned in at least four or five cities, and an acquaintance with it was a recommendation to the favour of the great; while the establishment of universities at Pavia, Turin, Ferrara, and Florence, since the beginning of the present century, or near the close of the last, bore witness to the generous emulation which they served to redouble and concentrate.

Causes of enthusiasm for antiquity in Italy.

22. It is an interesting question, What were the causes of this enthusiasm for antiquity which we find in the beginning of the fifteenth century?—a burst of public feeling that seems rather sudden, but prepared by several circumstances that lie farther back in Italian history. The Italians had for some generations learned more to identify themselves with the great people that had subdued the world. The fall of the house of Swabia, releasing their necks from a foreign yoke, had given them a prouder sense of nationality; while the name of Roman emperor was systematically associated by one party with ancient tradition; and the study of the civil law, barbarously ignorant as its professors often were, had at least the effect of keeping alive a mysterious veneration for antiquity. The

[1] Victorin perhaps exchanged instruction with his pupil; for we find by a letter of Traversari (p. 421, edit. Mehus), that he was himself teaching Greek in 1433.

monuments of ancient Italy were perpetual witnesses; their inscriptions were read; it was enough that a few men like Petrarch should animate the rest; it was enough that learning should become honourable, and that there should be the means of acquiring it. The story of Rienzi, familiar to every one, is a proof what enthusiasm could be kindled by ancient recollections. Meantime the laity became better instructed; a mixed race, ecclesiastics, but not priests, and capable alike of enjoying the benefices of the church or of returning from it to the world, were more prone to literary than theological pursuits. The religious scruples which had restrained churchmen, in the darker ages, from perusing heathen writers by degrees gave way, as the spirit of religion itself grew more objective, and directed itself more towards maintaining the outward church in its orthodoxy of profession and in its secular power, than towards cultivating devout sentiments in the bosom.

23. The principal Italian cities became more wealthy and more luxurious after the middle of the thirteenth century. Books, though still very dear, comparatively with the present value of money, were much less so than in other parts of Europe.[k] In Milan, about 1300, there were fifty persons who lived by copying them. At Bologna it was also a regular occupation at fixed prices.[m] In this state of social prosperity, the keen relish of Italy for intellectual excellence had time to develop itself. A style of painting appeared in the works of Giotto and his followers, rude and imperfect, according to the skilfulness of later times, but in itself pure, noble, and expressive, and well adapted

Advanced state of society.

[k] Savigny thinks the price of books in the middle ages has been much exaggerated, and that we are apt to judge by a few instances of splendid volumes, which give us no more notion of ordinary prices than similar proofs of luxury in collectors do at present. Thousands of manuscripts are extant, and the sight of most of them may convince us that they were written at no extraordinary cost. He then gives a long list of law-books, the prices of which he has found recorded. Gesch. des Römischen Rechts, iii. 549. But unless this were accompanied with a better standard of value than a mere monetary one, which last Savigny has given very minutely, it can afford little information. The impression left on my mind, without comparing these prices closely with those of other commodities, was that books were in real value very considerably dearer (that is, in the ratio of several units to one) than at present, which is confirmed by many other evidences.

[m] Tiraboschi, iv. 72-80. The price for copying a Bible was eighty Bolognese livres, three of which were equal to two gold florins.

to reclaim the taste from the extravagance of romance to classic simplicity. Those were ready for the love of Virgil, who had formed their sense of beauty by the figures of Giotto and the language of Dante. The subject of Dante is truly mediæval; but his style, the clothing of poetry, bears the strongest marks of his acquaintance with antiquity. The influence of Petrarch was far more direct, and has already been pointed out.

Exclusive study of antiquity.

24. The love of Greek and Latin absorbed the minds of Italian scholars, and effaced all regard to every other branch of literature. Their own language was nearly silent; few condescended so much as to write letters in it; as few gave a moment's attention to physical science, though we find it mentioned, perhaps as remarkable, in Victorin of Feltre, that he had some fondness for geometry, and had learned to understand Euclid.[n] But even in Latin they wrote very little that can be deemed worthy of remembrance, or even that can be mentioned at all. The ethical dialogues of Francis Barbaro, a noble Venetian, on the married life (de re uxoria),[o] and of Poggio on nobility, are almost the only books that fall within this period, except declamatory invectives or panegyrics, and other productions of circumstance. Their knowledge was not yet exact enough to let them venture upon critical philology; though Niccolì and Traversari were silently occupied in the useful task of correcting the text of manuscripts, faulty beyond description in the later centuries. Thus we must consider Italy as still at school, active, acute, sanguine, full of promise, but not yet become really learned, or capable of doing more than excite the emulation of other nations.

25. But we find very little corresponding sympathy with this love of classical literature in other parts of Europe; not so much owing to the want of intercourse,

[n] Meiners, Lebensbeschr., ii. 293.

[o] Barbaro was a scholar of Gasparin in Latin. He had probably learned Greek of Guarino, for it is said that, on the visit of the emperor John Paleologus to Italy in 1423, he was addressed by two noble Venetians, Leonardo Giustiniani and Francesco Barbaro, in as good language as if they had been born in Greece. Andrès, iii. 33. The treatise de re uxoria, which was published about 1417, made a considerable impression in Italy. Some account of it may be found in Shepherd's Life of Poggio, ch. iii., and in Corniani, ii. 137, who thinks it the only work of moral philosophy in the fifteenth century which is not a servile copy of some ancient system. He was grandfather of the more celebrated Hermolaus Barbarus.

as to a difference of external circumstances, and still more of national character and acquired habits.

Classical learning in France low.

Clemangis, indeed, rather before the end of the fourteenth century, is said by Crevier to have restored the study of classical antiquity in France, after an intermission of two centuries;[p] and Eichhorn deems his style superior to that of most contemporary Italians.[q] Even the Latin verses of Clemangis are praised by the same author, as the first that had been tolerably written on this side the Alps for two hundred years. But we do not find much evidence that he produced any effect upon Latin literature in France. The general style was as bad as before. Their writers employed not only the barbarous vocabulary of the schools, but even French words with Latin terminations adapted to them.[r] We shall see that the renovation of polite letters in France must be dated long afterwards. Several universities were established in that kingdom; but even if universities had been always beneficial to literature, which was not the case during the prevalence of scholastic disputation, the civil wars of one unhappy reign, and the English invasions of another, could not but retard the progress of all useful studies. Some Greeks, about 1430, are said to have demanded a stipend, in pursuance of a decree of the council of Vienne in the preceding century, for teaching their language in the university of Paris. The nation of France, one of the four into which that university was divided, assented to this suggestion; but we find no other steps taken in relation to it. In 1455, it is said that the Hebrew language was publicly taught.[s]

Much more so in England.

26. Of classical learning in England we can tell no favourable story. The Latin writers of the fifteenth century, few in number, are still more insignificant in value; they possess scarce an ordinary knowledge of grammar; to say that they are

[p] Hist. de l'Université de Paris, iii. 189.

[q] Gesch. der Litteratur, ii. 242. Meiners (Vergleich. der Sitten, iii. 33) extols Clemangis in equally high terms. He is said to have read lectures on the rhetoric of Cicero and Aristotle. Id. ii. 647. Was there a translation of the latter so early?

[r] Bulæus, Hist. Univ. Paris, apud Heeren, p. 118.

[s] Crevier, iv. 43. Heeren, p. 121.—[Daunou says (Journal des Savans, May, 1829), that we might find names and books to show that the study of Greek was not totally interrupted in France from 1300 to 1453.—1842.]

full of barbarisms and perfectly inelegant, is hardly necessary. The university of Oxford was not less frequented at this time than in the preceding century, though it was about to decline; but its pursuits were as nugatory and pernicious to real literature as before.[t] Poggio says, more than once, in writing from England about 1420, that he could find no good books, and is not very respectful to our scholars. "Men given up to sensuality we may find in abundance; but very few lovers of learning; and those barbarous, skilled more in quibbles and sophisms than in literature. I visited many convents; they were all full of books of modern doctors, whom we should not think worthy so much as to be heard. They have few works of the ancients, and those are much better with us. Nearly all the convents of this island have been founded within four hundred years: but that was not a period in which either learned men, or such books as we seek, could be expected, for they had been lost before."[u]

Library of Duke of Gloucester.

27. Yet books began to be accumulated in our public libraries: Aungerville, in the preceding century, gave part of his collection to a college at Oxford; and Humphrey, duke of Gloucester, bequeathed six hundred volumes, as some have said, or one hundred and twenty-nine only, according to another account, to that university.[x] But these books were not of much value in a literary sense, though some may have been historically useful. I am indebted to Heeren for a letter of thanks from the duke of Gloucester to Decembrio, an Italian scholar of considerable reputation, who had sent him a translation of Plato de Republica. It must have been written before July, 1447, the date of Humphrey's death, and was probably as favourable a specimen of our Latinity as the kingdom could furnish.[y]

[t] No place was more discredited for bad Latin. "Oxoniensis loquendi mos" became a proverb. This means that, being disciples of Scotus and Ockham, the Oxonians talked the jargon of their masters.

[u] Pogg. Epist. p. 43 (edit. 1832).

[x] The former number is given by Warton; the latter I find in a short tract on English monastic libraries (1831), by the Rev. Joseph Hunter. In this there is also a catalogue of the library in the priory of Bretton in Yorkshire, consisting of about 150 volumes; but as late as the middle of the sixteenth century. [The libraries of Aungerville, Cobham, and others were united at Oxford in 1480 to that of the duke of Gloucester, and remained till the plunder under Edward VI. This may account for the discrepancy as to the number of books (manuscript) in the latter.—1842.]

[y] Hoc uno nos longe felicem judicamus, quod tu totque florentissimi viri

28. Among the Cisalpine nations, the German had the greatest tendency to literary improvement, as we may judge by subsequent events, rather than by much that was apparent so early as 1440. Their writers in Latin were still barbarous, nor had they partaken in the love of antiquity which actuated the Italians. But the German nation displayed its best characteristic—a serious, honest, industrious disposition, loving truth and goodness, and glad to pursue whatever part seemed to lead to them. A proof of this character was given in an institution of considerable influence both upon learning and religion, the college, or brotherhood, of Deventer, planned by Gerard Groot, but not built and inhabited till 1400, fifteen years after his death. The associates of this, called by different names, but more usually Brethren of the Life in Common (Gemeineslebens), or Good Brethren and Sisters, were dispersed in different parts of Germany and the Low Countries, but with their head college at Deventer. They bore an evident resemblance to the modern Moravians, by their strict lives, their community, at least a partial one, of goods, their industry in manual labour, their fervent devotion, their tendency to mysticism. But they were as strikingly distinguished from them by the cultivation of knowledge, which was encouraged in brethren of sufficient capacity, and promoted by schools both for primary and for enlarged education. "These schools were," says Eichhorn, "the first genuine nurseries of literature in Germany, so far as it depended on the knowledge of languages; and in them was first taught the Latin, and in the process of time the Greek and Eastern tongues."[2] It will be readily understood that Latin only could be taught in the period

Gerard Groot's college at Deventer.

Græcis et Latinis literis peritissimi, quot illic apud vos sunt nostris temporibus, habeantur, quibus nesciamus quid laudum digne satis possit excogitari. Mitto quod facundiam priscam illam et priscis viris dignam, quæ prorsus perierat, huic sæculo renovatis; nec id vobis satis fuit, et Græcas literas scrutati estis, ut et philosophos Græcos et vivendi magistros, qui nostris jam obliterati erant et occulti, reseratis, et eos Latinos facientes in propatulum adducitis. Heeren quotes this, p. 135, from Sassi de studiis Mediolanensibus. Warton also mentions the letter, ii. 388. The absurd solecism exemplified in "hos felicem judicamus" was introduced affectedly by the writers of the twelfth century. Hist. Litt. de la France, ix. 146.

[2] Meiners, Lebensbeschreibungen berühmter Männer, ii. 311-324. Lambinet, Origines de l'Imprimerie, ii. 170. Eichhorn, Geschichte der Litteratur, ii. 134, iii. 882. Revius, Daventria Illustrata. Mosheim, cent. xv. c. 2, § 22. Biogr Univ.: Gerard, Kempis.

with which we are now concerned; and, according to Lambinet, the brethren did not begin to open public schools till near the middle of the century.[a] These schools continued to flourish, till the civil wars of the Low Countries and the progress of the Reformation broke them up. Groningen had also a school, St. Edward's, of considerable reputation. Thomas à Kempis, according to Meiners, whom Eichhorn and Heeren have followed, presided over a school at Zwoll, wherein Agricola, Hegius, Langius, and Dringeberg, the restorers of learning in Germany, were educated. But it seems difficult to reconcile this with known dates, or with other accounts of that celebrated person's history.[b] The brethren Gemeineslebens had forty-five houses in 1430, and in 1460 more than thrice the number. They are said by some to have taken regular vows, though I find a difference in my authorities as to this, and to have professed celibacy. They were bound to live by the labour of their hands, observing the ascetic discipline of monasteries, and not to beg; which made the mendicant orders their enemies. They were protected, however, against these malignant calumniators by the favour of the pope. The passages quoted by Revius, the historian of Deventer, do not quite bear out the reputation for love of literature which Eichhorn has given them; but they were much occupied in copying and binding books.[c] Their house at Bruxelles began to print books instead of copying them, in 1474.[d]

Physical sciences in middle ages.

29. We have in the first chapter made no mention of the physical sciences, because little was to be said, and it seemed expedient to avoid breaking the subject into unnecessary divisions. It is well known that Europe had more obligations to the Saracens in this than in any other province of research. They indeed had borrowed much from Greece, and much from India; but it was through their language that it came into use among the nations of the West. Gerbert, near the end of the tenth century, was the first who, by travelling into Spain, learned something of Arabian science. A common literary tradition ascribes

[a] Origines de l'Imprimerie, p. 180.
[b] Meiners, p. 323. Eichhorn, p. 137. Heeren, p. 145. Biog. Univ.: Kempis. Revius, Davent. Illust.
[c] Daventria Illustrata, p. 35.
[d] Lambinet.

to him the introduction of their numerals, and of the arithmetic founded on them, into Europe. This has been disputed, and again re-asserted, in modern times.* It is sufficient to say here, that only a very unreasonable scepticism has questioned the use of Arabic numerals in calculation during the thirteenth century; the positive evidence on this side cannot be affected by the notorious fact, that they were not employed in legal instruments, or in ordinary accounts: such an argument indeed would be equally good in comparatively modern times. These numerals are found, according to Andrès, in Spanish manuscripts of the twelfth century; and, according both to him and Cossali, who speak from actual inspection, in the treatise of arithmetic and algebra by Leonard Fibonacci of Pisa,

Arabian numerals and method.

* See Andrès, the Archæologia, vol. viii., and the Encyclopædias Britannic and Metropolitan, on one side against Gerbert; Montucla, i. 502, and Kästner, Geschichte der Mathematik, i. 35 and ii. 695, in his favour. The latter relies on a well-known passage in William of Malmesbury concerning Gerbert: Abacum certe primus a Saracenis rapiens, regulas dedit, quæ a sudantibus abacistis vix intelliguntur; upon several expressions in his writings, and upon a manuscript of his Geometry, seen and mentioned by Pez, who refers it to the twelfth century, in which Arabic numerals are introduced. It is answered that the language of Malmesbury is indefinite, that Gerbert's own expressions are equally so, and that the copyist of the manuscript may have inserted the ciphers.

It is evident that the use of the numeral signs does not of itself imply an acquaintance with the Arabic calculation, though it was a necessary step to it. Signs bearing some resemblance to these (too great for accident) are found in MSS. of Boethius, and are published by Montucla (vol. i. planch. xi.). In one MS. they appear with names written over each of them, not Greek, or Latin, or Arabic, or in any known language. These singular names, and nearly the same forms, are found also in a manuscript well deserving of notice,—No. 343 of the Arundel MSS. in the British Museum, and which is said to have belonged to a convent at Mentz. This has been referred by some competent judges to the twelfth, and by others to the very beginning of the thirteenth century. It purports to be an introduction to the art of multiplying and dividing numbers; quicquid ab abacistis excerpere potui, compendiose collegi. The author uses nine digits, but none for ten, or zero, as is also the case in the MS. of Boethius. Sunt vero integri novem sufficientes ad infinitam multiplicationem, quorum nomina singulis sunt superjecta. A gentleman of the British Museum, who had the kindness, at my request, to give his attention to this hitherto unknown evidence in the controversy, is of opinion that the rudiments, at the very least, of our numeration are indicated in it, and that the author comes within one step of our present system, which is no other than supplying an additional character for zero. His ignorance of this character renders his process circuitous, as it does not contain the principle of juxtaposition for the purpose of summing; but it does contain the still more essential principle, a decuple increase of value for the same sign, in a progressive series of location from right to left. I shall be gratified if this slight notice should cause the treatise, which is very short, to be published, or more fully explained. [This manuscript, as well as that of Boethius, has drawn some attention lately, and is noticed in the publications of Mr. J. O. Halliwell, and of M. Charles at Paris.—1842.]

written in 1220.[f] This has never been printed.[g] It is by far our earliest testimony to the knowledge of algebra in Europe; but Leonard owns that he learned it among the Saracens. "This author appears," says Hutton, or rather Cossali, from whom he borrows, "to be well skilled in the various ways of reducing equations to their final simple state by all the usual methods." His algebra includes the solution of quadratics.

Proofs of them in thirteenth century.

30. In the thirteenth century, we find Arabian numerals employed in the tables of Alfonso X., king of Castile, published about 1252. They are said to appear also in the Treatise of the Sphere, by John de Sacro Bosco, probably about twenty years earlier; and a treatise, De Algorismo, ascribed to him, treats expressly of this subject.[h] Algorismus was the proper name for the Arabic notation and method of reckoning. Matthew Paris, after informing us that John Basing first made Greek numeral figures known in England, observes, that in these any number may be represented by a single figure, which is not the case "in Latin, nor in Algorism."[i] It is obvious that in some few numbers only this is true of the Greek; but the passage certainly implies an acquaintance with that notation which had obtained the name of Algorism. It cannot therefore be questioned that Roger Bacon knew these figures; yet he has, I apprehend, never mentioned them in his writings; for a calendar, bearing the date 1292, which has been blunderingly ascribed to him, is

[f] Montucla, whom several other writers have followed, erroneously places this work in the beginning of the fifteenth century.

[g] [(1836). It has since been published by M. Libri, at Paris, in his Histoire des Sciences Mathématiques en Italie, vol. ii., from a MS. in the Magliobecchi Library. It occupies 170 pages in M. Libri's volume. The editor places Fibonacci at the head of the mathematicians of the middle ages.—1842.]

[h] Several copies of this treatise are in the British Museum. Montucla has erroneously said that this arithmetic of Sacro Bosco is written in verse. Wallis, his authority, informs us only that some verses, two of which he quotes, are subjoined to the treatise. This is not the case in the manuscripts I have seen. I should add, that only one of them bears the name of Sacro Bosco, and that in a later handwriting. [I have called this an unpublished treatise in my first edition, on the authority of the Biographie Universelle. But Professor De Morgan has informed me that it was printed at Venice in 1523.—1842.]

