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HISTORY OF

ENGLISH LITERATURE

(FROM THE FOURTEENTH CENTURY TO THE DEATH OF SURREY)

GEORGE BELL & SONS

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HISTORY OF ENGLISH LITERATURE

BY

BERNHARD TEN BRINK

EDITED BY DR. ALOIS BRANDL

TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN

BY

L. DORA SCHMITZ

VOL. III

FROM THE FOURTEENTH CENTURY TO THE DEATH OF SURREY

LONDON
GEORGE BELL & SONS
1902

Published, 1896.
Reprinted with corrections, 1902.

TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE.

THE pathetic circumstances connected with the publication of the Second Volume of Ten Brink's "History of English Literature" naturally cast a deeper shadow still over the last part of his work. The First Part of the Second Volume had at least passed through the press under his supervision and had received his latest corrections. This Second Part * was, however, still in the author's hands awaiting his final touches when he was suddenly struck down by death in the prime of life on the 29th of January, 1892. Ten Brink's death is a lamentable loss to students of English literature, for with the appearance of the First Volume of his "History"—as far back as 1877—he was at once recognized by scholars to be one of the leading authorities in all that concerned the earliest period of English literature, and his subsequent treatment of Chaucer is admitted on all hands to stand well-nigh unrivalled.

Dr. Alois Brandl, who succeeded Ten Brink in the Chair of English Philology in Strassburg, was appointed one of his literary executors, and entrusted with the MS. material left by the eminent Dutch scholar. Dr. Brandl devoted himself to his task with so much zeal and assiduity that before the close of the year (1892) the present volume was in the hands of his German readers. In his Preface,

* It has been found more convenient to issue the translation of the two Parts as Volume II. and Volume III.

Dr. Brandl tells us that up to the end of Chapter IV. of Book VI. he found all practically ready for the press, the pages numbered and evidently finally revised by the author. The remainder of the MS., although carefully arranged, was unpaged, yet without gaps, beyond two blank leaves which Dr. Brandl has filled in to the best of his ability (this passage occurs in our volume on p. 211, l. 11, to the end of the chapter).

Of the Appendix, which had been referred to by the author as far back as 1889, only a few pages were to be found, and although some of the promised notes are wanting, we have others which had not been looked for. This is a further proof of the method Ten Brink is said to have adopted in work, viz. of taking up his subjects as the spirit moved him, and this may possibly also account for the omission in this volume of some writers whom Ten Brink may have intended to deal with in their turn before finally arranging his material for publication. His "History" remains unfinished, in any case, and this is the more to be regretted as the next volume would have presented the more serious discussion of the Elizabethan era, a subject which he had already made a part of his University lectures, and by which he had attracted students from all parts of the world.

Ten Brink's last words in this volume, on the untimely death of the Earl of Surrey, Dr. Brandl very appropriately quotes in connection with Ten Brink's own sad fate: "Great things he might still have accomplished, but what he did accomplish has not been lost to posterity."

L. DORA SCHMITZ.

May, 1896.

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LANCASTER AND YORK.

HISTORY OF

ENGLISH LITERATURE.

IX. (*Continued*).

THE numerous transcripts made of the legend of *The Three Kings* bear witness to its increasing popularity during the decline of the Middle Ages. It is possible that the success of the subject also led to the general acceptance of the form of composition in which it appeared. The ground thus gained by prose was, however, part and parcel of the whole tendency of the age. As early as the second half of the fourteenth century occasional instances are met with where works, originally written in metrical form, were turned into prose. This had been the case with one of the versions of the life of *Adam and Eve*, where the Biblical nucleus of the legend had been supplemented by a variety of attractive, symbolical motives, and had thus tempted several English poets—and subsequently prose-writers as well—to take the subject in hand. During the fifteenth century a number of the Lives of the Saints were translated from Latin into English prose—in some cases repeatedly—and even the Miracles treating of the Legends of the Virgin sometimes assumed this form. It has been considered that this legendary literature every now and again gives distinct evidence of the increasing tendency to asceticism and mysticism, to the spread of which, in England, Hampole so essentially contributed. Characteristic, too, is the part which women played in this branch of literature, both in prose and poetry, whether by forming the centre of the legends—as the heroines—or by inducing writers to turn foreign works into English. One English priest, out of regard for a noble lady, his confessant, compiled a life

of *St. Jerome* from the "Legenda Aurea" and from letters which had passed between St. Augustine and St. Cyril, in order that this lady and others might learn therefrom how to live and how to die. Again, a monk, who probably wrote in the north-eastern Midlands—and who excuses himself, in a postscript, for his admixture of south and north English linguistic forms—translated, at the request of his prior, the legends of four female saints from Latin into his own language; he was cautious enough simply to omit the more obscure passages from the Scriptures which he found quoted in his originals. In the Lives of these Saints—three of whom are Belgian women of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, one of them being *Christina Mirabilis*, another an Italian, *Catherine of Siena*—there is distinct evidence of the above-mentioned tendency to asceticism and mysticism.

Various districts in England were engaged in the production of prose-legends; Western England, however, especially distinguished itself in this domain at an early date, and, as we have already seen, produced Trevisa and Pecock. It was on the borders of Wales that, among other things, the first cycle of prose-legends arose. The author, *John Mirkus*, was a regular canon of the Augustinian friary at Lilleshall, in Shropshire. Mirkus had also tried his hand at verse, and—drawing from a Latin source—wrote his *Instructions for Parish Priests* in very readable rhymed-couplets. He seems, however, to have thought that prose was more suitable for the people, there being a kind of transition to it in the alliterative verse (indigenous to that part of the country), when presented without archaisms and without any claim to a higher form of poetry. In prose, accordingly, he wrote his *Festial*, at the beginning of the fifteenth century—again a book intended in the first instance for the use of priests, but also well adapted for being communicated verbally to the congregation; its aim was to be a comfort to preachers, to provide them throughout the ecclesiastical year with homilies and legends for Sundays and Church festivals. The "Golden Legend," the distribution and influence of which were still on the increase, was also the source and prototype of "Festial," though Mirkus followed it with freedom and discrimination, in detail as

well as a whole. The number of legends with him is smaller than in the collection of Jacobus of Genoa, although supplemented by several new ones, such as that of St. Alkmund, patron saint of Lilleshall Church, and of St. Winifred of Wales. On the other hand, the number of homilies is considerably increased, and several new stories, from the "Gesta Romanorum" and other sources, were incorporated. How opportune this undertaking of the pious Augustinian monk was, is proved by the success it met with. The demand for "Festial" was extraordinarily great; new copies were perpetually being made, and on such occasions the language, and in many cases the contents, experienced all sorts of modifications and amplifications, and in the course of time even the arrangement of the parts was altered.

About a generation after the version made by Mirkus, the "Legenda Aurea," in 1438, found a more faithful translator, whose name and profession are unknown. The anonymous writer calls himself a "pore sinner"; one of his copyists, however, had the happy thought—not rare in those days—of substituting for him a number of "worthy scholars and doctors of divinity." Such appellations would scarcely have suited the pious "sinner." Perhaps he was even unacquainted with Latin; at all events he did not make his translation from the original, but from one of the two existing French versions, and, indeed, from the earlier one by Jehan de Vignay, which he has followed carefully upon the whole, and in many passages word for word.

French influence, together with that which proceeded from Latin sources, is also apparent in the devotional literature of allegorico-mystical tendency. A name specially often met with in this domain, is that of Guillaume de Deguileville, whom we first came across when discussing the religious bent of Chaucer's mind.* Deguileville, a monk and prior of the Cistercian Abbey of Chalis, in the diocese of Senlis, wrote his "Pèlerinage de la Vie Humaine" between 1330 and 1331, when about "midway on life's course," and it was followed, after a short interval, by his "Pèlerinage de l'Âme Humaine." In 1335 he remodelled both poems, and then (in 1358) added the "Pèlerinage de

* Vol. ii. p. 60.

Jesu Christ" as a final part to his trilogy. Deguileville wrote under the sway of the "Roman de la Rose," which so powerfully influenced the literature of the declining Middle Ages. He himself connects his own vision, of which he gives an account in his first "Pèlerinage," with the mental state produced upon him by reading the famous poem. It may not only have fertilized his imagination, but have also aroused in him the distinct intention of creating a religious *pendant* to a poem which was wholly secular in character, and, in many respects, full of trivial matter, by a work of equally deep-rooted significance. The author of the "Pèlerinages" had at his disposal knowledge of various kinds, he was rich in inward experience, and was by no means wanting in imagination. Still, he was not the sort of man able, in all cases, to throw life into the artistic form in which he expressed his thoughts; like most allegorical writers, he makes his personifications hold discourses of too great length, and allows them too little scope for action; the more correct he is in his sentiments and ideas, the more equal the construction of his plan, and the more choice his diction, the less his work impresses us with any direct force. Still, a book must not be judged only by itself, but in connection with the readers for whom it is written. And how well de Deguileville hit the spirit of his day is shown by the immense and lasting success his poem met with.

A French priest, Jean Gallopes, surnamed le Galoys, and said to have been of English extraction, turned the first two "Pèlerinages" into prose towards the beginning of the fifteenth century (previous to 1435), having made use of the earlier versions. About the same time, the original text of the "Pèlerinage de la Vie Humaine" was turned into prose in the South-English dialect, and at a later period another English prose version was produced in the northern dialect, also based upon the earlier form of the poem, possibly, however, upon the version by Gallopes. In 1426, as we learn from Lydgate, the first "Pèlerinage"—based upon the version of 1355—was turned into English in short rhymed-couplets, at the request of the Earl of Salisbury, who was residing in Paris at the time. All of these translations adopt the A B C Hymn to the Virgin in the form which Chaucer had given it, or, at all events, were meant so to reproduce it; in the

Cotton Manuscript containing Lydgate's work, the space for the Master's poem—which in the text is expressly mentioned and praised—has remained a blank. In the mean time, in 1413, a free English adaptation had been made, under the title of "Pylgremages of the Sowle," and a certain share in this work is again ascribed to Lydgate; it was subsequently printed by Caxton.

The influence of Guillaume de Deguileville did not remain confined to the Middle Ages. As late as the seventeenth century, an abbreviated version of his "Pilgrimage of Human Life" * enjoyed a certain circulation in manuscript, and probably may have come into Bunyan's hands and have thus suggested his "Pilgrim's Progress."

Less far-reaching, but even more intense, within a narrower sphere, was the influence exercised upon English spiritual life in the fifteenth century by a work of German mysticism. Somewhere about the same date, when the first English version of the French "Pylgremages" also appeared, the famous Dominican, Heinrich Suso, wrote his "Büchlein der Weisheit," which, during the Middle Ages, enjoyed an even wider circulation in Germany than the "De Imitatione Christi," a work which has remained much more closely in touch with the present day. Those acquainted with—let us frankly say those who admire—"The Imitation of Christ" would find Suso's "Booklet" frequently remind them of a favourite work: not only do we find it pervaded by the same mental and spiritual atmosphere, and, in many instances, the thoughts clothed in the self-same language, but we find, above all, the same depth of insight, the same intensity of emotion. But what in Suso appears linked with a youthful exuberance of poetic feeling, and thus—like everything visionary on the borderland between the natural and spiritual—exhibits a morbid touch, in Thomas à Kempis † strikes one as wisdom, purified and mellowed by rich experience.

Suso had translated his "Booklet of Wisdom" into Latin, under the title of "Horologium Sapientiæ," before 1341, and had dedicated it to Hugo of Vaucemane, the General of his

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* It appears to be based upon the above-mentioned South-English version.

† The name of à Kempis I make use of here only as a familiar symbol, and do not mean to express any literary conviction; books with which I have been intimately acquainted from early youth—such as "The Imitation of Christ," and others—I have never made the subjects of learned inquiry.

Order at the time. In its Latin form, the little book found a circulation both in France and England. It was the spiritual need of a noble and pious woman in this case again, that called forth an English version of Suso's booklet. The English translator begins the Prologue to his adaptation with its characteristic title of *Ye Sevene Poyntes of Trewe Love and Everlastyng Wisdame*, with the following words: "My most worshipfull lady after your hygh worthynesse, and derest loved goostly dougter after your vertuous mekenes, I youre symple trew chapeleyne unworthy to have name of fader, consideryng youre excellent wisdom bothe to god and to the worlde, and felynge in experience by the sparcles of goostly communicatyon the hete of the fyre of love to oure lorde Jhû, that he of his grace hath sete in youre herte for to norrysshe sumwhat and fede that gracyous fyre of love, and to comforte youre goostly wysdome, namely in thys wickyd worlde that is full of decevable wisdom and faste feyned love, I am styred to write after my symple cunnynge to you, as ye devoutly desyre, a lytyll shorte treatyse of everlastynge wysdom and the trew love of Jhesu, drawen oute in englysshe of that devoute contemplatyf boke writen clergealye in latyn the whyche is clepid the Orologe of wysdom." The little treatise deserves our fullest consideration here; for we have to deal not merely with a translation—whether strict or free—nor with a mere careless compilation such as the Middle Ages delighted in and, unfortunately, our own age favours,—we have here to deal with a reproduction based upon an intimate acquaintance with the original, and carried out with clear insight and great skill. In taking the several parts and passages of the English version and comparing them with the plan of the original, we are amazed at the wanderings to and fro, backwards and forwards, we are compelled to make in our own examination; it seems as if we were endeavouring to gather up, without the help of pagination, the loose leaves of a book which had got into disorder. And yet our difficulty and the impression of arbitrariness made by the English version arise solely from our own defective knowledge of the subject. What seems in the first instance to be a confused and capriciously arranged mosaic from the "Horologium Sapientiæ," on closer inspection appears a mosaic still, it is true, but one that,

while representing an independent and smaller picture, gives evidence of having been made by a skilful hand and with a definite purpose from stones taken from the original. The English adapter has not confined himself—in accordance with any distinct plan—to abbreviating, reducing, rearranging, and here and there altering the expression, yet he has absolutely succeeded in condensing his original according to the object he had in view. We do not find all the substance of Suso's book in the English version, but merely what the Englishman required for his purpose. The mental offspring of the German mystic in its English dress appears practical, sober, and subdued, and certain angular features make it appear even somewhat commonplace; and yet it is pervaded by such a glow of mysticism and spiritual life that compared to it the ecstasies of some modern English sects might be said to resemble the orgies of a drunken sailor, rather than a poet's rapture. The "Sevene Poyntes of Trewe Love and Everlastyng Wisdame" does not exhibit in composition and expression that invariable and harmonious gracefulness we admired in some of the earlier productions of English mysticism; * on the other hand, it displays fuller maturity and an even greater degree of simple piety. After Pecock's works, this little treatise must be acknowledged the most important memorial of English prose from the first half of the fifteenth century.

Its influence cannot have been unimportant, to judge by the existing manuscript copies and above all by its having been included among Caxton's prints. It is extremely remarkable, however, that even several decades before Caxton printed the work (about 1490?) it had exercised its influence on a dramatic poet. The author of the Moral Play "Spirit, Will, and Understanding" † is in a great measure indebted to "The Sevene Poyntes" for the theological learning he displays. The very first monologue by Wisdom, which opens the play, as well as the following dialogue between Wisdom and Spirit, are taken from "The Seven Poyntes," and hence, originally, from Suso's well-known work.

Meanwhile secular prose had commenced to show fuller development, especially in the domain of epic presentation. One of the earliest English prose-romances—if we disregard

* Vol. i. p. 199, ff. † Vol. ii. p. 299, ff.

"Apollonius of Tyre"*—is the history of *King Ponthus of Galicia* and the beautiful Sidonia (Sidoyne), daughter of the King of Little Bretagne. Under changed names and in a new locality, the figures and events of the saga of Horn and Rymenhild are here again met with. But it was not upon English soil that the remodelling had been effected. In the same way as the German romance of "Pontus and Sidonia" is based upon the work of a Scottish princess,† the English work is based upon a French prose version. Among other subjects rendered in prose at an early date we may mention the *Ipomedon* (Hippomedon), the poetic figures of which will have to occupy our attention for a short time in what follows.

With the beginning of the Lancastrian era, the Arthurian legend had also been turned into prose, at first, it seems, after the manner of Geoffrey of Monmouth, in that pseudo-historical connection called the "Brut." Thereupon writers directed their attention to that vast mine of French romances the origin of which is only now beginning to be fully cleared up by the investigations of most recent times. The "Roman de Merlin," which was written by Robert de Boron at the beginning of the thirteenth century, as a sequel to his "Joseph de Arimethie," had subsequently been turned into prose, and in this form had more than one supplement added to it. De Boron's narrative ends with the crowning of young Artus; the best known and most widely circulated continuation carries on the history of the king and of the heroes interwoven with the saga, down to the period when Launcelot comes to the court. The *Roman de Merlin* thus supplemented was turned into English prose in the reign of Henry VI., probably towards the middle of the fifteenth century. This translation gives throughout the impression of being a faithful one, the more trifling deviations from the French texts I have been able to consult may have originated from the condition of the copy the Englishman had before him. Noteworthy, perhaps, is the fact that the translator did not recognize his own ancestors, the Saxons, under the French form of the name, Saisnes; hence, in place of the Saxons, the Saracens are made the chief enemies of the Britons.

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* Vol. i. p. 114.

† Eleonora, daughter of James I. of Scotland, who married Duke Siegmund of Austria in 1448.

The English writers who worked upon the *Gesta Romanorum*, although drawing from Latin sources, took up subjects dealing with their native land. For the "Gesta," as already stated,* are a collection of stories which in all probability originated in England. In any case, they had played their own part there. The growth of the offshoots which had struck root on the Continent, had hitherto been without any perceptible influence on the development of the primary root. The Anglo-Latin "Gesta" had already furnished many an English poet with material and suggestions, but their literary future was to be considerably more important than had been their past. More than one preacher and moralist had drawn from this rich mine, and others were continually finding their way anew to the storehouse. In 1431, during the reign of Henry VI., John Felton, Vicar of Magdalen College, Oxford, at the request of the Fellows, wrote a collection of Latin Sunday-sermons, which contain numerous quotations from the "Gesta." A beginning may have been made, about this date, to translate this popular work into English. Two different versions which were produced at that time, independently of each other, have been preserved. The one gives seventy stories, the other ninety-six, of which, however, some fifty have been gathered from Odo of Cerinton and other sources, mainly legendary; only the smaller portion are genuine "Gesta." A third collection, made towards the end of the fifteenth century, appears connected with these, but contains only thirty-two narratives, in a variously changed order, also somewhat abridged, and without moralizings.

A book written by Geoffroy de la Tour-Landry between 1371–72 for his three daughters, belongs to a species akin to the "Gesta Romanorum." The author belonged to a noble Angevine family which had distinguished itself in war, chiefly against the English. De la Tour-Landry's father, also a Geoffroy, had fought in 1336 under the banner of the Count of Anjou, and distinguished himself; his eldest son, Charles, fell on the field of Agincourt in 1415, and he himself was no less of a warrior than his father had been or his descendants proved themselves to be. The French prose-romance of "Ponthus et Sidoyne" was written, at all events

* Vol. i. p. 264.

partly, in honour and glorification of his family; for the most eminent of the hero's comrades bears the name of Landry de la Tour, and it is probably no mere accident that Geoffroy's grandson—Charles' son, who soon after his grandfather's death became head of the family—was named Pontus. At the time when gallant Geoffroy wrote his book, his wife had been dead for many years. But as "a true lover never forgets the woman he has once truly loved," he was still inconsolable at her loss; yet this did not prevent his marrying twice again later in life.* It was anxiety for his daughters' future, fear of the dangers to which their innocence and piety were exposed in this world, that made him take up his pen. *Le Livre du Chevalier de La Tour Landry*, is a mirror of virtues and morals for women and girls, full of useful and more or less devotional narratives, which the noble author had caused to be collected, by two priests and two clerks, from the Bible and all sorts of other books which he had read aloud to him. Chronicles, and Collections of Tales and Miracles, furnished a variety of material; nor did the work lack references to the "Gesta Romanorum." Taken as a whole, it is an instructive and improving work, worthy even of being read in our century, though we might hesitate to place it in the hands of any young girls. The Chevalier probably expressed himself with even greater freedom and *naïveté* in the book he drew up for his sons; but it has not come down to us. The one written for his daughters attained great popularity, and has been handed down to our day in several manuscripts from the fifteenth century, and in two printed copies from the succeeding one. It also found its way to England and Germany, and into the literature of both of these countries. In England it was translated into the native language as early as the reign of Henry VI. It seems almost likely that Marguerite of Anjou, or some one in her immediate surroundings, may have suggested the work. This princess, who in 1445 became King Henry's wife, had various interests in literature, and had doubtless been acquainted with Chevalier Geoffroy's book, even before her marriage. The manuscript in which the by no means unsuccessful translation has been

* As Jeanne de Rougé was still alive in 1383, she cannot have been De la Tour-Landry's first wife, but his second. His third wife was Marguerite des Roches.

preserved, is both handsome in appearance and neat in workmanship.

The thirst for novelties which found refreshment in stories and anecdotes, was no less attracted by narratives of travel, by accounts of foreign lands and nations. One of the most widely circulated and favourite books during the fifteenth century was the "Travels" of *Sir John Maundeville*, which, however, owed its origin to a preceding period.

The itinerary literature of the Middle Ages has a long history of its own, and its starting-point and goal are found in the pilgrimages made to Palestine. In addition to the accounts of the Holy Land and of the roads leading thither, we have also descriptions of other lands in the East and their inhabitants, together with many a story of personal adventure. As these early accounts frequently served as the foundation for later narratives, the mass of wondrous reports which accumulated round the nucleus of truth was ever on the increase. What a traveller had himself actually seen, and what had merely sprung from a lively imagination, became mingled with what others had seen, or said they knew on reliable authority; hence, compilers presented all sorts of mythical and legendary matter gathered from earlier as well as later writers. It was in this manner that the fabric, which during the course of the fourteenth century was linked to the name of Sir John Maundeville, gradually came to be constructed.

Maundeville, who is said to have been born in St. Albans, is also said to have started on his great expedition to the East in 1322, and to have written the *Narrative of his Travels* on his return in 1356. He died, it is said, at Liège in 1371.

There exist numerous manuscripts and printed copies in Latin, French, and English, of his "Travels," and they were translated into almost all the other civilized languages of Europe. The enormous amount of material, and the numerous differences in the various texts or groups of texts, render it very difficult to solve any of the questions connected with the work and its author. From the inquiries of the last decade, however, there seems no doubt that Maundeville's "Narrative of his Travels" was originally written in French, that all the other existing texts, in the different

languages, are more or less faithful translations—whether made at first or second hand—and that none of these can be regarded as having been made by the author of the original.

The work seems, at an early date, to have met with quite peculiar favour in England, the traveller's supposed native land. The original text was there repeatedly translated into Latin and also into English, probably during the ninth decade of the fourteenth century. Thus multiplied by numerous transcripts, the English version then experienced various alterations, not very important, as a rule, but at times changes of an incisive kind were made. As early as 1390—if not earlier—an abridged copy of it was made, which, on its part, again formed the basis of a new Italian version.

Is Maundeville—as a traveller and even as a writer—to be regarded as an historical personage, or as a mere legendary type? Much seems to speak in favour of the latter assumption, viz. the connection between these "Travels" and the earlier Itineraries, the questionable nature of much of the information given, which is met with in various other sources as well, and further the meagreness and untrustworthiness of the communications on important contemporary events. Nevertheless, it is difficult to believe that the tradition of "Maundeville's Travels" does not contain some nucleus of historical truth. Still, any attempt to break through the doubt that enshrouds it cannot well prove successful until the appearance of the critical edition of the French text—of which there is some prospect in the immediate future; a variety of other questions await their solution from a similar edition of the English text, which it is hoped may likewise soon be forthcoming.

In Maundeville we seem to have a peculiar, as well as an attractive example of that type of Palestine-traveller who kept an account of the incidents and experiences of his journey for the benefit of future pilgrims. We have an English knight of the fourteenth century, full of the love of adventure, seized with the desire to wander abroad; we find him crossing the sea, roaming throughout long years in foreign lands, and visiting nations afar off; we find him among the followers of the Sultan of Egypt in his struggles with the Bedouins, and in the retinue of the great Khan of Cathay,

in Tartary, at war with the King of Mancy. And even an element of actual romance is not wanting. The Sultan of Egypt wished him to marry the daughter of a great potentate, but the knight would not forswear his belief.

These and other similar details are described in a frank and simple fashion. By exercising a certain amount of discretion the author contrives to increase the impression of the trustworthiness of his communications, as, for instance, when speaking of certain localities and their marvels, he adds, "Of Paradise I cannot speak properly, for I was not there." How immensely exciting must have been the effect of this narrative upon the older knights or freemen who were unable to leave their native land! As stirring, and probably even more powerful in their influence, must have been the legends of "The Three Kings" or "The Squire's Tale" from Chaucer, both of which deal with the distant Orient, and became accessible to English readers about the same date as "Maundeville's Travels." The translator of these "Travels" rendered no small service to his countrymen, even though he has at times misunderstood the original text. To us the earliest English Handbook on Travel is specially important in a linguistic respect. The great multiplicity of subjects that had to be spoken of, forced the translator to make a more extensive use of his native vocabulary than mediocre scribes were wont to do in those days.

It was in keeping with the increasing fondness for travel —which was not a little encouraged by reading "Maundeville"—that literature should endeavour to meet the requirement of travellers in a more practical manner. A collection of concise "Informacōn for pylgrimages to the Holy Londe" deals with the routes to be taken, with the time of year to be chosen, the most convenient means of transport, the most important stages; gives the names of the towns and other places worthy of a visit; discusses the question of taking food supplies, of medicinal safeguards against unfavourable climatic influences; explains the manner in which the traveller has to conduct himself towards Mahomedans or the Doge of Venice, and various other useful matters.

The efforts of Trevisa, also, which were directed towards

weightier subjects, and have been discussed above,* had supplementary matter added to them during the fifteenth century. Trevisa himself was, in all probability, still active as a writer at the commencement of the Lancastrian era. A translation of *Vegetius*, undertaken in the year 1408 at the request of his patron, Lord Berkeley, is probably from his hand; and a translation of *Ægidius Romanus*, preserved in the same codex, is probably by him or one of his school, and may be contemporaneous with Occleve's version of the *Mirror for Princes*. It will be remembered that Henry V., to whom—as Prince of Wales—Occleve dedicated his poem, was an eager reader of "Vegetius." Many other works were turned into English through Trevisa's industry, or as a result of the stimulus given by him. It was, however, somewhat superfluous that the chief work of his life was re-done, during the second quarter of the century, by another writer who probably knew nothing about Trevisa's translation. Ranulph Higden's comprehensive *Polychronicon* was again translated, but with considerable omissions, by an unknown writer, and carried down somewhere to the year 1401. In addition to these, *Osbern Bokenham*, Doctor of Divinity and Canon of the Augustinian monastery of Stockclare, in Suffolk, translated, in 1440, a large connected portion of the same work, viz. those chapters devoted to the account of England which form the conclusion to the first Book of the "Polychronicon." Bokenham wrote his *Mappula Angliæ*—as he calls his translation—for the benefit of the readers of a legendary work, which he had compiled some time previously from Jacobus à Voragine and other sources, and which contained the lives of a number of the English saints, and a good deal of information about places in England. Bokenham, too, was evidently not acquainted with Trevisa's more important work—a proof that the national literature of that era still bore more or less local character.

X.

About this date an Original Chronicle—so far as mediæval Chronicles can lay claim to originality—was already being

* See vol. ii. pp. 81, 82.

prepared. In the year 1438, *John Capgrave* dedicated a Latin Commentary on Genesis to his great patron, Duke Humphrey of Gloucester, and in his dedication quoted his *Annualia*, by which, to judge from the context, he could only have meant his *Chronicle of England*. Probably, however, these historical notes were originally written in English, because, in the first instance, intended merely for his own personal use. His theological treatises, and what he otherwise produced for learned readers and dedicated to some Mecænas, he wrote in the language of scholars.

Capgrave was born in 1394,* at Lynn in Norfolk. At an early age he entered the House of the Austin Friars there, and remained in close connection with it even after he had been appointed Provincial of his Order in England. At all events, he seems in his later years to have held this high position, together with that of Prior of the Friary at Lynn. Brother John—as he generally calls himself—was a doctor of divinity, a learned gentleman, a good monk, a good prior, a very orthodox and zealous Catholic; also a warm patriot and a good man, bitter and unjust only when the subject touched Wyclif or Sir John Oldcastle. Capgrave possessed no such critical a brain as Reginald Pecock, and as little had he felt any breath of the awakening spirit of humanism, although it occurred to him at one time to change his honest English name into the wondrous Latin form of *De monumento pilcato*. The world in which he lived and worked was thoroughly mediæval. He drew his chief mental nourishment from the Bible, the Fathers of the Church, and the Schoolmen, from Martyrologies, Lives of the Saints, and Chronicles. He occupied himself diligently not only with the moral application of words and matters, but also with their allegorical significance, and with the mystic value of numbers.† Where he quotes a verse from Vergil, or even merely from Geoffroy di Viterbo, he frequently makes bad blunders; his own Latin is not

* According to his own statement (*Chronicle of England*, ed. Hingeston, p. 259), on the 21st of April, in the seventeenth year of the reign of King Richard II.

† Allegory certainly stirred the blood of the men of the Renaissance as deeply as it had affected those belonging to the declining Middle Ages; what distinguishes Capgrave from the latter are qualities more negative than positive, in addition to which we have to take into consideration his preponderating theological bent and his belief in the miraculous.

altogether exemplary, although in its way tolerable enough. If the Life of Duke Humphrey—which he is said to have written—had been preserved, our praise would probably have referred more to his good intentions than to his intellectual ability. Otherwise, Capgrave was a very shrewd man in his own sphere, of sound understanding, and a skilful compiler, who sometimes, it is true, makes arrant confusion of historical matter beyond his grasp, and also allows himself to be carried away by loyal zealousness; upon the whole, however, he leaves the impression of a clear-headed, sober-minded man, honest and, in many respects, a trustworthy and well-informed authority.

With such advantages and such limitations in his character, he was the very man to make use of the variety of materials at his command for reproducing an exact picture of the vanishing era, and for collecting its characteristic features for future generations.

Capgrave was one of the most prolific writers of his century. His *Genesis* was followed by Commentaries on the other books of the Pentateuch and most of the other parts of the Old and New Testaments. These were succeeded by a variety of treatises, somewhat dogmatic in character, on theological and philosophical subjects. In many cases the object he had in view was to combat the encroachment of heresy. Capgrave also wrote a Life of St. Augustine, and narrated the deeds of some illustrious men belonging to his Order. He produced in English verse an adaptation of the Legend of St. Catherine, and, likewise in English—though probably in prose—the Life of St. Gilbert of Sempringham, a work that has been lost. According to tradition, Capgrave was also the author, or rather the compiler, of that great Latin catalogue of English saints which, at a later day, received the name of *Nova Legenda Angliæ*. The lives of the saints contained in this collection were, with few exceptions, transcribed from the "Sanctilogium" of John of Tynemouth, which is said to have been produced about 1366; except that the earlier arrangement adopted in the *Nova Legenda*, which followed the Calendar, was altered so as to give the names in alphabetical order.

A curious plan is adopted as the basis of the historical

work which Capgrave wrote in honour of his revered king, Henry VI.—*The Book of the Illustrious Henries.* By dividing it into three Parts, and taking his heroes in the order of their rank, the author first deals with the six emperors (Henry I.—Henry VI.), then with the six English kings, and finally with twelve other rulers and eminent persons who had borne the name of Henry. The first Part is a mere compilation from well-known sources disfigured by numerous errors; the third Part is both more attractive and instructive; but the middle Part is undoubtedly the most valuable, although again not free from errors, and although the chapter on the princes who occupied the throne of England at the time is written with too much reserve, and is too panegyrical in tendency. This tendency was, indeed, unavoidable, owing to the object of the work, and is clearly recognized in what is stated of the first two kings of the Lancastrian dynasty, especially in what is reported of the virtues of Henry IV. The "Book of the Illustrious Henries," which is written in Latin, was produced at different dates, with more than one interruption, and Capgrave seems to have put his final touches to it shortly before the middle of the century.

A couple of years later the worthy Augustinian—probably in connection with matters concerning his Order—travelled to Rome, where he was detained by illness longer than he had anticipated. William Grey, the English king's representative in Rome at the time, played the Samaritan's part towards Capgrave, who found himself very forlorn in the Eternal City, and cheered him by his visits. Capgrave was deeply grateful, and subsequently, when Bishop of Ely, dedicated his Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles to Grey, likewise his classification of the various orthodox symbols. But Brother John was as little drawn from his usual pursuits by his relation to Grey and his having met him on classic ground, as he had been by his previous intercourse with Humphrey of Gloucester. The works he produced after his return from Rome—when compared with his earlier ones—do not give evidence of any change in his historical and æsthetical views, and, more particularly, not the faintest approach to any humanistic tendency in thought or feeling.

These works must, however, be regarded quite apart from his "Guide to the Antiquities of Rome," of which only a few pages have been preserved. Much as the general character of this little book—which seems to have been chiefly occupied with favourite mediæval tales and traditions—is in keeping with Capgrave's style, still, the supposition that the Prior of Lynn wrote it during his sojourn in Rome, has no proper foundation, and, as is evident from several small significant features, is absolutely untenable.*

After his return to his native land, Capgrave continued his literary activity with all his old industry, and in his old method. When his great Commentary on the Bible—the result of more than twenty years' labour, although frequently interrupted by other work—was brought to an end, he, in his old age, and by way of recreation, turned his attention to the revision and completion of his *Chronicle of England*, which had long been in preparation. As was customary with works of this kind in the Middle Ages, Capgrave's account begins with a general survey of the world's history, gradually concentrating itself upon and ultimately changing into a special account of the writer's own country. The year of the accession of Henry III. (1216) marks the period in Capgrave's "Chronicle" where this specialization of the subject is regularly entered upon, and also where a system of dates is first employed by the years of the reigns of the English kings being given. Here, as in many other similar cases, it is observed that in the course of its progress, the narrative gains in fulness and significance, and the statements in independent value and trustworthiness. The interest of Capgrave's historical work—which cannot in other respects be reckoned among the great achievements of mediæval historiography—rests essentially upon his treatment of the centuries between 1216–1417. In his account of this period he frequently gives communications of his own, and refers to many important events in detailed connection. The moralizing character of his history, naturally, is preserved to the very last; but, though the detail is sometimes presented in a more plastic form than hitherto, up to

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* *Genesis* was dedicated to Duke Humphrey of Gloucester, in 1438; his *Acts of the Apostles*—which very probably preceded the *Epistles* and the *Apocalypse*—to William Grey, shortly after his elevation to the see of Ely, hence after 1454.

the last there is absolutely no connection between the individual groups of facts in the way of causality. On the other hand, full acknowledgment is due to Capgrave for his love of truth, and the objective manner in which he views things, and which forsakes him only when he comes to speak of heresies and those who advocate them. For while he dedicates his *Chronicle* to King Edward IV., and in the Dedication does not fail to contrast him—who has obtained the throne by the grace of God—with Henry IV. the Usurper, still, in the work itself, he describes the misgovernment of Richard II. and the doings of Henry of Lancaster with absolute impartiality.*

Capgrave's English prose is simple and unaffected, but clear and graphic, and at favourable moments exhibits vivid colouring.

The year 1417, and the meeting of the Council of Basle, brings his "Chronicle" to a close, although probably, had he lived longer, he would have carried it further down to his own time. The industrious and pious author died in the year 1464.

Contemporaneously with the development of historical prose we have the rise of political prose, which was forthwith to outstrip the former. It received its first main impetus from the Wars of the Roses. Before the outbreak of these hostilities there had, indeed, been produced the already-mentioned translation of "Ægidius Romanus"—"The Mirror for Princes"—and, in connection with the war with France, attempts had been made to treat such themes as "Commodytes of England," not only in verse, but also in prose. The first great political writer in the English language, however, stood in the midst of the turmoil of the Civil War as one of the most zealous partisans of the House of Lancaster, and the firstfruits of his pen were pamphlets in which he upheld the rightful claims of his party.

While Capgrave, in undisturbed leisure, was writing his "Chronicle of England," *Sir John Fortescue* was being driven

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* It must be remembered that even in his work which was dedicated to Henry VI., the *Liber de illustribus Henricis*, where the justice and wisdom of the first king of the House of Lancaster are extolled (ed. Hingeston, p. 108), at the commencement of the chapter dealing with this king (p. 98), it is stated: "*Henricus Quartus . . . regnavit post Ricardum secundum, non tam titulo sanguinis, quam electione populi.*"

about the country, a fugitive with the remnants of the Lancastrian party which had been routed in the battle of Towton, yet unweariedly engaged in the frequent attempts made to collect the scattered members for renewed undertakings, and to obtain fresh help for their temporarily prostrate cause, by forming leagues with foreign potentates. Fortescue, too, had originally been accustomed to a quieter and more peaceful kind of life. Descended from a family of note in Devonshire, he had at an early age taken up the study of law, and, when his years of apprenticeship were over, mounted the ladder of the law, at first step by step, by obtaining its successive offices and honours, and then at a bound rose to occupy the very highest position of all. Appointed Chief Justice of the King's Bench in 1442, Fortescue had since then, as a faithful servant of his country, led a most active life, had frequently to give his advice on weighty questions relating to law and the State, and successfully settled many a dispute. He had hitherto held an honourable position in life, his time fully occupied, and he himself as content as any one could possibly be when drawn into the full current of the proceedings of those days; he was held in high esteem on account of his learning, his upright and kindly disposition, his prominent public position (crowned as it was by knighthood), and as a wealthy landed proprietor in several of the southern counties; he had, also, been accustomed to devote to philosophical study what leisure was left him by his official as well as his domestic duties, being the head of a family. All this existence was imperilled by the Civil War; all this Fortescue risked losing when, with firm determination, he resolved to take his king's part in the struggle, and faithfully to stand by him in danger and need. After the catastrophe at Towton, Fortescue accompanied the royal family on their flight to Scotland, where he provided his royal master with the means of obtaining the necessaries of life, and supported him by word and deed, with his brain and with his sword, and also with his pen. It was there that Fortescue's literary activity began, with a series of pamphlets, written partly in Latin, partly in English, in which he upheld the hereditary rights of the House of Lancaster against the claims of the Yorkists. The most important of these treatises is one which far exceeds the others

in length, and also presents a range of subjects extending considerably beyond its immediate purpose, by dealing with general political principles. We refer to his Latin treatise, *De Natura Legis Naturæ*, written for Prince Edward of Lancaster. According to Fortescue, natural law forms the basis of political hereditary right. Hence, in the first part of his treatise he examines the nature of the *lex naturæ*, and, in the course of his inquiry, goes on to explain the origin of and the different forms of government. Of these, three forms are dealt with: the unlimited monarchy (*dominium regale*), the republican form (*dominium politicum*), and that based upon a union of both, the constitutional monarchy (*dominium politicum et regale*). According to Fortescue, the absolute monarch — when making laws and imposing taxes and customs—acts solely upon his own discretion; whereas the constitutional sovereign, in both respects, can act only with the consent of his subjects. That, however, as every case in the life of the State cannot be regulated by statute or custom, so even in the constitutional monarchy some matters must be left to the discretion of the sovereign; that upon this fact is based the sovereign's right to grant a pardon, which right he is allowed to exercise, except when it is opposed to the law and injurious to his people; that, however, in extraordinary cases, such as the sudden outbreak of a war or of a revolution, the sovereign may have—in case of need —to act despotically, may even have to destroy the possessions of some of his subjects and expose them to danger for the good of the whole community; that, however, in this case the king ought, above all things, to sacrifice his own personal safety to the State. The second part of the treatise is devoted to the question of hereditary right. This subject is dealt with in a general, or, more accurately, in an allegorical manner, unmistakably in connection with the feud existing between the Houses of York and Lancaster. The discussion is given in the form of a legal dispute between imaginary persons. The ruler of an Asiatic country has died, and three candidates for the throne lay their claims before the judgment-seat of "Justice," the claimants being the brother and the daughter of the late ruler, together with the daughter's son. The question is whether a woman can inherit the throne and transmit her hereditary right to her descendant?

The late ruler's grandson maintains that a woman cannot inherit the throne, but can transmit her claim to her offspring. The mother disputes this point of view, and maintains she can do both. The uncle denies her legal power to either. The disputants exhaust themselves in arguments of endless length, often of a most wondrous and ingenious kind. In the end the case is settled in favour of the brother of the late ruler, as could scarcely have been otherwise, as the hereditary right of the Lancastrian dynasty rested upon the principle that the female descendants were excluded both directly and indirectly.

The struggle for the English crown could not, however, be settled by mere legal argumentation, only by success of arms, and although the Lancastrians may be admitted to have gained some victories, still fortune continued to favour the Yorkists in the more important engagements. After the battles of Hedgely Moor and Hexham (April and May, 1464), the victory of the White Rose remained decisive for some length of time, and its success seemed secured for good when, in 1465, Henry VI. himself fell into the hands of his enemies. Before the crisis came, in July, 1463, Queen Margaret had taken Prince Edward, the Lancastrian heir, to the Continent for safety, and Fortescue was one of those who accompanied her. Their route led through the province of Burgundy to Lorraine, where the queen had been recommended by her father René to take up her residence in the little town St. Mihel, in the district of Bar. While in this unfortunate position, and often in great poverty, the fugitives were constantly occupied with plans, negotiations, and intrigues for the restoration of the House of Lancaster, and were setting heaven and earth in motion to procure confederates. Alternately, or even at the same time, they tried their luck with Burgundy, Portugal, and Spain, with the Emperor and with the Pope. Fortescue wrote letter upon letter, despatch upon despatch, and travelled more than once to Paris. After having lived long in suspense between fear and hope, their horizon seemed at length permanently to become clearer, and, in fact, as the result of an event which had, at first, threatened altogether to crush their prospects. Duke Charles the Bold of Burgundy, upon

whom—while he was still Count Charollois—the Lancastrian party had in a great measure set their hopes, no sooner succeeded his father (in June, 1467) than he began to show closer interests in the House of York. In July, 1468, he married Margaret of York, sister of King Edward IV. The followers of Henry VI. thus found themselves in the utmost distress, and their adversaries were triumphant. However, the close union the Duke of Burgundy had entered upon with the reigning dynasty in England, led King Louis XI. to take up the cause of the dethroned Lancastrians with all the greater energy; this was followed further by a complete break between King Edward and the Nevilles (from whom he had already become estranged), hence, also, with the Earl of Warwick, the head of the family, and who, in English politics, represented the party friendly towards France.

In the midst of this eventful and critical period, Fortescue managed to find the necessary quiet for a new and important literary effort. Again he wrote a book for the instruction of Prince Edward of Lancaster, and may have thought the time was approaching when the prince would occupy his rightful position by the side of or upon the English throne. The contents, spirit, tendency, and even the title of this work are all in the highest degree characteristic of the Englishman's patriotic pride and steadfast optimism. For years Fortescue had shared an exile's lot with his queen and the prince; a usurper was still occupying the English throne, and the rightful king still lay in prison; the country was torn into factions, and exposed to the convulsions of a civil war, which was constantly breaking out anew—and yet it was amid such times that Fortescue wrote his work *De Laudibus Legum Angliæ* (In Commendation of the Laws of England). In place of lamenting the sad condition of his country, in place of addressing the young prince with words of consolation, he gives him an account of the English constitution, and of English affairs, which must have filled the prince with pride; the author closes his dissertation by advising his pupil to study the laws of the land which he will one day be called upon to govern. Starting with an account of the difference between an absolute and a limited monarchy—absolute

monarchy being made the result of conquest, limited monarchy of the choice of the people—Fortescue describes the English constitution as the proper pattern for a limited monarchy, and, as regards the English laws, bestows especial praise upon the power which they possess of removing, by act of parliament, any defects that may attach to them. The type of the absolute system appears, to Fortescue, to be France under Louis XI., above all other countries, and he takes a delight in accounting for the evils which spring from this form of government—as well as, conversely, the blessings which arise from the constitutional form—by comparing English conditions with those of the French, among other matters, the comfortable position of the English yeoman being placed in a bright light in contrast with the wretched existence of the French peasant. This comparison between the two neighbouring countries Fortescue carries considerably beyond the limits of his actual subject, by enlarging upon systems of government, jurisprudence, the training of lawyers, and other social relations; and no small part of the charm of his book is directly connected with his detailed descriptions of life in England at the time, especially of the legal world. In many respects the exiled patriot sees the circumstances of his native land in a rosier light than might have been expected from a man of his penetration. The incorruptibility of English witnesses and judges which Fortescue extols so highly must, however, have presented very numerous exceptions, particularly in those days; and a decidedly comic impression is produced when he compares the French of the day as he had heard it spoken in France, with the traditional and mummified jargon of the English lawyers, and describes the former as being "disfigured by barbarisms."

About the time when Fortescue finished his "De Laudibus Legum Angliæ," the diplomatic negotiations which were to lead to the restoration of the House of Lancaster were on the eve of being brought to a close. Warwick's banishment from England in March, 1470, was an event of undoubted importance; for Louis XI. thereupon succeeded in bringing about an arrangement between Queen Margaret and the King-Maker, upon which the future of the Lancastrian party depended. The negotiations lasted some length of

time, for Queen Margaret was both disinclined and doubtful about making common cause with her old antagonist. Fortescue, however, made every effort to promote the arrangement; one memorial after another flowed from his unwearied pen, addressed to the great mediator, Louis XI. At length an agreement was come to on the main points; the diplomatic procedure could, therefore, be followed by active measures.

Towards the middle of September, 1470, Warwick landed in England, and within three weeks the restoration of the House of Lancaster was an accomplished fact. Henry VI. again occupied the throne, while Warwick ruled in his name, and Edward IV. escaped to Flanders. Queen Margaret, however, remained the winter in France with the prince, Fortescue still being one of her attendants; she appears to have been kept there by Louis' crafty, and at the same time over-wise, policy. It was at this period that Fortescue wrote a memorial containing most excellent precepts, which were subsequently for the most part again utilized by the author in another work; this memorial was written in the form of Articles sent by the Prince to the Earl of Warwick, his father-in-law.* In the spring of 1471, the exiles at last found themselves enabled to return to their native land, but the propitious moment was already past. On the very day on which Margaret landed at Weymouth with her son and Fortescue, the battle of Barnet was fought (April 14) where Warwick fell, defeated by Edward IV., and King Henry was again cast into prison. The plan of the Lancastrians was now to withdraw to the north, where they would be among their most powerful adherents; but their intention was frustrated by King Edward's quick and energetic measures. At the battle of Tewkesbury (May 4) the Lancastrian party were finally routed, Prince Edward, the heir to the throne, was killed before his mother's eyes, while both she and Fortescue, together with many others, fell into the hands of the victors. Shortly afterwards, King Henry

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* "Here folowen in articles certeyne advertisementes sente by my lorde prince to therle of Warrewic his fadir in lawe, for to be shewed and comuned by hym to King Henry his fader and his counseile to thentente that the same advertisementes, or such of theym as maybe thoughte expediente for the good publique of the Reaume, mow be practised and put in use" (see *The Governance of England*, ed. C. Plummer, App. B., p. 348, ff.).

died in prison—probably a violent death. His queen, who had to attend the triumphal entry of her antagonist, remained a prisoner till the year 1475.

The war which had lasted so many years was now at an end, indeed, had now no longer any object. Fortescue, whose life was for a time in danger, was pardoned in October, 1471, and soon afterwards was appointed member of the King's Council. He was not foolish enough to attempt to resist incontrovertible facts. In fact, he perhaps showed himself a little over-eager in the matter, by subsequently endeavouring to bring his theory of the succession into harmony with existing circumstances. Still, it was only at this price that he could obtain the reversal of his attainder and look forward to having his possessions restored to him; and, as there was now no one living whom he could injure by recanting, it was only human that his own interests should induce him to look at purely theoretical questions in a new light. These were the circumstances that gave rise to Fortescue's *Declaration*,* in which he retracts what he had previously written on the question of the succession to the throne. The reason he gives is that he had become better acquainted with the subject; and the passage he had formerly quoted from the Bible when opposing the female right of succession—*eris sub potestate viri, et ipse dominabitur tui*—he now, with harmless sophistry, affirms to refer to the Pope's authority over every woman, this interpretation to his mind answering every purpose. Fortescue's conversion bore good fruit for himself; he regained possession of his property, and spent the rest of his life in peace at Ebrington in Gloucestershire, where, perhaps, he led a somewhat solitary life. His only son Martin had died in 1471; his wife, too, was no longer alive, and his two daughters were married. His grandchildren, however, especially Martin's two sons, may have often brought life into the quietude of his last years. Fortescue lived to a good old age, but there is no authentic trace of him after February, 1476; the year of his death, as well as that of his birth, is unknown.

Fortescue's most important work, and the one to which

* *The Declaracion made by John Fortescu, Knyght, upon certain Wrytings oute of Scotteland, agenst the Kinges Title to the Roialme of England.*

he essentially owes his place in the history of English literature, belongs to the period following the restoration of the York dynasty; this is the treatise *On the Governance of England*, better known under the less appropriate title of the "Difference between Absolute and Limited Monarchy." Although a work of smaller compass, and less full of the details which bear upon the history of civilization, than his Latin work "De Laudibus Legum Angliæ," the English treatise shows a greater degree of strict unity of purpose and a considerably wider range of practical deduction. The praise bestowed upon Fortescue for having been the first writer during the Middle Ages to bring the science of politics down from the clouds to earth, finds its justification more especially in his "Governance of England." The introductory chapters of this smaller work are merely a reproduction of the corresponding parts of his "De Laudibus." The difference between the absolute and limited monarchy is again discussed, and the various sources of the two forms of government inquired into; after which, from the examples of France and England, the effects of the one and the other are described "ut ex fructibus eorum cognoscatis eos." All this, however, serves only to pave the author's way to his actual subject; and this subject consists of the question how the English form of administration, conducted by such admirable laws, and so prosperous compared with other administrations, can be freed from the worst evils that were attached to it at the time. And the chief of these evils, Fortescue considers, are: the poverty and consequent weakness of the sovereign, the undue power of individual members of the aristocracy, and the influence of factions with aristocratic proclivities in the Councils of the Crown, with all of which evils—together with their attendant dangers—he himself had become sufficiently well acquainted during the reign of Henry VI. The danger that arises from the poverty of the Crown and from the existence of too much wealth and power among the subjects, Fortescue depicts in bold strokes, but with perfect clearness and force. To meet these evils, it seems to him above all necessary to increase the revenues of the Crown, to check extravagance, and to forbid mortgages in the future. Of the already alienated Crown lands, a portion

ought by parliamentary decree to be returned to the Crown, the present owner to receive compensation; that in future, however, no king should be permitted to dispose of any further land, unless in peculiar cases, and then only for the lifetime of the recipient. Hereupon follow excellent remarks on the conferring of posts and granting annuities and pensions. Important above all, however, is the fact that while Fortescue would restrict the monarch in the free disposal of all these matters, and more especially as regards the Crown lands, and would compel him to follow the advice of his Council—all this is done purely in the interest of the king's own authority. And in his propositions for the formation of the King's Council, Fortescue's endeavour to check the power of the aristocracy is most prominently brought forward. The King's Council should, he thinks, be constituted somewhat after the manner of the Judicial Benches: twelve spiritual and twelve temporal members, selected from the best and wisest men of the kingdom, and bound by oath to the king, should be permanent members of the Council, and receive their fees, clothing, and rewards from no one but the king. In addition to these, there should be appointed annually by the king four spiritual and four secular lords. The right to attend the meetings of this Assembly, of joining in the discussions and divisions, should rest with the Chancellor, the Treasurer, and the Keeper of the Privy Seal, by virtue of their offices; other dignitaries and lords only at the request of the Council. The Council should have a permanent leader or head, chosen by the king from the four and twenty members; but the Chancellor may act as President of the meetings which he attends. A king, who should far outstrip every one of his subjects in landed property and in wealth, with an independent and enlightened body of councillors by his side to assist him in maintaining his power, and in wisely and judiciously appointing his officers and in granting pardons—this was the form of government with which Fortescue hoped most effectually to combat the weakness of the sovereign, the arrogance of the aristocracy, the unbridled proceedings of the various factions, and the general state of insecurity. Fortescue rejects with indignation and horror the idea

which had been raised in another quarter, that the king, while strengthening his own power, should see that his people were kept in poverty. To impoverish the commons, he maintains, would cripple the kingdom's power of self-defence in its most vital part, would weaken the king's power of controlling his unruly vassals, would give rise to disturbances and insurrections, and also be a blot on the honour of the sovereign; it would deprive the king himself, in times of need, of the subsidies which the Commons otherwise willingly and fully provided him with, and would place the country in the hands of thieves and robbers. If the French people were easier to govern than the English, if they did not rise against their rulers even under the worst oppression, the reason of this was not because they were poorer, but merely because they were more cowardly than the English. Fortescue adds, "It hath benofften tymes sene in Englande that iij. or iiij. theves ffor pouerte have sett upon vj. or vij. trewe men and robbed hem all. But it hath not bene sene in Ffrance that vi. or vij. theves haue be hardy to robbe iij. or iiij. trewe men. Wherfore it is right selde that Ffrenchmen be hanged ffor robbery, ffor thai haue no hartes to do so terable an acte. Ther bith therfore mo men hanged in Englande in a yere ffor robbery and manslaughter, then they be hanged in France ffor such manner of crime in vij. yeres. There is no man hanged in Scotlande in vij. yere togedur ffor robbery. And yet thai ben often tymes hanged ffor larceny, and stelynge off good in the absence off the owner theroff. But ther hartes serue hem not to take a manys gode while he is present, and woll defende it; wich manner off takynge is called robbery. But ye English man is off another corage. Ffor iff he be pouere, and see another man havynge rychesse, wich mey be taken ffrom him be myght, he will not spare to do so, but yff that pouere man be right trewe. Wherfore it is not pouerte, but it is lakke off harte and cowardisse, that kepith the Ffrenchmen ffro rysynge." *

In his works Fortescue proves himself an Englishman whose expressions of patriotism at times surpass the bounds of absurdity, a warm friend of his nation, a man clear in thought and humane in feeling, a zealous advocate of

* *The Governance of England*, ed. Plummer, ch. xiii. p. 141, f.

freedom as well as of political order, a learned lawyer and devoted to his profession. And although of a strictly ecclesiastical turn of mind—in other words, with a leaning towards ultramontanism—he was a man of upright and sincere piety, as is evident from his beautiful *Dialogue between Understanding and Faith*, which discusses, from the point of view of a faithful and devout Christian, the difficult problem of the sovereignty of a merciful and just Providence amid the perplexed and often most sorrowful form assumed by our life here on earth.