[i] Hic insuper magister Joannes figuras Græcorum numerales, et earum notitiam et significationes in Angliam portavit, et familiaribus suis declaravit. Per quas figuras etiam literæ repræsentantur. De quibus figuris hoc maxime admirandum, quod unica figura quilibet numerus representatur; quod non est in Latino, vel in Algorismo. Mat. Paris, A.D. 1252, p. 721.

expressly declared to have been framed at Toledo. In the year 1282, we find a single Arabic figure 3 inserted in a public record; not only the first indisputable instance of their employment in England, but the only one of their appearance in so solemn an instrument.[k] But I have been informed that they have been found in some private documents before the end of the century. In the following age, though they were still by no means in common use among accountants, nor did they begin to be so till much later, there can be no doubt that mathematicians were thoroughly conversant with them, and instances of their employment in other writings may be adduced.[m]

31. Adelard of Bath, in the twelfth century, translated the elements of Euclid from the Arabic, and another version was made by Campano in the next age. The first printed editions are of the latter.[n] The writings of Ptolemy became known through the same chan- Mathematical treatises.
nel; and the once celebrated treatise on the Sphere by John de Sacro Bosco (Holywood, or, according to Leland, Halifax), about the beginning of the thirteenth century, is said to be but an abridgment of the Alexandrian geometer.[o] It has been frequently printed, and was even thought worthy of a commentary by Clavius. Jordan of Namur (Nemorarius), near the same time, shows a considerable insight into the properties of numbers.[p] Vitello, a native of Poland, not long afterwards, first made

[k] Parliamentary Writs, i. 232, edited under the Record Commission by Sir Francis Palgrave. It was probably inserted for want of room, not enough having been left for the word m^um. It will not be detected with ease, even by the help of this reference.

[m] Andrès, ii. 92, gives on the whole the best account of the progress of numerals. The article by Leslie in the Encyclopædia Britannica is too dogmatical in denying their antiquity. That in the Encyclopædia Metropolitana, by Mr. Peacock, is more learned. Montucla is but superficial, and Kästner has confined himself to the claims of Gerbert; admitting which, he is too indifferent about subsequent evidence. [Dr. Thomson, in his History of the Royal Society, refers to several papers in their Transactions on the use of Arabic numerals in England, and quotes one in 1741, which asserts that an unquestionable instance of their employment as early as 1011 occurs in the parish church of Romsey (p. 241). But this, I conceive, must be wholly rejected.—1853.]

[n] [M. Charles Jourdain, in his edition of his father's Recherches Critiques sur les Traductions d'Aristote, p. 98, has observed that I have reproduced an error pointed out by Tiraboschi, iv. 151. Campano did not translate Euclid, though he commented upon him. The only translation was by Adelard.—1853.]

[o] Montucla, i. 506. Biogr. Univ.: Kästner.

[p] Montucla. Kästner. Drinkwater's Life of Galileo.

known the principles of optics in a treatise in ten books, several times printed in the sixteenth century, and indicating an extensive acquaintance with the Greek and Arabian geometers. Montucla has charged Vitello with having done no more than compress and arrange a work on the same subject by Alhazen; which Andrés, always partial to the Arabian writers, has not failed to repeat. But the author of an article on Vitello in the Biographie Universelle repels this imputation, which could not, he says, have proceeded from any one who had compared the two writers. A more definite judgment is pronounced by the laborious German historian of mathematics, Kästner. "Vitello," he says, "has with diligence and judgment collected, as far as lay in his power, what had been previously known; and, avoiding the tediousness of Arabian verbosity, is far more readable, perspicuous, and methodical than Alhazen; he has also gone much farther in the science."[q]

Roger Bacon.

32. It seems hard to determine whether or not Roger Bacon be entitled to the honours of a discoverer in science; that he has not described any instrument analogous to the telescope, is now generally admitted; but he paid much attention to optics, and has some new and important notions on that subject. That he was acquainted with the explosive powers of gunpowder it seems unreasonable to deny; the mere detonation of nitre in contact with an inflammable substance, which of course might be casually observed, is by no means adequate to his expressions in the well-known passage on that subject. But there is no ground for doubting that the Saracens were already conversant with gunpowder.

His resemblance to Lord Bacon.

33. The mind of Roger Bacon was strangely compounded of almost prophetic gleams of the future course of science, and the best principles of the inductive philosophy, with a more than usual credulity in the superstitions of his own time. Some have deemed him overrated by the nationality of the English.[r] But if we may have sometimes

[q] Gesch. der Mathem., ii. 263. The true name is Vitello, as Playfair has remarked (Dissertat. in Encycl. Brit.), but Vitellio is much more common. Kästner is correct, always copying the old editions.

[r] Meiners, of all modern historians of literature, is the least favourable to Bacon, on account of his superstition, and credu-

given him credit for discoveries to which he has only borne testimony, there can be no doubt of the originality of his genius. I have in another place remarked the singular resemblance he bears to Lord Bacon, not only in the character of his philosophy, but in several coincidences of expression. This has since been followed up by a later writer,* who plainly charges Lord Bacon with having borrowed much, and with having concealed his obligations. The Opus Majus of Roger Bacon was not published till 1733, but the manuscripts were not uncommon, and Selden had thoughts of printing the work. The quotations from the Franciscan and the Chancellor, printed in parallel columns by Mr. Forster, are sometimes very curiously similar; but he presses the resemblance too far; and certainly the celebrated distinction, in the Novum Organum, of four classes of *Idola* which mislead the judgment, does not correspond, as he supposes, with that of the causes of error assigned by Roger Bacon.

English mathematicians of fourteenth century.

34. The English nation was not at all deficient in mathematicians during the fourteenth century; on the contrary, no other in Europe produced nearly so many. But their works have rarely been published. The great progress of physical science, since the invention of printing, has rendered these imperfect treatises interesting only to the curiosity of a very limited class of readers. Thus Richard Suisset, or Swineshead, author of a book entitled, as is said, the Calculator, of whom Cardan speaks in such language as might be applied to himself, is scarcely known, except by name, to literary historians; and though it has several times been printed, the book is of great rarity.† But the

lity in the occult sciences. Vergleichung der Sitten, ii. 710, and iii. 232. Heeren, p. 244, speaks more candidly of him. It is impossible, I think, to deny that credulity is one of the points of resemblance between him and his namesake.

* Hist. of Middle Ages, iii. 539. Forster's Mahometanism Unveiled, ii. 312.

† The character of Suisset's book given by Brucker, iii. 852, who had seen it, does not seem to justify the wish of Leibnitz that it should be republished. It is a strange medley of arithmetical and geometrical reasoning with the scholastic philosophy. Kästner (Geschichte der Mathematik, i. 50) appears not to have looked at Brucker, and, like Montucla, has a very slight notion of the nature of Suisset's book. His suspicion that Cardan had never seen the book he so much extols because he calls the author the Calculator, which is the title of the work itself, seems unwarrantable. Suisset probably had obtained the name from his book, which is not uncommon; and Cardan was not a man to praise what he had

most conspicuous of our English geometers was Thomas Bradwardin, archbishop of Canterbury; yet more for his rank and for his theological writings, than for the arithmetical and geometrical speculations which give him a place in science. Montucla, with a carelessness of which there are too many instances in his valuable work, has placed Bradwardin, who died in 1348, at the beginning of the sixteenth century, though his treatise was printed in 1495.[u]

Astronomy.

35. It is certain that the phenomena of physical astronomy were never neglected; the calendar was known to be erroneous, and Roger Bacon has even been supposed by some to have divined the method of its restoration, which has long afterwards been adopted. The Arabians understood astronomy well, and their science was transfused more or less into Europe. Nor was astrology, the favourite superstition of both the eastern and western world, without its beneficial effect upon the observation and registering of the planetary motions. Thus, too, alchemy, which, though the word properly means but chemistry, was generally confined to the mystery that all sought to penetrate, the transmutation of metals into gold, led more or less to the processes by which a real knowledge of the component parts of substances has been attained.[x]

Alchemy.

Medicine.

36. The art of medicine was cultivated with great diligence by the Saracens both of the East and of Spain, but with little of the philosophical science that had immortalised the Greek school. The writings, however, of these masters were translated into Arabic; whether correctly or not, has been disputed

never read. [One of the later editions is in the British Museum, with a manuscript date, 1520, but entered in the catalogue as Venice, 1505. It may be added that the title in this edition is not the Calculator, though it appears by Brunet to have been so called in the first edition, that of Pavia, 1498; but Subtilissimi Ricardi Sulseti Anglici Calculationes noviter impressæ atque revisæ. I am informed that the work, in one edition or another, is less scarce than, on the authority of Brucker, I had conceived.—1842.]

[u] It may be considered a proof of the attention paid to geometry in England that two books of Euclid were read at Oxford about the middle of the fifteenth century. Churton's Life of Smyth, p. 151, from the University Register. We should not have expected to find this.

[x] I refer to Dr. Thomson's History of Chemistry for much curious learning on the alchemy of the Middle Ages. In a work like the present, it is impossible to follow up every subject; and I think that a general reference to a book of reputation and easy accessibility is better than an attempt to abridge it.

among oriental scholars; and Europe derived her acquaintance with the physic of the mind and body, with Hippocrates as well as Aristotle, through the same channel. But the Arabians had eminent medical authorities of their own, Rhases, Avicenna, Albucazi, who possessed greater influence. In modern times, that is, since the revival of Greek science, the Arabian theories have been in general treated with much scorn. It is admitted, however, that pharmacy owes a long list of its remedies to their experience, and to their intimacy with the products of the East. The school of Salerno, established as early as the eleventh century,[y] for the study of medicine, from whence the most considerable writers of the next ages issued, followed the Arabians in their medical theory. But these are deemed rude, and of little utility at present.

37. In the science of anatomy an epoch was made by the treatise of Mundinus, a professor at Bologna, who died in 1326. It is entitled Anatome omnium humani corporis interiorum membrorum. This book had one great advantage over those of Galen, that it was founded on the actual anatomy of the human body. For Galen is supposed to have only dissected apes, and judged of mankind by analogy; and though there may be reason to doubt whether this were altogether the case, it is certain that he had very little practice in human dissection. Mundinus seems to have been more fortunate in his opportunities of this kind than later anatomists, during the prevalence of a superstitious prejudice, have found themselves. His treatise was long the text-book of the Italian universities, till, about the middle of the sixteenth century, Mundinus was superseded by greater anatomists. The statutes of the university of Padua prescribed that anatomical lecturers should adhere to the literal text of Mundinus. Though some have treated this writer as a mere copier of Galen, he has much, according to Portal, of his own. There were also some good anatomical writers in France during the fourteenth century.[z] Anatomy.

[y] Meiners refers it to the tenth, ii. 413; and Tiraboschi thinks it may be as ancient, iii. 347.

[z] Tiraboschi, v. 269-244, who is very copious for a non-medical writer. Portal, Hist. de l'Anatomie. Biogr. Univ.: Mondino, Chauliac. Eichhorn, Gesch. der Lit., ii. 416-447.

Encyclopædic works of middle ages.

38. Several books of the later middle ages, sometimes of great size, served as collections of natural history, and, in fact, as encyclopædias of general knowledge. The writings of Albertus Magnus belong, in part, to this class. They have been collected, in twenty-one volumes folio, by the Dominican Peter Jammi, and published at Lyons in 1651. After setting aside much that is spurious, Albert may pass for the most fertile writer in the world. He is reckoned by some the founder of the schoolmen; but we mention him here as a compiler, from all accessible sources, of what physical knowledge had been accumulated in his time. A still more comprehensive contemporary writer of this class was Vincent de Beauvais, in the Speculum naturale, morale, doctrinale et historiale, written before the middle of the thirteenth century. The second part of this vast treatise in ten volumes folio, usually bound in four, Speculum morale, seems not to be written by Vincent de Beauvais, and is chiefly a compilation from Thomas Aquinas, and other theologians of the same age. The first, or Speculum naturale, follows the order of creation as an arrangement; and after pouring out all the author could collect on the heavens and earth, proceeds to the natural kingdoms; and, finally, to the corporeal and mental structure of man. In the third part of this encyclopædia, under the title Speculum doctrinale, all arts and sciences are explained; and the fourth contains an universal history.[a] The sources of this magazine of knowledge are of course very multifarious. In the Speculum naturale, at which alone I have looked, Aristotle's writings, especially the history of animals, those of other ancient authors, of the Arabian physicians, and of all who had treated the same subjects in the middle ages, are brought together in a comprehensive, encyclopædic manner, and with vast industry, but with almost a studious desire, as we might now fancy, to accumulate absurd falsehoods. Vincent, like many, it must be owned, in much later times, through his haste to compile, does not give himself the trouble to understand what he copies. But, in fact, he relied on others to make extracts for him, especially from the

Vincent of Beauvais.

[a] Biogr. Univ.: Vincentius Bellovacensis.

writings of Aristotle, permitting himself or them, as he tells us, to change the order, condense the meaning, and explain the difficulties.[b] It may be easily believed, that neither Vincent of Beauvais, nor his amanuenses, were equal to this work of abridging and transposing their authors. Andrès, accordingly, has quoted a passage from the Speculum naturale, and another to the same effect from Albertus Magnus, relating no doubt, in the Arabian writer from whom they borrowed, to the polarity of the magnet, but so strangely turned into nonsense, that it is evident they could not have understood in the least what they wrote. Probably, as their language is nearly the same, they copied a bad translation.[c]

Vincent of Beauvais.

39. In the same class of compilation with the Speculum of Vincent of Beauvais, we may place some later works, the Trésor of Brunetto Latini, written in French about 1280; the Reductorium, Repertorium, et Dictionarium morale of Berchorius, or Berchœur, a monk, who died at Paris in 1362,[d] and a treatise by Bartholomew Glanvil, De proprietatibus rerum, soon after that time. Reading all they could find, extracting from all they read, digesting their extracts under some natural, or, at worst, alphabetical classification, these laborious men gave back their studies to the world with no great improvement of the materials, but sometimes with much convenience in their disposition. This, however, depended chiefly on their ability as well as diligence; and in the mediæval period, the want of capacity to discern probable truth was a very great drawback from the utility of their compilations.

Berchorius.

40. It seems to be the better opinion, that few only of the Spanish romances or ballads founded on history or legend, so many of which remain, belong to a period anterior to the fifteenth century. Most of them should be placed still lower. Sanchez has included

Spanish ballads.

[b] A quibusdam fratribus excerpta susceperam; non eodem penitus verborum schemate, quo in originalibus suis jacent, sed ordine plerumque transposito, nonnunquam etiam mutata perpaululum ipsorum verborum forma, manente tamen auctoris sententia; prout ipsa vel prolixitatis abbreviandæ vel multitudinis in unam colligendæ, vel etiam obscuritatis explanandæ necessitas exigebat.

[c] Andrès, ii. 112. See also xiii. 141.

[d] This book, according to De Sade, Vie de Pétrarque, iii. 550, contains a few good things among many follies. I have never seen it.

none in his collection of Spanish poetry, limited by its title to that period; though he quotes one or two fragments which he would refer to the fourteenth century.[e] Some, however, have conceived, perhaps with little foundation, that several in the general collections of romances have been modernised in language from more ancient lays. They have all a highly chivalrous character; every sentiment congenial to that institution, heroic courage, unsullied honour, generous pride, faithful love, devoted loyalty, were displayed in Castilian verse, not only in their real energy, but sometimes with an hyperbolical extravagance to which the public taste accommodated itself, and which long continued to deform the national literature. The ballad of the Conde de Alarcos, which may be found in Bouterwek, or in Sismondi, and seems to be ancient, though not before the fifteenth century, will serve as a sufficient specimen.[f]

Metres of Spanish poetry.

41. The very early poetry of Spain (that published by Sanchez) is marked by a rude simplicity, a rhythmical, and not very harmonious versification, and, especially in the ancient poem of the Cid, written, according to some, before the middle of the twelfth century, by occasional vigour and spirit.[g] This poetry is in that irregular Alexandrine measure, which, as has been observed, arose out of the Latin pentameter. It gave place in the fifteenth century to a dactylic measure, called *versos de arte mayor*, generally of eleven syllables, the first, fourth, seventh, and tenth being accented, but subject to frequent licences, especially that of an additional short syllable at the beginning of the line. But the favourite metre in lyric songs and romances was the redondilla, the type of which was a line

[e] The Marquis of Santillana, early in the fifteenth century, wrote a short letter on the state of poetry in Spain to his own time. Sanchez has published this with long and valuable notes.

[f] Bouterwek's History of Spanish and Portuguese Poetry, i. 55. See also Sismondi, Littérature du Midi, iii. 228, for the romance of the Conde de Alarcos.

Sismondi refers it to the fourteenth century; but perhaps no strong reason for this could be given. I find, however, in the Cancionero General, a "romance viejo," beginning with two lines of the Conde de Alarcos, continued on another subject. It was not uncommon to build romances on the stocks of old ones, taking only the first lines; several other instances occur among those in the Cancionero, which are not numerous.

[g] [This has been the opinion of Mr. Southey, and, I believe, of others. But Masdeu, Hist. Critica de España, vol. xx. p. 321, says that the greatest antiquity which can be given to the poem of the Cid is the thirteenth century. It is ascribed, according to him, to one Pedro Abad, of the church of Seville.—1842.]

of four trochees, requiring, however, alternately, or at the end of a certain number, one deficient in the last syllable, and consequently throwing an emphasis on the close. By this a poem was sometimes divided into short stanzas, the termination of which could not be mistaken by the ear. It is no more, where the lines of eight and seven syllables alternate, than that English metre with which we are too familiar to need an illustration. Bouterwek has supposed that this alternation, which is nothing else than the trochaic verse of Greek and Latin poetry, was preserved traditionally in Spain from the songs of the Roman soldiers. But it seems by some Arabic lines which he quotes, in common characters, that the Saracens had the line of four trochees, which, in all languages where syllables are strongly distinguished in time and emphasis, has been grateful to the ear. No one can fail to perceive the sprightliness and grace of this measure, when accompanied by simple melody. The lighter poetry of the southern nations is always to be judged with some regard to its dependence upon a sister art. It was not written to be read, but to be heard, and to be heard in the tones of song, and with the notes of the lyre or the guitar. Music is not at all incapable of alliance with reasoning or descriptive poetry; but it excludes many forms which either might assume, and requires a rapidity as well as intenseness of perception, which language cannot always convey. Hence the poetry designed for musical accompaniment is sometimes unfairly derided by critics, who demand what it cannot pretend to give; but it is still true, that, as it cannot give all which metrical language is able to afford, it is not poetry of the very highest class.

42. The Castilian language is rich in perfect rhymes. But in their lighter poetry the Spaniards frequently contented themselves with *assonances*, that is, with the correspondence of final syllables, wherein the vowel alone was the same, though with different consonants, as *duro* and *humo*, *boca* and *cosa*. These were often intermingled with perfect or consonant rhymes. In themselves, unsatisfactory as they may seem at first sight to our prejudices, there can be no doubt but that the assonances contained a musical principle, and would soon give

Consonant and assonant rhymes.

pleasure to and be required by the ear. They may be compared to the alliteration so common in the northern poetry, and which constitutes almost the whole regularity of some of our oldest poems. But though assonances may seem to us an indication of a rude stage of poetry, it is remarkable that they belong chiefly to the later period of Castilian lyric poetry, and that consonant rhymes, frequently with the recurrence of the same syllable, are reckoned, if I mistake not, a presumption of the antiquity of a romance.[h]

Nature of the glosa.

43. An analogy between poetry and music, extending beyond the mere laws of sound, has been ingeniously remarked by Bouterwek in a very favourite species of Spanish composition, the *glosa*. In this a few lines, commonly well known and simple, were glossed, or paraphrased, with as much variety and originality as the poet's ingenuity could give, in a succession of stanzas, so that the leading sentiment should be preserved in each, as the subject of an air runs through its variations. It was often contrived that the chief words of the glossed lines should recur separately in the course of each stanza. The two arts being incapable of a perfect analogy, this must be taken as a general one; but it was necessary that each stanza should be conducted so as to terminate in the lines, or a portion of them, which form the subject of the gloss.[i] Of these artificial, though doubtless, at the time, very pleasing compositions, there is nothing, as far as I know, to be found beyond the peninsula;[k] though, in a general sense, it may be said, that all lyric poetry, wherein a burthen or repetition of leading verses recurs, must originally be founded on the same principle, less artfully and musically developed. The burthen of a song can only be an impertinence, if its sentiment does not pervade the whole.

44. The Cancionero General, a collection of Spanish poetry written between the age of Juan de la Mena,

[h] Bouterwek's Introduction. Velasquez in Dieze's German translation, p. 288. The assonance is peculiar to the Spaniards. [But it is said by M. Raynouard that assonances are common in the earliest French poetry. Journal des Savans, July, 1833.—1842.]

[i] Bouterwek, p. 118.

[k] They appear with the name Grosas in the Cancioneiro Geral of Resende; and there seems, as I have observed already to be something much of the same kind in the older Portuguese collection of the thirteenth century.

near the beginning of the fifteenth century, and its publication by Castillo in 1517, contains the productions of one hundred and thirty-six poets, as Bouterwek says; and in the edition of 1520 I have counted one hundred and thirty-nine. There is also much anonymous. The volume is in two hundred and three folios, and includes compositions by Villena, Santillana, and the other poets of the age of John II., besides those of later date. But I find also the name of Don Juan Manuel, which, if it means the celebrated author of the Conde Lucanor, must belong to the fourteenth century, though the preface of Castillo seems to confine his collection to the age of Mena.[m] A small part only are strictly love songs (canciones); but the predominant sentiment of the larger portion is amatory. Several romances occur in this collection; one of them is Moorish, and, perhaps, older than the capture of Granada; but it was long afterwards that the Spanish romancers habitually embellished their fictions with Moorish manners. These romances, as in the above instance, were sometimes glosed, the simplicity of the ancient style readily lending itself to an expansion of the sentiment. Some that are called romances contain no story; as the Rosa Fresca and the Fonte Frida, both of which will be found in Bouterwek and Sismondi.

The Cancionero General.

45. "Love songs," says Bouterwek, "form by far the principal part of the old Spanish cancioneros. To read them regularly through would require a strong passion for compositions of this class, for the monotony of the authors is interminable. To extend and spin out a theme as long as possible, though only to seize a new modification of the old ideas and phrases, was, in their opinion, essential to the truth and sincerity of their poetic effusions of the heart. That loquacity, which is an hereditary fault of the Italian canzone, must also be endured in perusing the amatory flights of the Spanish redondillas, while in them the

Bouterwek's character of Spanish songs

[m] Don Juan Manuel, a prince descended from Ferdinand III., was the most accomplished man whom Spain produced in his age. One of the earliest specimens of Castilian prose, El Conde Lucanor, places him high in the literature of his country. It is a moral fiction, in which, according to the custom of novelists, many other tales are interwoven. "In every passage of the book," says Bouterwek, "the author shows himself a man of the world and an observer of human nature."

Italian correctness of expression would be looked for in vain. From the desire, perhaps, of relieving their monotony by some sort of variety, the authors have indulged in even more witticisms and plays of words than the Italians, but they also sought to infuse a more emphatic spirit into their compositions than the latter. The Spanish poems of this class exhibit, in general, all the poverty of the compositions of the troubadours, but blend with the simplicity of these bards the pomp of the Spanish national style in its utmost vigour. This resemblance to the troubadour songs was not, however, produced by imitation; it arose out of the spirit of romantic love, which at that period, and for several preceding centuries, gave to the south of Europe the same feeling and taste. Since the age of Petrarch this spirit had appeared in classical perfection in Italy. But the Spanish amatory poets of the fifteenth century had not reached an equal degree of cultivation; and the whole turn of their ideas required rather a passionate than a tender expression. The sighs of the languishing Italians became cries in Spain. Glowing passion, despair, and violent ecstasy were the soul of the Spanish love songs. The continually recurring picture of the contest between reason and passion is a peculiar characteristic of these songs. The Italian poets did not attach so much importance to the triumph of reason. The rigidly moral Spaniard was, however, anxious to be wise even in the midst of his folly. But this obtrusion of wisdom in an improper place frequently gives an unpoetical harshness to the lyric poetry of Spain, in spite of all the softness of its melody."[n]

John II.

46. It was in the reign of John II., king of Castile from 1407 to 1454, that this golden age of lyric poetry commenced.[o] A season of peace and regularity, a monarchy well limited, but no longer the

[n] Vol. i. p. 109.

[o] Velasquez, p. 165, 442 (in Dieze), mentions, what has escaped Bouterwek, a more ancient Cancionero than that of Castillo, compiled in the reign of John II. by Juan Alfonso de Baena, and hitherto unpublished. As it is entitled Cancionero di Poetas Antiguos, it may be supposed to contain some earlier than the year 1400. I am inclined to think, however, that few would be found to ascend much higher. I do not find the name of Don Juan Manuel, which occurs in the Cancionero of Castillo. A copy of this manuscript Cancionero of Baena was lately sold (1836), among the MSS. of Mr. Heber, and purchased for 120*l.* by the King of the French.

sport of domineering families, a virtuous king, a minister too haughty and ambitious, but able and resolute, were encouragements to that light strain of amorous poetry which a state of ease alone can suffer mankind to enjoy. And Portugal, for the whole of this century, was in as flourishing a condition as Castile during this single reign. But we shall defer the mention of her lyric poetry, as it seems chiefly to be of a later date. In the court of John II. were found three men, whose names stand high in the early annals of Spanish poetry,—the marquises of Villena and Santillana, and Juan de Mena. But, except for their zeal in the cause of letters, amidst the dissipations of a court, they have no pretensions to enter into competition with some of the obscure poets to whom we owe the romances of chivalry. A desire, on the contrary, to show needless learning, and to astonish the vulgar by an appearance of profundity, so often the bane of poetry, led them into prosaic and tedious details, and into affected refinements.[p]

Poets of his court.

47. Charles, duke of Orleans, long prisoner in England after the battle of Agincourt, was the first who gave polish and elegance to French poetry. In a more enlightened age, according to Goujet's opinion, he would have been among their greatest poets.[q] Except a little allegory in the taste of his times, he confined himself to the kind of verse called rondeaux, and to slight amatory poems, which, if they aim at little, still deserve the praise of reaching what they aim at. The easy turns of thought and graceful simplicity of style which these compositions require came spontaneously to the duke of Orleans. Without as much humour as Clement Marot long afterwards displayed, he is much more of a gentleman, and would have been in any times, if not quite what Goujet supposes, a great poet, yet the pride and ornament of the court.[r]

Charles, duke of Orleans.

[p] Bouterwek, p. 78.

[q] Goujet, Bibliothèque Française, ix. 233.

[r] The following very slight vaudeville will show the easy style of the duke of Orleans. It is curious to observe how little the manner of French poetry, in such productions, has been changed since the fifteenth century.

Petit mercier, petit panier:
Pourtant si je n'ai marchandize
Qui soit du tout à votre guise
Ne blamez pour ce mon mestier,
Je gagne denier à denier;
C'est loin du trésor de Vénise.

Petit mercier, petit panier,
Et tandis qu'il est jour, ouvrier,
Le temps perds, quand à vous devise,
Je vais parfaire mon emprise,

Et

48. The English language was slowly refining itself, and growing into general use. That which we sometimes call pedantry and innovation, the forced introduction of French words by Chaucer, though hardly more by him than by all his predecessors who translated our neighbours' poetry, and the harsh Latinisms that began to appear soon afterwards, has given English a copiousness and variety which perhaps no other language possesses. But as yet there was neither thought nor knowledge sufficient to bring out its capacities. After the death of Chaucer, in 1400, a dreary blank of long duration occurs in our annals. The poetry of Hoccleve is wretchedly bad, abounding with pedantry, and destitute of all grace or spirit.[s] Lydgate, the monk of Bury, nearly of the same age, prefers doubtless a higher claim to respect. An easy versifier, he served to make poetry familiar to the many, and may sometimes please the few. Gray, no light authority, speaks more favourably of Lydgate than either Warton or Ellis, or than the general complexion of his poetry would induce most readers to do.[t] But great poets have often the taste to discern, and the candour to acknowledge, those beauties which are latent amidst the tedious dulness of their humbler brethren. Lydgate, though probably a man of inferior powers of mind to Gower, has more of the minor qualities of a poet; his lines have sometimes more spirit, more humour, and he describes with more graphic minuteness. But his diffuseness becomes generally feeble and tedious; the attention fails in the schoolboy stories of Thebes and Troy; and he had not the judgment to select and compress the prose narratives from which he commonly derived his subject. It seems highly probable that Lydgate would have been a better poet in satire upon his own times, or delineation of their manners; themes which would have gratified us much more than the fate of princes. The King's Quair, by James I. of Scotland, is a long allegory, polished and imaginative,

English poetry.

Lydgate.

James I. of Scotland.

Et parmi les rues crier:
Petit mercier, petit panier.
(Recueil des Anciens Poètes Français, i. 196.)

[s] Warton, ii. 348.

[t] Id. 361-407; Gray's Works, by Mathias, ii. 55-73. These remarks on Lydgate show what the history of English poetry would have been in the hands of Gray as to sound and fair criticism.

but with some of the tediousness usual in such productions. It is uncertain whether he or a later sovereign, James V., were the author of a lively comic poem, Christ's Kirk o' the Green; the style is so provincial that no Englishman can draw any inference as to its antiquity. It is much more removed from our language than the King's Quair. Whatever else could be mentioned as deserving of praise is anonymous and of uncertain date. It seems to have been early in the fifteenth century that the ballad of our northern minstrels arose. But none of these that are extant could be placed with much likelihood so early as 1440.[u]

Restoration of classical learning due to Italy.

49. We have thus traced in outline the form of European literature as it existed in the middle ages and in the first forty years of the fifteenth century. The result must be to convince us of our great obligations to Italy for her renewal of classical learning. What might have been the intellectual progress of Europe if she had never gone back to the fountains of Greek and Roman genius it is impossible to determine; certainly nothing in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries gave prospect of a very abundant harvest. It would be difficult to find any man of high reputation in modern times who has not reaped benefit, directly or through others, from the revival of ancient learning. We have the greatest reason to doubt whether, without the Italians of these ages, it would ever have occurred. The trite metaphors of light and darkness, of dawn and twilight, are used carelessly by those who touch on the literature of the middle ages, and suggest by analogy an uninterrupted progression, in which learning, like the sun, has dissipated the shadows of barbarism. But with closer attention it is easily seen that this is not a correct representation; that, taking Europe generally, far from being in a more advanced

[u] Chevy Chase seems to be the most ancient of those ballads that has been preserved. It may possibly have been written while Henry VI. was on the throne, though a late critic would bring it down to the reign of Henry VIII. Brydges' British Bibliography, iv. 97. The style is often fiery, like the old war songs, and much above the feeble, though natural and touching, manner of the later ballads. One of the most remarkable circumstances about this celebrated lay is, that it relates a totally fictitious event with all historical particularity, and with real names. Hence it was probably not composed while many remembered the days of Henry IV., when the fray of Chevy Chase is feigned to have occurred.

stage of learning at the beginning of the fifteenth century than two hundred years before, she had in many respects gone backwards, and gave little sign of any tendency to recover her ground. There is in fact no security, as far as the past history of mankind assures us, that any nation will be uniformly progressive in science, arts, and letters; nor do I perceive, whatever may be the current language, that we can expect this with much greater confidence of the whole civilised world.

50. Before we proceed to a more minute and chronological history, let us consider for a short time some of the prevailing strains of sentiment and opinion which shaped the public mind at the close of the mediæval period.

Character of classical poetry lost.

51. In the early European poetry, the art sedulously cultivated by so many nations, we are struck by characteristics that distinguish it from the remains of antiquity, and belong to social changes which we should be careful to apprehend. The principles of discernment as to works of imagination and sentiment, wrought up in Greece and Rome by a fastidious and elaborate criticism, were of course effaced in the total oblivion of that literature to which they had been applied. The Latin language, no longer intelligible except to a limited class, lost that adaptation to popular sentiment which its immature progeny had not yet attained. Hence, perhaps, or from some other cause, there ensued, as has been shown in the last chapter, a kind of palsy of the inventive faculties, so that we cannot discern for several centuries any traces of their vigorous exercise.

New schools of criticism on modern languages.

52. Five or six new languages, however, besides the ancient German, became gradually flexible and copious enough to express thought and emotion with more precision and energy; metre and rhyme gave poetry its form; a new European literature was springing up, fresh and lively, in gay raiment, by the side of that decrepit Latinity which rather ostentatiously wore its threadbare robes of more solemn dignity than becoming grace. But in the beginning of the fifteenth century the revival of ancient literature among the Italians seemed likely to change again the scene, and threatened to restore a standard of critical excellence by which the new Europe would be disad-

vantageously tried. It was soon felt, if not recognised in words, that what had delighted Europe for some preceding centuries depended upon sentiments fondly cherished, and opinions firmly held, but foreign, at least in the forms they presented, to the genuine spirit of antiquity. From this time we may consider as beginning to stand opposed to each other two schools of criticism, latterly called the classical and romantic; names which should not be understood as absolutely exact, but perhaps rather more apposite in the period to which these pages relate than in the nineteenth century.

Effect of chivalry on poetry.

53. War is a very common subject of fiction, and the warrior's character is that which poets have ever delighted to portray. But the spirit of chivalry, nourished by the laws of feudal tenure and limited monarchy, by the rules of honour, courtesy, and gallantry, by ceremonial institutions and public shows, had rather artificially modified the generous daring which always forms the basis of that character. It must be owned that the heroic ages of Greece furnished a source of fiction not unlike those of romance; that Perseus, Theseus, or Hercules answer pretty well to knights errant, and that many stories in the poets are in the very style of Amadis or Ariosto. But these form no great part of what we call classical poetry; though they show that the word, in its opposition to the latter style, must not be understood to comprise everything that has descended from antiquity. Nothing could less resemble the peculiar form of chivalry than Greece in the republican times, or Rome in any times.

Effect of gallantry towards women.

54. The popular taste had been also essentially affected by changes in social intercourse, rendering it more studiously and punctiliously courteous, and especially by the homage due to women under the modern laws of gallantry. Love, with the ancient poets, is often tender, sometimes virtuous, but never accompanied by a sense of deference or inferiority. This elevation of the female sex through the voluntary submission of the stronger, though a remarkable fact in the philosophical history of Europe, has not, perhaps, been adequately developed. It did not originate, or at least very partially, in the Teutonic manners, from which it has sometimes been

derived. The love-songs again, and romances of Arabia, where others have sought its birthplace, display, no doubt, a good deal of that rapturous adoration which distinguishes the language of later poetry, and have, perhaps, in some measure, been the models of the Provençal troubadours; yet this seems rather consonant to the hyperbolical character of oriental works of imagination, than to a state of manners where the usual lot of women is seclusion, if not slavery. The late editor of Warton has thought it sufficient to call "that reverence and adoration of the female sex which has descended to our own times, the offspring of the Christian dispensation."[x] But until it can be shown that Christianity establishes any such principle, we must look a little farther down for its origin.

Its probable origin.

55. Without rejecting, by any means, the influence of these collateral and preparatory circumstances, we might ascribe more direct efficacy to the favour shown towards women in succession to lands, through inheritance or dower, by the later Roman law, and by the customs of the northern nations; to the respect which the clergy paid them (a subject which might bear to be more fully expanded); but, above all, to the gay idleness of the nobility, consuming the intervals of peace in festive enjoyments. In whatever country the charms of high-born beauty were first admitted to grace the banquet or give brilliancy to the tournament,—in whatever country the austere restraints of jealousy were most completely laid aside,—in whatever country the coarser, though often more virtuous, simplicity of unpolished ages was exchanged for winning and delicate artifices,—in whatever country, through the influence of climate or polish, less boisterousness and intemperance prevailed,—it is there that we must expect to find the commencement of so great a revolution in society.

It is not shown in old Teutonic poetry; but appears in the stories of Arthur.

56. Gallantry, in this sense of a general homage to the fair, a respectful deference to woman, independent of personal attachment, seems to have first become a perceptible element of European manners in the south of France, and, probably, not later than the end of the tenth century;[y] it was not at all in unison with the

[x] Preface, p. 123.

[y] It would be absurd to assign an exact date for that which in its nature must be gradual. I have a suspicion

rough habits of the Carlovingian Franks or of the Anglo-Saxons. There is little or, as far as I know, nothing of it in the poem of Beowulf, or in that upon Attila, or in the oldest Teutonic fragments, or in the Nibelungen Lied;[z] love may appear as a natural passion, but not as a conventional idolatry. It appears, on the other hand, fully developed in the sentiments as well as the usages of northern France, when we look at the tales of the court of Arthur, which Geoffrey of Monmouth gave to the world about 1128. Whatever may be thought of the foundation of this famous romance, whatever of legendary tradition he may have borrowed from Wales or Britany, the position that he was merely a faithful translator appears utterly incredible.[a] Besides the numerous allusions to Henry I. of England, and to the history of his times, which Mr. Turner and others have indicated, the chivalrous gallantry, with which alone we are now concerned, is not characteristic of so rude a people as the Welsh or Armoricans. Geoffrey is almost our earliest testimony to these manners; and this gives the chief value to his fables. The crusades were probably the great means of inspiring an uniformity of conventional courtesy into the European aristocracy,

that sexual respect, though not with all the refinements of chivalry, might be traced earlier in the south of Europe than the tenth century; but it would require a long investigation to prove this.

A passage, often quoted, of Radulphus Glaber, on the affected and effeminate manners, as he thought them, of the southern nobility who came in the train of Constance, daughter of the count of Toulouse, on her marriage with Robert, king of France, in 999, indicates that the roughness of the Teutonic character, as well perhaps as some of its virtues, had yielded to the arts and amusements of peace. It became a sort of proverb; Franci ad bella, Provinciales ad victualia. Eichhorn, Allg. Gesch., i. Append. 73. The social history of the tenth and eleventh centuries is not easily recovered. We must judge from probabilities founded on single passages, and on the general tone of civil history. The kingdom of Arles was more tranquil than the rest of France.