Fortescue was an exceedingly well-read man for the age in which he lived. Apart from strictly legal works and the Bible, with which he was intimately acquainted, his reading included a variety of different subjects—historical works, mainly mediæval Chronicles, but also Poggio's translation of Diodorus of Sicily, "The Consolations of Philosophy" of Boethius, and St. Augustine's "De Civitate Dei;" further, the works of Thomas Acquinas, Ægidius Romanus, and above all, the "Compendium morale" of Roger of Waltham, which was written towards the close of the thirteenth century. Many other authors—for instance, Aristotle—he knew at second hand, either through such writers as Roger of Waltham, or from collections of extracts. Where Fortescue gives an account of his own political principles, he, of course, draws from his predecessors; but even here his independence of thought betrays itself, and it is often difficult, or even impossible, to discover his attitude in the works he quotes. What constitutes the actual value of his writings, Fortescue owes more to his vast experience, clear perception, and well-balanced judgment, than to literature; and, in fact, his "Governance of England" opened up a new path to political literature.

While he is clear and convincing in the development of his thoughts—which are not, indeed, presented altogether methodically, yet in synoptical order—and happy in the selection of his explanatory illustrations and detail, he is further distinguished by the choice of his expressions, by the formation and combination of his sentences in their simple appropriateness and definiteness. Besides this, he manages to produce increased effect, within modest limits, by gradation, repetition, and antithesis; at times also he

brings his periods to a full-sounding close by making use of a greater flow of language. The Renaissance did not quite reach him, and yet his earnest inquiry into the actualities of his own domain, gives him an attitude in some measure connected with the Renaissance.

About the time when we lose all authentic trace of Fortescue, we again, on English ground, meet with the traces of a man who had lived abroad for a much longer time, and who was now about permanently to take up his abode and his work in his native country. *William Caxton*, who had returned to England from Flanders in 1476, is but little fitted to be compared with Sir John Fortescue. He was neither a lawyer nor a politician, even though—as the result of the prominent position he had occupied abroad—he may have at times been entrusted with diplomatic work connected with his vocation. Still less was Caxton a political agitator, and, in fact, from the outset had been a warm friend and staunch adherent of the Yorkists. Neither was he a scholar nor a profound thinker, but a practical man of business—undoubtedly of unusual cleverness, thoroughness, and conscientiousness. A business man to start with, he never tried to disguise his mercantile turn of mind, even when he subsequently devoted his energies to the service of literature. Intent, above all things, upon what was useful and practical, ever anxious to satisfy the demands of the moment, and satisfactorily to arrange the relation between supply and demand, as unweariedly industrious as he was circumspect, advancing carefully step by step—such was Caxton's method of attaining success. And it was precisely by this mode of procedure that he has rendered English literature inestimable service. He made his mark mainly by the skilful and industrious manner in which he united the activity of a writer with that of a printer—and, above all, as the first printer of English.

It is worthy of note that Caxton did not set up this business—which must be allowed to have been his chief vocation—till he had reached the age of mature manhood. When he settled in his native land in 1476, he was already fifty years of age, and had written only two, at most three, works—an extremely small number in proportion to the

numbers which were destined to flow from his pen; and in his occupation as a printer of books, he had scarcely done more than make his first attempts.

Caxton, who was a Kentish man, a native of the Weald of Kent—a district which in his day was still a wild and wooded part of the country—was apprenticed, in 1438, to a London merchant, one Robert Large, a man of wealth and high repute who eventually rose to the rank of Lord Mayor. Caxton's master was a member of the Company of Mercers, the most important and influential of all the mercantile corporations of the day, and Caxton remained connected with it all his life. When Robert Large died, in 1441, Caxton moved to Bruges, the great mercantile centre of North-Western Europe where a number of English merchants resided. The Corporation of Merchant Adventurers, to which the Mercers belonged, obtained, in 1446, under the name of the "English nation," important privileges from Duke Philip the Good, and the Corporation had its own house in Bruges called the *Domus Angliæ*, which was the home of all the members residing in the town—necessarily all bachelors. Caxton remained in Flanders, with but few interruptions, for thirty-five years—the better part of his life—and in the course of time came to hold an important position there. Soon after he had served his apprenticeship he had conferred upon him the freedom of the Mercers' Company, the members of which were strongly represented in the Corporation of Merchant Adventurers; his ability, industry, and consequent prosperity as well, recommended him in so high a degree to his associates at home and abroad that, in 1462 or 1463, he was appointed Governor of the English Merchants in Brabant, Flanders, etc.—in fact, of the "felawship by yond the see"—with a residence in Bruges. This influential and responsible office Caxton held successfully for the benefit of the Corporation for six or eight years, during a very unsettled period distinguished by weighty events and a critical position of affairs. The desire for a more peaceful life, or the wish to get married, may have at length determined him to give up his position as Governor. Still it was the great onward roll of history also that strongly affected Caxton's future, by opening up to him a new sphere of

activity. In June, 1468, the marriage of Duke Charles of Burgundy with Margaret of York, sister of King Edward IV., had been celebrated in Bruges with great pomp, an event in which the "English nation" of that city—with Caxton at its head—had taken the liveliest interest. Between the new young Duchess and the Governor of the English merchants a most pleasant relationship arose, which proved one of lasting attachment on both sides. Caxton resigned his post as head of the "felawship by yond the sée," and entered the service of the Duchess. Perhaps he had already taken this step when Edward IV., with a number of his nobles, escaped to Flanders in October, 1470, Warwick having for a time succeeded in restoring the House of Lancaster to the English throne; indeed, Caxton, it would seem, found an opportunity of rendering important services to his king, the brother of Duchess Margaret, which the king subsequently, on his restoration to the throne, gratefully acknowledged. It was, however, a matter of even greater significance that Caxton, while in the Duchess' service, made up his mind as to his actual vocation.

The era of culture which was already drawing to a close may appropriately be termed the Burgundian, not only for the Netherlands but for the whole of North-Western Europe; this clearly enough expresses the prominent part played, during the declining Middle Ages, by the provinces under the dominion of the Dukes of Burgundy in everything that pertained to intellectual culture. Various circumstances combined, in the happiest manner, to achieve this end: the prosperity of the Netherland towns as the outcome of the joyful rise of trade and commerce; the vivacious, frank, and enterprising spirit of the people; the power and wealth of their rulers, who were not only fond of displaying great pomp in their brilliant festivals, but also desirous of obtaining the chief luxuries of life offered by art and learning, and who esteemed it an honour to encourage scholars and artists in their work, and to reward them for their achievements; finally, the geographical position and the variety of languages among the peoples of the Burgundian lands, who seemed predestined to effect a mediation between the Latin and Teutonic races. Hence, various branches of knowledge —and chiefly the fine arts, music, and sculpture, but painting

in particular—flourished there; it was, however, chiefly in the domain where art and commerce meet that countless hands and ingenious brains produced an extraordinary wealth of finished work. Literary activity, likewise, took an important rise at this time and mainly benefited the development of prose. The Dukes of Burgundy of the House of Valois, and among them probably Philip the Good, more especially, were great lovers of books, and authors found them generous patrons; many of the nobility, too, followed the example set by their princes. As was but natural, the dukes specially favoured French literature. Many of the more eminent writers of the period belonged, by birth, to the Burgundian territories, many had settled there and had met with a kindly welcome and powerful support, a large number of others dedicated their writings to the dukes, or wrote treatises at their request. And as artistic work of all kinds had become so highly developed in these provinces, literature, too, became affected by it. In addition to original work, translations and adaptations were also in request and produced; and the illustrious patrons of literature not only directed their efforts to encouraging fresh mental work, but were even more anxious to have existing works multiplied and decorated in an artistic fashion. Caligraphists, miniature-painters, and those skilled in making costly bindings, all found permanent and remunerative employment under the Dukes of Burgundy. The prevailing passion did not concern itself only with the literary work of art and the intellectual enjoyment to be derived from it, but also with the book itself, as the fitting and sumptuous covering of the valuable interior. The extensive library gradually collected by the Dukes of Burgundy had a world-wide reputation because of its store of works of art, treasures, and curiosities of this kind, and also because of the actual contents of the books themselves, which were of the most various and diversified character.

When entering upon a closer examination of the intellectual side of this literary movement, the *poetry* of the Burgundian era—in spite of its wealth of production and the activity of a number of talented men—generally makes the impression of a certain lassitude, a result, on the one hand, of the prevailing fondness for didactic subjects, and

on the other, for neatness in the allegorical form. More vigorous life is manifested by *prose*-composition, which was continually extending the sphere of its influence, sometimes by dealing with or imitating the valuable productions of the earlier epics, by presenting important works in historiography, or by discussing subjects in philosophy, religion, and ethics; in fact, it handled subjects of the utmost variety in an instructive, devotional, satirical or apologetical style, and in many cases showed abundant ornamentation after the manner of romance-writers. In this literature we meet with numerous translations from the Latin, for the most part, however, from later and mediæval times. And although there is certainly no dearth of attempts to grapple with the difficulties of the actual classics, of symptoms of a genuine spirit of humanism, of evident signs of sympathy with the current emanating from Italy—still this literature, upon the whole, exhibits more of the spirit of the late Middle Ages than that of the Renaissance, it represents a culture of a variegated and somewhat pedantic character, and is generally associated with a fantastically distorted conception of the antique.

One of the centres of the literary activity of this epoch was the city of Bruges, where Philip the Good had frequently held his court, and where Charles the Bold had celebrated his marriage with Margaret of York. In Bruges were amassed quantities of books, and numbers of the inhabitants were engaged in multiplying the copies—authors, translators, caligraphists, miniature-painters, and bookbinders; and, as all the arts and crafts for multiplying books flourished in this city, the art of printing, too—cautiously at first—began to lend its aid to the work. It seems almost like the arrangement of some higher dispensation to find a man like Caxton occupying a prominent position in this foreign town during the best years of his life, and then entering the service of the foreign potentate who had married an English princess. For it was in Bruges that Caxton first entertained the thought and found himself in a position to assist the literature of his own country in obtaining—more than it had yet done—its proper share of the acquisitions made during the Burgundian period; and it was here, also, that he first thought of carrying the new and mighty art of

printing—the great organ of literary communication—on to English soil.

Shortly before Caxton had entered the service of the Duchess Margaret, he had begun to study the famous French book of the day, *Le Receuil des Histoires de Troyes*, and even to translate it into English. The author, Raoul Lefevre, had been chaplain and secretary to Duke Philip the Good, and the work, produced in 1464, was—as regards contents and colouring—a somewhat chaotic and wondrous compilation, yet well in keeping with the spirit of the age, with its newly instituted Order of the Golden Fleece. Caxton took great pleasure in the "many strange and meruaylles historyes" which were new to him; he also delighted in "the fayre langage of Frenche," which, being in prose, and "so well and compendiously sette and wreton, me thought I understood the sentence and substance of every mater." Yet, after he had translated some five or six sheets, the undertaking came to a standstill. Two years afterwards, however, the Duchess requested him to finish the translation, and her wish was complied with, for the work was completed some six months afterwards, although Caxton had been travelling most of the time between Ghent and Cologne. It was in Cologne, on the 19th of September, 1471, that he put the last touches to this first of his translations, which was thereupon dedicated to the Duchess, and Caxton received an appropriate reward for his gift. A book which interested the Duchess naturally proved in a high degree attractive, not only to the English gentlemen and ladies of her court, but also to the whole English colony in Bruges. Caxton was overwhelmed with commissions and requests for new transcripts of his *Recuyell of the Histroyes of Troye*, and it soon became evident that—in spite of an immense expenditure of time and labour—the demand could not be altogether satisfied. This induced Caxton to consult an excellent caligraphist in Bruges, named Colard Mansion, who had commenced, on his own account, to make use of the new invention, by which it was possible to make a large number of copies of any book at one and the same time, and who required only the necessary support for him to venture upon a larger undertaking of the kind. The result was that Caxton associated himself with Mansion, in order to get his

book that was so much in demand, printed, and by taking part in the business himself, he became acquainted with the technicalities of the new art. Thus Caxton's "Recuyell of the Historyes of Troye,"—the first book printed in the English language—was issued from the press in Bruges, probably in the year 1474. And while engaged in this business, a new idea struck Caxton in connection with the future, the idea of a new mercantile enterprise, and accordingly his first venture was quickly followed by a second. On the 31st of March, 1475,* he finished the translation of another very popular book, originally written in Latin, but Caxton made use of the French version; this was the politico-moral allegory of *The Game and Playe of the Chesse*, and it is probable that the book was set up in type with Mansion's assistance during the same year. The venture was a great success; in a very short time the edition was sold out, and Caxton must have felt himself encouraged in his hopes and new plans for the future. And if he cherished the hope of obtaining employment and of earning his living as an English translator and printer, it was inevitable that the plan of a wider sphere of action and more promising circumstances should direct his thoughts to his native land. For, naturally, it would be easier for him to have the necessary material for his twofold work sent to England, or to procure it there, than to make the numerous readers in his native country acquainted with books written and printed in Bruges. Hence Caxton at length retired from the position he had so long enjoyed in the Duchess' service—no doubt with her consent—and returned to England, as it seems, in the year 1476. He established himself in Westminster in the vicinity of the Abbey, and, indeed, to the south-west of the building, in a part known by the name of the "Almonry," and set up his business in "The Red Pale." The earliest book issued from his press—it was not from his own pen, but the work of an eminent friend—has the following words in the epilogue: "Here endeth the book named the dictes or sayengis of the philosopheres enprynted by me William Caxton at Westminster the yere of our Lord MCCCCLXXVIJ."

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* According to the chronology of the Netherlands at the time, which began the year with the Easter festival (March 31, 1474), in the year 1475 Easter fell on the 10th of April.

In Westminster, throughout the remaining years of his life, Caxton led uninterruptedly the busiest life, both as a translator and a printer. Death, which apparently overtook him towards the end of 1491, came unexpectedly, and found him pen in hand, having just completed his last work, the process of printing which had thereupon to be left to his apprentice, who succeeded to the business.

A study of the works which were issued from Caxton's press, is of great importance to our knowledge of the literary movement of that age. And this is particularly the case with regard to the prose literature of the day, the development of which was very plainly influenced by Caxton's own work. Hence, the attempt we have made in this and our preceding chapter to fill in the details of our sketch, had best now be connected with an examination of his work.

Romances in prose had up to about the year 1470 played a somewhat subordinate part in the English book-market; it was Caxton—both by his pen and his printing-press—who led to its becoming a favourite and promising branch of literature. The selection of the foreign—mostly French—works of this species, which he himself translated into English, was not, we think, always happy; but he, nevertheless, managed to present a distinct variety of subjects, and almost invariably succeeded in winning the approval of his readers.

Of works connected with the ancient sagas, Caxton translated, in the first place, two by Raoul Lefevre, which throw full light upon the but little refined taste of the Burgundian period in its fantastic conception of antiquity—the already-mentioned "Hystoryes of Troy," and the "Lyf of Jason." In the latter—which directly recalls the institution of the Order of the Golden Fleece, although there is no mention of it even in the Prologue addressed to Duke Philip—one is struck, among other things, by the endeavour which is made to clear the memory of the Argonauts from the imputation of infidelity and treachery to Medea. The "Hystoryes of Troye" are a compilation of a chaotic description. Of the three Books into which the "Hystoryes" are divided, the third presents a version of Guido de Columna's "Historia Destructionis Troiæ," abbreviated in part, but

very rarely altered or supplemented. The first two Books, which give the ancient traditions in a curiously distorted and disfigured form, appear to have been collected from the most diverse sources; they deal, above all, with the life and deeds of Hercules, who had the first two destructions of Troy on his conscience, and whose name is frequently given to the whole work; and by way of introduction we have the genealogy and history of Saturn and Jupiter, and also the story of Perseus.

If the Troy Book forms the starting-point of Caxton's twofold activity, his "Jason" belongs, at all events, to one of its first stages, for the English print of this work is one of the earliest productions of the Westminster press. At a later date Caxton again occasionally returned to the sagas of antiquity. In the spring of 1480 he completed a translation of the *Metamorphoses*, of which only the last six Books have been preserved, and, indeed, only in manuscript; it can scarcely be doubted that the translator, in this case also, made use of a French prose-version. This was assuredly the case with Caxton's *Boke of Eneydos*, the text of which was finished in the summer of 1490, and must have been printed shortly afterwards. The original of this translation was a but little tasteful adaptation and compilation from Vergil and Boccaccio.

The unwearied translator and printer further made his countrymen acquainted with the Charlemagne legends by two publications, both important in their way: *The Lyf of Charles the Grete, Kyng of Fraunce and Emperor of Rome* (1485), and the *Four Sonnes of Aymon* (about 1489). The first was undertaken at the request of Henry Bolomier, a canon of Lausanne, and was based upon a work by an unknown writer, "La Conqueste que fit le grand roy Charlemaigne es Espaignes," but also known under the name of "Fierabras," the second of the three Books it contains being devoted to the epic of Fierabras, while the two others mainly, if not exclusively, owe their contents to Vincent de Beauvais' "Mirror of History." Hence we have here again a compilation, and, in fact, one where the contents are only in part founded upon subjects of ancient and genuinely popular tradition; for, occasionally, they deal with the Church legends, later inventions or with an

intentional perversion of the saga. The English title, in fact, indicates the nature of the work more distinctly than the varying title of the French version. More genuine and more original in character is the work, *The Four Sonnes of Aymon.* The French prose-romance of this name, translated by Caxton, when compared with the "Chanson de Geste" by Renaud de Montauban (as it appears in the edition of the twelfth century), does, indeed, show a number of alterations in the detail which almost invariably lead to a sacrifice of beauty, and the effect ot the work as a whole has certainly lost very much by the metrical form having been abandoned; still, the nucleus remained after all the same, and hence the story of the "Four Sonnes of Aymon," and their steed Bayard, retains its indestructible power even in its ruder form as reproduced by Caxton, who has shown more fidelity in his work than fine appreciation of the original.

Of romances of adventure Caxton has likewise produced two — *Thystorye of the noble right valyaunt and worthy Knyghte Parys and of the fayr Vyenne* (1485), and *The Histoyre of Kynge Blanchardyne* and Queen Eglantyne his wyfe* (about 1489)—both translations from French prose works, which on their part again are connected with earlier sources. The attractive and well-told story of "Parys and Vyenne," which in its French dress won the approval of critics even in the sixteenth—nay, as late as the eighteenth—century, is primarily of Catalan origin. A French metrical romance in short rhymed-couplets, is the earliest reliable source of "Blanchardyne," the contents of which correspond pretty well with the average character of this species of poem, and possess a certain charm only in the figure of the heroine who despises love till she comes to know what it is by her own experience.

Very much more important than any of the preceding was the gift which Caxton presented to the literature of his country in his *Hystorye of Reynart the Foxe.* Although this fable, as we have already seen, had stimulated English poetry to more than one happy and even excellent performance, still up to that time none of the larger and fuller works on the subject had appeared in English. And now

* A corruption from Blanchandin, Blancandin.

Caxton offered to English readers the most admirable of all the forms which the grateful subject had ever assumed, though his rendering was blurred at points and disfigured by various devices. The poem of the Fleming Willem, "Die Historie van Reynaert die Vos," which was produced shortly before the year 1250, is, it is true, founded upon an offshoot of the French "Romaunt de Rénard," but it exhibits such independence of conception and presentation, gives evidence of so much genius, manifests so much fulness in its self-imposed limitation, that it may absolutely claim to be an original production. The Flemish work forms the starting-point for all the subsequent Reynard-literature of the Teutonic nations, not only for the Netherlands, but also for the Low-German dialects—these latter being again connected with the new High-German through Goethe—and for the English as well. Willem's poem was remodelled in 1380 by a countryman of his own, and had a continuation added to it. Thus enlarged—and corrupted—the "Historie van Reynaert" was turned into prose in the fifteenth century; this Netherland prose-version was printed at Gouda in 1479—as it seems for the first time—and was thereupon faithfully translated into English by Caxton. This translation was completed in 1481, and was probably printed that same year; the success the book met with is evident from the fact that some eight years later Caxton was enabled to publish a second edition.

This finishes the list—as far as it is known—of the prose-romances which Caxton himself translated. His history of *Godefroy of Boloyne, or the laste Siege and Conqueste of Jherusalem*, which he drew from a French source while engaged with the translation of the "Reynard," is already a work from the borderland between poetry and prose. His *Life and Miracles of Robert, Earl of Oxford*, a work written at the request of John, Earl of Oxford, and which seems to be altogether lost, belonged probably to the genus of historical legends.

We must not, however, omit to mention here a celebrated work by another author, which, had it not been for Caxton's printing-press, might perhaps have fallen into oblivion. In the year 1485, there was issued from the office at Westminster a stately folio, entitled *A Book of the noble Hystoryes*

of Kynge Arthur and of certen of his Knyghtes—or, briefly, *The Death of Arthur* (*La Morte d'Arthur*). Caxton, who had translated and printed so many works, had frequently been asked by noble lords and gentlemen why he never published any work relating to the Holy Grail, or to King Arthur, the great national hero of England. Of the famous heroes in history nine were, in those days, considered to rise pre-eminently above their fellows—the nine worthies, as they were called; of these, three were heathens: Hector, Alexander, Cæsar; three were Jews: Joshua, David, Judas Maccabæus, and three were Christians: Arthur, Charlemagne, Godefroy de Bouillon. Honest Caxton, in his reply as to why he had not included King Arthur's history among his publications, stated that he omitted such histories as were doubtful; that it was very questionable whether such a King Arthur had ever existed; that many persons had considered the traditions about him to be fables and inventions, and that some trustworthy chronicles did not make any mention of him or of his knights. Caxton, however, was not let off so easily; he was overwhelmed with proofs that Arthur was an historical personage; he was told, "Fyrst ye may see his sepulture in the monasterye of Glastyngburye . . . where his body was buryed, and after founden and translated into the sayd monasterye. Ye shal se also in thystorye of Bochas in his book *de casu principum*, parte of his noble actes and also his falle. Also Galfrydus, in his Brutysshe book recounteth his lyf. And in divers places of Englond many remembraunces ben yet of hym and shal remayne perpetually, and also of his knyghtes. First in the abbey of Westmestre at saynt Edwardes shryne remayneth the prynte of his seal in reed waxe closed in beryll, in which is wryton Patricius Arthurus, Britannie, Gallie, Germanie, Dacie imperator. Item, in the castel of Dover ye may see Gauwayns skulle, and Cradoks mantel; at Wynchester, the rounde table; in other places Launcelottes swerd, and many other thynges. And also he is spoken of beyonde the see, moo bookes made of his noble actes, than there be in Englond, as wel in Duche,* Italyen, Spanysshe and Grekesshe as in Frensshe." Caxton thereupon declared himself convinced: "thenne all

* Duche (Dutch) included the Low-German and the Netherland dialect.

these thynges forsayd aledged, I coude not wel denye but that there was suche a noble kyng named Arthur, and reputed one of the IX. worthies, and first and chyef of the cristen men, and many noble volumes be made of hym and of his noble knyghtes in Frensshe, which I have seen and redde beyonde the see, which been not had in our maternal tongue, but in Walsshe ben many, and also in Frensshe and somme in Englysshe, but no wher nygh alle. Wherfore such as have late ben drawen oute bryefly into Englysshe, I have after the symple connyng that God hath sente to me, under the favour and correctyon of al noble lordes and gentylmen, emprysed to enprynte a book of the noble hystoryes of the sayd Kynge Arthur, and of certeyn of his knyghtes after a copye unto me delyvered, whiche copye syr Thomas Malorye dyd take out of certyn bookes of Frensshe and reduced it into Englysshe."