[z] Von eigentlicher Galanterie ist in dem Nibelungen Lied wenig zu finden, von Christlichen mysticismus fast gar nichts. Bouterwek, ix. 147. I may observe that the positions in the text, as to the absence of gallantry in the old Teutonic poetry, are borne out by every other authority; by Weber, Price, Turner, and Eichhorn. The last writer draws rather an amusing inference as to the want of politeness towards the fair sex, from the frequency of abductions in Teutonic and Scandinavian story, which he enumerates. Allg. Gesch., i. 37. App., p. 37. [We might appeal also to the very curious old German poems on Hildebrand, perhaps of the eighth century, published by the Grimms at Cassel in 1812. They exhibit chivalry without its gallantry. Some account of them may be found in Roquefort, p. 51, or in Bouterwek.—1842.]

[a] See in Mr. Turner's Hist. of England, iv. 256-269, two dissertations on the romantic histories of Turpin and of Geoffrey, wherein the relation between the two, and the motives with which each was written, seem irrefragably demonstrated.

which still constitutes the common character of gentlemen; but it may have been gradually wearing away their national peculiarities for some time before.

Romances of chivalry of two kinds.

57. The condition and the opinions of a people stamp a character on its literature; while that literature powerfully reacts upon and moulds afresh the national temper from which it has taken its distinctive type. This is remarkably applicable to the romances of chivalry. Some have even believed that chivalry itself, in the fulness of proportion ascribed to it by these works, had never existence beyond their pages; others, with more probability, that it was heightened and preserved by their influence upon a state of society which had given them birth. A considerable difference is perceived between the metrical romances, contemporaneous with, or shortly subsequent to, the crusades, and those in prose after the middle of the fourteenth century. The former are more fierce, more warlike, more full of abhorrence of infidels; they display less of punctilious courtesy, less of submissive deference to woman, less of absorbing and passionate love, less of voluptuousness and luxury; their superstition has more of interior belief and less of ornamental machinery than those to which Amadis de Gaul and other heroes of the later cycles of romance furnished a model. The one reflect, in a tolerably faithful mirror, the rough customs of the feudal aristocracy in their original freedom, but partially modified by the gallant and courteous bearing of France; the others represent to us, with more of licensed deviation from reality, the softened features of society, in the decline of the feudal system through the cessation of intestine war, the increase of wealth and luxury, and the silent growth of female ascendency. This last again was, no doubt, promoted by the tone given to manners through romance; the language of respect became that of gallantry; the sympathy of mankind was directed towards the success of love; and, perhaps, it was thought that the sacrifices which this laxity of moral opinion cost the less prudent of the fair were but the price of the homage that the whole sex obtained.

58. Nothing, however, more showed a contrast between the old and the new trains of sentiments in points

of taste than the difference of religion. It would be untrue to say that ancient poetry is entirely wanting in exalted notions of the Deity; but they are rare in comparison with those which the Christian religion has inspired into very inferior minds, and which, with more or less purity, pervaded the vernacular poetry of Europe. They were obscured in both periods by an enormous superstructure of mythological machinery, but so different in names and associations, though not always in spirit, or even in circumstances, that those who delighted in the fables of Ovid usually scorned the Golden Legend of James de Voragine, whose pages were turned over with equal pleasure by a credulous multitude, little able to understand why any one should relish heathen stories which he did not believe. The modern mythology, if we may include in it the saints and devils, as well as the fairy and goblin armies, which had been retained in service since the days of paganism, is so much more copious and so much more easily adapted to our ordinary associations than the ancient, that this has given an advantage to the romantic school in their contention, which they have well known how to employ and to abuse.

Effect of difference of religion upon poetry.

59. Upon these three columns—chivalry, gallantry, and religion—repose the fictions of the middle ages, especially those usually designated as romances. These, such as we now know them, and such as display the characteristics above mentioned, were originally metrical, and chiefly written by natives of the north of France. The English and Germans translated or imitated them. A new era of romance began with the Amadis de Gaul, derived as some have thought, but upon insufficient evidence, from a French metrical original, but certainly written in Portugal, though in the Castilian language, by Vasco de Lobeyra, whose death is generally fixed in 1325.[b] This romance is in prose; and though a long interval seems to have elapsed before those founded on the story of Amadis began to multiply, many were written in French during the latter part of the fourteenth and the fifteenth centuries, derived from other legends of chivalry, which became

General tone of romance.

[b] Bouterwek, Hist. of Spanish Literature, p. 48.

the popular reading, and superseded the old metrical romances, already somewhat obsolete in their forms of language.[c]

Popular moral fictions.

60. As the taste of a chivalrous aristocracy was naturally delighted with romances, that not only led the imagination through a series of adventures, but presented a mirror of sentiments to which they themselves pretended, so that of mankind in general found its gratification, sometimes in tales of home growth or transplanted from the East, whether serious or amusing, such as the Gesta Romanorum, the Dolopathos, the Decameron (certainly the most celebrated and best written of these inventions), the Pecorone; sometimes in historical ballads or in moral fables, a favourite style of composition, especially with the Teutonic nations; sometimes again in legends of saints and the popular demonology of the age. The experience and sagacity, the moral sentiments, the invention and fancy of many obscure centuries, may be discerned more fully and favourably in these various fictions than in their elaborate treatises. No one of the European nations stands so high in this respect as the German; their ancient tales have a raciness and truth which has been only imitated by others. Among the most renowned of these we must place the story of Reynard the Fox, the origin of which, long sought by literary critics, recedes, as they prolong the inquiry, into greater depths of antiquity. It was supposed to be written or at least first published in German rhyme by Henry of Alkmaar, in 1498; but earlier editions, in the Flemish language, have since been discovered.[d] It has been found written in French verse by Jaquemars Gielée, of Lille, near the end, and in French prose by Peter of St. Cloud, near the beginning, of the thirteenth century. Finally, the principal characters are mentioned in a Provençal song by Richard Cœur de

[c] The oldest prose romance, which also is partly metrical, appears to be Tristan of Leonois, one of the cycle of the round table, written or translated by Lucas de Gast, about 1170. Roquefort, Etat de la Poésie Française, p. 147. [Several romances in prose are said in Hist. Litt. de la France, xvi. 170, 177, to be older than the close of the thirteenth century. Those relating to Arthur and the round table are esteemed of an earlier date than such as have Charlemagne for their hero. Most of these romances in prose are taken from metrical romances.—1842.]

[d] [I have been reminded that Caxton's "Historye of Reynard the Foxe" was published in 1481.—1847.]

Lion.[e] But though we thus bring the story to France, where it became so popular as to change the very name of the principal animal, which was always called goupil (vulpes) till the fourteenth century, when it assumed, from the hero of the tale, the name of Renard,[f] there seems every reason to believe that it is of German origin; and, according to a conjecture once thought probable, a certain Reinard of Lorraine, famous for his vulpine qualities in the ninth century, suggested the name to some unknown fabulist of the empire. But Raynouard, and I believe Grimm, have satisfactorily refuted this hypothesis.[g]

61. These moral fictions, as well as more serious productions, in what may be called the ethical literature of the middle ages, towards which Germany contributed a large share, speak freely of the vices of the great. But they deal with them as men responsible to God, and subject to natural law, rather than as members of a community. Of political opinions, properly so called, which have in later times so powerfully swayed the conduct of mankind, we find very little to say in the fifteenth century. In so far as they were not merely founded on temporary circumstances, or at most on the prejudices connected with positive institutions in each country, the predominant associations that influenced the judgment were derived from respect for birth, of which opulence was as yet rather the sign than the substitute. This had long been, and long continued to be, the characteristic prejudice of European society. It was hardly ever higher than in the fifteenth century, when heraldry, the language that

Exclusion of politics from literature.

[e] Recueil des anciens Poètes, i. 21. M. Raynouard observes that the Troubadours, and, first of all, Richard Cœur de Lion, have quoted the story of Renard, sometimes with allusions not referable to the present romance. Journal des Sav. 1826, p. 346. A great deal has been written about this story; but I shall only quote Bouterwek, ix. 347; Heinsius, iv. 104; and the Biographie Universelle, arts. Gielée, Aikmaar.

[f] Something like this nearly happened in England: bears had had a narrow escape of being called only bruins, from their representative in the fable.

[g] [Journal des Savans, July, 1834. Raynouard, in reviewing a Latin poem, Reinardus Vulpis, published at Stutgard in 1832, and referred by its editor to the ninth century, shows that the allegorical meaning ascribed to the story is not in the slightest degree confirmed by real facts, or the characters of the parties supposed to be designed. The poem he places in the twelfth or thirteenth century rather than the ninth; and there can be no doubt whatever that he is right with any one who is conversant with the Latin versification of the two periods.—1842.]

speaks to the eye of pride and the science of those who despise every other, was cultivated with all its ingenious pedantry, and every improvement in useful art, every creation in inventive architecture, was made subservient to the grandeur of an elevated class in society. The burghers, in those parts of Europe which had become rich by commerce, emulated in their public distinctions, as they did ultimately in their private families, the ensigns of patrician nobility. This prevailing spirit of aristocracy was still but partially modified by the spirit of popular freedom on one hand, or of respectful loyalty on the other.

Religious opinions.

62. It is far more important to observe the disposition of the public mind in respect of religion, which not only claims to itself one great branch of literature, but exerts a powerful influence over almost every other. The greater part of literature in the middle ages, at least from the twelfth century, may be considered as artillery levelled against the clergy—I do not say against the church, which might imply a doctrinal opposition by no means universal. But if there is one theme upon which the most serious as well as the lightest, the most orthodox as the most heretical writers are united, it is ecclesiastical corruption. Divided among themselves, the secular clergy detested the regular—the regular monks satirised the mendicant friars, who, in their turn, after exposing both to the ill-will of the people, incurred a double portion of it themselves. In this most important respect, therefore, the influence of mediæval literature was powerful towards change. But it rather loosened the associations of ancient prejudice and prepared mankind for revolutions of speculative opinion, than brought them forward.

Attacks on the church.

Three lines of religious opinion in fifteenth century.

63. It may be said in general that three distinct currents of religious opinion are discernible on this side of the Alps in the first part of the fifteenth century. 1. The high pretensions of the Church of Rome to a sort of moral as well as theological infallibility, and to a paramount authority even in temporal affairs, when she should think fit to interfere with them, were maintained by a great body in the monastic and mendicant orders, and had still, probably, a considerable influence over the people in most

parts of Europe. 2. The Councils of Constance and Basle, and the contentions of the Gallican and German churches against the encroachments of the holy see, had raised up a strong adverse party, supported occasionally by the government, and more uniformly by the temporal lawyers and other educated laymen. It derived, however, its greatest force from a number of sincere and earnest persons, who set themselves against the gross vices of the time, and the abuses grown up in the church through self-interest or connivance. They were disgusted also at the scholastic systems, which had turned religion into a matter of subtle dispute, while they laboured to found it on devotional feeling and contemplative love. The mystical theology, which, from seeking the illuminating influence and piercing love of the Deity, often proceeded onward to visions of complete absorption in his essence, till that itself was lost, as in the East, from which this system sprang, in an annihilating pantheism, had never wanted, and can never want, its disciples. Some, of whom Bonaventura is the most conspicuous, opposed its enthusiastic emotions to the icy subtilties of the schoolmen. Some appealed to the hearts of the people in their own language. Such was Tauler, whose sermons were long popular and have often been printed; and another was the unknown author of the German Theology, a favourite work with Luther, and known by the Latin version of Sebastian Castalio. Such, too, were Gerson and Clemangis, and such were the numerous brethren who issued from the college of Deventer.[b] One, doubtless of this class, whenever he may have lived, was author of the celebrated treatise De Imitatione Christi (a title which has been transferred from the first chapter to the entire work), commonly ascribed to Thomas von Kempen or à Kempis, one of the Deventer society, but the origin of which has been, and will continue to be, the subject of strenuous controversy. Besides Thomas à Kempis, two candidates have been supported by their respective partisans—John Gerson, the famous chancellor of the

Treatise De Imitatione Christi.

[b] Eichhorn, vi. 1-136, has amply and well treated the theological literature of the fifteenth century. Mosheim is less satisfactory, and Milner wants extent of learning, yet both will be useful to the English reader. Eichhorn seems well acquainted with the mystical divines, in p. 97 et post.

university of Paris, and John Gersen, whose name appears in one manuscript, and whom some contend to have been abbot of a monastery at Vercelli in the thirteenth century, while others hold him an imaginary being, except as a misnomer of Gerson. Several French writers plead for their illustrious countryman, and especially M. Gence, one of the last who has revived the controversy; while the German and Flemish writers, to whom the Sorbonne acceded, have always contended for Thomas à Kempis, and Gersen has had the respectable support of Bellarmin, Mabillon, and most of the Benedictine order.[1] The book

[1] I am not prepared to state the external evidence upon this keenly debated question with sufficient precision. In a few words, it may, I believe, be said, that in favour of Thomas à Kempis has been alleged the testimony of many early editions bearing his name, including one about 1471, which appears to be the first, as well as a general tradition from his own time, extending over most of Europe, which has led a great majority, including the Sorbonne itself, to determine the cause in his favour. It is also said that a manuscript of the treatise De Imitatione bears these words at the conclusion: Finitus et completus per manum Thomæ de Kempis, 1441; and that in this manuscript are so many erasures and alterations as give it the appearance of his original autograph. Against Thomas à Kempis it is urged that he was a professed calligrapher or copyist for the college of Deventer; that the Chronicle of St. Agnes, a contemporary work, says of him: Scripsit Bibliam nostram totaliter, et multos alios libros pro domo et pro pretio; that the entry above mentioned is more like that of a transcriber than of an author; that the same chronicle makes no mention of his having written the treatise De Imitatione, nor does it appear in an early list of works ascribed to him. For Gerson are brought forward a great number of early editions in France, and still more in Italy, among which is the first that bears a date (Venice, 1483), both in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, and some other probabilities are alleged. But this treatise is not mentioned in a list of his writings given by himself. As to Gersen, his claim seems to rest on a manuscript of great antiquity, which ascribes it to him, and indirectly on all those manuscripts which are asserted to be older than the time of Gerson and Thomas à Kempis. But, as I have before observed, I do not profess to give a full view of the external evidence, of which I possess but a superficial knowledge.

From the book itself, two remarks, which I do not pretend to be novel, have suggested themselves to me. 1. The Gallicisms or Italicisms are very numerous, and strike the reader at once; such as Scientia sine timore Dei quid importat?—Resiste in principio inclinationi tuæ—Vigilia serotina—Homo passionatus—Vivere cum nobis contrariantibus—Timoratior in cunctis actibus—Sufferentia crucis. It seems strange that these barbarous adaptations of French or Italian should have occurred to any one whose native language was Dutch; unless it can be shown, that through St. Bernard, or any other ascetic writer, they had become naturalised in religious style. 2. But, on the other hand, it seems impossible to resist the conviction that the author was an inhabitant of a monastery, which was not the case with Gerson, originally a secular priest at Paris, and employed for many years in active life as chancellor of the university and one of the leaders of the Gallican church. The whole spirit breathed by the treatise De Imitatione Christi is that of a solitary ascetic:—Vellem me pluries tacuisse et inter homines non fuisse.—Sed quare tam libenter loquimur, et invicem fabulamur, cum raro sine læsione conscientiæ ad silentium redimus.—Cella continuata dulcescit, et male custodita tædium generat. Si in principio

itself is said to have gone through 1800 editions, and has probably been more read than any one work after the Scriptures. 3. A third religious party consisted of the avowed or concealed heretics, some disciples of the older sectaries, some of Wicliffe or Huss, resembling the school of Gerson and Gerard Groot in their earnest piety, but drawing a more decided line of separation between themselves and the ruling power, and ripe for a more complete reformation than the others were inclined to desire. It is not possible, however, for us to pronounce on all the shades of opinion that might be secretly cherished in the fifteenth century.

64. Those of the second class were, perhaps, comparatively rare at this time in Italy, and those of the third much more so. But the extreme superstition of the popular creed, the conversation of Jews and Mahometans, the unbounded admiration of pagan genius and virtue, the natural tendency of many minds to doubt and to perceive difficulties, which the schoolmen were apt to find everywhere, and nowhere to solve, joined to the irreligious spirit of the Aristotelian philosophy, especially as modified by Averroes, could not but engender a secret tendency towards infidelity, the course of which may be traced with ease in the writings of those ages. Thus the tale of the three rings in Boccace, whether original or not, may be reckoned

Scepticism. Defences of Christianity.

conversionis tuæ bene eam incolueris et custodieris, erit tibi posthac dilecta, amica, et gratissimum solatium.

As the former consideration seems to exclude Thomas à Kempis, so the latter is unfavourable to the claims of Gerson. It has been observed, however, that in one passage, l. i. c. 24, there is an apparent allusion to Dante, which, if intended, must put an end to Gerson, abbot of Vercelli, whom his supporters place in the first part of the thirteenth century. But the allusion is not indisputable. Various articles in the Biographie Universelle, from the pen of M. Gence, maintain his favourite hypothesis; and M. Daunou, in the Journal des Savans for 1826, and again in the volume for 1827, espouses the same cause, and even says, Nous ne nous arrêterons point à ce qui regarde Thomas à Kempis, à qui cet ouvrage n'est plus guère attribué aujourd'hui, p. 631. But *aujourd'hui* must be interpreted rather literally, if this be correct. This is in the review of a defence of the pretensions of Gersen, by M. Gregory, who adduces some strong reasons to prove that the work is older than the fourteenth century.

This book contains great beauty and heart piercing truth in many of its detached sentences, but places its rule of life in absolute seclusion from the world, and seldom refers to the exercise of any social or even domestic duty. It has naturally been less a favourite in Protestant countries, both from its monastic character, and because those who incline towards Calvinism do not find in it the phraseology to which they are accustomed. The translations are very numerous, but there seems to be an inimitable expression in its concise and energetic, though barbarous Latin.

among the sports of a sceptical philosophy. But a proof, not less decisive, that the blind faith we ascribe to the middle ages was by no means universal, results from the numerous vindications of Christianity written in the fifteenth century. Eichhorn, after referring to several passages in the works of Petrarch, mentions defences of religion by Marsilius Ficinus, Alfonso de Spina, a converted Jew, Savonarola, Æneas Sylvius, Picus of Mirandola. He gives an analysis of the first, which, in its course of argument, differs little from modern apologies of the same class.[k]

Raimond de Sebonde.

65. These writings, though by men so considerable as most of those he has named, are very obscure at present; but the treatise of Raimond de Sebonde is somewhat better known, in consequence of the chapter in Montaigne entitled an apology for him. Montaigne had previously translated into French the Theologia Naturalis of this Sebonde, professor of medicine at Barcelona in the early part of the fifteenth century. This has been called by some the first regular system of natural theology; but, even if nothing of that kind could be found in the writings of the schoolmen, which is certainly not the case, such an appellation, notwithstanding the title, seems hardly due to Sebonde's book, which is intended, not so much to erect a fabric of religion independent of revelation, as to demonstrate the latter by proofs derived from the order of nature.

His views misunderstood.

66. Dugald Stewart, in his first dissertation prefixed to the Encyclopædia Britannica, observes, that "the principal aim of Sebonde's book, according to Montaigne, is to show that Christians are in the wrong to make human reasoning the basis of their belief, since the object of it is only conceived by faith, and by a special inspiration of the divine grace." I have been able to ascertain that the excellent author was misled in this passage by confiding in a translation of Montaigne, which he took in a wrong sense. Far from such being the aim of Sebonde, his book is wholly devoted to the rational proofs of religion; and what Stewart has taken for a proposition of Sebonde himself, is merely an objection which, according to Montaigne,

[k] Vol. vi. p. 24.

some were apt to make against his mode of reasoning. The passage is so very clear that every one who looks at Montaigne (l. ii. c. 12) must instantaneously perceive the oversight which the translator, or rather Stewart, has made; or he may satisfy himself by the article on Sebonde in Bayle.[m]

His real object.

67. The object of Sebonde's book, according to himself, is to develop those truths as to God and man which are latent in nature, and through which the latter may learn everything necessary, and especially may understand Scripture, and have an infallible certainty of its truth. This science is incorporate in all the books of the doctors of the church, as the alphabet is in their words. It is the first science, the basis of all others, and requiring no other to be previously known. The scarcity of the book will justify an extract, which, though in very uncouth Latin, will serve to give a notion of what Sebonde really aimed at; but he labours with a confused expression, arising partly from the vastness of his subject.[n]

[m] [The translation used by Stewart may not have been that by Cotton, but one published in 1776, which professes to be original. It must be said that, if he had been more attentive, the translation could not have misled him.—1842.]

[n] Duo sunt libri nobis data a Deo: scilicet liber universitatis creaturarum, sive liber naturæ, et alius est liber sacræ scripturæ. Primus liber fuit datus homini a principio, dum universitas rerum fuit condita, quoniam quælibet creatura non est nisi quædam litera digito Dei scripta, et ex pluribus creaturis sicut ex pluribus literis componitur liber. Ita componitur liber creaturarum, in quo libro etiam continetur homo; et est principalior litera ipsius libri. Et sicut literæ et dictionis factæ ex literis important et includunt scientiam et diversas significationes et mirabiles sententias: ita conformiter ipsæ creaturæ simul conjunctæ et ad invicem comparatæ important et significant diversas significationes et sententias, et continent scientiam homini necessariam. Secundus autem liber scripturæ datus est homini secundo, et hoc in defectu primi libri; eo quia homo nesciebat in primo legere, qui erat cæcus; sed tamen primus liber creaturarum est omnibus communis, quia solum clerici legere sciunt in eo [i. e. secundo].

Item primus liber, scilicet naturæ, non potest falsificari, nec deleri, neque false interpretari; ideo hæretici non possunt eum false intelligere, nec aliquis potest in eo fieri hæreticus. Sed secundus potest falsificari et false interpretari et male intelligi. Attamen uterque liber est ab eodem, quia idem Dominus et creaturas condidit, et sacram Scripturam revelavit. Et ideo conveniunt ad invicem, et non contradicit unus alteri, sed tamen primus est nobis connaturalis, secundus supernaturalis. Præterea cum homo sit naturaliter rationalis, et susceptibilis disciplinæ et doctrinæ; et cum naturaliter a sua creatione nullam habeat actu doctrinam neque scientiam, sit tamen aptus ad suscipiendum eam; et cum doctrina et scientia sine libro, in quo scripta sit, non possit haberi, convenientissimum fuit, ne frustra homo esset capax doctrinæ et scientiæ, quod divina scientia homini librum creaverit, in quo per se et sine magistro possit studere doctrinam necessariam; propterea hoc totum istum mundum visibilem sibi creavit, et dedit

Nature of his arguments.

68. Sebonde seems to have had floating in his mind, as this extract will suggest, some of those theories as to the correspondence of the moral and material world which were afterwards propounded in their cloudy magnificence by the Theosophists of the next two centuries. He undertakes to prove the Trinity from the analogy of nature. His argument is ingenious enough, if not quite of orthodox tendency, being drawn from the scale of existence, which must lead us to a being immediately derived from the First Cause. He proceeds to derive other doctrines of Christianity from principles of natural reason; and after this, which occupies about half a volume of 779 closely printed pages, he comes to direct proofs of revelation: first, because God, who does all for his own honour, would not suffer an impostor to persuade the world that he was equal to God, which Mahomet never pretended, and afterwards by other arguments more or less valid or ingenious.

69. We shall now adopt a closer and more chronological arrangement than before, ranging under each decennial period the circumstances of most importance in the general history of literature, as well as the principal books published within it. This course we shall pursue till the channels of learning become so various, and so extensively diffused through several kingdoms, that it will be found convenient to deviate in some measure from so strictly chronological a form, in order to consolidate better the history of different sciences, and diminish in some measure what can never wholly be removed from a work of this nature, the confusion of perpetual change of subject.

tanquam librum proprium et naturalem et infallibilem, Dei digito scriptum, ubi singulæ creaturæ quasi literæ sunt, non humano arbitrio sed divino juvante judicio ad demonstrandum homini sapientiam et doctrinam sibi necessariam ad salutem. Quam quidem sapientiam nullus potest videre, neque legere per se in dicto libro semper aperto, nisi fuerit a Deo illuminatus et a peccato originali mundatus. Et ideo nullus antiquorum philosophorum paganorum potest legere hanc scientiam, quia erant excæcati quantum ad propriam salutem, quamvis in dicto libro legerunt aliquam scientiam, et omnem quam habuerunt ab eodem contraxerunt; sed veram sapientiam quæ ducit ad vitam æternam, quamvis fuerat in eo scripta, legere non potuerunt.

Ista autem scientia non est aliud, nisi cogitare et videre sapientiam scriptam in creaturis, et extrahere ipsam ab illis, et ponere in animâ, et videre significationem creaturarum. Et sic comparando ad aliam et conjungere sicut dictionem dictioni, et ex tali conjunctione resultat sententia et significatio vera, dum tamen sciat homo intelligere et cognoscere.

CHAPTER III.

ON THE LITERATURE OF EUROPE FROM 1440 TO THE CLOSE OF THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY.

SECT. I. 1440–1450.

Classical Literature in Italy — Nicolas V. — Laurentius Valla.

1. THE reader is not to consider the year 1440 as a marked epoch in the annals of literature. It has sometimes been treated as such by those who have referred the inventing of printing to this particular era. But it is here chosen as an arbitrary line, nearly coincident with the complete development of an ardent thirst for classical, and especially Grecian, literature in Italy, as the year 1400 was with its first manifestation.

The year 1440 not chosen as an epoch.

2. No very conspicuous events belong to this decennial period. The spirit of improvement, already so powerfully excited in Italy, continued to produce the same effects in rescuing ancient manuscripts from the chances of destruction, accumulating them in libraries, making translations from the Greek, and by intense labour in the perusal of the best authors, rendering both their substance and their language familiar to the Italian scholar. The patronage of Cosmo de' Medici, Alfonso king of Naples, and Nicolas of Este, has already been mentioned. Lionel, successor of the last prince, was by no means inferior to him in love of letters. But they had no patron so important as Nicolas V. (Thomas of Sarzana), who became pope in 1447; nor has any later occupant of his chair, without excepting Leo X., deserved equal praise as an encourager of learning. Nicolas founded the Vatican library, and left it, at his death in 1455,

Continual progress of learning.

Nicolas V.

enriched with 5000 volumes—a treasure far exceeding that of any other collection in Europe. Every scholar who needed maintenance, which was of course the common case, found it at the court of Rome; innumerable benefices all over Christendom, which had fallen into the grasp of the holy see, and frequently required of their incumbents, as is well known, neither residence, nor even the priestly character, affording the means of generosity, which have seldom been so laudably applied. Several Greek authors were translated into Latin by direction of Nicolas V., among which are the history of Diodorus Siculus, and Xenophon's Cyropædia, by Poggio,[a] who still enjoyed the office of apostolical secretary, as he had under Eugenius IV., and with still more abundant munificence on the part of the Pope; Herodotus and Thucydides by Valla, Polybius by Perotti, Appian by Decembrio, Strabo by Gregory of Tiferno and Guarino of Verona, Theophrastus by Gaza, Plato de Legibus, Ptolemy's Almagest, and the Præparatio Evangelica of Eusebius by George of Trebizond.[b] These translations, it has been already observed, will not bear a very severe criticism, but certainly there was an extraordinary cluster of learning round the chair of this excellent pope.

Justice due to his character.

3. Corniani remarks, that if Nicolas V., like some popes, had raised a distinguished family, many pens would have been employed to immortalise him; but not having surrounded himself with relations, his fame has been much below his merits. Gibbon, one of the first to do full justice to Nicolas, has made a similar observation. How striking the contrast between this pope and his famous predecessor Gregory I., who, if he did not burn and destroy heathen authors,

[a] This translation of Diodorus has been ascribed by some of our writers, even since the error has been pointed out, to John Free, an Englishman, who had heard the lectures of the younger Guarini in Italy. Quod opus, Leland observes, Itali Poggio vanissime attribuunt Florentino. De Scriptoribus Britann., p. 462. But it bears the name of Poggio in the two editions, printed in 1472 and 1493; and Leland seems to have been deceived by some one who had put Free's name on a manuscript of the translation. Poggio, indeed, in his preface, declares that he undertook it by command of Nicolas V. See Niceron, ix. 158; Zeno, Dissertazioni Vossiane, i. 41; Ginguéné, iii. 245. Pits follows Leland in ascribing a translation of Diodorus to Free, and quotes the first words: thus, if it still should be suggested that this may be a different work, there are the means of proving it.

[b] Heeren, p. 72.

was at least anxious to discourage the reading of them! These eminent men, like Michael Angelo's figures of Night and Morning, seem to stand at the two gates of the middle ages, emblems and heralds of the mind's long sleep, and of its awakening.

4. Several little treatises by Poggio, rather in a moral than political strain, display an observing and intelligent mind. Such are those on nobility, and on the unhappiness of princes. For these, which were written before 1440, the reader may have recourse to Shepherd, Corniani, or Ginguéné. A later essay, if we may so call it, on the vicissitudes of fortune, begins with rather an interesting description of the ruins of Rome. It is an enumeration of the more conspicuous remains of the ancient city; and we may infer from it that no great devastation or injury has taken place since the fifteenth century. Gibbon has given an account of this little tract, which is not, as he shows, the earliest on the subject. Poggio, I will add, seems not to have known some things with which we are familiar, as the Cloaca Maxima, the fragments of the Servian wall, the Mamertine prison, the Temple of Nerva, the Giano Quadrifronte; and, by some odd misinformation, believes that the tomb of Cecilia Metella, which he had seen entire, was afterwards destroyed.[e] This leads to a conjecture that the treatise was not finished during his residence at Rome, and consequently not within the present decennium.

Poggio on the ruins of Rome.

5. In the fourth book of this treatise De Varietate Fortunæ, Poggio has introduced a remarkable narration of travels by a Venetian, Nicolo di Conti, who in 1419 had set off from his country, and, after passing many years in Persia and India, returned home in 1444. His account of those regions, in some respects the earliest on which reliance could be placed, will be found, rendered into Italian from a Portuguese version of Poggio, in the first volume of Ramusio. That editor seems not to have known that the original was in print.

Account of the East by Conti.

6. A far more considerable work by Laurentius Valla, on the graces of the Latin language, is rightly, I believe, placed within this period; but it is

Laurentius Valla.

[e] Ad calcem postea majore ex parte exterminatum.

often difficult to determine the dates of books published before the invention of printing. Valla, like Poggio, had long earned the favour of Alfonso, but, unlike him, had forfeited that of the court of Rome. His character was very irascible and overbearing, a fault too general with the learned of the fifteenth century; but he may, perhaps, be placed at the head of the literary republic at this time; for if inferior to Poggio, as probably he was, in vivacity and variety of genius, he was undoubtedly above him in what was then most valued and most useful, grammatical erudition.

His attack on the court of Rome.

7. Valla began with an attack on the court of Rome in his declamation against the donation of Constantine. Some have in consequence reckoned him among the precursors of protestantism; while others have imputed to the Roman see, that he was pursued with its hostility for questioning that pretended title to sovereignty. But neither of these representations is just. Valla confines himself altogether to the temporal principality of the pope; but as to this his language must be admitted to have been so abusive as to render the resentment of the court of Rome not unreasonable.[d]

His treatise on the Latin language.

8. The more famous work of Valla, De Elegantiis Latinæ Linguæ, begins with too arrogant an assumption. "These books," he says, "will contain nothing that has been said by any one else. For many ages past, not only no man has been able to speak Latin, but none have understood the Latin they read; the studious of philosophy have

[d] A few lines will suffice as a specimen. O Romani pontifices, exemplum facinorum omnium cæteris pontificibus, et improbissimi scribæ et pharisæi, qui sedetis super cathedram Moysi, et opera Dathan et Aoyron facitis, itane vestimenta apparatûs, pompa equitatûs, omnis denique vita Cæsaris, vicarium Christi decebit? The whole tone is more like Luther's violence than what we should expect from an Italian of the fifteenth century. But it is with the ambitious spirit of aggrandisement as temporal princes, that he reproaches the pontiffs; nor can it be denied that Martin and Eugenius had given provocation for his invective. Nec amplius horrenda vox audiatur, partes contra ecclesiam; ecclesia contra Perusinos pugnat, contra Bononienses. Non contra Christianos pugnat ecclesia, sed papa. Of the papal claim to temporal sovereignty by prescription, Valla writes indignantly. Præscripsit Romana ecclesia; o imperiti, o divini juris ignari. Nullus quantumvis annorum numerus verum abolere titulum potest. Præscripsit Romana ecclesia. Tace, nefaria lingua. Præscriptionem quæ fit de rebus mutis atque irrationalibus, ad hominem transfers; cujus quo diuturnior in servitute possessio, eo detestabilior.

had no comprehension of the philosophers, the advocates of the orators, the lawyers of the jurists, the general scholar of any writers of antiquity." Valla, however, did at least incomparably more than any one who had preceded him; and it would probably appear that a great part of the distinctions in Latin syntax, inflexion, and synonymy, which our best grammars contain, may be traced to his work. It is to be observed, that he made free use of the ancient grammarians, so that his vaunt of originality must be referred to later times. Valla is very copious as to synonyms, on which the delicate, and even necessary understanding of a language mainly depends. If those have done most for any science who have carried it farthest from the point whence they set out, philology seems to owe quite as much to Valla as to any one who has come since. The treatise was received with enthusiastic admiration, continually reprinted, honoured with a paraphrase by Erasmus, commented, abridged, extracted, and even turned into verse.[e]

9. Valla, however, self-confident and of no good temper, in censuring the language of others, fell not unfrequently into mistakes of his own. Its defects. Vives and Budæus, coming in the next century, and in a riper age of philology, blame the hypercritical disposition of one who had not the means of pronouncing negatively on Latin words and phrases, from his want of sufficient dictionaries; his fastidiousness became what they call superstition, imposing captious scruples and unnecessary observances on himself and the world.[f] And of this species of superstition there has been much since his time in philology.

10. Heeren, one of the few who have, in modern times, spoken of this work from personal knowledge, and with sufficient learning, gives it a Heeren's praise of it.

[e] Corniani, ii. 221. The editions of Valla de Elegantiis, recorded by Panzer, are twenty-eight in the fifteenth century, beginning in 1471, and thirty-one in the first thirty-six years of the next.

[f] Vives de tradendis disciplinis, i. 478. Budæus observes:—Ego Laurentium Vallensem, egregii spiritus virum, existimo sæculi sui imperitia offensum primum Latine loquendi consuetudinem constituere summa religione instituisse; deinde judicii cerimonia singulari, cum profectus quosque diligentiam æquasset, in eam superstitionem sensim delapsum esse, ut et sese ipse et alios captiosis observationibus scribendique legibus obligaret. Commentar. in Ling. Græc., p. 26 (1529). But sometimes, perhaps, Valla is right, and Budæus wrong in censuring him.

high character. "Valla was without doubt the best acquainted with Latin of any man in his age; yet, no pedantic Ciceronian, he had studied all the classical writers of Rome. His Elegantiæ is a work on grammar; it contains an explanation of refined turns of expression, especially where they are peculiar to Latin; displaying not only an exact knowledge of that tongue, but often also a really philosophical study of language in general. In an age when nothing was so much valued as a good Latin style, yet when the helps, of which we now possess so many, were all wanting, such a work must obtain a great success, since it relieved a necessity which every one felt."[g]

Valla's annotations on the New Testament.

11. We have to give this conspicuous scholar a place in another line of criticism, that on the text and interpretation of the New Testament. His annotations are the earliest specimen of explanations founded on the original language. In the course of these he treats the Vulgate with some severity. But Valla is said to have had but a slight knowledge of Greek;[h] and it must also be owned, that with all his merit as a Latin critic he wrote indifferently, and with less classical spirit than his adversary Poggio. The invectives of these against each other do little honour to their memory, and are not worth recording in this volume, though they could not be omitted in a legitimate history of the Italian scholars.

SECT. II. 1450–1460.

Greeks in Italy — Invention of Printing.

12. THE capture of Constantinople in 1453 drove a few learned Greeks, who had lingered to the last amidst the crash of their ruined empire, to the hospitable and

[g] P. 220.

[h] Annis abhinc ducentis Herodotum et Thucydidem Latinis literis exponebat Laurentius Valla, in ea bene et eleganter dicendi copia, quam totis voluminibus expliciavit, inelegans tamen, et pæne barbarus, Græcis ad hoc literis leviter tinctus, ad auctorum sententias parum attentus, oscitans sæpe, et alias res agens, fidem apud eruditos decoxit. Huet de claris Interpretibus, apud Blount. Daunou, however, in the Biographie Universelle, art. Thucydides, asserts that Valla's translation of that historian is generally faithful. This would show no inconsiderable knowledge of Greek for that age.

admiring Italy. Among these have been reckoned Argyropulus and Chalcondyles, successively teachers of their own language; Andronicus Callistus, who is said to have followed the same profession both there and at Rome; and Constantine Lascaris, of an imperial family, whose lessons were given for several years at Milan, and afterwards at Messina. It seems, however, to be proved that Argyropulus had been already for several years in Italy.[i] Fresh arrival of Greeks in Italy.

13. The cultivation of Greek literature gave rise about this time to a vehement controversy, which had some influence on philosophical opinions in Italy. Gemistus Pletho, a native of the Morea, and one of those who attended the council of Florence in 1439, being an enthusiastic votary of the Platonic theories in metaphysics and natural theology, communicated to Cosmo de' Medici part of his own zeal; and from that time the citizens of Florence formed a scheme of establishing an academy of learned men, to discuss and propagate the Platonic system. This seems to have been carried into effect early in the present decennial period. Platonists and Aristotelians.

14. Meantime, a treatise by Pletho, wherein he not only extolled the Platonic philosophy, which he mingled, as was then usual, with that of the Alexandrian school, and of the spurious writings attributed to Zoroaster and Hermes, but inveighed without measure against Aristotle and his disciples, had aroused the Aristotelians of Greece, where, as in western Europe, their master's authority had long prevailed. It seems not improbable that the Platonists were obnoxious to the orthodox party for sacrificing their own church to that of Rome; and there is also some ground for ascribing a rejection of Christianity to Pletho. The dispute, at least, began in Greece, where Pletho's treatise met with an angry opponent in Gennadius, patriarch of Constantinople.[k] It soon spread to Italy; Theodore Their controversy.