Sir Thomas Malory was one of the first men of distinction —with the exception of Sir John Maundeville—to write works in English, and this was at a time when a Scottish king had already won his laurels as a national poet. It was a happy idea of Sir Thomas's to make King Arthur and the Knights of the Round Table the subject of his work; for Middle English poetry—not to mention prose—had by no means exhausted the theme, and the imperfect knowledge and contradictory statements that had been made about many of the personages and events connected with the legend, made it appear doubly desirable to possess a full and comprehensive account of them. In the year 1469, or at the beginning of 1470, Sir Thomas had finished his compilation, and fifteen years afterwards Caxton brought it within the reach of a large circle of readers, since which time, by means of numbers of reprints and new editions, it has more and more distinctly influenced the popular English idea of the Arthurian legend, and furnished important material for the classic poetry both of the great era and of our own time.

Where Malory himself obtained the materials for his narrative is well known upon the whole—or, at least, we think we know whence he took them. There is the "Merlin" founded upon Robert de Boron's poem, the latter parts of which, at all events, were made use of, and two different continuations of it, the one appearing here to be interwoven

with the other; there is "Launcelotte" in its later form, together with the later versions of the Search for the Grail, and the Death of Arthur, which had been added to it before Malory's day; there is, finally, "Tristan" also, which is again interwoven with "Launcelotte"—all of them French prose-romances. In many passages, however, it is distinctly evident that Malory may have made use of earlier sources no longer accessible to us; and again, there are differences which though unimportant are difficult to account for; or there is extraneous matter, in the narrative, which shows that here, too, where everything appears plain and clear, problems still remain to be solved.

The "Morte d'Arthur"—by which title the work is generally known—can in no way divest itself of the character of being a compilation: repetitions, contradictions, and other irregularities are by no means of rare occurrence. At the same time, it is, upon the whole, arranged with a certain degree of skill, for in spite of the abundance of episode, Malory has succeeded in producing a kind of unity, and even though some monotony in the variety was unavoidable, still the plan and style of the narrative do not allow our interest to sleep, or, if asleep, it is aroused at definite points. Above all, the terse style of the narrative, in simple, but by no means colourless language, produces a good effect; and it was this alone which made it possible to compress the mass of material within a space readily surveyable.

XI.

In the mean time the influence of Chaucer and his school had already spread to the northern part of Britain, to Scotland, and was pointing out to a national literature in the full vigour of youth, a road towards a higher artistic development.

Up to the fourteenth century, the Scottish language had formed merely a branch of the North-English dialect, and had not produced a literature in any way dependent or at all national in character. And although the foundation of the Scottish nationality had been laid as early as the tenth

and more particularly in the eleventh century, it was long before it had advanced far enough for a national consciousness to manifest itself. Four districts, with four races, more or less different in language, customs, and culture, were united under the sceptre of the Scottish kings. The north-west was inhabited by the Scots, who had originally crossed from Ireland, and ultimately gave their name to the new kingdom and its dynasty; their descendants, in the inhospitable Highlands, have maintained their peculiarities of character up to most recent times. In the north-east lived the Picts, whom it is difficult to classify ethnologically, but who are possibly an admixture of Keltic and Teutonic blood. The inhabitants south of the Frith of Clyde were Britons, while those south of the Frith of Forth were men of English blood. Not any one of these races was in every respect superior to the other, and hence it was only very gradually that the superior culture of the English race—their language and customs—could make its way northward, and thus confer a higher kind of support—a community of ideas—upon the political unity which was constantly in danger owing to the variety of local interests, the fanaticism of parties, and the hostile feelings between the clans. It is true that the English element in Scotland did obtain vigorous support from the inhabitants of the southern kingdom, and that the Britons inhabiting the district between the Frith of Clyde and the Solway, were at an early date imbued with English culture, not only by what reached them from the eastern district, but from the south as well. Still, these very relations with England—ethnological, linguistic, dynastic, and feudal—while they undoubtedly facilitated the English element acquiring the ascendency in Scotland, were almost as likely to retard the development of a national consciousness in the Scottish people. It must have been long before the inhabitants of the southern districts—to the east as well as to the west—accustomed themselves to regard the Esk and Tweed as the boundaries of their nationality, in place of the Clyde and Forth.

Other circumstances, also, had retarded the national development of the Scottish nation, other influences of culture had forced themselves to the front, and had to be worked out. First of all by the Scandinavians, who had

in various ways been connected with the earlier history of the Scottish people, and had permanently held possession of their outposts—the islands to the north of Britain. At a later date there was also the influence of the French language and customs, which proceeded directly from France, partly from Norman England, and partly from dynastic and political considerations. At the beginning of the thirteenth century complaints had certainly been raised, that the Scottish kings preferred—in the way of birth, manners, language, and mode of life—being regarded as Frenchmen rather than as Scotchmen, and that while they oppressed their own subjects they surrounded themselves with French favourites.

The national consciousness of the Scottish people reached its full development at last, in the struggle for political independence which broke out between them and their southern neighbours after the death of their king Alexander III., in 1286, and was carried on with varying success against Edward I. and his successors. It was also during this period that the national poetry of Scotland took its rise—a national poetry which sang triumphantly of victories achieved, which jeered at English defeats or scoffed at English customs, or which appealed to Heaven in its own distress, but, above all, glorified the deeds of the champions of the national freedom. Two heroes, undoubtedly, stood as the central figures of this poetry: Sir William Wallace, the darling of the multitude, the inspired agitator, the warrior of gigantic stature, of joyous mien, of iron strength, and overpowering intrepidity, the ever-ready defender of the oppressed, the merciless destroyer of his adversaries, in whom was embodied the hardiness, the daring, the wild fanaticism, as well as the shrewdness—nay, the craftiness—of the Scottish character; and Robert Bruce, the chivalrous king, the far-sighted politician, the heroic man who—not being free from egotistical motives—began his career with intrigue and murder, yet succeeded in making his followers overlook this by his resoluteness in misfortune, his calm and humane disposition after victory, the man of inexhaustible resources of mind and body, whose marvellous fortunes and glorious successes carried with them the future of Scotland.

The national folk-songs, the earlier productions of which are lost to us with the exception of a few short strophes, were soon followed by a national literature. Its earliest existing memorials belong to the second half of the fourteenth century.

North-western England on the one hand, and Northumbria on the other, continued to cross the Scottish borders, linguistically as well as ethnologically. And the traditions of literature, also, were transplanted into the northern kingdom from both sides. The country to the west showed a preference for the alliterative form of verse, whether purely alliterative or in conjunction with the end-rhyme, for the employment of a rich and brilliant diction, and for handling the Arthurian legends. The country to the east showed a taste for the short rhymed-couplet of elegant construction, resembling the French syllabic metre, for powerfully drawn presentations, also an appreciation for literary undertakings with some actual significance, with some practicable object—whether the subjects were secular or religious in character. Now, since an insight into the requirements of the living Present necessarily produces a keener appreciation of political contrasts than would a mere contemplative inquiry into an ideal Past, it is not surprising to find that, of the two poetical tendencies met with in the beginnings of Scottish literature, the one in the eastern territory is distinctly national, representing the specific Scottish element both in form and substance, and that it exhibits distinctly more vigour than the poetry of the west. The Tweed and the Cheviots mark the boundary of the country more definitely than the Esk, and in a political respect as well they had marked it off more clearly. As regards language, too, the east may have shown a more definite character than the west.

Accordingly, it is natural that the literature of the eastern territory has its earliest representative in the immortal "Father of Scottish Poetry," John Barbour; whereas the literature of the west is associated with the name of Huchown, a poet to whom both Scotland and England lay claim, and who has almost become a mythical character.

Huchown of the Awle ryale (de aula regia), as he is

called by Androw of Wyntoun,* a Scottish Chronicler of the beginning of the fifteenth century, has been identified by some scholars—and not without reason—with Sir Hugh of Eglinton, whose estates and castle were situated in Ayrshire, and who married a sister of King Robert II. (1371–1390), the founder of the Stuart dynasty. Sir Hugh's lifetime might with tolerable certainty be limited by the years 1320–1381.

Of the three works which Wyntoun ascribes to the poet whom he praises so highly—"The Great Gest of Arthure," and the "Awntyre of Gawane" (Adventures of Gawayne), as well as the "Pystel of Swete Swsane" (Epistle of Sweet Susannah)—the last-mentioned appears to have been preserved.

At all events it seems likely that we have some of Huchown's work—perhaps modified somewhat as regards language only—in the *Legend of the Chaste Susannah*,† which is preserved in three manuscripts, and the closing words of which refer to the testimony of the "Epistle of Daniel." The legend is written in alliterative and rhymed-strophes, constructed somewhat like those of the "Anturs of Arther at the Tarnewathelan" (Adventures of Arthur at Tarn Wadling).‡

It is not as simple a matter to settle the question whether *The Great Gest of Arthure* is to be identified with the well-known alliterative romance of the "Morte Arthure" (see above). A subtile inquiry of recent date brings forward a series of weighty and important arguments for an answer in the affirmative, and finds agreements between the romance and the statements made by the Chronicler either about or upon the authority of those "Gesta;" agreements also between the romance and the legend of Susannah with regard to language, style, and metre, certain peculiarities in the alliteration which the "Morte Arthure" has in common almost solely with poetry of recognized Scottish origin. On the other hand, the contents of the romance do not appear altogether to coincide with the presumable contents of the "Gest of Arthure," which Wyntoun mentions also under the name of "Gest hystoryal," or "Gest of Broythys

* *Originale Cronykil*, v. 251, ff.

† Angl. i. 93; Arch. lxii. 407; lxxiv. 339.

‡ See vol. i. p. 336.

auld story." Further, there is more especially a direct contrast between them, in the detailed account given of the death and burial of Arthur in the romance, and what the Chronicler in his unbiased interpretation, distinctly enough states about the lack of any such account in Huchown's work.

Huchown's poem no doubt actually deserved the name of "Brut," or "Broite," * as the Scottish people probably called it, and hence, in spite of the poetic spirit with which the whole subject is treated, it might be compared with the works of Geoffrey of Monmouth or of Layamon. Arthur, however, must have been brought even more prominently to the fore in Huchown's poem than in the works of his predecessors, and, indeed, so prominently brought forward that the name of "The Great Geste of Arthure" might appropriately be applied to the work.

A portion of this "Geste" seems subsequently—perhaps in connection with the less comprehensive "Adventures of Gawayne"—to have become the source of the "Morte Arthure." The author—unless we are to call him the compiler—of this poem probably wrote in the north of England at the beginning of the fifteenth century, and may have confined himself, in all essential points, to reproducing Huchown's work almost word for word, even though his account of Arthur's death is taken from some other source unknown to us. If our conjecture be correct, we should, nevertheless, have to pay the compiler the tribute of having selected his material appropriately, although, indeed, the plan and arrangement of the work he had before him must have afforded him the necessary suggestions. On the other hand, all the principal points of beauty in his work—and there are not a few—probably belonged to Huchown.

The picture which, in our imagination, we should have to form of the Scottish poet in accordance with the above supposition would coincide perfectly with the description

* What name Huchown himself gave to his poem is uncertain. If we may imagine a detailed title for the MS., it may have been somewhat like the following: *The Geste hystoriale of the Broite or the grete Geste of Arthure.* This would explain the different names given to it by Wyntoun, as well as the one that occurs in Barbour, i. 560, and also the circumstance that Wyntoun (v. 12, 272, 296) calls it "the Brwte" (mark the different form of sound), in contradistinction to the "Gest hystoryale" as the name for Geoffrey of Monmouth's "Historia," or any of the accounts connected with it.

which the Chronicler gives of him. Huchown's style of writing was a choice one, his diction excellent and full of refinement, and the construction of his strophes charming, although he but rarely, if ever, forsook the truth, *i.e.* by having invariably and in all essential points followed the tradition which, in the first instance, originated with Geoffrey of Monmouth. We may complete the picture of Huchown by a few personal characteristics, for a manly and noble spirit, a highly poetic disposition is met with in the "Morte Arthure;" the author shows a lively appreciation for nature and beauty, as well as for the splendour and the renown attached to the active life of a knight, and, further, shows genuinely human sentiments capable both of the deepest pathos as well as of the keenest sense of humour. The author of "Sir Gawayne and the Grene Knight" excels him in delicacy and wealth of invention, and his temperament also shows a greater admixture of the feminine element; but Huchown equals him in freshness and vigour of perception and representation, and—by his manly reserve and somewhat robust character—perhaps gives a more decided impression of health, without, however, a trace of coarseness.

More original is the figure of *John Barbour*. Of humble origin, as indicated by his name, he devoted himself to the Church, and rose to the rank of Archdeacon of Aberdeen. In this capacity, towards the end of the year 1357, he travelled to Oxford with three students to visit the University. Barbour may possibly have been connected with it at an earlier date, and made use of the opportunity that presented itself to revisit the scenes he loved, in company with the young men placed under his care; and while he superintended their studies, may have been engaged in his own learned pursuits. Barbour undertook a similar journey to England in 1364. In the following year—probably for ecclesiastical purposes—he travelled to St. Denis and other shrines in France. Three years later he crossed the Channel a second time, for the purpose of study.

The love of learning, which evidently animated Barbour, was the result of his great reading—a very rare accomplishment in his native land in those days. Scotland did not as yet possess a university, and the remote situation of a poor and small country made it difficult for those anxious

to learn, to participate in the gradual rise of international culture. Apart from theological and ecclesiastical books, Barbour appears to have been specially attracted by historical works, and perhaps in an even higher degree by poetry. In addition to such Latin poets as Statius, he had also read various of the French poets. His works betray not only a knowledge of the Charlemagne epics, but contain, among other matter, distinct traces of his intimate acquaintance with the "Roman de la Rose."

The archdeacon could not have remained long ignorant of the poetical talent he possessed. It is not known when he began to write poetry, or what subject he first took in hand. Many of his works may have entirely disappeared. Among those that are known, the earliest was, no doubt, his *Troy-romance.* It is characteristic of his intellectual vigour, that Barbour was not only the first of his own countrymen to treat the Troy saga in his native tongue, but did so before any English poet had handled the subject. Barbour—like the English author of the fifteenth century who, without knowing it, followed his example—founded his work on Guido de Columna's "Historia Trojana." Only two fragments of Barbour's work have been preserved, having by a fortunate discovery of recent years again become known: a short piece—some 596 lines of the beginning of the poem—describing part of the Argonaut expedition, and a longer fragment—3118 lines—which gives the concluding portion of the narrative, but, unfortunately, shows a considerable gap. It is evident from these fragments that Barbour's poetical independence was but little developed at the time. His reproduction is a mere translation—decidedly less original even than Lydgate's—and worked out only in descriptive passages by his having occasionally filled in suggestions given by the original. At the same time, however, these fragments of the Troy Romance betray an appreciation for form which, in its fulness and peculiar development, is not generally met with apart from the poetic gift itself. And in Barbour we have a powerful and graphic style of diction which moulds the linguistic material with great skill, and moves on smoothly and securely in short rhymed-couplets of masterly construction.

The same characteristics, only carried to an even higher perfection, and other qualities of an entirely different kind, are found in Barbour's principal work. Foreign lands and Troy had not made Barbour forget his native Scotland, nor was the Present and the immediate Past forgotten amid the dusk of bygone ages. An ecclesiastic in his position, and with a variety of interests in life, was not likely to hold himself aloof from public concerns and State affairs, and in Scotland, more especially, ecclesiastics of every rank are found taking an enthusiastic part in politics, and even in military enterprises. Barbour was clear-headed, a man of ability and moderation, and also a warm-hearted patriot. Hence it cannot surprise us to find that, as early as September, 1357, he was appointed by the bishop of his diocese to act as one of the commissioners who were to meet in Edinburgh to arrange about the ransom of the imprisoned king (David II., 1357–1370, the son of Robert Bruce). Perhaps on account of the arrangements already made for his journey to Oxford, this appointment had no actual result at the time. Still, there is no doubt King Robert valued Barbour's practical ability no less than his talent as a poet, and that he continued to draw him closer into his service. Thus, in February, 1374, the Archdeacon of Aberdeen was appointed one of the "auditors of exchequer."

The relation in which he stood to the King and to various members of the aristocracy, as well as to officers of high rank, Barbour did not fail to make use of in order to satisfy his thirst for historical knowledge. The period of the war of independence which lay so close to his own day, and the results of which he had, of course, himself witnessed, proved specially attractive to the worthy Scotchman. Patriotism, appreciation of historical events, and the impulse for poetical production in him, all combined to induce Barbour to give his countrymen an account of the life of the great king who had founded the independence of the nation, whose son had for years—during the days of his own youth and early manhood—been kept from the throne by a usurper in league with English interests, and whose nephew was now, as Robert II., wearing the Scottish crown. In the year 1375 we find Barbour at work upon

his *Bruce*, and, indeed, already halfway through it. In 1378 the work was finished.

Few literatures can offer an example in any way comparable to this poem of *The Bruce*. England has nothing like it. To historians it is an historical source; philologists — without intending to contradict historians — have declared it to be an epic. It might more correctly be called an historical representation in the form of a romance. And yet even this definition would only half settle the matter, and more particularly not do justice to its patriotic pathos and the national spirit which breathes through it.

Barbour's intention was to present an absolutely truthful account of the events which had occurred. He had at his disposal valuable material, the written and verbal reports of eye-witnesses, the accounts of contemporaries, certainly also many documentary records. He lacked neither the intuition for judging men and circumstances, nor such impartiality as was likely to be met with in a Scotchman of the period possessing a patriotic spirit and a poetical disposition. Those who have any conception of what the nature ot historical truth actually is—how a report of any two witnesses of an experience they have had in common, scarcely ever corresponds absolutely, how difficult it is, in fact, to give an account, in all its bearings, of a somewhat complicated occurrence one has witnessed, and how soon legend throws its veil over important personages and events—will not expect to meet with, among the Scottish people in the days of their struggle for independence, a picture of the fortunes and doings of Bruce that coincides with the actual facts in every feature. The life of King Robert the Bruce was a veritable romance and in the highest degree adapted to stir the poetic imagination of his contemporaries. Scarcely had the crown been placed on his head in the Abbey at Scone, when the battle at Methven obliged him to take to flight. For long he wandered about in the Scottish Highlands, hunted like a wild animal, his life in perpetual danger, while he was ever on the alert among the mountain ravines for the baying of the bloodhounds set upon his track. Many a time he defended himself in a narrow glen single-handed against a host of wild Highlanders, and not unfrequently

saved his life by casting aside his coat of mail and climbing barefoot up steep mountain walls. At length he succeeded in reaching the Mull of Cantyre, and from there escaped to the small island of Rathlin off the north coast of Ireland. Scarcely was he in safety when he set about planning new schemes, and carried out many a bold undertaking with his small band of followers, by perpetually harassing his opponents, and rousing new hopes in the hearts of the Scottish patriots. By degrees his fortunes took a brighter turn. One of the first of the aristocracy in the Lowlands to take up his cause was Lord James Douglas, and thereupon new adherents were constantly coming forward, some of their own freewill, some by being compelled to do so. And about this time the power of England was itself crippled by internal political dissensions, by the struggle between the kingdom and the barons, but, above all, by the incapacity of the ruler who had succeeded Edward I. to the throne. The more important Scottish fortresses fell one after the other into Bruce's hands; and, at length, he laid siege to Stirling—the key to the whole country. When England then roused herself to make a final and immense effort at resistance, and sent a large army to Scotland under King Edward, Bruce succeeded in completely routing the English force at Bannockburn, and in a bloody battle established the independence of his native land.

No wonder that poetry had handled this subject, that King Robert the Bruce and his faithful ally in danger and in victory—James Douglas—were favourite heroes of national songs. And, indeed, a comprehensive account of the life of Robert Bruce, in Scottish verse, is said to have existed before Barbour's day. The author is stated to have been a monk of the Abbey of Melrose, Peter Fenton by name, and the work to have been produced in the year 1369. It cannot be said, however, whether this work—if it really existed—was ever known to Barbour. But still, he was not unacquainted with the national poetry treating of Bruce, and even though it would be foolish—as has been done—to maintain that Barbour's poem was based upon the national songs, yet it did undoubtedly arise under their influence. But, above all, the spirit which animated the songs, and the spirit which even nowadays breathes forth from Barbour's

work is precisely the same, in spite of all the differences in culture, thought, and historical appreciation.

Barbour's "Bruce" will always be granted a prominent place among the historical sources for the epoch it deals with, but in making use of it as such, allowance will have to be made for the peculiar light in which his authorities and he himself regarded the subject, and the effect of which was increased by the form in which he presented his narrative.

The method in which the poet has handled the grateful material is a proof of his artistic insight and taste. In a short and cleverly constructed introduction, he carries us forthwith back to the occurrence which—with unerring instinct—he has chosen to regard as the starting-point of his delineation, viz. the murder of the traitor John Comyn by Bruce, which is then followed by the latter's coronation. The hero's sufferings are made an expiation of this act; purified by misfortune, we then see the Bruce—who carries Scotland's fate within his breast—marching from victory to victory. It cannot be denied that we have here a poetical conception of the subject. And as a sort of *pendant* to this idea, Barbour, after having described the death of Bruce, gives an account of the pilgrimage made by the ever-faithful Douglas to lay the heart of his royal master in the soil of the land hallowed by the footsteps of Christ. But Douglas himself meets with his death in the Holy Land, and his bones, as well as Bruce's heart, are carried back to Scotland and buried in their native earth.

Barbour's description is absolutely clear and connected, admirably motived, full of attractive freshness and sympathetic warmth of feeling. In his conception of men and circumstances he shows correct judgment, and political as well as psychological insight. A pleasant effect is produced by his thoroughly sound and healthy views of life, the genuinely human sentiments which in him are combined with a passionate love for his native land. He shows appreciation for all that is great and noble, and although his poem does not altogether disregard scholars and ecclesiastics, still he is as free from pedantry as from clerical narrow-mindedness. The sentences and reflections scattered about his narrative are scarcely ever thrown in with a disturbing effect, or in a wrong place. At times these passages

are quite lyrical in effect, where, for instance, he sings of the power of love, in praise of women, and, above all, in praise of freedom. Notwithstanding his fondness for detail, Barbour's narrative marches on at a rapid pace, and with stirring animation. Characters and events are brought forward with great distinctness, and the poet contrives, by means of delicate shading, to throw light and variety into the mass of his material, and to avoid the monotony likely to arise from the numerous adventures and battle scenes.

The dispute as to whether "The Bruce" is an actual poem is an idle one. He who was able to grasp the given historical subject in so poetical a manner, and to describe it so effectively, is unquestionably a genuine poet, even though the range of his genius may be a limited one, and his productivity not conspicuous in a qualitative sense. But the fact—thanks to a lucky constellation—that Barbour was able to give a subject of such pre-eminent national importance so appropriate a form, will secure him a reputation which far exceeds the actual value of his poetical gifts. For having drawn his materials from the national spirit of the age, there breathes forth from his work something of the imperishable youth of national poetry.

The recognition his work received at the hands of the better portion of his contemporaries and of his King, must have given Barbour a foretaste of that which a grateful posterity held in readiness for him.

On the completion of his work, Barbour received from Robert II. a "perpetual pension, with power to assign it in mortmain." Another pension for life was bestowed upon him by the King, possibly in acknowledgment of other services.

The poet may, about this time, have written another work in the interest of his sovereign and of the Stuart dynasty which has been lost, yet the reports we have of it give it a certain connection with the contents of his "Troy Romance" and the tendencies of his "Bruce." The traditional genealogy which linked the origin of the Britons and Scots with Troy was not unknown to Barbour; for it is probable that he had read Geoffrey of Monmouth, and almost certain that he had perused Huchown's "Great Geste;" indeed, if the identification of

this poet's personality be granted, Barbour must have been personally acquainted with him, for Hugh of Eglinton was one of the "auditors of exchequer" at the same time as Barbour. A sort of supplement to Huchown's work—although not exactly a "Brut"—was furnished by Barbour in an historical account, which seems to have been essentially genealogical in character and dealt with the race of Brutus, as well as the descent of the Stuarts, their origin being traced back to Dardanus, King of Phrygia and son of Ninus.

The later years of the poet's life proved him more distinctly the ecclesiastic. Having withdrawn himself from political interests, the Archdeacon of Aberdeen devoted himself exclusively to the duties of his calling, and when the infirmities of old age began to prevent him attending to his official work, he endeavoured all the more eagerly to clothe the pious sentiments that filled his mind in a poetic form. Barbour, therefore, applied himself to writing religious epics. He, in the first place, took up the subject of the Virgin Mary and her Divine Son, by filling in the actual Gospels from well-known apocryphal accounts, and —somewhat after the manner of the author of the "Cursor Mundi" (in the corresponding chapter of his work)—carried the narrative in chronological order from the Virgin's Conception down to her Ascension to Heaven. The whole of this work, with the sixty-six Miracles of the Virgin attached to it, has been lost. On the other hand, all the substance of the *Book of Legends of the Saints*, which Barbour wrote as an appendix to it, has been preserved. It consists of different parts which were produced from time to time. The aged poet—he was granted a long life —clearly did not wish to cease working as long as he could hold his pen. Hence, like a busy bee, he added one group of cells after the other. Taking the heavenly hierarchy in order of rank, he commences with the Apostles, St. Peter at their head, then the Evangelists—who do not belong to the series—and they are followed by Barnabas, Magdalen (whom he calls the "co-apostol"), and "Sister" Martha. The "Maria Egyptiaca" was then—as it seems—to open a series of other repentant sinners, male and female, who have, however, not found their place there. Then come

four martyrs, the "seven dormientes or sleperis," six confessors (in four legends), and these make way for a large and somewhat mixed group of persons. The collection, containing altogether fifty pieces, closes with the legends of ten female saints.