[i] Hody, Tiraboschi, Roscoe.

[k] Pletho's death, in an extreme old age, is fixed by Brucker, on the authority of George of Trebizond, before the capture of Constantinople. A letter, indeed, of Bessarion, in 1462 (Mém. de l'Acad. des Inscript., vol. ii.), seems to imply that he was then living; but this cannot have been the case. Gennadius, his enemy, abdicated the patriarchate of Constantinople in 1458, having been raised to it in 1453. The public burning

Gaza embracing the cause of Aristotle with temper and moderation,[m] and George of Trebizond, a far inferior man, with invectives against the Platonic philosophy and its founder. Others replied in the same tone; and whether from ignorance or from rudeness, this controversy appears to have been managed as much with abuse of the lives and characters of two philosophers, dead nearly two thousand years, as with any rational discussion of their tenets. Both sides, however, strove to make out, what in fact was the ultimate object, that the doctrine they maintained was more consonant to the Christian religion than that of their adversaries. Cardinal Bessarion, a man of solid and elegant learning, replied to George of Trebizond in a book entitled Adversus Calumniatorem Platonis; one of the first books that appeared from the Roman press in 1470. This dispute may possibly have originated, at least in Greece, before 1450; and it was certainly continued beyond 1460, the writings both of George and Bessarion appearing to be rather of later date.[n]

15. Bessarion himself was so far from being as unjust towards Aristotle as his opponent was towards Plato, that he translated his metaphysics. That philosopher, though almost the idol of the schoolmen, lay still in some measure under the ban of the church, which had very gradually removed the prohibition she laid on his writings in the beginning of the thirteenth century. Nicolas V. first permitted them to be read without restriction in the universities.[o]

16. Cosmo de' Medici selected Marsilius Ficinus, as a youth of great promise, to be educated in the mysteries of Platonism, that he might become the chief and preceptor of the new academy; nor did the devotion of the young philosopher fall short of the

Marsilius Ficinus.

of Pletho's book was in the intermediate time; and it is agreed that this was done after his death.

[m] Hody, p. 79, doubts whether Gaza's vindication of Aristotle were not merely verbal, in conversation with Bessarion; which is, however, implicitly contradicted by Boivin and Tiraboschi, who assert him to have written against Pletho. The comparison of Plato and Aristotle by George of Trebizond was published at Venice in 1523, as Heeren says on the authority of Fabricius.

[n] The best account, and that from which later writers have freely borrowed, of this philosophical controversy, is by Boivin, in the second volume of the Memoirs of the Academy of Inscriptions, p. 15. Brucker, iv. 40, Buhle, ii. 107, and Tiraboschi, vi. 303, are my other authorities.

[o] Launoy de varia Aristotelis Fortuna in Academia Parisiensi, p. 44.

patron's hope. Ficinus declares himself to have profited as much by the conversation of Cosmo as by the writings of Plato; but this is said in a dedication to Lorenzo, and the author has not on other occasions escaped the reproach of flattery. He began as early as 1456, at the age of twenty-three, to write on the Platonic philosophy; but being as yet ignorant of Greek, prudently gave way to the advice of Cosmo and Landino, that he should acquire more knowledge before he imparted it to the world.[p]

17. The great glory of this decennial period is the invention of printing, or at least, as all must allow, its application to the purposes of useful learning. The reader will not expect a minute discussion of so long and unsettled a controversy as that which the origin of this art has furnished. For those who are little conversant with the subject a very few particulars may be thought necessary. Invention of printing.

18. About the end of the fourteenth century we find a practice of taking impressions from engraved blocks of wood; sometimes for playing-cards, which were not generally used long before that time, sometimes for rude cuts of saints.[q] The latter were frequently accompanied by a few lines of letters cut in the block. Gradually entire pages were impressed in this manner; and thus began what are called block books, printed in fixed characters, but never exceeding a very few leaves. Of these there exist nine or ten, often reprinted, as it is generally thought, between 1400 and 1440.[r] In using the word printed, it is of course not intended to prejudice the question as to the real art of printing. These block books seem to have been all executed in the Low Countries. They are said to have been followed by several editions of the short grammar of Donatus.[s] These also were printed in Holland. This mode of printing from blocks of wood has been practised in China from time immemorial. Block books.

19. The invention of printing, in the modern sense, from moveable letters, has been referred by most to

[p] Brucker, iv. 80; Roscoe.

[q] Heinecke and others have proved that playing-cards were known in Germany as early as 1299; but these were probably painted. Lambinet, Origines de l'Imprimerie; Singer's History of Playing-Cards. The earliest cards were on parchment.

[r] Lambinet, Singer, Ottley, Dibdin, &c.

[s] Lambinet.

Gutenberg, a native of Mentz, but settled at Strasburg. He is supposed to have conceived the idea before 1440, and to have spent the next ten years in making attempts at carrying it into effect, which some assert him to have done in short fugitive pieces, actually printed from his moveable wooden characters before 1450. But of the existence of these there seems to be no evidence.[t] Gutenberg's priority is disputed by those who deem Lawrence Costar of Haarlem the real inventor of the art. According to a tradition, which seems not to be traced beyond the middle of the sixteenth century, but resting afterwards upon sufficient testimony to prove its local reception, Costar substituted moveable for fixed letters as early as 1430; and some have believed that a book called Speculum humanæ Salvationis, of very rude wooden characters, proceeded from the Haarlem press before any other that is generally recognised.[u] The tradition adds that an unfaithful servant, having fled with the secret, set up for himself at Strasburg or Mentz; and this treachery was originally ascribed to Gutenberg or Fust, but seems, since they have been manifestly cleared of it, to have been laid on one Gensfleisch, reputed to be the brother of Gutenberg.[x] The evidence, however, as to this is highly precarious; and even if we were to admit the claims of Costar, there seems no fair reason to dispute that Gutenberg might also have struck out an idea, which surely did not require any extraordinary ingenuity, and left the most important difficulties to be surmounted, as they undeniably were, by himself and his coadjutors.[y]

Gutenberg and Costar's claims.

20. It is agreed by all, that about 1450, Gutenberg, having gone to Mentz, entered into partnership with Fust, a rich merchant of that city, for the purpose of carrying the invention into

Progress of the invention.

[t] Mémoires de l'Acad. des Inscript., xvii. 762; Lambinet, p. 113.

[u] In Mr. Ottley's History of Engraving, the claims of Costar are strongly maintained, though chiefly on the authority of Meerman's proofs, which go to establish the local tradition. But the evidence of Ludovico Guicciardini is an answer to those who treat it as a forgery of Hadrian Junius. Santander, Lambinet, and most recent investigators, are for Mentz against Haarlem.

[x] Gensfleisch seems to have been the name of that branch of the Gutenberg family to which the inventor of printing belonged. Biogr. Univ., art. Gutenberg.

[y] Lambinet, p. 315.

effect, and that Fust supplied him with considerable sums of money. The subsequent steps are obscure. According to a passage in the Annales Hirsargienses of Trithemius, written sixty years afterwards, but on the authority of a grandson of Peter Schæffer, their assistant in the work, it was about 1452 that the latter brought the art to perfection, by devising an easier mode of casting types.[a] This passage has been interpreted, according to a lax construction, to mean, that Schæffer invented the method of casting types in a matrix; but seems more strictly to intimate that we owe to him the great improvement in letter-casting, namely, the punches of engraved steel, by which the matrices or moulds are struck, and without which, independent of the economy of labour, there could be no perfect uniformity of shape. Upon the former supposition, Schæffer may be reckoned the main inventor of the art of printing; for moveable wooden letters, though small books may possibly have been printed by means of them, are so inconvenient, and letters of cut metal so expensive, that few great works were likely to have passed through the press till cast types were employed. Van Praet, however, believes the Psalter of 1457 to have been printed from wooden characters; and some have conceived letters of cut metal to have been employed both in that and in the first Bible. Lambinet, who thinks "the essence of the art of printing is in the engraved punch," naturally gives the chief credit to Schæffer;[a] but this is not the more usual opinion.

21. The earliest book, properly so called, is now generally believed to be the Latin Bible, commonly called the Mazarin Bible, a copy having been found, about the middle of the last century, in Cardinal Mazarin's library at Paris.[b] It is remarkable

First printed Bible.

[a] Petrus Opilio de Gernsheim, tunc famulus inventoris primi Joannis Fust, homo ingeniosus et prudens, facilioremmodum fundendi characteras excogitavit, et artem, ut nunc est, complevit. Lambinet, i. 101; see Daunou contra; Id. 417.

[a] ii. 213. In another place he divides the praise better: Gloire donc à Gutenberg, qui, le premier, conçut l'idée de la typographie, en imaginant la mobilité des caractères, qui en est l'âme; gloire à Fust, qui en fit usage avec lui, et sans lequel nous ne jouirions peut-être pas de ce bienfait; gloire à Schæffer, à qui nous devons tout le mécanisme, et toutes les merveilles de l'art. i. 119.

[b] The Cologne Chronicle says, Anno Domini 1450, qui jubilæus erat, cœptum est imprimi, primusque liber, qui excudebatur, biblia fuere Latina.

that its existence was unknown before; for it can hardly be called a book of very extraordinary scarcity, nearly twenty copies being in different libraries, half of them in those of private persons in England.[c] No date appears in this Bible, and some have referred its publication to 1452, or even to 1450, which few perhaps would at present maintain; while others have thought the year 1455 rather more probable.[d] In a copy belonging to the Royal Library at Paris, an entry is made, importing that it was completed in binding and illuminating at Mentz, on the feast of the Assumption (Aug. 15), 1456. But Trithemius, in the passage above quoted, seems to intimate that no book had been printed in 1452; and, considering the lapse of time that would naturally be employed in such an undertaking during the infancy of the art, and that we have no other printed book of the least importance to fill up the interval till 1457, and also that the binding and illuminating the above-mentioned copy is likely to have followed the publication at no great length of time, we may not err in placing its appearance in the year 1455, which will secure its hitherto unimpeached priority in the records of bibliography.[e]

Beauty of the book.

22. It is a very striking circumstance, that the high-minded inventors of this great art tried at the very outset so bold a flight as the printing an entire Bible, and executed it with astonishing success. It was Minerva leaping on earth in her divine strength and radiant armour, ready at the moment of her nativity to subdue and destroy her enemies. The Mazarin Bible is printed, some copies on vellum, some on paper of choice quality, with strong, black, and tolerably hand-

[c] Bibliotheca Sussexiana, i. 293 (1827). The number there enumerated is eighteen; nine in public, and nine in private libraries; three of the former, and all the latter, English.

[d] Lambinet thinks it was probably not begun before 1453, nor published till the end of 1455: i. 130. See, on this Bible, an article by Dr. Dibdin in Valpy's Classical Journal, No. 8, which collects the testimonies of his predecessors.

[e] It is very difficult to pronounce on the methods employed in the earliest books, which are almost all controverted. This Bible is thought by Fournier, himself a letter-founder, to be printed from wooden types; by Meerman, from types cut in metal; by Heinekke and Daunou from cast types, which is most probable. Lambinet, i. 417. Daunou does not believe that any book was printed with types cut either in wood or metal; and that, after block books, there were none but with cast letters like those now in use, invented by Gutenberg, perfected by Schaeffer, and first employed by them and Fust in the Mazarin Bible. Id., p. 423.

some characters, but with some want of uniformity, which has led, perhaps unreasonably, to a doubt whether they were cast in a matrix. We may see in imagination this venerable and splendid volume leading up the crowded myriads of its followers, and imploring, as it were, a blessing on the new art, by dedicating its first fruits to the service of Heaven.

Early printed sheets.

23. A metrical exhortation, in the German language, to take arms against the Turks, dated in 1454, has been retrieved in the present century. If this date unequivocally refers to the time of printing, which does not seem a necessary consequence, it is the earliest loose sheet that is known to be extant. It is said to be in the type of what is called the Bamberg Bible, which we shall soon have to mention. Two editions of Letters of Indulgence from Nicolas V., bearing the date of 1454, are extant in single printed sheets, and two more editions of 1455;[f] but it has justly been observed that, even if published before the Mazarin Bible, the printing of that great volume must have commenced long before. An almanac for the year 1457 has also been detected; and as fugitive sheets of this kind are seldom preserved, we may justly conclude that the art of printing was not dormant, so far as these light productions are concerned. A Donatus, with Schæffer's name, but no date, may or may not be older than a Psalter published in 1457 by Fust and Schæffer (the partnership with Gutenberg having been dissolved in November, 1455, and having led to a dispute and litigation), with a colophon, or notice, subjoined in the last page, in these words:—

Psalmorum codex venustate capitalium decoratus, rubricationibusque sufficienter distinctus, adinventione artificiosa imprimendi ac caracterizandi, absque calami ulla exaratione sic effigiatus, et ad eusebiam Dei industrie est summatus. Per Johannem Fust, civem Moguntinum, et Petrum Schæffer de Gernsheim, anno Domini millesimo cccclvii. In vigilia Assumptionis.[g]

[f] Brunet, Supplément au Manuel du Libraire. It was not known till lately that more than one edition out of these four was in existence. Santander thinks their publication was after 1460. Dict. Bibliographique du 15me siècle, i. 92. But this seems improbable, from the transitory character of the subject. He argues from a resemblance in the letters to those used by Fust and Schæffer in the Durandi Rationale of 1459.

[g] Dibdin's Bibliotheca Spenceriana;

A colophon, substantially similar, is subjoined to several of the Fustine editions. And this seems hard to reconcile with the story that Fust sold his impressions at Paris, as late as 1463, for manuscripts.

Psalter of 1459. Other early books.

24. Another Psalter was printed by Fust and Schæffer with similar characters in 1459; and, in the same year, Durandi Rationale, a treatise on the liturgical offices of the church; of which Van Praet says that it is perhaps the earliest with cast types to which Fust and Schæffer have given their name and a date.[h] The two Psalters he conceives to have been printed from wood. But this would be disputed by other eminent judges.[i] In 1460, a work of considerable size, the Catholicon of Balbi, came out from an opposition press established at Mentz by Gutenberg. The Clementine Constitutions, part of the canon law, were also printed by him in the same year.

Bible of Pfister.

25. These are the only monuments of early typography acknowledged to come within the present decennium. A Bible without a date, supposed by most to have been printed by Pfister at Bamberg, though ascribed by others to Gutenberg himself, is reckoned by good judges certainly prior to 1462, and perhaps as early as 1460. Daunou and others refer it to 1461. The antiquities of typography, after all the pains bestowed upon them, are not unlikely to receive still further elucidation in the course of time.

Greek first taught at Paris.

26. On the 19th of January, 1458, as Crevier, with a minuteness becoming the subject, informs us, the university of Paris received a petition from Gregory, a native of Tiferno in the kingdom of Naples, to be appointed teacher of Greek. His request was granted, and a salary of one hundred crowns assigned to him, on condition that he should teach gratuitously, and deliver two lectures every day, one on the Greek language, and the other on the art of rhetoric.[k] From

Biogr. Univ., Gutenberg, &c. In this edition of Donatus the method of printing is also mentioned: Explicit Donatus arte nova imprimendi seu caracterizandi per Petrum de Gernsheim in urbe Moguntina effigiatus. Lambinet considers this and the Bible to be the first specimens of typography; for he doubts the Literæ Indulgentiarum, though probably with no cause.

[h] Lambinet, i. 154.

[i] Lambinet, Dibdin. The former thinks the inequality of letters observed in the Psalter of 1457 may proceed from their being cast in a matrix of plaster or clay, instead of metal.

[k] Crevier, Hist. de l'Univ. de Paris, iv 243.

this auspicious circumstance Crevier deduces the restoration of ancient literature in the university of Paris, and consequently in the kingdom of France. For above two hundred years the scholastic logic and philosophy had crushed polite letters. No mention is made of rhetoric—that is, of the art that instructs in the ornaments of style—in any statute or record of the university since the beginning of the thirteenth century. If the Greek language, as Crevier supposes, had not been wholly neglected, it was at least so little studied that entire neglect would have been practically the same.

27. This concession was perhaps unwillingly made, and, as frequently happens in established institutions, it left the prejudices of the ruling party rather stronger than before. The teachers of Greek and rhetoric were specially excluded from the privileges of regency by the faculty of arts. These branches of knowledge were looked upon as unessential appendages to a good education; but a bigoted adherence to old systems, and a lurking reluctance that the rising youth should become superior in knowledge to ourselves, were no peculiar evil spirits that haunted the university of Paris, though none ever stood more in need of a thorough exorcism. For many years after this time the Greek and Latin languages were thus taught by permission, and with very indifferent success.

Leave unwillingly granted.

28. Purbach, or Peurbach, native of a small Austrian town of that name, has been called the first restorer of mathematical science in Europe. Ignorant of Greek, and possessing only a bad translation of Ptolemy, lately made by George of Trebizond,[m] he yet was able to explain the rules of physical astronomy and the theory of the planetary motions far better than his predecessors. But his chief merit was in the construction of trigonometrical tables. The Greeks had introduced the sexagesimal division, not only of the circle, but of the radius, and calculated chords according to this scale. The Arabians, who about

Purbach: his mathematical discoveries.

[m] Montucla, Biogr. Univ. It is, however, certain, and is admitted by Delambre, the author of this article in the Biogr. Univ., that Purbach made considerable progress in abridging and explaining the text of this translation, which, if ignorant of the original, he must have done by his mathematical knowledge. Kästner, ii. 521.

the ninth century first substituted the sine, or half-chord of the double arch, in their tables, preserved the same graduation. Purbach made one step towards a decimal scale, which the new notation by Arabic numerals rendered highly convenient, by dividing the radius, or sinus totus, as it was then often called, into 600,000 parts, and gave rules for computing the sines of arcs; which he himself also calculated for every minute of the quadrant, as Delambre and Kästner think, or for every ten minutes, according to Gassendi and Hutton, in parts of this radius. The tables of Albaten the Arabian geometer, the inventor, as far as appears, of sines, had extended only to quarters of a degree.[n]

29. Purbach died young, in 1461, when, by the advice of Cardinal Bessarion, he was on the point of setting out for Italy, in order to learn Greek. His mantle descended on Regiomontanus, a disciple, who went beyond his master, though he has sometimes borne away his due credit. A mathematician rather earlier than Purbach was Nicolas Cusanus, raised to the dignity of cardinal in 1448. He was by birth a German, and obtained a considerable reputation for several kinds of knowledge.[o] But he was chiefly distinguished for the tenet of the earth's motion; which, however, according to Montucla, he proposed only as an ingenious hypothesis. Fioravanti, of Bologna, is said, on contemporary authority, to have removed, in 1455, a tower with its foundation to a distance of several feet, and to have restored to the perpendicular one at Cento seventy-five feet high, which had swerved five feet.[p]

Other mathematicians.

[n] Montucla, Hist. des Mathématiques, i. 539. Hutton's Mathematical Dictionary, and his Introduction to Logarithms. Gassendi, Vita Purbachii. Biogr. Univ.: Peurbach (by Delambre). Kästner, Geschichte der Mathematik, i. 529-543, 572; ii. 319. Gassendi twice gives 6,000,000 for the parts of Purbach's radius. None of these writers seem comparable in accuracy to Kästner.

[o] A work upon statics, or rather upon the weight of bodies in water, by Cusanus, seems chiefly remarkable, as it shows both a disposition to ascertain physical truths by experiment, and an extraordinary misapprehension of the results. See Kästner, ii. 122. It is published in an edition of Vitruvius, Strasburg, 1550.

[p] Tiraboschi. Montucla, Biogr. Univ

SECT. III. 1460-1470.

Progress of Art of Printing—Learning in Italy and rest of Europe.

30. THE progress of that most important invention, which illustrated the preceding ten years, is the chief subject of our consideration in the present. Many books, it is to be observed, even of the superior class, were printed, especially in the first thirty years after the invention of the art, without date of time or place; and this was of course more frequently the case with smaller or fugitive pieces. A catalogue, therefore, of books that can be certainly referred to any particular period must always be very defective. A collection of fables in German was printed at Bamberg in 1461, and another book in 1462, by Pfister, at the same place.[q] The Bible which bears his name has been already mentioned. In 1462 Fust published a Bible, commonly called the Mentz Bible, and which passed for the earliest till that in the Mazarin library came to light. But in the same year, the city having been taken by Adolphus count of Nassau, the press of Fust was broken up, and his workmen, whom he had bound by an oath to secrecy, dispersed themselves into different quarters. Released thus, as they seem to have thought, from their obligation, they exercised their skill in other places. It is certain that the art of printing soon after this spread into the towns near the Rhine; not only Bamberg, as before mentioned, but Cologne, Strasburg, Augsburg, and one or two more places, sent forth books before the conclusion of these ten years. Nor was Mentz altogether idle after the confusion occasioned by political events had abated. Yet the whole number of books printed with dates of time and place, in the German empire, from 1461 to 1470, according to Panzer, was only twenty-four; of which five were Latin, and two German, Bibles. The only known classical works are two editions of Cicero de Officiis, at Mentz, in 1465 and 1466, and another about the latter year at Cologne by Ulric Zell; perhaps too the treatise de Finibus, and that de Senec-

Progress of printing in Germany.

[q] Lambinet.

tute, at the same place. There is also reason to suspect that a Virgil, a Valerius Maximus, and a Terence, printed by Mentelin at Strasburg, without a date, are as old as 1470; and the same has been thought of one or two editions of Ovid de Arte Amandi by Zell of Cologne. One book, Joannis de Turrecremata Explanatio in Psalterium, was printed by Zainer at Cracow, in 1465. This is remarkable, as we have no evidence of the Polish press from that time till 1500. Several copies of this book are said to exist in Poland; yet doubts of its authenticity have been entertained. Zainer settled soon afterwards at Augsburg.[r]

Introduced into France.

31. It was in 1469 that Ulrick Gering, with two more who had been employed as pressmen by Fust at Mentz, were induced by Fichet and Lapierre, rectors of the Sorbonne, to come to Paris, where several books were printed in 1470 and 1471. The epistles of Gasparin of Barziza appear, by some verses subjoined, to have been the earliest among these.[s] Panzer has increased to eighteen the list of books printed there before the close of 1472.[t]

Caxton's first works.

32. But there seem to be unquestionable proofs that a still earlier specimen of typography is due to an English printer, the famous Caxton. His Recueil des Histoires de Troye appears to have been printed during the life of Philip duke of Burgundy, and consequently before June 15, 1467. The place of publication, certainly within the duke's dominions, has not been conjectured. It is, therefore, by several years the earliest printed book in the French language.[u] A Latin speech by Russell, ambassador of Edward IV. to Charles of Burgundy, in 1469, is the next publication of Caxton. This was also printed in the Low Countries.[x]

33. A more splendid scene was revealed in Italy. Sweynheim and Pannartz, two workmen of Fust, set up a

[r] Panzer, Annales Typographici. Biographie Universelle: Zainer.

[s] The last four of these lines are the following:—

Primos ecce libros quos hæc industria finxit,
Francorum in terris, ædibus atque tuis.
Michael, Udalricus, Martinusque magistri
Hos impresserunt, et facient alios.

[t] See Gresswell's Early Parisian Press.

[u] [I am obliged to a correspondent for reminding me that the Recueil des Histoires de Troye, though printed, and afterwards translated, by Caxton, was written by Raoul le Fevre.—1847.]

[x] Dibdin's Typographical Antiquities. This is not noticed in the Biographie Universelle, nor in Brunet; an omission hardly excusable.

press, doubtless with encouragement and patronage, at the monastery of Subiaco in the Apennines, a place chosen either on account of the numerous manuscripts it contained, or because the monks were of the German nation; and hence an edition of Lactantius issued in October, 1465, which one, no longer extant, of Donatus's little grammar is said to have preceded. An edition of Cicero de Officiis, without a date, is referred by some to the year 1466. In 1467, after printing Augustin de Civitate Dei and Cicero de Oratore, the two Germans left Subiaco for Rome, where they sent forth not less than twenty-three editions of ancient Latin authors before the close of 1470. Another German, John of Spire, established a press at Venice in 1469, beginning with Cicero's Epistles. In that and the next year almost as many classical works were printed at Venice as at Rome, either by John and his brother Vindelin, or by a Frenchman, Nicolas Jenson. Instances are said to exist of books printed by unknown persons at Milan, in 1469; and in 1470 Zarot, a German, opened there a fertile source of typography, though but two Latin authors were published that year. An edition of Cicero's Epistles appeared also in the little town of Foligno. The whole number of books that had issued from the press in Italy at the close of that year amounts, according to Panzer, to eighty-two, exclusive of those which have no date, some of which may be referable to this period.

Printing exercised in Italy.

34. Cosmo de' Medici died in 1464. But the happy impulse he had given to the restoration of letters was not suspended; and in the last year of the present decad his wealth and his influence over the republic of Florence had devolved on a still more conspicuous character, his grandson Lorenzo, himself worthy by his literary merits to have done honour to any patron, had not a more prosperous fortune called him to become one.

Lorenzo de' Medici.

35. The epoch of Lorenzo's accession to power is distinguished by a circumstance hardly less honourable than the restoration of classical learning— the revival of native genius in poetry after the slumber of near a hundred years. After the death of Petrarch, many wrote verses, but none excelled in the art, though Muratori has praised the poetry down

Italian poetry of fifteenth century.

to 1400, especially that of Giusto di Conti, whom he does not hesitate to place among the first poets of Italy.[y] But that of the fifteenth century is abandoned by all critics as rude, feeble, and ill expressed. The historians of literature scarcely deign to mention a few names, or the editors of selections to extract a few sonnets. The romances of chivalry in rhyme, Buovo d'Antona, la Spagna, l'Ancroja, are only deserving to be remembered as they led in some measure to the great poems of Boiardo and Ariosto. In themselves they are mean and prosaic. It is vain to seek a general cause for this sterility in the cultivation of Latin and Greek literature, which we know did not obstruct the brilliancy of Italian poetry in the next age. There is only one cause for the want of great men in any period; nature does not think fit to produce them. They are no creatures of education and circumstance.

Italian prose of same age.

36. The Italian prose literature of this interval from the age of Petrarch would be comprised in a few volumes. Some historical memoirs may be found in Muratori, but far the chief part of his collection is in Latin. Leonard Aretin wrote lives of Dante and Petrarch in Italian, which, according to Corniani, are neither valuable for their information nor for their style. The Vita Civile of Palmieri seems to have been written some time after the middle of the fifteenth century; but of this Corniani says, that having wished to give a specimen, on account of the rarity of Italian in that age, he had abandoned his intention, finding that it was hardly possible to read two sentences in the Vita Civile without meeting some barbarism or incorrectness. The novelists Sacchetti and Ser Giovanni, author of the Pecorone, who belong to the end of the fourteenth century, are read by some: their style is familiar and idiomatic; but Crescimbeni praises that of the former. Corniani bestows some praise on Passavanti and Pandolfini; the first a religious writer, not much later than Boccaccio, the latter a noble Florentine, author of a moral dialogue in the beginning of the fifteenth century. Filelfo, among his voluminous productions, has an Italian commentary on Petrarch, of which Corniani speaks very

[y] Muratori della perfetta poesia, p. 193. Bouterwek, Gesch. der Ital. Poesie, t. 216.

slightingly. The commentary of Landino on Dante is much better esteemed; but it was not published till 1481.

37. It was on occasion of a tournament, wherein Lorenzo himself and his brother Julian had appeared in the lists, that poems were composed by Luigi Pulci and by Politian, then a youth, or rather a boy, the latter of which displayed more harmony, spirit, and imagination than any that had been written since the death of Petrarch.* It might thus be seen that there was no real incompatibility between the pursuits of ancient literature and the popular language of fancy and sentiment, and that if one gave chastity and elegance of style, a more lively and natural expression of the mind could best be attained by the other. Giostra of Politian.

38. This period was not equally fortunate for the learned in other parts of Italy. Ferdinand of Naples, who came to the throne in 1458, proved no adequate representative of his father Alfonso. But at Rome they encountered a serious calamity. A few zealous scholars, such as Pomponius Lætus, Platina, Callimachus Experiens, formed an academy in order to converse together on subjects of learning, and communicate to each other the results of their private studies. Dictionaries, indexes, and all works of compilation being very deficient, this was the best substitute for the labour of perusing the whole body of Latin antiquity. They took Roman names—an innocent folly, long after practised in Europe. The pope, however, Paul II., thought fit, in 1468, to arrest all this society on charges of conspiracy against his life, for which there was certainly no foundation, and of setting up Pagan superstitions against Christianity, of which, in this instance, there seems to have been no proof. They were put to the torture and kept in prison a twelvemonth, when the tyrant, who is said to have vowed this in his first rage, set them all at Paul II. persecutes the learned.

* Extracts from this poem will be found in Roscoe's Lorenzo, and in Sismondi, Littérature du Midi, ii. 45, who praises it highly, as the Italian critics have done, and as by the passages quoted it seems well to deserve. Roscoe supposes Politian to be only fourteen years old when he wrote the Giostra di Giuliano. But the lines he quotes allude to Lorenzo as chief of the republic, which could not be said before the death of Pietro in December, 1469. If he wrote them at sixteen, it is extraordinary enough; but these two years make an immense difference. Ginguéné is of opinion that they do not allude to the tournament of 1468, but to one in 1473.

liberty; but it was long before the Roman academy recovered any degree of vigour.[b]

39. We do not discover as yet much substantial encouragement to literature in any country on this side the Alps, with the exception of one where it was least to be anticipated. Mathias Corvinus, king of Hungary, from his accession in 1458 to his death in 1490, endeavoured to collect round himself the learned of Italy, and to strike light into the midst of the depths of darkness that encompassed his country. He determined, therefore, to erect an university, which, by the original plan, was to have been in a distinct city; but the Turkish wars compelled him to fix it at Buda. He availed himself of the dispersion of libraries after the capture of Constantinople to purchase Greek manuscripts, and employed four transcribers at Florence, besides thirty at Buda, to enrich his collection. Thus, at his death, it is said that the royal library at Buda contained 50,000 volumes—a number that appears wholly incredible.[c] Three hundred ancient statues are reported to have been placed in the same repository. But when the city fell into the hands of the Turks in 1527, these noble treasures were dispersed and in great measure destroyed. Though the number of books, as is just observed, must have been exaggerated, it is possible that neither the burning of the Alexandrian library by Omar, if it ever occurred, nor any other single calamity recorded in history, except the two captures of Constantinople itself, has been more fatally injurious to literature; and, with due regard to the good intentions of Mathias Corvinus, it is deeply to be regretted that the inestimable relics once rescued from the barbarian Ottomans should have been accumulated in a situation of so little security against their devastating arms.[d]

Mathias Corvinus.

His library.

[b] Tiraboschi, vi. 93. Ginguéné. Brucker. Corniani, ii. 280. This writer, inferior to none in his acquaintance with the literature of the fifteenth century, but, though not an ecclesiastic, always favourable to the court of Rome, seems to strive to lay the blame on the imprudence of Platina.

[c] The library collected by Nicolas V. contained only 5000 manuscripts. The volumes printed in Europe before the death of Corvinus would probably be reckoned highly at 15,000. Heeren suspects the number 50,000 to be hyperbolical; and in fact there can be no doubt of it.

[d] Brucker, Roscoe, Gibbon. Heeren, p. 173, who refers to several modern books expressly relating to the fate of this library. Part of it, however, found its way to that of Vienna.

40. England under Edward IV. presents an appearance, in the annals of publication, about as barren as under Edward the Confessor; there is, I think, neither in Latin nor in English, a single book that we can refer to this decennial period.[e] Yet we find a few symptoms, not to be overlooked, of the incipient regard to literature. Leland enumerates some Englishmen who travelled to Italy, perhaps before 1460, in order to become disciples of the younger Guarini at Ferrara—Robert Fleming, William Gray, bishop of Ely, John Free, John Gunthorpe, and a very accomplished nobleman, John Tiptoft, earl of Worcester. It is but fairness to give credit to these men for their love of learning, and to observe that they preceded any whom we could mention on sure grounds either in France or Germany. We trace, however, no distinct fruits from their acquisitions. But, though very few had the means of attaining that on which we set a high value in literature, the mere rudiments of grammatical learning were communicated to many. Nor were munificent patrons, testators, in the words of Burke, to a posterity which they embraced as their own, wanting in this latter period of the middle ages. William of Wykeham, chancellor of England under Richard II. and bishop of Winchester, founded a school in that city, and a college at Oxford in connexion with it, in 1373.[f] Henry VI., in imitation of him, became the founder of Eton School, and of King's College, Cambridge, about 1442.[g] In each of these schools seventy boys, and in each college seventy fellows and scholars, are maintained by these princely endowments. It is unnecessary to observe that they are still the amplest, as they are much the earliest, foundations for the support of grammatical learning in England. What could be taught in these or any other schools at

Slight signs of literature in England.

[e] The university of Oxford, according to Wood, as well as the church generally, stood very low about this time: the grammar schools were laid aside; degrees were conferred on undeserving persons for money. A.D. 1455, 1466. He had previously mentioned those schools as kept up in the university under the superintendence of masters of arts. A.D. 1442. But the statutes of Magdalen College, founded in the reign of Edward, provide for a certain degree of learning.—Chandler's Life of Waynflete, p. 200.

[f] Lowth's Life of Wykeham. He permits in his statutes a limited number of sons of gentlemen (gentilium) to be educated in his school. Chandler's Life of Waynflete, p. 5.

[g] Waynflete became the first head master of Eton in 1442. Chandler, p. 26.

this time the reader has been enabled to judge; it must have been the Latin language, through indifferent books of grammar, and with the perusal of very few heathen writers of antiquity. In the curious and unique collection of the Paston Letters we find one from a boy at Eton in 1468, wherein he gives two Latin verses, not very good, of his own composition.[h] I am sensible that the mention of such a circumstance may appear trifling, especially to foreigners; but it is not a trifle to illustrate by any fact the gradual progress of knowledge among the laity—first in the mere elements of reading and writing, as we did in a former chapter, and now, in the fifteenth century, in such grammatical instruction as could be imparted. This boy of the Paston family was well born, and came from a distance; nor was he in training for the church, since he seems by this letter to have had marriage in contemplation.

Paston Letters.

41. But the Paston Letters are, in other respects, an important testimony to the progressive condition of society, and come in as a precious link in the chain of the moral history of England, which they alone in this period supply. They stand indeed singly, as far as I know, in Europe; for though it is highly probable that in the archives of Italian families, if not in France or Germany, a series of merely private letters equally ancient may be concealed, I do not recollect that any have been published. They are all written in the reigns of Henry VI. and Edward IV., except a few as late as Henry VII., by different members of a wealthy and respectable, but not noble, family, and are therefore pictures of the life of the English gentry in that age.[i] We are merely concerned with their evidence as to the state of literature. And this upon the whole is more favourable than, from the want of authorship in those reigns,

[h] Vol. i. p. 301. Of William Paston, author of these lines, it is said, some years before, that he had "gone to school to a Lombard called Karol Giles, to learn and to be read in poetry, or else in French. He said that he would be as glad and as fain of a good book of French or of poetry as my master Falstaff would be to purchase a fair manor." P. 173 (1459).

This collection is in five quarto volumes, and has become scarce. The length has been doubled by an injudicious proceeding of the editor, in printing the original orthography and abbreviations of the letters on each left-hand page, and a more legible modern form on the right. As orthography is of little importance, and abbreviations of none at all, it would have been sufficient to have given a single specimen.

we should be led to anticipate. It is plain that several members of the family, male and female, wrote not only grammatically, but with a fluency and facility, an epistolary expertness, which implies the habitual use of the pen. Their expression is much less formal and quaint than that of modern novelists when they endeavour to feign the familiar style of ages much later than the fifteenth century. Some of them mix Latin with their English, very bad, and probably for the sake of concealment; and Ovid is once mentioned as a book to be sent from one to another.[k] It appears highly probable that such a series of letters, with so much vivacity and pertinence, would not have been written by any family of English gentry in the reign of Richard II., and much less before. It is hard to judge from a single case; but the letter of Lady Pelham, quoted in the first chapter of this volume, is ungrammatical and unintelligible. The seed, therefore, was now rapidly germinating beneath the ground; and thus we may perceive that the publication of books is not the sole test of the intellectual advance of a people. I may add, that although the middle of the fifteenth century was the period in which the fewest books were written, a greater number, in the opinion of experienced judges, were transcribed in that than in any former age; a circumstance easily accounted for by the increased use of linen paper.

Low condition of public libraries.

42. It may be observed here, with reference to the state of learning generally in England down to the age immediately preceding the Reformation, that Leland, in the fourth volume of his Collectanea, has given several lists of books in colleges and monasteries, which do not by any means warrant the supposition of a tolerable acquaintance with ancient literature. We find, however, some of the recent translations made in Italy from Greek authors. The clergy, in fact, were now retrograding, while the laity were advancing; and when this was the case, the ascendency of the former was near its end.

k "As to Ovid de arte amandi, I shall send him you next week, for I have him not now ready." iv. 175. This was between 1463 and 1469, according to the editor. We do not know positively of any edition of Ovid de arte amandi so early; but Zell of Cologne is supposed to have printed one before 1470, as has been mentioned above. Whether the book to be sent were in print or manuscript must be left to the sagacity of critics.

43. I have said that there was not a new book written within these ten years. In the days of our fathers it would have been necessary at least to mention as a forgery the celebrated poems attributed to Thomas Rowley. But probably no one person living believes in their authenticity; nor should I have alluded to so palpable a fabrication at all, but for the curious circumstance that a very similar trial of literary credulity has not long since been essayed in France. A gentleman of the name of Surville published a collection of poems, alleged to have been written by Clotilde de Surville, a poetess of the fifteenth century. The muse of the Ardèche warbled her notes during a longer life than the monk of Bristow; and having sung the relief of Orleans by the Maid of Arc in 1429, lived to pour her swan-like chant on the battle of Fornova in 1495. Love, however, as much as war, is her theme; and it was a remarkable felicity that she rendered an ode of her prototype Sappho into French verse, many years before any one else in France could have seen it. But having, like Rowley, anticipated too much the style and sentiments of a later period, she has, like him, fallen into the numerous ranks of the dead who never were alive.[m]

Rowley.

Clotilde de Surville.