One main source from which Barbour drew the materials for this work was the "Golden Legend;" however, he also, in part, made use of earlier complete records, and other collections as well, such as the "Vitæ Patrum" and Vincent de Beauvais' "Mirror of History," were not left unconsulted.

The nature of the material, as well as the poet's age, would not allow us to expect these "Legends" to show as vigorous an expression of originality, as brilliant a display of talent, as his poem of "The Bruce;" one would need, in fact, to be an unwearied investigator of legends like the editor to whom we owe the publication of the "Book of Legends of the Saints," before we could venture upon the conclusion that the work "might readily be regarded as the most perfect of all Barbour's productions."

The "Legends of the Saints" demand concessions from us much more frequently than "The Bruce," and, indeed, concessions of various kinds—to the spirit of the age in which the poem originated, to the power of tradition which even the most gifted poet cannot ignore, and to the various influences and conditions which compel him to accept all manner of things not adapted to poetry, even things that are insipid. It is saying a good deal that we are able to recognize in these religious epics the patriotic singer of the war of independence. It is not the inevitable defects attached to the poetry, but its great merits, that should excite our astonishment.

Barbour, as a very old man, thus created a work which far surpassed almost everything of its kind that English literature had to show, and, indeed, he was not surpassed in this domain even at a later date. Huchown in his "Susannah" exhibits greater brilliancy of diction, Chaucer's "Cecilia" more completely captivates our ear by the pleasant sound of its strophes; but, as a whole, it will be found that Barbour's simple as well as vivid form of representation corresponds best with the character of the genus, and

that it is the only form which can be carried out successfully, especially in poems of longer effort or in compilations.

Barbour's attitude towards the sources from which he drew his material shows much greater independence than is exhibited by the majority of poets who have handled legends, for he sometimes abbreviates and then again dilates, and not unfrequently alters them, supplementing them by numerous additions. And while treating the details in this manner, he acts towards the plan and construction of the whole as a man accustomed to go his own way. The reflections aroused in him by the events he relates, the maxims he scatters about his narratives, are scarcely ever unimportant; and whether more or less new or commonplace, they are naïve, spontaneous expressions of the poet, whose character even here bears the impress of sterling and genuinely human qualities, sound piety, clearness of mind, and of a wisdom based upon a full experience of life. And amid this collection of "Legends" we do not lose sight of the Scotchman—nay, of the Aberdeen man; for the legend of St. Nicholas, the patron saint of Aberdeen, whose story was also related by Jacobus à Voragine, is followed by that of St. Macharius (Machar), the patron saint of a church in the town; and, again, in another part he gives us the life of St. Ninian, the Apostle of Galloway, by adding to Alfred de Rievaux's account a number of stories obtained from oral tradition.

In working out his details Barbour exhibits poetic invention in more than one passage; and, in particular, manages successfully to develop the romantic element in some of the legendary material, by replacing the bare suggestions of his copy with a psychological picture of vivid action, finely conceived, and worked out with clearness. The "Book of Legends of the Saints" was probably Barbour's last work. The poet died at an advanced age in the year 1396.

English literature—and, indeed, Scottish literature—can show no more brilliant figure or richer nature than his.

BOOK VI.

THE RENAISSANCE UP TO SURREY'S DEATH.

I.

In the last week of December, 1501, a large banquet was given by the Lord Mayor of London. The reception was held in honour of distinguished visitors—special ambassadors from the King of Scotland—who had come to conclude negotiations in connection with his marriage with Margaret, the young daughter of Henry VII. Among the retinue of the ambassadors was a poet, small of stature and of vivacious temperament, who, on this occasion, was inspired to write a poem in praise of the city of London, and shortly afterwards received from King Henry a not inconsiderable gift of money in return. "Dunbar, the Rhymer of Scotland," is the name given in the old chronicles to this poet, whose genius so immeasurably excelled all the contemporary poets in England.

William Dunbar was at this time six and forty years of age, but had already a somewhat full life behind him. A scion of the noble house of Dunbar, and a relative of the Earl of March, he had from his earliest youth been distined for the Church, and, it was hoped, would one day rise to occupy the highest of its gifts, which, however, it was never his good fortune to obtain. We are told that even as a babe he was sung to sleep on his nurse's knee to the refrain of "Dandeley, bishop, dandeley." And this idea was firmly adhered to even after the strong sensuousness and passionate nature of the young man had distinctly manifested itself. Perhaps, owing to his sanguine temperament, he himself held longest to this hope of being able to reach the goal that had once been held up before him, and did so, in fact, even when other paths had become closed to him.

He had received an academical education at St. Andrews, and took his degree of Master of Arts there in 1479. Then he entered the Order of the Franciscans, "preached and flattered," led a gay life, wandering over a great part of

Scotland and England, and travelled even as far as Picardy. He contrived, however, to free himself again from these religious fetters, hence had probably never solemnly pledged himself by a vow. What his doings had otherwise been, down to the accession of James IV. (1489), remains unknown.

The reign of this chivalrous, gifted, and, in spite of all his weaknesses, an amiable monarch, was the period when the still youthful poetry of Scotland burst into full bloom. The close connection between art-poetry and popular-poetry, the free and eminently national tendency which Scottish literature had struck out for itself, in the first stages of its development, all afforded the most admirable preliminary conditions. While the favour of circumstances, the gradual rise of learning, together with Dunbar's own refined and liberal education, and the political situation of the moment, including the disposition and inclinations of the King—which impressed themselves on his court—completed the happy constellation. James's bravery, his affable nature, and his intellectual energy, which enabled him with ease to master a number of the European languages besides Latin, his interest in poetry, nay, even his merry and gallant adventures, which were by no means of an objectionable character,—all this combined to create an atmosphere very advantageous for poetry. Accordingly, we have a number of names of poets handed down to us from that period, without our being able, in most cases, to do more than obtain a very uncertain idea of them, and in the more favourable cases our knowledge of them is based only upon a couple of small productions which have accidentally been preserved.

At King James's court Dunbar, too, found a sphere of activity, and he received recognition both as a poet and as a man of business.

Dunbar is not one of those fond of displaying their "learning," yet his accomplishments were by no means insignificant. He was, doubtless, intimately acquainted with Latin and French, and, in spite of his contempt for the Gaels, he probably—like his King—understood their language. He was well read in Scottish poetry and also in Chaucer and other English poets. Ovid, Vergil, and

especially Horace, had been studied industriously. But, above all, he had gradually acquired a great knowledge of the world and of mankind.

The poems of his earlier years were probably mainly of the erotic species: tender love-songs with a play upon words, allegorical poems, and also merry tales and narratives. Among the latter is the lyrico-epic apologue *The Tod* (*Fox*) *and the Lamb*, which, in all probability, belongs to the last decade of the fifteenth century. The poem treats of a love-adventure of the merry-hearted monarch, which seems to have had a comical end. James, of course, is the fox, the lady the lamb, and the wolf, from whom the fox tries to conceal himself, probably the jealous husband. The adventure took place in Dunfermline, where Robert Henryson wrote his "Fables." Dunbar may have obtained from Henryson a general idea as to how to dress up his material. But what a contrast we have in Dunbar's clever, piquant description and reckless spirit—nay, the whole tone of his work, with its worldliness and even ribaldry—when it is compared with the staid and somewhat pedantic manner of the honest "schoolmaster!"

Great is the influence of Chaucer—whether direct or indirect—made evident in these poems. And yet Dunbar's own peculiar style is already apparent: that trait of pointed epigram which recalls the French genius, that free attitude, equally far removed from anything conventional and court-like as from the ordinary and commonplace; and his verse and strophe—notwithstanding their strictly artistic construction and exquisite flow—show a simpler method, more akin to that of the folk-poetry.

To the tenth decade belong also some of his satirical poems, such as *The Flyting of Dunbar and Walter Kennedy*, a poem bristling with violent invectives and coarse-grained salt; Kennedy was a poet of some renown at that period, but is little known to us now. To this period belongs also Dunbar's spirited and pungent *Tidings fra the Session*,* in which a peasant returning from Edinburgh tells his neighbours, at their request, of his experiences at the law

* The form of this poem corresponds exactly with that of *The Tod and the Lamb*: strophes of seven octosyllabic lines, the last acting as a refrain, with the rhyme-order of *aa bb c b c*.

courts. Even that merry and waggish poem, *Dunbar's Dirige to the King at Stirling*, which applies the images of purgatory and heaven to Stirling and Edinburgh, and parodies the Church prayers for the dead in a somewhat profane manner, may be assigned to this period.

Much as King James enjoyed amusing himself, he did not, amid his pleasures, forget the more serious duties of life. After 1489 he determined to make a suitable marriage, and looked about among the different courts for a princess. Spain, France, the Emperor, and even the Pope were applied to, and finally, after 1500, negotiations were entered into with England, where his proposal met with ready acceptance. Dunbar had not held himself aloof from these proceedings; at all events, he had joined some of the embassies entrusted with the matter—perhaps as their secretary. In 1491, accordingly, he went to France, and would have travelled on to Italy had he not been prevented by the snow on the Alps, and was thus compelled to remain the winter in Paris. In 1501, as we have seen, he was in London.

When Margaret Tudor, who was scarcely more than a child, came to Scotland in 1503 to be married and crowned, Dunbar received her with his poem, *The Thistle and the Rose*, which, according to its last line, he wrote or had at all events thought out, on the 9th of May. In order worthily to celebrate the union between the English and Scottish royal families, a poet in those days could scarcely have dispensed with allegorical machinery, and the emblems of their crests lay here at his disposal. As a prototype for the plan of his work, Dunbar may have had in his mind Chaucer's "Parlement of Fowls," which had been composed for a similar occasion; but besides this there are reminiscences from other poems of Chaucer's, especially his "Knight's Tale." In place of old Africanus we have here Mistress May, who comes to the poet early one morning and calls upon him to write something in her honour. When she leaves him, he follows her, and comes to a beautiful garden where he sees the sun rise, and listens to the song of the birds. Nature tells Neptune and Æolus not to disturb the water or the air, and commands Juno to keep the heavens clear and dry. By means of three

messengers—a roe, a swallow, and sneezewort—she thereupon calls the "beasts" and birds, flowers and herbs to a meeting. Each one of these groups chooses a king; and thus the lion, eagle, and thistle are crowned and instructed by the great goddess to exercise justice and mercy. The Thistle she orders more especially, not to hold herbs without virtue to be as valuable as those "of virtue and of odour sweet," and not to let any vile nettle compare itself to the goodly *fleur-de-lis:*

> "Nor hald non udir flour in sic denty,
> As the freshe *Rois*, of cullour reid and quhyt:
> For gif thow dois, hurt is thyne honesty;
> Considdering that no flour is so perfeit
> So full of vertew, plesans, and delyt,
> So full of blisful, angelik beauty,
> Imperiale birth, honour, and dignité."

Thereupon Nature addresses herself to the Rose, whose lineage she esteems above that of the Lily (*i.e.* England above France). The queen of flowers is crowned, and receives the homage of her sisters. Then all the birds join in a continuous hymn of praise, till the poet awakes.

As a product of court-like gallantry, "The Thistle and the Rose" could not fail to display an abundance of colour and spirit. The heiress of the Red and the White Rose is personally honoured in accordance with her rank, and sufficiently praised, and even King James—in the form of the Thistle as well as of the Lion—is offered many a well-turned compliment.

In plan and execution, no other poem of Dunbar's so distinctly betrays the influence of Chaucer. But even here there is no denying the originality of the Scottish poet, in the brevity and clearness of the poem as a whole, in the simplicity of his plot, the brilliancy of his descriptions, his wealth of noble and beautiful language. But, nevertheless, the thought of his great prototype unwittingly forces itself upon one, and on this occasion Dunbar has in no way equalled him. In richness of invention as well as in animated variety in execution, in ideal character and in freedom of movement, "The Parlement of Fowls" is far superior to the Scottish poem; and how very differently Chaucer's humour comes to the fore!

Dunbar's *Golden Targe* was probably written not very much later than "The Thistle and the Rose," scarcely at an earlier date. It treats of a shield by means of which the noble knight Reason seeks to protect the poet against the shafts of Beauty and her train, till Presence casts a powder in his eyes which renders him incapable of resistance, and thus his *protégée* falls defenceless into the enemies' hands. This simple thought has been draped in the happiest manner. The invention is here unquestionably more original and more significant than in "The Thistle and the Rose," and in execution exhibits even greater brilliancy. Dunbar, in this poem, reaches the climax of his art in the domain of erotico-romantic allegory; and hence we can here best study the merits as well as the defects characteristic of him in this species of poetry. Admirable is the flight of his fancy, which charmingly contrives to weave nature and mythology into a living, even though ephemeral whole. The action is worked out in a few great scenes which produce their effect by pleasing gradations, as well as by surprising contrasts. The diction is full of bold splendour, and, at the same time, of harmonious beauty. Few poets are able, in the same degree as Dunbar, to call up exquisite pictures by the choice and arrangement of a series of well-sounding words. Yet close to the light we have the shadow. If Dunbar's language may be said to be more equal than Chaucer's, if he does not, like the latter, occasionally fall out of cadence, he is less varied and suggestive. And a poet who, in the plan of his works, manages so to limit himself, and, when he chooses, attains such energetic conciseness of expression, will generally be found to allow himself too much licence in his descriptions, and not know how to regulate his wealth. Too frequently, accordingly, in Dunbar, the same thought is repeated, we have too much fulness, too great an abundance of brilliancy, in brief, too great an outlay for the object in view, such as Chaucer would have accomplished in a single line. In a description of a beautiful landscape on a May morning, we have at the outset an instance of this fault, and hence the effect of strophes like the following is rather weakened than heightened by those connected with them in the work :—

"Full angel-like thir birdis sang their houris
Within thair courtins grene, in to thair bouris,
Apparalit quhite and red, wyth blomes suete;
Anamalit was the felde wyth all colouris,
The perly droppis schuke in silver schouris;
Quhill all in balme did branch and levis flete
To part fra Phebus, did Aurora grete;
Her cristall teris I saw hyng on the flouris,
Quhilk he for lufe all drank up with his hete."

The courtly and worldly poet who wrote such verses seemed but little fitted for the ecclesiastical profession. Yet it was just at this period that Dunbar began to take the matter seriously into consideration. In March, 1504, he read Mass for the first time in the King's presence. It was only as an ecclesiastic that the poet could now hope to obtain a post of dignity and distinction, or, in fact, any position free from care. Why should he have despaired of obtaining a bishopric through the King's interest in him, especially as he had also gained the favour of the young Queen? In those days of sanguine hopes and bitter disappointments, Dunbar seems also to have been tempted in all seriousness permanently to assume the cowl of a Franciscan, which he had already for a time worn as a young man. How he cast the temptation from him we learn from his extremely original poem, *The Visitation of St. Francis: or How Dunbar was desired to be a Friar:*

"This nycht befoir the dawing cleir
Me thocht Sanct Francis did to me appeir,
With ane religiouse abbeit in his hand,
And said, In this go cleith thé, my servand,
Refuiss the warld, for thow mon be a Freir.

"With him and with his abbeit bayth I skarrit,
Lyke to ane man that with a gaist wes marrit
Me thocht on bed he layid it me abone;
But on the flure delyverly and sone
I lap thair fra, and nevir wald cum nar it.

"Quoth he, Quhy skarris thow with this holy weid?
Cleith thé thairin, for weir it thow most neid;
Thow that hes lang done Venus lawis teiche,
Sall now be freir, and in this abbeit preiche;
Delay it not, it mon be done but dreid.

"Quoth I, Sanct Francis, loving be thé till,
And thankit mot thow be of thy gude will
To me, that of thy claithes are so kynd;
Bot thame to weir it nevir come in my mynd;
Sweit Confessour, thow tak it nocht in ill.

"In haly legendis haif I hard allevin,
Ma sanctis of bischoppis, nor freiris, be sic sevin;
Off full few freiris that hes bene sanctis I reid;
Quhairfoir ga bring to me ane bischoppis weid,
Give evir thow wald my saule yeid unto hevin

"My brethir oft hes maid thé supplicationis,
Be epistillis, sermonis, and relationis.
To tak this abbeit; bot thow did postpone;
But furder process, cum on thairfore anone
All circumstance put by and excusationis.

"Gif evir my fortoun wes to be a freier,
The dait thairof is past full mony a yeir;
For in to every lusty town and place,
Off all Jngland, from Berwick to Kalice,
I haif in to thy habeit maid gud cheir.

"In freiris weid full fairly haif I fleichit,
In it haif I in pulpit gone and preichit
In Derntown kirk,* and eik in Canterberry;
In it I past at Dover oure the ferry,
Throw Piccardy, and thair the peple teichit.

"Als lang as I did beir the freiris style,
In me, God wait, wes mony wrink and wyle;
In me wes falset with every wyght to flatter,
Quhilk mycht be flemit with na haly watter;
I wes ay reddy all men to begyle.

"The freir that did Sanct Francis thair appeir,
Ane feind he wes in liknes of ane freir;
He vaneist away with stynk and fyrrie smowk;
With him me thocht all the house end he towk,
And I awoik as wy that wes in weir."

Only an eminent poet could have kept himself thus free from conventional influences, as Dunbar has done in this pithy description, this humorous satire, with its epigrammatical and surprising end.

Meanwhile he was anxiously endeavouring to obtain a benefice, and, with this object in view, he addressed numerous

* Derntown Kirk, a place which has not yet been identified, perhaps Dirrington in Berwickshire.

petitions in verse to the King, full of frank lamentations, naïve vagaries, and pungent wit. He complains that benefices are not justly appointed, "Sum men hes seven, and I nocht ane." He maintains that he has no desire for any great abbey, "but ane kirk, scant coverit with hather." And again he asks the King—

> "Sihir, quhidder is it almess mair,
> To gif him drink that thristis sair;
> Or fyll ane full man quhyll he brist;
> And latt his fallow die for thrist,
> Quhylk wyne to drink als worthie wer?"

On another occasion he wishes that the King were more under the Queen's influence,

> "The mercy of that sweit meik Rois,
> Suld sofft yow Thrisill, I suppois,
> Quhois pykis throw me so reuthles ran;
> God gif ye war Johne Thomsounis man!"

At times he ventures to remind the King of services he had formerly rendered him. Even the poet's self-consciousness occasionally finds expression. And Horace's "Exegi monumentum" is recalled to our mind by the noble pride exhibited in Dunbar's *Remonstrance*, where he says—

> 'And thocht that I, amang the laif,
> Unworthy be ane place to have,
> Or in their nummer to be tald
> Als lang in mynd my wark fall hald!
> Als haill in everie circumstance,
> In forme, in mater and substance
> But wering, or consumptioun
> Roust, cankar, or corruptioun
> As ony of thair werkis all,
> Suppois that my rewarde be small!"

A benefice Dunbar never succeeded in getting; but a pension which he had been drawing since the 15th of August, 1500, was doubled in the year 1507, and in 1510 even increased to eighty pounds.

The period in Dunbar's life to which "The Thistle and the Rose" belongs, and which includes the first seven years of the sixteenth century, shows us the poet's many-sided talent in its fullest brilliancy. In those of his poems written

for special objects, he reveals his whole versatility and inventive caprice. And as he achieved his best work in romantic allegory, so at this period he produced the more important of his satirical poems. His alliterative poem, *The Two Married Women and the Widow*, is rich in striking characterization and a comedy taken from the life full of force. Chaucer, in his "Confessions of the Wife of Bath," had started satire against women, but it receives an even more dramatic form in Dunbar's hands, where he causes three women to converse unconstrainedly over their wine. Here, too, the views and experiences of love and marriage are discussed, the characteristics of men and the secrets of feminine policy. The three ladies, who have no notion that the poet is listening to their conversation, put no restraint upon their feelings, and their but little edifying remarks, the cynicism of which stands in so great a contrast with the charming picture we had received of their outward appearance, perfectly justifies the question with which the poem closes—a question pretty difficult to answer: "Of thir thré wanton wives, that I have written here, which would ye waile to your wif, if ye suld wed one?"

His satire takes a burlesque form in *The Justis betuix the Tailyeour and Soutar* (The Dispute between the Tailor and Shoemaker), without the extravagant humour losing any of its pungency. The *Testament of Master Andro Kennedy*, with its effective mixture of Scottish and Latin verses, recalls the best productions of the songs of the *Vagantes*. Everywhere in the poems of this species Dunbar develops the most telling humour, a striking sense of the ludicrous, and a boldness of caprice that does not allow itself to be deterred by anything; further, a remarkable originality of fancy, which manages effectively to introduce what is furthest removed from the subject, and delights in the combination of the horrible and the burlesque. Dunbar is fond of making use of hell and the devil according to the popular idea. The dispute between the Tailor and Shoemaker takes place in hell. In the poem *Against Swearing; or, the Devil's Inquest*, he causes the Fiend to give the prize for swearing to a priest: "Thou art my clerk; renounce thy God and come to me." The climax of this tendency, however, is reached in the *Dance of the Seven*

Deadly Sins, which probably belongs to the year 1507. On the night of the 15th of February the poet dreams of Hell, where preparations are being made to celebrate the "fastern's even." "Mahoun" then calls upon the seven deadly sins —each accompanied by a numerous train—to lead off the dance. Only one minstrel plays to them, one who had slain a man to get possession of his inheritance. The poem is descriptive throughout, yet gives the impression of animated action. The rapid advance of the presentation in smoothly flowing and richly freighted strophes (Dunbar here, with great artistic skill, employs the twelve-lined stanza of the minstrels), the abundance of rapidly sketched and characteristic traits, some of them not unworthy of Dante, sustain and heighten the illusion. We fancy we have before us a grotesque nocturne, the gloomy character of which is relieved with a species of grim humour; it is a sketch, popular in style, drawn with bold, vigorous, though somewhat angular strokes. Some pictorial representation of the Dance of Death may have inspired Dunbar to handle the subject.

During the year 1507 we have the beginning of a new stage in the poet's mental development. A serious illness appears to have been the cause—an illness from which Dunbar did recover, it is true, but not without its leaving a moral effect upon the man who was now pretty well advanced in years. The crisis was not over when he wrote his *Lament for the Makars*, which shows signs of a melancholy and serious frame of mind, and of having been produced under the impression of gloomy thoughts of death, unrelieved even by his attempt at pious resignation—

> "I that in heill wes and glaidness,
> Am trublet now with great feikness,
> And feblit with infirmitie:
> *Timor Mortis conturbat me.*
>
> "Our plesance heir is all vane glory,
> This fals warld is bot transitory,
> The flesche is brukle, the feynd is flé:
> *Timor Mortis conturbat me.*"

He goes on to say that the state of man changes and varies, no state on earth being secure; like a flag before the

wind, doth wave this world's vanities: unto the dead go all estates, princes, prelates, and potentates; Death takes the knights in the field, though armed with helm and shield, he remains victor everywhere; the strong, merciless tyrant takes the sucking infant from its mother's breast; he takes the champion, the captain, the fine lady in her chamber, he spares no lord in his power, no clerk in his intelligence, no art-magicians or learned men, no physician or poet. Death, he says, carried off Chaucer, the monk of Bury, and Gower, all three. Then come the names of a number of Scottish poets, some of which are not found mentioned elsewhere. At the end of the list of those removed by Death is "gentle Stobo and Quintin Schaw," and "Gud Maister Walter Kennedy, In point of dede lies veraly."

> "Sen he has all my Brethar tane,
> He will nocht lat me leif alane,
> On forse I mon his nyxt pray be:
> *Timor Mortis conturbat me.*
>
> "Sen for the Deid remeid is none,
> Best is that we for deid dispone
> Eftir our deid that leif may be:
> *Timor Mortis conturbat me.*"

This "Lament," both in tone and form, reminds one of the well-known song (*Pos de chanter m'es pres talens*) where the earliest of the troubadours bids farewell to his country and people, his vassals and child. Like the old song, it does not lack poetic tendency or expression; still, the long enumeration of Scottish poets is more valuable for its literary and historical interest than for æsthetic charm.

The poems of the third period differ distinctly from those of the earlier ones. Dunbar's love of sarcasm, his unbridled humour, his fits of cynicism and frivolity, diminish and give place to a more deeply serious view of life. And although his poetic impulse may, even at this time, have induced him eagerly to handle a variety of subjects, still it is religious and moral motives which now mainly attracted him.

Of Dunbar's religious poems some are of value only as devotional subjects, while others are full of poetry. He sings with fervour and poetic inspiration of the "Nativitie"

and of the "Resurrection." But he is above all successful in depicting the contrast between Divine and earthly love. This contrast is admirably developed in *The Merle and Nightingale*, which, in spite of a more refined style of art, and although betraying Chaucer's influence, reminds us vividly in its construction, of the earlier poem of the "Throstle and Nightingale." The Merle represents earthly love, and its remarks occasionally give us a whiff of Dunbar's old humour—

> "God bade eik luve thy neighbour fro the splene,
> And quho than ladeis suetar nychtbouris be?"

The refrain of the Merle is ever "a lusty life in Luvis service bene," which the Nightingale opposes by maintaining in impressive words, that "All luve is lost but upone God allone." In the end the Merle is converted—perhaps somewhat too suddenly—and the opponents unite in praise of Divine love. The same theme gives both substance and title to another poem of this period called "Of Love Earthly and Divine."

In his moralizing poems, Dunbar gives expression to sound worldly wisdom—not unfrequently reminding one of Horace—and, where elegance of form is so rich in substance, it would, in fact, not be unworthy of a Horace. At one time he reflects on the transitoriness of life, on the vanity of earthly possessions, and the fickleness of fortune; at another he describes the follies and vices of mankind. He is fond of preaching moderation in all things, restraint in desire, in giving as well as in taking; extols the happiness of contentment; and recommends a rational enjoyment of life and a cheerful mind.

> "Be mirry, Man, and tak nocht far in mynd
> The wavering of this wrechit Warld of sorrow;
> To God be humill, and to thy freynd be kynd,
> And with thy nychtbouris glaidly len and borrow;
> His chance to nycht it may be thyne to morrow;
> Be blyth in hairt for ony aventure,
> For oft with wyse men it hes bene said aforrow:
> Without Glaidnés availes no Tressour.
>
> "Mak thé gud cheir of it that God thé sendis,
> For Warldis wrak but weilfair nocht availis;
> Na gude is thyne, saif only [that] thow spendis
> Remenant all thow brukis bot with bailis;

> Seik to solace quhen sadnes thé assailis ;
> In dolour lang thy lyfe may nocht indure,
> Quhairfore of comfort set up all thy sailis :
> Without Glaidnés availis no Tressour."

Dunbar had a prototype in the scanty memorials preserved of Chaucer's moralizing lyrics—with the rapid succession of their concise maxims or examples, the working out of which is left to the reader. Still, it will readily be admitted that Dunbar in this domain far surpasses Chaucer, not to mention a fellow-worker like Lydgate. A fertility of mind, which manages to obtain ever new points from a limited circle of motives, and the art of applying simple, yet striking and choice expressions amid a variety of turns and forms,—all this is, in these poems, found combined with a mature knowledge of human nature and a refined and kindly disposition, the waggishness of which seems now to have become pleasantly tempered.

The year of Dunbar's death is unknown. If he outlived the battle of Flodden and the death of James IV. (September, 1513), and was still writing poetry in 1517—which is not altogether certain—the period of his actual literary activity would, nevertheless, coincide with James's reign and be its most imperishable ornament.

Dunbar is chiefly a lyrical and satirical poet. As an epic writer he had the talent for giving graphic descriptions and vivid representations, which, however, he frequently employed in a non-epic fashion. The calmness, the long-sustained effort and complacency of the epic-writer were foreign to him. He manifests as little of the objectivity with which Chaucer mirrors life, as he does of the capacity for work, or the creative power of Chaucer, to whom we owe so many complete and life-like pictures of human nature. Dunbar's poetry does not possess altogether the directness of Chaucer's, it demands a greater amount of reflective power. The Scottish poet is a Master who shows himself in his limitation, and although he frequently does not limit himself in his descriptions, this is not done with the intention of becoming discursive, but because he takes artistic pleasure in his own charming delineations. His style is always clear, precise, and pregnant ; and there are few poets who can command such a far-reaching scale of tones

as he, where we have, at the same time, to admire so much gracefulness, so much intelligence, so much vigour and intrepidity; few poets have at their disposal so much sublime and lovely imagery, so much grotesque humour, and so much elegance in the expression of discreet worldly wisdom. As a writer of "occasional poems," in the narrowest, as well as in the widest sense, Dunbar raised lyrics on to a higher stage, in fact, was the first writer actually to create classic lyrics of an artistic kind, in English or the Scottish language.

By the side of the gracefully mobile figure of sensitive Dunbar, that of *Gawin Douglas* appears both more ponderous and more dignified.

A scion of the most famous of all the Scottish families, and third son of Archibald "the great Earl of Angus," Douglas, like Dunbar, had been destined for an ecclesiastical career. Thanks to his high connections and his own personal qualities, Gawin succeeded in reaching the goal thus set up before him—a goal which had so long hovered before the mind of restless William Dunbar, and which had always remained equally far removed from his grasp. Still, the goal Douglas had in view was not reached till various efforts had been made, and many intervening difficulties had been overcome. Douglas's life, too, was an active one, but of more significance than that of his brother-poet; he, too, was not spared disappointments, and the bitterest experiences threw a gloom over the evening of his life.

With Gawin Douglas humanism began to make its triumphant entry into Scottish poetry. Studies in antiquity were at that time zealously carried on, not only in the University of St. Andrews, but also in the monastic seminaries. Ferrarius, one of the most learned Scotchmen of the day, was teaching in the Abbey of Kinloss. And Gawin may have attended a monastic school before he went to the university, where, as early as 1494—at the age of nineteen—he took his degree of Master of Arts.

Douglas's learning—philological as well as theological—was distinctly superior to Dunbar's. He had devoted himself more thoroughly than the latter to the study of Roman literature, and had not only read the Latin authors, but also studied their commentators. He also knew something of

the Italian humanists—men like Petrarch, Boccaccio, Poggio, Valla, and Landino—had perused many of their works, and was, to some extent, acquainted with their personal relations, their rivalries, and disputations. The spirit of antiquity, however, he never succeeded in grasping as correctly as Dunbar, whose affinity to it was elective, and who attained classic perfection of form without difficulty.

Douglas's poetry and manner of thought remind one still a good deal of the Middle Ages, and the Christian view of life which always affected him so seriously, did not readily enable him to have unrestrained enjoyment in the ancient writers. With advancing years he experienced an ever-increasing need to bring his classical studies into a closer relation with his Christianity. Of the Fathers of the Church he held St. Augustine in especial esteem.

In his "unbridled youth" he had, like others, devoted himself to love and gallantry. It was then that he translated Ovid's "De Remedio Amoris" into his mother tongue. This translation has unfortunately been lost. His later works are all strictly moral in character, and, in spite of the brilliant colouring of his descriptions, even exhibit a touch of prudery, Venus and Cupid are by him, as it were, clothed in rich apparel.

His *Palace of Honour*, which was written in 1501, shows us the poet at an important period of his life. The pleasures of youth no longer engross his heart, the follies and errors of the years just passed awake in him a sympathetic smile; a more serious effort towards higher aims swells his breast. As a rector of six and twenty, with a salary that was certainly little more than a sinecure, Douglas began to feel the necessity for work, for creating and distinguishing himself. With a mind filled with the august figures of antiquity, affected by the rhetorical fire of its poets and historians, inspired by the renown of the hero and author, he sees, with his inward eye, the Palace of Honour rising majestically on a grand rock of smooth marble. On the road to the foot of this hill he is accompanied by a mounted cavalcade of the Muses in the train of Calliope, who appeases the wrath of Venus whom the poet had offended, and then places him under the guidance of one of her own nymphs. With the quickness of thought, and amid merry singing, we are hurried across country,

through valleys and woods, over mountains, seas, and rivers—hither and thither, first to the east, then to the west—and it is only at the Fount of the Muses that the riders stop to enjoy a little rest. The poet, who vainly endeavours, amid the crowd, to slake his thirst at the fountain, finds—more crawling than walking—an entry into the pavilion which has been erected for the Muses, and listens and watches the games they play during the banquet; he sees Ovid, Vergil, Terence, Juvenal, Martial, Poggio, and Valla appear. On reaching the foot of the mighty rock, which was the object they had in view, his conductress leads the way, and at one point takes him by the hair of his head, and thus carries him across a deep yawning gulf not far from the summit, which swallows up all those that are idle and given to pleasure. When they arrive at the top, he sees the wretched world far beneath him, driven hither and thither in a storm of misery. Many find their graves in the flood, and even numbers of those whom the "carwell [ship] of the State of Grace" has borne across the waves, are ship-wrecked in the end. He then beholds the Palace of Honour in all its splendour and glory, comes to a garden where Venus is seated on a magnificent throne, in front of her a magic mirror, which reflects strange and wondrous figures and events. Then he sees multitudes of men pressing on and trying to scale the walls of the castle, sees the vain efforts of Achitophell and Sinon, and how Catiline is thrust back with a book by Tully. At last his conductress leads him into the interior of the Palace, where he sees the hall built of precious stones, and royal princes walking about in plate and armour of burnished gold set with precious stones; then his eyes behold the face of the God omnipotent, seated on his throne, and he is blinded by the glory of God's countenance and, in an ecstasy, falls down insensible. In Douglas's poem, Honour is the prize obtained by high virtue and noble effort. No capricious goddess is incorporated in the idea, we have a sublime, luminous God, whose unimpeachable righteousness considers only the inner worth. And as Douglas here gives energetic expression to his consciousness of the unworthiness of his own unimportant life, he at the same time shows (as before at the Fount of the Muses) how modestly he rated his own poetic powers. On the way to the glorious

garden, where the Muses are gathering the blossoms of poesy, he falls from the slender bridge (over which his conductress has passed with ease) into the chasm that had to be crossed —a fall which puts a sudden end to the beautiful dream.

Those acquainted with Chaucer will at once observe the resemblance between this and his "House of Fame." The idea, plot, and arrangement of the whole, have proceeded from a fresh impression made by that poem, and, accordingly, many details have been drawn from it. The episode Venus-Calliope-Douglas reproduces the motive Amor-Alceste-Chaucer in the prologue to "The Saints' Legend of Cupid."

But Douglas seems to have copied his great prototype more unconsciously than intentionally. His poem is a work complete in itself, and the outcome of his own deep emotions. The fundamental idea proceeded, with a certain degree of necessity, from the phase in his development we spoke of above, and the numerous figures which people this dreamland appear to have sprung up as spontaneously. "The Palace of Honour" gives the reflex of a sterling, manly character, with upright and noble sentiments—in appearance half ecclesiastic, half knight, with just a touch of the lord of the manor—in fact, an aristocrat of the first water, who has learned to spiritualize his ideas on the subject of rank. For Douglas is a poet of powerful sensuousness, of great, though not very facile, power of imagination, and with a keen appreciation of nature. Humanism has intoxicated him a little, he revels in reminiscences of classic poetry, history, and mythology. But he is also acquainted with the great English and Scottish poets; he is conscious of the charms of folk-poetry, and is indebted to it for the pithiness of his language and a goodly portion of its richness; while from the ancients he has learned many a nicety of diction. Language and presentation appear in him somewhat heavy, owing to his learning, the former by its numerous foreign words and curious new formations, while the latter suffers from too great an amount of amplification. He is fond of piling up synonyms and antitheses, it is not easy for him to express himself with brevity. His descriptions are otherwise effective, and give evidence of the vigorous freshness of his ideas. He is admirable, at times, in the delineation of his own physico-mental condition. In these passages,

as well as in others where, in a characteristic manner, he introduces the great men of past days—Martial, Poggio, Lydgate—and again in those where pathos has affected him, we are reminded of Dante, whose name, however, is nowhere met with.

Douglas's "Palace of Honour" appears to have made a distinct impression upon Dunbar, and to have influenced him in his allegorical poems—this would be the briefest way of expressing the importance of the work. "The Thistle and the Rose," and probably "The Golden Targe," were produced a few years after it, and the full descriptions, the richness of the language of these works, exhibit something of Douglas's style, although Dunbar does not carry these matters as far as his contemporary. The "Targe" is even written in the same kind of strophe as the greater part of the "Palace of Honour." *

King James, to whom Douglas had dedicated his poem, shortly afterwards made him Provost of the Collegiate Church of St. Giles in Edinburgh, a church on a more extensive scale than any other in Scotland, and inferior only to the Chapel Royal in Stirling. This distinguished and lucrative post Gawin held during a great part of his life. Up to the year 1513 but little is heard of him. The duties of his new office appear to have been zealously fulfilled. Still, he must have continued his studies, and also have spent some time abroad. It is known that before the summer of 1515 he had been in England, France, and Rome, and it is probable that his journeys fell mainly within the years 1494–1496, and then again during the years of his Provostship in Edinburgh. For poetic production Gawin could have found but little leisure during this period; ecclesiastical and political questions, probably also the anxiety about his own promotion, may have frequently claimed his time. In his "Palace of Honour" he made Venus a promise to turn a book she had presented to him into verse. The book was Vergil's poem on the goddess's son, Æneas. More than a decade elapsed before

* Nine ten-syllabled lines with the rhyme-order: *aab aab bab*. Of Chaucer's metre, the nearest akin is the strophe of the Compleynte of Mars in the poem of the same name (*aab aab bcc*), and the envoy of the "Compleynte of Venus" (*aab aab baab*).

Douglas kept his promise. At the urgent request of a relative and patron—Lord Sinclair—he, at last, carried out his long-cherished plan. After eighteen months' work, during which urgent business must have led to frequent interruptions (some of considerable length), the translation of the Æneid was completed on St. Mary Magdalen's Day, 1513.

Douglas's *Eneados* stands at the head of a long series of attempts made to gain the classic poem of antiquity for the literature of his mother-tongue. Up to that time, both in England as well as in Scotland, only one Roman poet of the better epoch had been made to speak in English. As to Vergil's epos, there existed only a few more or less faithful adaptations of some of the episodes or passages from it; the best thing, without doubt, was what Chaucer had presented in his "Legend of Dido." There was also a free reproduction of the material—mixed with utterly heterogeneous elements—in Caxton's "Eneydos" (1490), based upon the French version of Guillaume de Roy, concerning which Douglas asserted that it was "na mair like [Vergil] than the devil was like Sanct Austyne." No actual translation, or, indeed, any rendering of the whole work had ever been heard of.

The Scottish poet was perfectly conscious of the novelty of his undertaking, and did not undervalue its difficulties. The excellence of Vergil's style and of the Latin language, together with the peculiarities of the Scottish dialect, he had estimated correctly; and, at the outset, had despaired of being able to translate the original word for word. He was aware that some forms of fidelity disfigure and obscure the sense; that the wording of the text, at times, requires to be rendered with greater distinctness; that, at others, some small addition is needed to give the passage its correct colouring; that, in certain cases, the meaning of one word can be reproduced, in the translation, only by three.* His intention, accordingly, was to bring Vergil as close as possible within the reach of his countrymen in as little adulterated a form as possible.

Considering the period in which he lived, his want of prototypes, and the inflexibility of his mother-tongue,

* *The Poetical Works of Gawin Douglas*, ed. John Small, ii. 14.

Douglas accomplished his task admirably. If some of his successors have surpassed him in various points, their translations, nevertheless, in many instances, lack the pithy charm peculiar to his; hence, in addition to the merit of having acted as a pioneer in paving the way for others, Douglas deserves the further merit of having accomplished some matters so well, that they have hardly been surpassed. His endeavour to adapt the views of antiquity to the ideas of his day is often carried to excess, the result being that the costume of the poem is so altered as to appear almost comic. However, those who bear in mind that the whole period of the Renaissance—nay, up to the very days of periwigs—followed the same tendency, will be lenient in their judgment of the blunders into which the aged poet was thus led. However, taken as a whole, Douglas presented his contemporaries with the real Vergil in a dignified and attractive dress. His representation is sustained and varied, his language full of force, colour, and richness. At times he is extremely happy in the choice of his expressions, and although he does not, as a rule, attain Vergil's elegant conciseness, and also often misses the delicate touches of the Latin poet, still, in many passages he succeeds effectively in reproducing the spirit of the original, especially where the object in view is to present a vivid representation of outward things and proceedings, or where deep pathos demands expression.

Douglas wrote his translation of the Æneid in heroic rhyme-couplets of nervous, but not absolutely correct, construction. It is here, in particular, that one has the feeling as though he had not given any finishing touches to his work; many verses exceed the regular measure of syllables, while not a few seem precisely like Alexandrines. In the Prologues he has added to every one of the twelve Books, he makes use of different metres, sometimes of a long rhymed-couplet, and then again of more or less complicated strophes. Douglas was a master of rhyme and of versification, although he did not always bind himself to rules with the strictness of good mediæval poets, and occasionally even broke through the uniformity of a poem as a whole, by a change of system without any apparent reason. What he accomplished in the domain of rhyming, in the

style of the contemporary French poets, is manifest in the three introductory strophes of his Prologue to the Ninth Book. The Prologue to the Eighth makes use of the alliterative rhymed strophe then so popular in Scotland. The distinctive forms of poetry which originally existed between the east and west of the country seem neutralized in Dunbar and Douglas, who represent the zenith of Scottish art-poetry. Douglas in other artistic forms as well, not unfrequently makes successful use of alliteration for increasing the effect to be produced.

In substance, the Prologues are partly reflective and didactic in character, partly descriptive, generally important, and admirably worked out. The old custom of the early English romantic poets, to give descriptions of landscapes as introductions to epic narratives, a custom which is also met with in Henryson, reaches its fullest development in Douglas. Famous, as examples of descriptive poetry, are his Prologues to the Seventh and the Twelfth Book of his "Eneados," the former of which powerfully depicts winter, the latter the month of May with a rich fulness of colour.

The Twelve Books of Vergil had received a continuation at the hands of the Italian humanist, Maffeo Vegio (who had been in the service of Pope Eugene IV., and died, in 1458, as an Augustine friar), by a Thirteenth Book, which carried the epic down to the apotheosis of Æneas. In spite of its internal weakness, this production, in Douglas's day, enjoyed a great reputation. Sebastian Brand had admitted it into his edition of the "Æneid" which was published with the Commentary of Cristoforo Landino, in Strassburg, in 1502. Douglas, who perhaps made use of this edition, determined, after some hesitation, to translate this Book of Maffeo's as well, although he considered it fitted Vergil's work "more like a fifth wheel to a cart." In the Prologue, where both Henryson and Chaucer make their appearance, Douglas explains in a very curious fashion how he decided to undertake the translation of this Thirteenth Book. After walking through the fields one summer evening in June, he fell asleep in a garden; and the figure of the Italian appeared to him and induced him, by harsh commands and even whippings, to consent to

honour his Book in the same manner as he had honoured the twelve Books of Vergil.

A commentary which the translator intended to have added to this work, appears not to have been carried beyond the first Book. The existing fragment is characteristic of the author and of his day. One is struck first of all by the partly rationalistic, partly allegorical significance of the myths which, in all essential points, are drawn from Boccaccio's "Genealogy of the Gods." But even the whole contents of the Æneid are interpreted allegorically in agreement with Landino: Æneas, who is endeavouring to reach Italy, is the righteous man striving to reach the highest good, which, according to Plato, is the contemplation of things Divine. Still, in attempting to understand the course taken by the development of poetry during that epoch, we must, as already said, bear in mind the manner in which the classic writers were interpreted during the Renaissance.

In the Epilogue to his "Eneados," Douglas appears to wish to bid farewell to poetry altogether. But, in fact, he bade farewell only to his youth and the mere worldly tendencies of his Muse. Several years later his poetic inspiration led him to produce a new and independent poem.

In the mean while changes had occurred in his own affairs, as well as in the position of Scotland itself. In the battle of Flodden (September, 1513) King James IV. and a number of his nobility were left dead on the field, and among them Gawin's two elder brothers. And shortly afterwards the poet's father, old Sir Archibald, departed this life. Young Archibald, Gawin's nephew, now became Earl of Angus, and, having won the affections of the widowed Queen, entered upon a hasty marriage with her. The old Scottish party-feuds thereupon broke out afresh in full fury. The opposition between the partisans of the Queen and Douglas and those of the parliamentary party who had proclaimed John Stewart, Duke of Albany, regent of the country, was strengthened by the antagonism between the adherents of the English and French interests. Gawin-too, was drawn into the political struggle and the parlia, mentary intrigues, which no man could pass through

unscathed. Douglas's own candidature for different high ecclesiastical preferments in Scotland, led to the most energetic measures being adopted by both parties, and contradictory appeals being addressed to the See of Rome. Owing to his negotiations with the Vatican, Douglas was arraigned before the Lords of the Council and condemned to imprisonment. The Queen, who had, some time previously, been compelled to give up her guardianship of the young heir to the throne (James V.), was now also required to relinquish the custody of her other children, and owing to the inconsiderate treatment she experienced in her own person, fled to England to be under the protection of her brother, Henry VIII. Soon after this, however, the Duke of Albany undertook the direction of affairs. He and the Queen had come to an understanding, the result being that Douglas obtained his liberty again, before July 30, 1516. The much-tried poet was thus enabled to take possession of the bishopric of Dunkeld, to which the Pope had already given his sanction. However, it was not obtained without some difficulty. Douglas found himself obliged to apologize and to do homage to his zealous opponent the Archbishop of St. Andrew's, Andrew Forman, and then, by main force, to snatch the bishopric from the candidate of the rival party, Andrew Stewart, who had already taken possession of it; this, fortunately, was accomplished without bloodshed on either side.

There now followed, for Douglas, some years of active ecclesiastical and political activity, which, however, can scarcely have brought him any real satisfaction. The Bishop was at this time in the prime of manhood, and yet the thoughts which engaged his peaceful and solitary hours were, in many respects, of a mournful and serious nature. It seemed as if future events were casting their shadows before. The images of Vicissitude and of Death often presented themselves to his soul. It was probably about this time that he wrote his *King Hart*, an allegorical representation of human life, full of deep emotion, and skilfully worked out. The problem, so frequently handled before and afterwards, is here put into the simplest and most striking form. The centre of human nature is here held to be, not the organ of perception, but the organ of feeling

and desire. The human Heart, in its youth and old age, in its joys and sorrows, its follies and repentance, is made the hero of the poem, which is advantageously distinguished from many other similar attempts, both by the consistency of the development and the comprehensive range of its plot, which is readily surveyable. The whole course of human life, from tender youth up to death—with all the predominant inclinations of the heart—is vividly described within a limited space and only a small outlay of means.

Of suggestions and prototypes of various kinds there existed plenty for Douglas, yet in this poem he has more distinctly than usual given proof of his own originality. Among his direct sources we have, in the first place, to consider the "Séjour d'honneur," an autobiography of Octavien de St. Gelais, which is taken in the abstract and worked out allegorically in a mixture of prose and verse. The author, an earlier contemporary of the Scottish poet, was, like Douglas, a bishop and a translator of Vergil. This autobiography had already furnished Douglas with some features for his "Palace of Honour," it now offered him the fundamental motives for his "King Hart." In addition to this work, some scenes from "The Vision of Piers Plowman" rose vividly before the poet's mind. Douglas draws less fully from his sources than Langland—at all events, he maintains greater reserve—but he is clearer, more perspicuous, shows a decidedly greater appreciation of artistic arrangement and finish; and his allegory, in spite of greater consistency, is no less pregnant than that of his great predecessor. How happily invented, among other things, is the following feature: King Hart finds himself forsaken by Youtheid (Youthhead is of the male sex) and his brothers Disport and Wantonness, who are about to ride away; Deliverance comes running up and offers to be their guide; and all slip away by a back gate without taking formal leave. Thereupon Delight comes hurrying up, pulls Youthhead by the sleeve, and says, "Abide a little, good fellow, lend me thy cloak, to disguise myself for a while, without thy mantle I shall certainly do mischief, I will follow thee before thou goest a mile." Delight enters the castle, and all who look at him from behind take him to be Youthhead, and believe him to have remained. Afterwards,

however, upon speaking to him, they find they have been deceived. When Delight has enjoyed himself as much as he wished, the colour of his courtly mantle begins to fade, "thriftless, threadbare, and ready for to spill, like failèd black, which was before time blue." *

In "King Hart" the delineation is much simpler than in "The Palace of Honour:" we have less description, no mythological or learned reminiscences, less abundance and superfluity. The poet has here found the most concise and, at the same time, the most pithy and choice forms possible for expressing his thoughts. The versification, also, is more correct in every respect, more highly finished than in the work of his youth; Chaucer's eight-lined strophe is handled with masterly skill. Taken as a whole, the narrative reminds one of the style of the great Master in his strophic Tales; only Chaucer is more varied, more concrete, more vivid, Douglas, on this occasion, perhaps the more concise.

"King Hart" is unquestionably the most mature of Douglas's productions, and occupies a significant place in the poetry of personification. It forms an important stage towards the "Fairy Queen." And, considering the part which allegory plays in poems which do not altogether belong to the category (the numerous instances where, for example, Shakspere condenses allegorical ideas and lifts them into a higher sphere of poetic thought), a work seems to increase in significance when the but little sympathetic theme is brought home to us by the ingenious way in which it is handled.

Douglas, unlike the hero of his last poem, bade good-bye to his youth of his own accord, and early in life; the approach of old age had, perhaps, given premature signs of its coming. Still, he never knew the infirmities of old age; he was spared a visit from Decrepitus, whose spear in the end wounds King Hart. And yet Douglas's last days were but little happy.

Queen Margaret had returned to Scotland, but her heart was estranged from her husband. Angus had shown his consort but little affection or consideration in times of trouble and ill-health—had, indeed, been unfaithful to her—

* *The Poetical Works of Gawin Douglas*, ed. John Small, i. 103.

and the Queen wished to be freed from her marriage bond; she also wished to avenge herself against Douglas, for it was said to have been at his advice that Angus appropriated Ettrick Forest, which belonged to her. Soon after her return, her interest became centred in the Duke of Albany, who, wearied of the Scottish feuds, had resigned his position of Regent, and retired to France. By urgent entreaties Queen Margaret succeeded in persuading Albany to return. In November, 1521, he arrived in Scotland, and received a most friendly welcome. An intimate relation sprang up between them soon afterwards, and Angus, prepared for the worst, fled to the English frontier, but despatched his uncle Gawin to London to further his interests at the English court.

Full of zeal, the Bishop of Dunkeld devoted himself to his diplomatic task. But while he was addressing letters to Cardinal Wolsey, and raising complaints against the Duke of Albany in a memorial to Henry VIII., one jeremiad after another reached him from Scotland. His nephew, the Earl of Angus, turned traitor to his own cause, seemed disposed to consent to the Queen's wish for a divorce, and was endeavouring through her mediation to obtain a pardon from the Regent. By the death of Andrew Forman, the archbishopric of St. Andrew's and the abbotship of Dunfermline became vacant, and Douglas's rival, James Beaton, the Archbishop of Glasgow, set heaven and earth in motion to prevent Gawin's receiving these appointments. The political complications favoured Beaton's intrigues, for war was declared between England and Scotland, and Scotland formed an alliance with France against the Emperor Charles and King Henry VIII. The Bishop of Dunkeld found himself in the most awkward position: out of favour with his Queen and the Regent, deserted by the nephew for whose sake he had placed himself in his present position, and—at the time of the declaration of war—in the enemy's country as the representative of an unsuccessful cause, and rejected by its head. Beaton did not fail to make use of all these circumstances. He caused a proclamation to be issued in the name of the youthful King James V. which declared the Bishop of Dunkeld guilty of high treason; his bishopric was to be temporarily placed under the control

of the Vicar-General of St. Andrew's, and all vassals of the kingdom were prohibited, under penalty of high treason, from assisting him with money, or communicating with him by letter or messenger. Such was the end of Douglas's brilliant career: despised as a traitor, forsaken by relatives and old associates, in a foreign land, and in financial distress. A dim ray of light illumined his last days in the form of a new friendship, the outcome of services rendered in common to the Muses. Gawin, in London, made the acquaintance of Polydore Vergile of Urbino, who in 1501 had been sent to England to collect the tax called Peter's-pence, and had eventually settled there. This learned Italian had been appointed Archdeacon of Wells, enjoyed the favour and friendship of Cardinal Wolsey, and was on intimate terms with many persons at court conspicuous by their rank and learning. Polydore Vergile was at work upon his "Historia Anglica," which in 1534 was published with a Dedication to King Henry VIII. Douglas took a lively interest in this work, at least in the portions referring to Scottish concerns, and voluntarily contributed material relating to the origin of the Scottish people. Polydore was, however, not long to enjoy his assistance; for, as early as September, 1522, Bishop Douglas was carried off by the plague which was raging in London at the time. In accordance with the directions of his last will, he was buried in the Hospital Church of the Savoy. Eighteen months after his death, justice was done to his memory by the Scottish parliament declaring the accusation of high treason that had been raised against him to be null and void.