[m] Auguis, Recueil des Poètes, vol. ii. Biogr. Univ.: Surville; Villemain, Cours de Littérature, vol. ii.; Sismondi, Hist. des Français, xiii. 593. The forgery is by no means so gross as that of Chatterton; but, as M. Sismondi says, "We have only to compare Clotilde with the duke of Orleans, or Villon." The following lines, quoted by him, will give the reader a fair specimen:—

Suivons l'amour, tel en soit le danger;
Cy nous attend sur lits charmans de mousse.
A des rigueurs; qui voudroit s'en venger?
Qui (même alors que tout désir s'émousse)
Au prix fatal de ne plus y songer?
Règne sur moi, cher tyran, dont les armes
Ne me sauroient porter coups trop puissans!
Pour m'épargner n'en crois one à mes larmes;
Sont de plaisir, tant plus auront de charmes
Tes dards aigus, que seront plus cuisans.

It has been justly remarked, that the extracts from Clotilde in the Recueil des anciens Poètes occupy too much space, while the genuine writers of the fifteenth century appear in very scanty specimens.

SECT. IV. 1471-1480.

The same Subjects continued—Lorenzo de' Medici—Physical Controversy—Mathematical Sciences.

44. THE books printed in Italy during these ten years amount, according to Panzer, to 1297; of which 234 are editions of ancient classical authors. Books without date are of course not included; and the list must not be reckoned complete as to others. Number of books printed in Italy

45. A press was established at Florence by Lorenzo, in which Cennini, a goldsmith, was employed; the first printer, except Caxton and Jenson, who was not a German. Virgil was published in 1471. Several other Italian cities began to print in this period. The first edition of Dante issued from Foligno in 1472; it has been improbably, as well as erroneously, referred to Mentz. Petrarch had been published in 1470, and Boccace in 1471. They were reprinted several times before the close of this decad.

46. No one had attempted to cast Greek types in sufficient number for an entire book; though a few occur in the early publications by Sweynheim and Pannartz;[n] while in those printed afterwards at Venice, Greek words are inserted by the pen; till, in 1476, Zarot of Milan had the honour of giving the Greek grammar of Constantine Lascaris to the world.[o] This was followed in 1480 by Craston's Lexicon, a very imperfect vocabulary; but which for many years continued to be the only assistance of the kind to which a student could have recourse. The author was an Italian. First Greek printed.

[n] Greek types first appear in a treatise of Jerome, printed at Rome in 1468. Heeren, from Panzer.

[o] Lascaris Grammatica Græca, Mediolani ex recognitione Demetrii Cretensis per Dionysium Paravisinum, 4to. The characters in this rare volume are elegant and of a moderate size. The earliest specimens of Greek printing consist of detached passages and citations, found in a very few of the first printed copies of Latin authors, such as the Lactantius of 1465, the Aulus Gellius and Apuleius of Sweynheim and Pannartz, 1469, and some works of Bessarion about the same time. In all these it is remarkable that the Greek typography is legibly and creditably executed, whereas the Greek introduced into the Officia et Paradoxa of Cicero, Milan, 1474, by Zarot, is so deformed as to be scarcely legible. I am indebted for the whole of this note to Gresswell's Early Parisian Greek Press, i. 1.

47. Ancient learning is to be divided into two great departments: the knowledge of what is contained in the works of Greek and Roman authors, and that of the *matériel*, if I may use the word, which has been preserved in a bodily shape, and is sometimes known by the name of antiquities. Such are buildings, monuments, inscriptions, coins, medals, vases, instruments, which, by gradual accumulation, have thrown a powerful light upon ancient history and literature. The abundant riches of Italy in these remains could not be overlooked as soon as the spirit of admiration for all that was Roman began to be kindled. Petrarch himself formed a little collection of coins; and his contemporary Pastrengo was the first who copied inscriptions; but in the early part of the fifteenth century her scholars and her patrons of letters began to collect the scattered relics which almost every region presented to them.[p] Niccolo Niccoli, according to the funeral oration of Poggio, possessed a series of medals, and even wrote a treatise in Italian, correcting the common orthography of Latin words, on the authority of inscriptions and coins. The love of collection increased from this time; the Medici and other rich patrons of letters spared no expense in accumulating these treasures of the antiquary. Ciriacus of Ancona, about 1440, travelled into the East in order to copy inscriptions; but he was naturally exposed to deceive himself and to be deceived; nor has he escaped the suspicion of imposture, or at least of excessive credulity.[q]

Study of antiquities.

48. The first who made his researches of this kind collectively known to the world was Biondo Flavio, or Flavio Biondo,—for the names may be found in a different order, but more correctly in the first[r]—secretary to Eugenius IV., and to his successors. His long residence at Rome inspired him with the desire,

Works on that subject.

[p] Tiraboschi, vols. v. and vi. Andrès, ix. 196.

[q] Tiraboschi; Andrès, ix. 199. Ciriaco has not wanted advocates; some of the inscriptions he was accused of having forged have turned out to be authentic; and it is presumed in his favour that others which do not appear may have perished since his time. Biogr. Univ.: Cyriaque. One that rests on his authority is that which is supposed to record the persecution of the Christians in Spain under Nero. See Lardner's Jewish and Heathen Testimonies, vol. i., who, though by no means a credulous critic, inclines to its genuineness.

[r] Zeno, Dissertazioni Vossiane, i. 229.

and gave him the opportunity, of describing her imperial ruins. In a work, dedicated to Eugenius IV., who died in 1447, but not printed till 1471, entitled Romæ Instauratæ libri tres, he describes, examines, and explains, by the testimonies of ancient authors, the numerous monuments of Rome. In another, Romæ Triumphantis libri decem, printed about 1472, he treats of the government, laws, religion, ceremonies, military discipline, and other antiquities of the republic. A third work, compiled at the request of Alfonso king of Naples, and printed in 1474, called Italia Illustrata, contains a description of all Italy, divided into its ancient fourteen regions. Though Biondo Flavio was almost the first to hew his way into the rock, which should cause his memory to be respected, it has naturally happened, that his works being imperfect and faulty, in comparison with those of the great antiquaries of the sixteenth century, they have not found a place in the collection of Grævius, and are hardly remembered by name.*

49. In Germany and the Low Countries the art of printing began to be exercised at Deventer, Utrecht, Louvain, Basle, Ulm, and other places, and in Hungary at Buda. We find, however, very few ancient writers; the whole list of what can pass for classics being about thirteen. One or two editions of parts of Aristotle in Latin, from translations lately made in Italy, may be added. Yet it was not the length of manuscripts that discouraged the German printers; for besides their editions of the Scriptures, Mentelin of Strasburg published, in 1473, the great Encyclopædia of Vincent of Beauvais, in ten volumes folio, generally bound in four; and, in 1474, a similar work of Berchorius, or Berchœur, in three other folios. The contrast between these labours and those of his Italian contemporaries is very striking.

Publications in Germany.

50. Florus and Sallust were printed at Paris early in

* A superior treatise of the same age on the antiquities of the Roman city is by Bernard Rucellai (de urbe Româ, in Rer. Ital. Script. Florent., vol. ii.). But it was not published before the eighteenth century. Rucellai wrote some historical works in a very good Latin style, and was distinguished also in the political revolutions of Florence. After the death of Lorenzo he became the protector of the Florentine academy, for the members of which he built a palace with gardens. Corniani, iii. 143. Biogr. Univ.: Rucellai.

this decad, and twelve more classical authors at the same place before its termination. An edition of Cicero ad Herennium appeared at Angers in 1476, and one of Horace at Caen in 1480. The press of Lyons also sent forth several works, but none of them classical. It has been said by French writers that the first book printed in their language is Le Jardin de Dévotion, by Colard Mansion of Bruges, in 1473. This date has been questioned in England; but it is of the less importance, as we have already seen that Caxton's Recueil des Histoires de Troye has the clear priority. Le Roman de Baudouin comte de Flandres, Lyon, 1474, seems to be the earliest French book printed in France. In 1476, Les Grands Chroniques de St. Denis, an important and bulky volume, appeared at Paris.

In France.

51. We come now to our own Caxton, who finished a translation into English of the Recueil des Histoires de Troye, by order of Margaret duchess of Burgundy, at Cologne, in September, 1471. It was probably printed there the next year.[t] But soon afterwards he came to England with the instruments of his art; and his Game of Chess, a slight and short performance, referred to 1474, though without a date, is supposed to have been the first specimen of English typography.[u] In almost every year from this time to his death in 1483 Caxton continued to publish those volumes which are the delight of our collectors. The earliest of his editions bearing a date in England is the "Dictes and Sayings," a translation by Lord Rivers from a Latin compilation, and published in 1477. In a literary history it should be observed, that the Caxton publications are more adapted to the general than the learned reader, and indicate, upon the whole, but a low state of knowledge in England. A Latin translation, however, of Aristotle's Ethics was printed at Oxford in 1479.

In England, by Caxton.

[t] This book at the duke of Roxburghe's famous sale brought 1060*l*.

[u] The Expositio Sancti Hieronymi, of which a copy in the public library at Cambridge bears the date of Oxford, 1468, on the title-page, is now generally given up. It has been successfully contended by Middleton, and lately by Mr. Singer, that this date should be 1478; the numeral letter x having been casually omitted. Several similar instances occur in which a pretended early book has not stood the keen eye of criticism: as the Decor Puellarum, ascribed to Nicolas Jenson of Venice, in 1461, for which we should read 1471; a cosmography of Ptolemy, with the date of 1462; a book appearing to have been printed at Tours in 1467, &c.

52. The first book printed in Spain was on the very subject we might expect to precede all others, the Conception of the Virgin. It should be a very curious volume, being a poetical contest on that sublime theme by thirty-six poets, four of whom had written in Spanish, one in Italian, and the rest in Provençal or Valencian. It appeared at Valencia in 1474. A little book on grammar followed in 1475, and Sallust was printed the same year. In that year printing was also introduced at Barcelona and Saragossa, in 1476 at Seville, in 1480 at Salamanca and Burgos. In Spain.

53. A translation of the Bible by Malerbi, a Venetian, was published in 1471, and two other editions of that, or a different version, the same year. Eleven editions are enumerated by Panzer in the fifteenth century. The German translation has already been mentioned; it was several times reprinted in this decad; one in Dutch appeared in 1477; one in the Valencian language, at that city, in 1478;* the New Testament was printed in Bohemian, 1475, and in French, 1477; the earliest French translation of the Old Testament seems to be about the same date. The reader will of course understand that all these translations were made from the Vulgate Latin. It may naturally seem remarkable, that not only at this period, but down to the Reformation, no attempt was made to render any part of the Scriptures public in English. But, in fact, the ground was thought too dangerous by those in power. The translation of Wicliffe had taught the people some comparisons between the worldly condition of the first preachers of Christianity and their successors, as well as some other contrasts, which it was more expedient to avoid. Long before the invention of printing it was enacted, in 1408, by a constitution of Archbishop Arundel in convocation, that no one should thereafter "translate any text of Holy Scripture into English, by way of a book, or little book or tract; and that no book should be read that was composed lately in the time of John Wicliffe, or since his death." Translations of Scripture.

* This edition was suppressed or destroyed; no copy is known to exist, but there is preserved a final leaf containing the names of the translator and printer. M'Crie's Reformation in Spain, p. 192. Andrès says (xix. 154) that this translation was made early in the fifteenth century, with the approbation of divines

Scarcely any of Caxton's publications are of a religious nature.

Revival of literature in Spain.

54. It would have been strange if Spain, placed on the genial shores of the Mediterranean, and intimately connected through the Aragonese kings with Italy, had not received some light from that which began to shine so brightly. Her progress, however, in letters was but slow. Not but that several individuals are named by compilers of literary biography in the first part of the fifteenth century, as well as earlier, who are reputed to have possessed a knowledge of languages, and to have stood at least far above their contemporaries. Alfonsus Tostatus passes for the most considerable; his writings are chiefly theological, but Andrès praises his commentary on the Chronicle of Eusebius, at least as a bold essay;[y] contending also that learning was not deficient in Spain during the fifteenth century, though he admits that the rapid improvements made at its close, and about the beginning of the next age, were due to Lebrixa's public instructions at Seville and Salamanca. Several translations were made from Latin authors into Spanish, which, however, is not of itself any great proof of peninsular learning. The men to whom Spain chiefly owes the advancement of useful learning, and who should not be defrauded of their glory, were Arias Barbosa, a scholar of Politian, and the more renowned, though not more learned or more early propagator of Grecian literature, Antonio of Lebrixa, whose name was latinised into Nebrissensis, by which he is commonly known. Of Arias, who unaccountably has no place in the Biographie Universelle, Nicolas Antonio gives a very high character.[z] He taught the Greek language at Salamanca probably about this time. But his writings are not at all numerous. For Lebrixa, instead of compiling from other

[y] ix. 151.

[z] In quo Antonium Nebrissensem socium habuit, qui tamen quicquid usquam Græcarum literarum apud Hispanos esset, ab uno Aria emanâsse in præfatione suarum Introductionum Grammaticarum ingenue affirmavit. His duobus amplissimum illud gymnasium, indeque Hispania tota debet barbariei, quæ longo apud nos bellorum dominatu in immensum creverat, extirpationem, bonarumque omnium disciplinarum divitias. Quas Arias noster ex antiquitatis penu per vicennium integrum auditoribus suis larga et locuplete vena communicavit, in poetica facultate Græcanicaque doctrina Nebrissense melior, a quo tamen in varia multiplicique doctrina superabatur. Bibl. Vetus.

sources, I shall transcribe what Dr. M'Crie has said with his usual perspicuous brevity.

55. "Lebrixa, usually styled Nebrissensis, became to Spain what Valla was to Italy, Erasmus to Germany, or Budæus to France. After a residence of ten years in Italy, during which he had stored his mind with various kinds of knowledge, he returned home, in 1473, by the advice of the younger Philelphus and Hermolaus Barbarus, with the view of promoting classical literature in his native country. Hitherto the revival of letters in Spain was confined to a few inquisitive individuals, and had not reached the schools and universities, whose teachers continued to teach a barbarous jargon under the name of Latin, into which they initiated the youth by means of a rude system of grammar, rendered unintelligible, in some instances, by a preposterous intermixture of the most abstruse questions in metaphysics. By the lectures which he read in the universities of Seville, Salamanca, and Alcalá, and by the institutes which he published on Castilian, Latin, Greek, and Hebrew grammar, Lebrixa contributed in a wonderful degree to expel barbarism from the seats of education, and to diffuse a taste for elegant and useful studies among his countrymen. His improvements were warmly opposed by the monks, who had engrossed the art of teaching, and who, unable to bear the light themselves, wished to prevent all others from seeing it; but, enjoying the support of persons of high authority, he disregarded their selfish and ignorant outcries. Lebrixa continued to an advanced age to support the literary reputation of his native country."[a] Character of Lebrixa.

56. This was the brilliant era of Florence, under the supremacy of Lorenzo de' Medici. The reader is probably well acquainted with this eminent character, by means of a work of extensive and merited reputation. The Laurentian library, still consisting wholly of manuscripts, though formed by Cosmo, and enlarged by his son Pietro, owed not only its name but an ample increase of its treasures to Lorenzo, who swept Library of Lorenzo.

[a] M'Crie's Hist. of Reformation in Spain, p. 61. It is probable that Lebrixa's exertions were not very effectual in the presen' decennium, nor perhaps in the next, but his Institutiones Grammaticæ, a very scarce book, were printed at Seville in 1481.

the monasteries of Greece through his learned agent, John Lascaris. With that true love of letters which scorns the monopolising spirit of possession, Lorenzo permitted his manuscripts to be freely copied for the use of other parts of Europe.

Classics corrected and explained.

57. It was an important labour of the learned at Florence to correct, as well as elucidate the text of their manuscripts, written generally by ignorant and careless monks, or trading copyists (though the latter probably had not much concern with ancient writers), and become almost wholly unintelligible through the blunders of these transcribers.[b] Landino, Merula, Calderino, and Politian were the most indefatigable in this line of criticism during the age of Lorenzo. Before the use of printing fixed the text of a whole edition—one of the most important of its consequences—the critical amendments of these scholars could only be made useful through their oral lectures. And these appear frequently to have been the foundation of the valuable, though rather prolix, commentaries we find in the old editions. Thus those of Landino accompany many editions of Horace and Virgil, forming, in some measure, the basis of all interpretative annotations on those poets. Landino in these seldom touches on verbal criticisms, but his explanations display a considerable reach of knowledge. They are founded, as Heeren is convinced, on his lectures, and consequently give us some notion of the tone of instruction. In explaining the poets, two methods were pursued, the grammatical and the moral, the latter of which consisted in resolving the whole sense into allegory. Dante had given credit to a doctrine, orthodox in this age and long afterwards, that every great poem must have a hidden meaning.[c]

Character of Lorenzo.

58. The notes of Calderino, a scholar of high fame, but infected with the common vice of arrogance, are found with those of Landino in the early editions of Virgil and Horace. Regio commented upon Ovid, Omnibonus Leonicenus upon Lucan, both these upon Quintilian, many upon Cicero.[d] It may be observed for the sake of chronological exactness, that these labours are by no means confined, even principally, to this de-

[b] Meiners, Vergleich. der Sitten, iii. 108. Heeren, p. 293.
[c] Heeren, pp. 241, 287.
[d] Id., 297.

cennial period. They are mentioned in connexion with the name of Lorenzo de' Medici, whose influence over literature extended from 1470 to his death in 1492. Nor was mere philology the sole or the leading pursuit to which so truly noble a mind accorded its encouragement. He sought in ancient learning something more elevated than the narrow, though necessary, researches of criticism. In a villa overhanging the towers of Florence, on the steep slope of that lofty hill crowned by the mother city, the ancient Fiesole, in gardens which Tully might have envied, with Ficino, Landino, and Politian at his side, he delighted his hours of leisure with the beautiful visions of Platonic philosophy, for which the summer stillness of an Italian sky appears the most congenial accompaniment.

Prospect from his villa at Fiesole.

59. Never could the sympathies of the soul with outward nature be more finely touched; never could more striking suggestions be presented to the philosopher and the statesman. Florence lay beneath them; not with all the magnificence that the later Medici have given her, but, thanks to the piety of former times, presenting almost as varied an outline to the sky. One man, the wonder of Cosmo's age, Brunelleschi, had crowned the beautiful city with the vast dome of its cathedral; a structure unthought of in Italy before, and rarely since surpassed. It seemed, amidst clustering towers of inferior churches, an emblem of the catholic hierarchy under its supreme head; like Rome itself, imposing, unbroken, unchangeable, radiating in equal expansion to every part of the earth, and directing its convergent curves to heaven. Round this were numbered, at unequal heights, the Baptistery, with its gates, as Michael Angelo styled them, worthy of Paradise; the tall and richly decorated belfry of Giotto; the church of the Carmine, with the frescos of Masaccio; those of Santa Maria Novella (in the language of the same great man), beautiful as a bride; of Santa Croce, second only in magnificence to the cathedral of St. Mark, and of San Spirito, another great monument of the genius of Brunelleschi; the numerous convents that rose within the walls of Florence, or were scattered immediately about them. From these the eye might turn to the trophies of a republican government that was rapidly