Douglas has, however, been more fully appreciated by posterity. He was a man of a firm yet frank nature, not without ambition, and—to his misfortune—was involved in the party-feuds of the Scottish nobility, but full of genuine kindliness of feeling; as an ecclesiastic and prelate, a man of sound religious principles, opposed to scholastic cavilling, and faithfully attached to the fundamental doctrines of the Christian faith; above all, a devoted servant of the Muses and a zealous promoter of high culture. As a poet he is not one of the first rank; but, among those occupying the second stage, he was one of the most influential. As the translator of Vergil, the sublime painter

of nature, the keen observer, the earnest and skilful delineator of life and of the human heart, Douglas will be remembered as long as Scottish literature is able to attract sympathetic admirers.

II.

Our history now returns to English poetry, which had not yet again risen to the eminence it had attained in Scotland. The epoch which there receives its chief brilliancy from Dunbar and Douglas, is in England represented by three names in particular: Stephen Hawes, Alexander Barclay, and John Skelton. Hawes is a belated child of the Middle Ages; Barclay's work, in many instances, reminds one of Douglas's, who, as a poet, however, is much his superior; and Skelton's character and writings are supposed to show certain peculiarities of Dunbar's talent and disposition.

Stephen Hawes is peculiarly the poet of the times of Henry VII. A country which has passed from a period of violent disturbances into peaceful circumstances, in the first place usually devotes itself to rest and comfortable enjoyment; and the special favourites of the day are those who contribute to this enjoyment by holding up to it the image of its intellectual character and possessions, without pointing to new aims in any exciting manner. Hawes's poetry corresponded perfectly with the average level of culture attained by the court circles of those days. In like manner his staidness coincided admirably with the but little enthusiastic, but eminently practical, character of the monarch who inaugurated in England the era of the modern type of kingdom.

Henry VII. was not, in any way, one of the great patrons of art and learning. And yet intellectual interests were not foreign to him. He took care that his sons received a thoroughly classical education. And he was himself especially devoted to mathematics, and at times, also, to theology from its practical and polemical side. And for poetry, too, he had a certain appreciation, and sometimes rewarded or rendered assistance to poets. He was especially fond of reading the fashionable French poetical literature of the day.

Stephen Hawes, who entered the King's service as groom of the privy chamber, won his favour as the possessor of various qualities of mind. He was an accomplished man, possessed a kind of encyclopædic knowledge, understood French very well, and had such an excellent memory that he could repeat whole passages from the early English poets by heart.

He was, above all, intimately acquainted with the great triumvirate: Chaucer, Gower, and Lydgate. It is characteristic of Hawes that of these three he appears to have regarded Lydgate as most worthy of honour; and this is only partly accounted for by the fact that Lydgate, like himself, was a native of Suffolk. Dan John is to him the Master, the sweet spring of famous rhetoric, the author of all his learning, the prototype which he is always endeavouring to approach, without any hope of ever being able to equal him. Poetry he regards as a species of learning, as it were a subordinate species of rhetoric; its object, intellectual elevation and moral improvement. A poem written for its own sake he considers mere idle play; love-poems or romances without any deeper significance under disguise, he looks upon as worth nothing. Accordingly, his own poems are always moralizing and instructive, even where they deal with erotic themes.

He is at his best in the allegorical epos *The Pastime of Pleasure or the Historye of Graunde Amoure and la Bell Pucell: containing the Knowledge of the Seven Sciences and the Course of Man's Life in this World.* The poem was written in 1506, and was dedicated to Henry VII. "whose worthy power and royal dignity, all our rancour and debate gan cease, and hath to us brought both wealth, rest and peace." It appeared in print for the first time in 1517, and passed through several editions in 1554 and 1555.

In tendency the poem is closely related to Douglas's "King Hart," which was produced some dozen years later; but the psychologico-moral element is less prominently brought forward, and is connected on the one hand with didactical matter of a secular kind, and on the other with subjects belonging to romances of chivalry.

Had Stephen Hawes lived at an earlier date, it is probable he would have written a genuine romance of

chivalry; he would have described how his hero was instructed in the art of handling weapons, in horsemanship, in hunting and hawking, in carving and serving at table, in striking the harp and in singing; then, how he fell in love and, after many manly deeds, in the end attained the aim of all his desires. In the "Pastime of Pleasure," however, the types of character show unmistakable qualities of mind: "the fiery lover," "the fair lady," the difficulties to be overcome, the friendly as well as the hostile powers, are, in fact, only of a moral species, and the hero's training is a systematic course of learning. As frequently happened with the allegorical writers, the poet here identifies himself with his hero, and holds up to young Englishmen of good birth, a mirror to show them how they are strengthened by a scholarly education, and that they ought courageously to take up the struggle against ignorance and sin, in order after death to obtain the reward of true love, and a happy life of honour and renown.

The work is in many ways meagre and unpoetical. This applies in the first place to the course of study which Graunde Amoure has to pursue. Accompanied by two "white greyhounds," Gouvernance and Grace, he reaches the Tower of Doctrine, where the "goodly portress" Countenance leads him to Science. The latter sends him to Dame Grammar, whom he leaves after having benefited by her instruction, and passes on to Lady Logic; and in this manner he visits in succession Rhetoric, Arithmetic, Music, Geometry, and Astronomy. What the seven ladies—who represent the sciences of the trivium and quadrivium—have to say to the hero, is little in the extreme. Rhetoric speaks more in detail than Grammar or Logic; Astronomy somewhat more to the point than Geometry; the modern reader would, on the whole, be but little edified or even fortified by the course of instruction. At times the effect is involuntarily comic, as in the last strophes in the dialogue with Dame Grammar:

"Madame, quoth I, for as much as there be
Eight partes of speche, I would knowe right faine,
What a noune substantive is in his degre,
And wherefore it is so called certaine?
To whom she answered right gentely againe

Saing alway that a noune substantive
Might stand without helpe of an adjective

"The Latin worde whiche that is referred
Unto a thing whiche is substanciall,
For a noune substantive is well averred,
And with a gender is declinall;
So all the eight partes in generall
Are Latin wordes, annexed properly
To every speche for to speke formally.

"And gramer is the first foundement
Of every science to have construccion:
Who knewe gramer without impediment
Shoulde perfitely have intelleccion
Of a litteral cense and moralizacion.
To construe every thinge ententifly,
The worde is gramer wel and ordinatly.

"By worde the world is made originally,
The hie King saide, it was made incontinent;
He did commaunde, al was made shortly.
To the world the worde is sentencious judgemente
I marked well Dame Gramers sentement,
And of her then I did take my licence,
Goinge to Logike with all my diligence."

The narrative becomes somewhat more animated at the point where the interest of all young women is usually awakened in a romance they happen to be reading, viz. at the point where love enters into the game. In the Temple of the "Power musicale," Graunde Amoure first sees La Bell Pucell, and is captivated by her, and after a dance with her, is head over ears in love. Hereupon follows an interview with the fair lady in a garden, a love-scene, which is not without a certain degree of gracefulness. Then comes the parting between the lovers, who cannot yet belong to each other, the melancholy farewell, and the grief of the "fiery" lover. These scenes have evidently been written under the influence of Chaucer's "Troilus" (even the meeting in the Temple is significant), and Pandarus, too, finds here a representative in the certainly somewhat tiresome fellow Councell, who offers the lover advice before his meeting with Pucell, and consolation after their parting.

We can only briefly refer to the Tower of Chivalry, which Graunde Amoure reaches after completing his studies; to

Mars and Fortuna; to Minerva and to King Melizius, who dubs him a knight. The poet becomes more concrete, and even comic—after the manner of Morals Plays—in the episode connected with Geoffrey Gobilive, who represents False Report, and, with evil intent, joins Graunde Amoure in his adventures, but is unmasked in the end, and well punished by Correction. In this portion of the poem—where the seven-lined strophe is exchanged for the heroic rhyme-couplet—Lydgate's influence is specially manifest, and hence we are again reminded of Chaucer, who was, certainly, in the habit of showing less haste and less monotony. Thereupon follow the perilous conflicts with allegorical giants and monsters, who represent evil powers; then allegorical ladies enter, and, after the manner of good spirits, give advice and assistance, and provide refreshments and entertainment. When the three-headed giant appears, three ladies follow him; when a seven-headed monster enters, seven ladies are considered a necessary accompaniment. When Graunde Amoure has finally succeeded in crossing the "tempestuous flood" and killed the monster of the Seven Metals, he is led into the arms of La Bell Pucell and celebrates his wedding. These portions of the poem exhibit a certain amount of inventive talent, and the narrative here becomes more animated than in the other parts of the work. The end is formed by short chapters full of commonplaces, with headings such as "Age," "Death," "Fame," and "Eternity."

Hawes is very far from being able to compete with Lydgate in poetic productivity, yet he excells him, perhaps, in the art of invention and in working out allegorical motives. The style of art exhibited here is certainly of questionable value, but we must not overlook the fact that even Hawes forms a step in the ladder that leads up to Spenser. The element of chivalrous romance in his poem is brought decidedly more forward than in the earlier allegories; and many features in it might be mentioned which prepare us for the "Fairy Queen." This recalls to our mind that we have to do with an epoch where the spirit of chivalry seemed again to wish to assert its influence, little as it could reconcile itself with the more important tendencies of the day.

Hawes's poem is not only full of reminiscences, but even,

in many instances, makes the impression of being the outcome of some prescribed form. His language is tolerably fluent, but little accurate and to the point; smooth, it is true, but bare and unsatisfactory. He shows undoubted talent for versification, yet, like other poets of his day, he was troubled by the struggle between the rigidity of scholastic tradition, and the progressive development of the language; it may also be that the type-setter has, at times, spoiled his verse.

His work is characteristic above all things in one respect. It proves that learning had gained access to the court. Meagre and dry as is the summary he gives of an antiquated form of scholarship, which, however, he himself has not sufficiently mastered, still, the connection in which he communicates it is not insignificant. The barriers which separated the knight from the clerk during the Middle Ages had collapsed. The less conspicuous the individuality of the poet, the safer is the inference to be drawn from his work.

Of the spirit of humanism, Hawes shows about as much as his master, Lydgate—that is, very little. He speaks of Vergil and Cicero as men who had clarified "the well of fructefulness, with Latin pure, sweet and delicious," and states that Lydgate's aim was "in English language to make our tongue as clearly purified." Still, Hawes's own art reminds us as little of Vergil as of Cicero.

Classical culture had a very different significance for *Alexander Barclay* from what it had for Hawes; yet Barclay appropriated only as much of antiquity as a worthy ecclesiastic could make use of in converting and bettering his fellow-men, and successful adaptations attracted him at least as strongly as the originals. Barclay was presumably of Scottish origin, but he had lived in England from early youth, and had received his education there. His earliest English recollections were connected with Croydon, in Surrey. As a youth he studied at one of the universities, whether at Oxford, as tradition says, and which describes him as having belonged to Oriel College, or at Cambridge, which he himself refers to casually in his poetry, is uncertain. After finishing his studies he seems to have travelled on the Continent, and to have visited Germany, France, and Italy,

as, indeed, is the report of most of the poets of those days as given by their biographers. In 1508 we find Barclay in Devonshire, one of the prebendaries of the College of St. Mary Ottery; in 1514, a monk of the Benedictine monastery in Ely, and several years later a Franciscan at Canterbury. When the monasteries were suppressed in 1539, he must probably again have become one of the secular clergy. He received several preferments, one after the other, in Essex, Somerset, and finally—a few months before his death—the Rectory of All-Hallows in Lombard Street, London. The years of his old age he probably spent in peace and comfort, at all events he seems during that period to have lived rather quietly. He enjoyed a long life, having been born somewhere about 1476, and his death did not take place till June 1552; but the period of his actual productivity probably falls within the years 1505 and 1522.

As a poet Barclay was mainly content to play the modest part of a translator, adaptor, and imitator. His merit rests chiefly upon the fact that he brought several important works of his day, and one from a not far-distant past, within reach of his countrymen, by correctly understanding what they specially required. Active, thus, as an intelligent and somewhat original mediator between the classical culture of the Continent and that of his own country, his footprints can distinctly be traced in his native literature, leading to hitherto untrodden paths.

Barclay was, above all, attracted by moralists and satirists. In 1506 he published, under the title of "The Castle of Labour," a translation of the French allegory by Pierre Gringoire; in 1522 his "Mirror of Good Manners," a poetical version of Dominicus Mancinus's "De quatuor virtutibus" (1516), first appeared in print. And to the interval between these dates belong his more important productions, *The Ship of Fools of the Worlde* and his *Eclogues.*

The first-mentioned is the more important of these two works. Barclay figures in the history of English literature mainly as the translator of a work belonging to the Upper Rhineland. And this is probably more due to the popularity of the original than to the merits of the translation.

Sebastian Brand of Strassburg, who had found a second

home in Basle, made an extremely happy hit, in 1494, with his "Narrenschiff" (Ship of Fools). To compare men and their follies and vices to fools, to present different types of fools in word and deed, was by no means a new idea, and an account of a ship of fools was a thoroughly popular theme at the time. What rendered Brand's work so appropriate for the period, was the fact that the author presented a satire on the vices and follies which affected every rank and position in life, every type of character; and that he presented these in an allegorical form and worked them out with earnestness and emphasis, the result being a comprehensive picture of life intelligible to all. Brand was a clear-headed man, with his heart in the right place; and, although a scholar, he knew how to hit the popular tone. Of that higher flight of the imagination which is called poetry, he shows nothing; his powers of observation and reflection are not altogether deep; his satire lacks incisive acumen. He keeps himself throughout on the mean level of the general reading public, and this is partly the reason of his success. His language is but little refined though full of animation, and as he gives expression to sentiments that hovered on the lips of many, he must have been intelligible to most people. He expresses himself, if not exactly with Attic wit, certainly with good and, at times, with trenchant humour, which served to conceal genuine moral pathos. His worthy fellow-citizens were delighted to find that they understood the book of the learned doctor, and nodded their approval of the thrusts given by his satire, without feeling themselves specially affected by them. Those who stood within the sphere of humanism, delighted in the numerous sentences and reflections from the ancient poets and philosophers, which, here, assumed the garb of the people, and, together with the passages from the Bible and proverbs, threw life into the representation. The unity of the poem was very defective: the allegory of the ship which stands at the head of the work, is afterwards only casually referred to; and of consecutive action there is none whatever in Brand's "Narrenschiff." The book is more a series of humorous pictorial illustrations of fools, accompanied by a treatise full of moral and satirical observations. Still, what the representation lacks in unity as a whole, is

abundantly counterbalanced by the variety it offered in accordance with the taste of the day. And the skilful and fine drawing missed in the text, is often to be found in the admirable woodcuts which accompany it.

The German "Narrenschiff" appeared in no less than seventeen editions. As early as 1497 a Latin version was produced by Jacob Locher, and, during the same year, the first French translation by Pierre Rivière. Other versions in French, Low-German, Dutch, and a freer one in Latin, followed. Even in England the "Narrenschiff" found a second translator contemporaneously with Barclay.*

Barclay, although he based his adaptation upon the German original, also made use of Locher's translation and of the French version. He had no intention of giving as faithful a rendering as possible of the German work; his idea was, above all, to affect English readers much in the same way as Brand had affected German readers. Barclay everywhere has English circumstances, English customs and abuses in view; his satire gives us a vivid, and partly a cheerful, but in most cases a dismal picture of the England of his day. And while he adds a great deal of his own, he expunges a good deal of what his copies contained. At times this is done from a certain feeling of prudery. It cannot be said that Brand was, in reality, less earnest in his endeavour than Barclay; but the Englishman kept the serious side of his task ever before him, and was too strict and anxious ever to forget himself or his purpose. The English "Ship of Fools," accordingly, has lost something of the naïve, homely character of the original. In tone, also, and in style, it is more pretentious. Very important in the present case was the choice of metre. Brand wrote in short rhymed-couplets, which were constructed in Germany, in those days, in accordance with the number of syllables, without any special regard to word-accent; his translator, Barclay, however, made use of the Chaucerian stanza. It may be doubted whether this solemn, dignified dress was suited to the subject. Besides, Barclay possessed only a moderate degree of appreciation for form; like the rest of

* Henry Watson's, whose abridged prose-version is based upon the second French translation of the prose edition of Jean Drouye (Paris, 1498), and was published for the first time in 1509 by Wynkyn de Worde. See also p. 114, under Skelton.

the poets of the transition period, he shows uncertainty in his ideas of metre; and his verse is therefore in many respects somewhat awkward. Possessed of but little poetic fancy, he was not very competent to take advantage of the Chaucerian strophe; on the other hand, the difficulty of its construction encouraged in Barclay a tendency to amplification. In spite of all this, the English "Ship of Fools" is well written for the day in which it was produced: in simple, plain language, somewhat stiff and monotonous, yet not without force and warmth. At times the poet succeeds in giving a graphic picture with one stroke; more frequently he succeeds in finding a telling form for dicta and maxims. Where Barclay makes use of shorter lines, his delineation becomes more animated; in the well-known apologue of Prodicus, the speech of Pleasure—with its alternating rhythms and frequent rhymes—lacks neither the characteristic element nor elegance.

Poetically far more important than his "Ship of Fools" are his *Eclogues*. They are the earliest poems of this species which English literature has to show, and in none of his works has Barclay more distinctly evinced his connection with humanism. Dante, too, and Petrarch, more especially, have written Latin Eclogues and found imitators. In no domain could the connection between Antiquity and the Present be so readily restored, ideality and reality so conveniently placed in antithesis; and even though the ancients occasionally introduced into the idyll, experiences of their own and allusions to political events of the day, their Italian imitators considered this the real character of the *genre*. Idyll and satire taken as contrasts have various points of contact; in the hands of the humanists the idyll in many instances forthwith assumes the form of satire. The Eclogues of Giovanni Baptista Spagnuoli, who flourished about 1400, and attained great celebrity and far-reaching influence under the name of Mantuanus, are altogether moral and satirical in character. The example set by Mantuanus exercised great influence, among other places, in England, where, in the sixteenth century, his Eclogues were introduced into the Latin schools as reading-books, and Barclay at once took him more especially as his model, even though he borrowed his materials elsewhere as well.

As far as is known Barclay wrote five "Eclogues." In the first three his theme deals with the miseries of courts and courtiers, and was taken from the well-known Epistle of Enea Silvio ("Miseriæ curialium"). The fourth treats of the conduct of rich persons towards poets, the fifth renews the dispute between townsmen and countrymen; in the latter two Barclay has directly followed the footsteps of Mantuan.

The "Eclogues," to judge from their substance, were produced in the poet's youth. For some length of time they remained in an unfinished state, the manuscript was lost, and was afterwards more than once hunted for in vain; at last it came to light again in Ely, and then began the work of polishing, enlarging and altering.

This would account for the fact that these poems, more than any other of Barclay's work, combine the freshness of youth with the maturity of manhood. Traces of the poet's corrections are found everywhere, and all of them received subsequently considerable additions; in the first "Eclogue," for instance, there is an enthusiastic panegyric on Bishop Alcock, the founder of Jesus College, Cambridge, who occupied the see of Ely from 1486 to 1500; in the third "Eclogue" a eulogy on Morton, Alcock's predecessor, who in 1486 exchanged the bishopric of Ely for that of Canterbury; in the fourth the shepherd Menelaus, in an allegorical elegy, "The Tower of Virtue and Honour," sings in memory of the heroic death of the famous admiral Lord Edward Howard (April 25, 1514, in the harbour of Brest), with the view to reconcile the inconsolable father, Duke Thomas of Norfolk, to his bitter loss.

Barclay's originality, his personal thoughts and sentiments, obtain fuller expression in his "Eclogues" than elsewhere. The same strictly moral sentiments which form the foundation of his "Ship of Fools" are again met with here; and the artistic form of the idyll enables the poetic element in the man to stand out more clearly, and, accordingly, allows many a trait of a more intimate character to be pourtrayed. The enjoyment Barclay had derived from his travels as a young man, his lively appreciation of nature, his pleasure in fine buildings, his intelligent observation of life among the people, are no less strongly pronounced than his zeal for religion and morality, his love for what is

good and noble, his detestation of vice, and his warm attachment to his benefactors. His idylls are by no means idyllic in a modern sentimental sense. The manner in which he describes country life, peasants at their work or amid their pleasures, exhibits a strongly pronounced realism, and it is, in fact, the sincerity of his poetry which constitutes its main charm. The technicalities of dialogue and the poetical details of the eclogue, he handles with great skill for that period, although a certain degree of stiffness and, at times, of excessive amplification also characterize his style here. The form of the heroic rhyme-couplet, which he makes use of in these poems (it is only the elegy on the death of Howard that is written in stanzas), is more in keeping with the peculiarity of the genus and the poet's manner, than would have been the artificial strophe. Accordingly, his work here is more nervous, more rounded, more animated, than in "The Ship of Fools," and his somewhat rough pen succeeds in presenting many a striking trait, graphic picture, and impressive phrase.

What Barclay may have produced in the way of poetry besides his moral-satirical works has been lost. As a prose writer we owe him the first and, in its way, admirable English translation of Sallust's "War against Jugurtha," a work probably produced in Ely between the years 1519–1524, and dedicated to the Duke of Norfolk, the father of Lord Edward Howard. This same great patron induced him to write a work of a very different kind, an "Introductory to write and to pronounce French" (published by Copland in 1521), which is referred to, though not exactly in amiable terms of acknowledgment, by the well-known grammarian Palsgrave in "Lesclaircissement de la Langue Françoyse" (1530). It is noteworthy, although not astonishing, that during the Middle Ages, as well as in mor modern times, the first attempts at the grammatical treat ment of French appeared on English soil.

If the last-mentioned works bring the classical and learned side of Barclay's character to the fore, the titles of his lost works testify mainly to his zeal as an ecclesiastic: an allegory, "The Figure of our Mother Holy Church oppressed by the French King;" a "Life of the Glorious Martyr Saint George," adapted from Mantuan; and, if Bale

is to be trusted, the lives of three other saints, besides a treatise on the "True Faith," and various addresses and sermons, are attributed to him by Tanner. As regards these works we cannot venture even to conjecture whether they were written in prose or verse. In all probability, however, the "Book against Skelton the Poet," which, according to Bale, was written by Barclay, may be considered to have been a poem.

How unfavourably Barclay judged Skelton is evident from a remark at the end of the "Ship of Fools," and especially from a passage in one of his "Eclogues." But it is not to be wondered at that he felt revolted by the style of his more important rival, for he was wholly unable to recognize his merits. And, indeed, no greater contrast than that which existed between these two men could well be conceived. Both were ecclesiastics, both had been trained in the Humanities, and both were chiefly moralists and satirists in their writings; if Barclay, at times, gives the impression of having leaden weights attached to his heels, we feel, in Skelton's case, as though he were wholly made of quicksilver.

Skelton had drunk much more deeply from the source of classical antiquity than his more staid rival; he had even become somewhat intoxicated with it. Barclay's relation to the old heathens was more cool and outward. Skelton feels himself one of the family; he is partly a son of the Middle Ages, partly of the Greeks and Romans, and it is interesting to mark how far he has succeeded in working these two sides of his inheritance into a species of unity. Of the various and striking physiognomies from the days of the humanists, his is one of the most original.

Towards the close of the fifteenth century England began to win a place of her own in the arena of the new learning. The discovery that there existed enthusiastic patrons and eminent scholars of classic antiquity in the Ultima Thule was made by the inspired son of a kindred race, Erasmus of Amsterdam. In the year 1497 Erasmus visited England for the first time, at an invitation from Lord Mountjoy, whose acquaintance he had probably made in Paris.

Erasmus was a little over thirty years of age at the time, and just at the beginning of his splendid productivity and

of his European fame. His "Adagia," which first brought him into the notice of most of his contemporaries, appeared three years later. He had not yet acquired the position due to him among the learned men of the day, as the most many-sided and gifted of them all; the Italians, who looked with over-weening pity upon the northern barbarians, had not yet been forced by him to admit that the highest classical culture could be obtained beyond the Alps. Still, of patrons, friends, and admirers he possessed not a few; for wherever the fair-headed Dutchman went, in his garb of an Augustinian monk, with his somewhat timid disposition and refined appearance, his speaking blue eyes and features brimful of intelligence, his wealth of learning and acute and yet always moderate judgment, his kindly humour and sprightly wit—those who met him and who possessed a keener insight into character soon became aware of his distinction. In England, too, he soon won friends, especially in Oxford, a favourite place of residence with him, where he studied Greek with vehement zeal.

At this time a small cluster of distinguished men were gathered together in Oxford, the flower of the earlier English philologists: William Graye, Thomas Linacre, and John Colet, all three of whom had studied Greek in Italy under such scholars as Demetrius Chalcondylas and Angelo Poliziano; they were unlike as regards age, temperament, and mental tendencies, but alike in their love for the classics, in their endeavour to promote and encourage the study of them. The oldest of the three men was Graye, at the time already fifty-five years of age, an enthusiastic disciple of Aristotle, whose works he had commenced to translate; he was also the first man to teach Greek in an English College, and, in fact, gave free lectures without receiving any remuneration in return. Thomas Linacre, who was born about the year 1460, divided his energies between the classics and medicine. Both domains of learning received his attention, in his lectures as well as in his works, and he was appointed both physician and preceptor to Arthur, the young Prince of Wales. The two Lectures on Physic Linacre founded at Oxford and the one at Cambridge, together with the service he rendered as founder of the Royal College of Physicians, certainly cannot be compared

with any other foundation of the kind in the domain of philology that owed its existence to him. As regards John Colet—the son of a wealthy citizen of London, a knight who had twice been elected Lord Mayor—it was theology upon which his intellectual interests were mainly centred. Graye and Linacre were both ecclesiastics, but this fact is not emphasized in any one of their works as philosophers. Colet, however, found the study of the classics, above all, a means for throwing life into the study of the Bible, and, accordingly, into ecclesiastical interests; and, fortunately, the well-educated and eloquent man—through the influence of relatives holding high positions—had early the prospect of high Church preferments, and the way to them paved in the pleasantest manner. His favourite author was St. Paul, and, at the time of which we are speaking, he gave free lectures at Oxford on St. Paul's Epistles.

It was from this circle that Erasmus received a friendly welcome in Oxford, and he soon found himself so at home in it that, although his longing for Italy cannot be said to have been extinguished, still it was certainly moderated. He attached himself to the very learned Graye as well as to the extremely accomplished Linacre; perhaps, however, he felt himself chiefly attracted to Colet, who was of his own age, whose efforts were so akin to his own in weightier matters, and whose eloquence and deeply religious speculations reminded him of Plato. And in order that the younger generation might not seem unrepresented in that select circle, it also included Thomas More, a student of nineteen, of good family, who had been educated in the house of Archbishop Morton, and who had come to Oxford with the best introductions. Like Erasmus, More occupied himself at Oxford mainly with the study of Greek. And, as always happens when learning is a living force—which was peculiarly its character at that period—the barriers raised by etiquette between the different stages in life, between teachers and pupils, are readily broken down by intellectual kinship; hence, the young student, with his ideal nature yet full of worldly wisdom, his fine culture, and quick power of perception, associated with the older scholars almost as though he had been their equal. Erasmus, too, soon recognized in More a mind closely akin to his own; as early as

December, 1497, in a letter to Robert Pisco, he says: "Can nature ever have formed a mind more gentle, genial, or sweeter than his?" (Thomæ Mori ingenio quid unquam finxit natura vel mollius vel felicius vel dulcius?) And the acquaintance then entered upon with him, became, in the course of years, a close and lasting friendship.

John Skelton stood further apart from this Oxford circle without being a stranger to it. He was of the same age as Linacre, having been born about 1460, probably in the county of Norfolk, had studied in Cambridge and, apparently, taken his degree of Master of Arts there, in 1484. But subsequently he must have studied at Oxford as well, at all events the Oxford Senate, in 1489, appointed him *poeta laureatus*, an honour which was also awarded to him by one of the universities on the Continent, probably Louvain, and in 1493, also by his "Alma Mater Cantabrigiensis." These laurels were conferred upon him in recognition of his great skill in writing Latin verse; and in addition to bringing him titles and marks of honour, they brought him from the King the gift of a dress (habitus) in the symbolical colours of white and green.

At that period, men who devoted themselves to the Muses, and were without private means, considered it advisable to take orders. Skelton, too, who may have felt but little inclination for ecclesiastical pursuits—at all events for the state of celibacy—was ordained in 1498. At this date he became, or was already, preceptor to young Prince Henry, whom, four years previously (when the Prince, at three or four years of age, had received the title of Duke of York), he had welcomed to his new dignity with a Latin *carmen*. If the royal child at the time had no taste for such things, he learned to appreciate them under the guidance of his gifted preceptor.

A pretty description from Erasmus carries us back into the midst of the classical proceedings of the time as they affected court life. It was in the year 1499. Thomas More had already left Oxford for Lincoln's Inn, in London, and had temporarily given up Greek for Jurisprudence. Erasmus was staying at the country seat of Lord Mountjoy, his patron. While there, his young friend More came to see him, and persuaded him to pay a visit to the neighbouring stately

mansion—apparently Eltham—where the children of Henry VII. were all brought up, with the exception of Arthur, Prince of Wales. In the hall, as they entered, Erasmus saw all the royalties surrounded by the courtiers; and Lord Mountjoy's suite, the attendants of the House of Mountjoy, were also present. In the midst stood young Henry, then a boy of nine years old, who, even at that age, is described by Erasmus as having a royal demeanour; on his right hand stood the Lady Margaret, eleven years old, who was afterwards to figure in Dunbar's poems as the White Rose. On the brother's left was playing little Lady Mary, four years of age, while Prince Edmund was still in his nurse's arms. After greetings were exchanged, More presented Prince Henry with some production from his pen. Erasmus, not being prepared to offer him anything of the kind, became embarrassed, and was annoyed with More for not having told him what would be expected of him. Meanwhile the Prince had to be content with a promise, and Henry took care that it was not forgotten; for during dinner, which they all partook of together, he sent his learned guest a little note—no doubt in Latin—in which he called upon him for a contribution from his Muse. Hence, immediately on his return home, Erasmus set to work. It was long since he had written any Latin verse, in fact, any verses at all; nevertheless, in three days he brought the royal children a *carmen* in praise of their father, Henry VII., and dedicated it to the young Prince. In the Dedication he congratulates the young Prince on his good fortune in having Skelton as a teacher, "this light and ornament of British learning" (Britannicarum Literarum Decus et Lumen).

Skelton wrote a "Mirror for Princes" in Latin, for his pupil, which, however, no longer exists, and was, probably, of as little avail as most mirrors for princes. But if Skelton's teaching did not prevent Henry from subsequently developing into a tyrant, still it did succeed in arousing in the Prince an appreciation of learning; of this the King has given proof at various periods of his reign, in a peculiar manner, it is true, but still in many ways with wholesome effect.

Between the years 1501 and 1504 Skelton's duties as preceptor seem to have come to an end; the date cannot

be more accurately stated. In 1504 we find him Rector of Diss in Norfolk, and residing in the parish.

Norfolk was Skelton's native county, and Diss may even have been his birthplace. And although, accordingly, there was no lack of outward points of connection between him and his parishioners, still it is not difficult to believe the tradition that his sheep were as little edified with their shepherd as the shepherd was with his sheep.

Skelton was certainly not worse than most of his colleagues, and probably better than many of them. He had, however, peculiar ideas about many things, a peculiar temperament, which was but little fitted for the life of an ecclesiastic, and he was not the man to put any control upon himself, or to keep his views always under cover. Skelton was not without religious feelings, or without faith as a Christian; but his faith was mixed with a goodly amount of scepticism, his interests were mainly directed to secular concerns, and if he possessed reverence for the saints, it often took a peculiar form of expression. Above all, Skelton was one of the humanists, full of enthusiasm for classical culture, full of reverence for the sovereign importance of learning, and fully conscious of being a richly endowed and eminently learned son of the Muses. Self-denial, a secluded life, and asceticism, were foreign to his nature; he was fond of giving free play to his thoughts in poetry, and somewhat in his actions as well. The discordance between his inner nature and his position in life, between his Humanity and his Christianity, must often have forced itself upon him; his humour must have helped him over his difficulty, but his humour is often but little pleasant and much too negative in colouring. His conception of the world and of life seems, at times, pretty much that of the prelate, according to whom everything is a mere farce. Skelton was, at all events, inclined to play his part in the "farce" with all possible vivacity. His views of life are both those of a satirist and of a jester, and for both points of view, he had at his command a sprightly wit, a host of learned reminiscences, and a rich abundance of ideas and forms of expression which never failed him.

Skelton had begun to write in English at an early date. As early as 1490 he had translated two prose works from

the classics into his mother-tongue: Cicero's Epistles to his Friends, and Diodorus of Sicily—the latter through the medium of a Latin translation.* Several things in verse, also, he probably produced during the eighth decade of the fifteenth century. More accurate dates can be given for his "Elegies" on the death of Edward IV. (1483) and on the death of the fourth Earl of Northumberland (1489).† They are written in the old Frankish style, and give little evidence of the author's originality; the former is gloomy and ascetic in colouring, the latter full of pathos and strongly suggestive of Lydgate. Both exhibit uncertainty of versification, which, in fact, is characteristic of the period.

At what date the poet may have taken up his own peculiar style it is now scarcely possible to determine. Of the numerous productions of his inventive brain, so many have been lost that, in our endeavour to estimate his mental development, we find many indispensable connecting-links altogether wanting. Of such of his writings as have been preserved, there are only a few which furnish any definite chronological data, and their variety in tone and style of treatment, taken as a whole, increases the difficulty of determining the order of their production on the ground of psychologico-æsthetic considerations.

Skelton has handled the most varied kinds of material and in the most varied kinds of forms; the purely epic genus alone seems to have been altogether foreign to him. Narrative, with him, serves the purpose of Allegory, mingles with the description, and also serves the purpose of satire and eulogy. Lyric poetry, too, with him, is inclined to ally itself with foreign elements. He can strike every variety of tone; yet feels himself most at home in a form of art of his own invention, to which the name of *satura* might appropriately be applied.

Religious poetry, as may be supposed, is represented among Skelton's works only by a few specimens. And yet these show not only a higher degree of technical skill, a greater wealth of ideas, but also greater depth and fervour

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* Skelton's "Diodorus" has, curiously enough, not yet been published; his "Cicero" has been lost.

† To the year 1489 belongs also the Congratulatory Poem addressed to Prince Arthur on his being raised to the rank of Prince of Wales and Duke of Chester, of which, however, only the title has come down to us.

than the productions of many of the pious order of poets. It is the less surprising, therefore, that he is even successful in a tone he but rarely strikes, that of ascetic meditation—for his whole nature was based upon a melancholy view of the end of all things earthly, a necessary foil to his bacchanalian ribaldry.

Erotics occupy a large space among his works. Skelton loved women, clearly as he understood their weaknesses, and also found favour with them. Many a lady he has sung to in his life; and many a one, too, has been pursued by his biting, cynical sarcasm. Of actual love-songs from his pen, only the veriest few have been preserved; and here it is sometimes the tendency, then the form which shows a falling off. The chief of Skelton's erotics is his *Boke of Philip Sparowe*, which was probably written between the years 1503 and 1507, an elegy on the death of a sparrow belonging to fair Jane Scroupe, who, as it seems, was being educated in the nunnery of Carow in Norwich. The fundamental idea was furnished by Catullus, in the lovely verses every one knows by heart.* But it never occurred to Skelton to compete with the Roman poet in delicacy and precision. To him the theme was merely a welcome hook on which to hang all sorts of reminiscences and strange ideas. Dalliance with him is worked out with such assiduity and persistency that it becomes dalliance and no mistake, and it is only Skelton's peculiar grace—a mixture of sensuality, mischief, intentional pedantry, irony, humour, fancy, wit, and buffoonery—that can render the whole enjoyable, nay, in a great measure even charming. The absolute recklessness with which he presents delicate and indelicate matter, things suitable and unsuitable, the astounding audacity of his transitions, the incalculable variety of his episodes—all this it is impossible to describe, and also impossible to realize by mere quotations. Ovid, Vergil, Chaucer, and many other writers, history both sacred and profane, ancient and mediæval sagas, nature and human life, offered him material in abundance. One description, like an avalanche, seems to carry with it a series of others more or less akin to it. The reader would never be able to follow it all, were it not that the poet,

* *Lugete Veneres Cupidinesque*, etc.; also *Passer, deliciæ meæ puellæ.*

with fine musical feeling, has definitely marked off his unstrophed verse by melodious repetitions and endings that ring on in the ear; and, in place of a refrain we often have bold parodies of Latin Church prayers, especially from the psalms connected with the service for the dead. The poem is full of reminiscences, and yet as original as could be—original in plan and execution, in substance and form, the one inseparable from the other. It is only in what is called *par excellence* Skeltonian metre that such a thoroughly Skeltonian poem could have been written. This metre consists of short lines, usually of three accented syllables, which in quick succession take up the same rhyme, in couplets, triplets, or quartets, as his thoughts flow powerfully in one direction, or turn aside, or hasten to a close. Many of the poets of the period have attempted to imitate Skelton in this style of verse; but not one has even approximately attained the same degree of force, fulness, freedom, and melody, as is exhibited by the grand virtuoso in verse and language.

Skelton's true domain is satire. His keenness of perception and observation, his lively appreciation of the ludicrous, his restless temperament, his quick and trenchant wit—all led him to this *genre*. At times it was higher and general interests of a political or religious kind which induced him to take up his pen; or it might be to obtain satisfaction for some purely personal grievance or personal dislike; or, again, merely to satisfy a whim of the moment. Sometimes he speaks in the tone of an earnest and cultured moralist; sometimes, and more frequently, like a scurrilous buffoon; and not seldom he combines satire with the style of a lampoon. There are few poets of Skelton's importance who take their subjects so little into account, and yet venture upon so much. An old, ugly, and dirty ale-wife, "Elynour Rummynge," and the questionable customers who crowd into her "tunnyng," inspire him with the most vivid—and certainly drastic—but most humorous descriptions, amounting to over six hundred lines—Skeltonian short lines, however. Who had not had to submit to the lashes of his scorn and to his merciless rebuffs: sporting ecclesiastics, abnoxious fellows in Diss, frivolous women, heretical theologians, imperious lords at court, and arrogant

men both at home and abroad? Skelton carried on a dispute in lampoons with Sir Christopher Garnesch, one of the gentlemen ushers of Henry VIII., who justly enjoyed the king's favour, and in these lampoons poured a perfect flood of insulting and abusive language upon his antagonist. The most remarkable part of this dispute was that the King took the greatest pleasure in it, and was for ever inciting his late preceptor, by encouragement as well as commands, to renew his attacks upon Garnesch. Skelton spared the French scholar Robert Gaguin as little as he did the English grammarian William Lily. It is very strange that—as far as is known—Barclay, who had spoken disparagingly of Skelton's "Philip Sparowe," is despatched among a number of others, and dealt with pretty leniently.

The more admirable productions of our satirist are those where he pourtrays manners and customs at greater length, or ventures upon attacking persons of authority in the Church or State.

The experiences he had met with at court, Skelton depicts in his poem *The Bouge of Court.* It is written in Chaucer's seven-lined stanza, and moves on in the forms of allegorical art-poetry without appearing in any way to be an inferior after-growth. Here, where the poet gives evidence of his ability to be at one and the same time both extremely correct and extremely original and significant, his masterly style is perhaps more brilliant than elsewhere. The idea of his poem seems to have been suggested by Brand's "Narrenschiff" (Ship of Fools). "Bouge of Court" is the name of a magnificent, richly decorated vessel, on board of which Skelton has embarked, with a number of others, in order to obtain the purchasable commodity "Favour." The owner of the ship, Dame Saunce-pere, is difficult of access to the poor poet, who introduces himself under the name of Drede. The Lady Desire, however, lends him the precious jewel Bon Aventure, and refers him to the lady seated at the helm, to Fortuna. From her, Drede and the others receive the desired commodity Favour. The ship then sets out to sea, and the poet starts on the voyage in good spirits. Soon, however, the presence of some disagreeable fellows on board causes him great trouble and annoyance. They are friends of Fortuna, and in favour with her; their names

are Favell, Full of Flattery, Suspecte, Harvey Hafter, Disdain, Riot, Dissimulation, and Disceit. They show themselves but little gracious to the new-comer on board, who has already gained so much credit. They take to watching him, whisper about him among one another, draw him into conversation, and try to ensnare him, and finally form a conspiracy against him. The description of these figures, their behaviour, and the talk they carry on, form the nucleus of the poem. On a limited space we have developed an abundance of the finest and most lifelike characterization, given with a style and effect which remind one absolutely of the drama. And yet we have here nothing beyond the exposition. When the personages have revealed their characters, and we have become sufficiently acquainted with the situation of affairs, the poet suddenly lets the curtain drop. He sees "lewd fellows" advancing towards him with murderous intent, grasps the side of the ship, and is about to leap into the sea—when he awakes. The dream is at an end, and with it the poetical presentation.

When this pungent—and in its way absolutely classic—satire of court life was written we are unable to say. At any rate it is a production from Skelton's best period, and may belong to the same period as his "Philip Sparowe," and, indeed, to a date later, rather than earlier. The experiences upon which it is based, the poet probably gained at the time—which we are unable to fix more definitely—when he was closely associated with the court of Henry VIII. and became "orator regius," which, probably, signified something like private secretary.

Skelton lashed the sins of the clergy even more mercilessly and more vehemently than he had done the sins of courtiers. In his *Colin Clout* he follows Langland's footsteps in his own fashion. Colin appears as the spokesman of the people; he repeats only what he has heard, and sometimes calls upon ecclesiastics to silence the rascally slanderers. But the further he advances the less the satirist feels the necessity of making use of the transparent veil, and the more plainly his reproofs come to the fore. A sharp sentence is here passed upon the clergy and monks, above all upon bishops and prelates; their luxuriousness,

avarice and pride, their indifference to all religious concerns, the primary cause of all the misery and trouble in the Church. Skelton returns to this theme in the most diverse variations, he allows his victims, occasionally, a moment's peace, only in order unexpectedly to renew his attack upon them. He plays with them as a cat with a mouse, and with feline address, craftiness, and grace, the story glides on in its lightly tripping verse. The form and style of the "Boke of Philip Sparowe" appear here brought to a higher stage of development. Notwithstanding all the whimsicality and oddity of his ideas and contrivances, the poet here keeps his subject ever in view; the bounds he takes, be they ever so crazy, in the end all serve the object of his satire. This characterizes the very plan of the poem; of clear exposition or progressive movement it shows nothing whatever. Skelton's method of procedure is concentred.

"Colin Clout" may have been written about the year 1519. Luther's name had already resounded through Europe; his words and actions had aroused many an echo even in England, where the conditions of Church and State were becoming more and more unsatisfactory. Thomas Wolsey, the butcher's son of Ipswich, had for five years been Archbishop of York, and, for the last four years, a cardinal; soon afterwards he was appointed Lord Chancellor, and had lately been made the Pope's *legatus a latere.* His power in England was unlimited—after and by the side of the King. He who had attacked the English prelates could not spare Wolsey. Skelton had endeavoured to obtain the Cardinal's favour, had dedicated more than one of his works to him. But in "Colin Clout" he gave many a stab which must above all, indeed exclusively, have been aimed at Wolsey; this is evident enough where he speaks of prelates who have risen from the lower ranks, and who have taken leave of kindness, simplicity, humility, and Christian charity; where he denounces their pride and arrogance even towards knights and barons. Every one must have known to whom the poet alluded when he exclaimed—

> "It is a bery thyng
> For one man to rule a kyng
> Alone, and make rekenyng

To governe over all
And rule a realme royall
By one mannes verrey wyt ;" *

or where he complains that no one dare venture to approach the King without the permission of "our President," and no one dare address the King except when the President or one of his creatures is present. And, accordingly, the prophetic words in which Skelton foretells the fall of a mighty man :

"A fatale fall of one
That shuld syt on a trone,
And rule all thynges alone" †

were universally referred to Wolsey.

By his cutting satires and reckless lampoons Skelton had made numbers of enemies, who were not content with attacking his weaknesses and denouncing his audacity and licence, but also endeavoured to damage his reputation as a writer of talent and learning, and his poetical achievements as well. This was a point on which the "poet laureate" was extremely sensitive. Poetic renown was his special desire; to receive the recognition of his contemporaries—which gave him a foretaste of immortality—was to him a necessity. About the year 1520 Skelton, as one of the suite of his great patroness the Countess of Surrey —mother of the poet of the same name—was residing in the Castle of Sherif-Hutton, in Yorkshire, which in those days belonged to the Duke of Norfolk, the Countess's father-in-law. Skelton felt himself quite in his element there. A life of comfort amid aristocratic society, and a number of ladies to dance attendance upon him, was very agreeable to the poet now growing old. The Countess of Surrey seems to have been most appreciative of the enjoyment to be obtained from literature; perhaps she found in it a compensation for the happiness she had missed in being married to a man some twenty years her senior, and one who had been forced upon her. It was at the Countess's suggestion (so at least the poet states) that ten noble and beautiful women made him a laurel wreath. An earnest and somewhat subdued spirit came

* *The Poetical Works of Skelton*, ed. Al. Dyce, i. 349, l. 990, ff.
† *Ibid.*, l. 475, ff.

over the fêted man; he felt the need of explaining himself to his contemporaries and to posterity, of immortalizing the Countess of Surrey and her Ladies in a poem, but, above all, of raising a monument to himself and his work; and in so doing he endeavoured, in semi-ironical fashion, to express his regret at having occasionally carried his satire too far. It was thus that his *Garlande of Laurell* was produced, a poem of some length in allegorical form, and which, in point of self-glorification, accomplishes all that might be expected from a poet of humanistic tendencies. The fundamental motives were offered by Chaucer's "House of Fame," and the Prologue to "The Saint's Legend of Cupid." If, however, Skelton's poem be placed by the side of its prototype, the comparison will not by any means turn in favour of the "poet laureate." Rich invention and descriptive talent are not indeed wanting here, but Skelton demands too much of his readers; the one-sidedness of the tendency which runs through the whole poem affects one unpleasantly, and he is almost as far behind Chaucer in matters of taste and modesty, as he is in genius.

Skelton dedicated his "Garlande of Laurell" to the King and, at the same time, to the all-powerful Cardinal legate, which appears exceedingly strange when we recollect "Colin Clout." That malicious satire, it is true, had not yet appeared in print, but Skelton could scarcely have supposed that Wolsey had not yet heard anything of the amiable things it contained about him. However this may be, it does not appear that the poet succeeded in winning the Cardinal's favour.

Skelton, however, did not allow his satirical Muse to rest for long. In his *Speke Parrott*—which, although begun before "The Garlande of Laurell," was not finished till after the latter—his Muse is, in fact, wilder and more reckless than ever, and gives the commentator the hardest nuts to crack, by introducing every conceivable and inconceivable kind of matter. And Wolsey is here told things by the side of which the invectives which Colin Clout indulges in against him seem but harmless jokes.

Still, the poet was not satisfied with this. He was right in supposing that this opponent of his deserved a special chapter to himself. And accordingly, between 1522 and

1523, he wrote the most cutting and most personal of all his satires, *Why come ye nat to Courte?* He says there—

> "Our barons be so bolde
> Into a mouse hole they wolde
> Rynne away and crepe
> Lyke a mayny of shepe;
> Dare nat loke out at dur
> For drede of the mastyue cur,
> For drede of the bochers dogge
> Wold wyrry them lyke an hogge.
> For and this curre do gnar,
> They must stand all a far
>
> . . . .
>
> For all their noble blode
> He pluckes them by the hode,
> And shakes them by the eare
> And brynges them in such feare;
> He bayteth them lyke a bere,
> Lyke an oxe or a bull:
> Theyr wyttes, he saith, are dull;
> He sayth they have no brayne
> Theyr astate to mayntayne;
> And maketh them to bow theyre kne
> Before his majeste."

And further on—

> "Ones yet agayne
> Of you I wolde frayne,
> Why come ye nat to Court?—
> To whyche court?—
> To the kynges court
> Or to Hampton Court?
> Nay to the kynges court:
> The kynges courte
> Shulde have the excellence;
> But Hampton Court
> Hath the preemynence,
> And Yorkes Place,
> With my lordes grace,
> To whose magnifycence
> Is all the conflewence,
> Sutys and supplycacyons,
> Embassades of all nacyons.
> Strawe for lawe canon,
> Or for the lawe common,
> Or for lawe cyvyll!"

When Wolsey's wrath is aroused he is said to despatch his opponents forthwith to prison;

"Now, yet all this myght be
Suffred and taken in gre,
If that that he wrought
To any good ende were brought:
But all he bringeth to nought,
By God, that me dere bought!
He bereth the kyng on hand,
That he must pyll his lande
To make his cofers ryche."

Extortions are made, exorbitant taxes are imposed at will, and Wolsey takes bribes from abroad, while the French, we are told, had been wholly subdued by the brave Earl of Surrey;

"But yet they ouer shote us
Wyth crownes and wyth scutus;
With scutis and crownes of gold
I drede we are bought and solde;
It is a wondrous warke;
They shote all at one marke,
At the Cardynals hat,
They shot all at that;
Oute of theyr stronge townes
They shote at him with crownes;
With crownes of golde enblased
They make him so amazed,
And his eyen so dased
That he ne se can
To know God nor man."

And the favour which Wolsey enjoys at the hands of King Henry is made out to be a species of sorcery. For what is there so attractive about the man? As to his birth—

"He came of the rank royall
That was cast out of a bocher's stall."

In the way of learning he was—

"But a poore maister of arte
Got wot, had lytell parte
Of the quatriuials
Nor yet of triuials,
Nor of philosophy
Nor of philology
Nor of good pollycy,
Nor of astronomy

. . . . . ."

His Latyne tongue dothe hobbyll,
He doth but cloute and cobbill
In Tullis faculte
Called humanyte;
Yet proudly he dare pretende
How no man can him amende:
But have ye not harde this,
How an one eyed man is
Well sighted when
He is amonge blynde men?"

And as to Wolsey's character and morals, he is said to be proud, arrogant, hard-hearted, and ungrateful, leading an irreligious life of extravagance, eating flesh on fast days, and many a worse thing.

"God save his noble grace
And graunt him a place
Endlesse to dwell
With the devyll in hell!
For, and he were there
We nede never feere
Of the fendys blake.
For I undertake
He wolde so brag and crake
That he wolde than make
The devyls to quake
To shudder and shake.
. . . . . .
That he wolde breke the braynes
Of Lucifer in his chaynes,
And rule them echone
In Lucifer's trone."

It cannot be wondered at that Wolsey's patience was worn out at last, and that the hour came when Skelton's position as "orator regius" and late preceptor to the King could no longer shield the malicious satirist from the vengeance of the Cardinal-legate. Skelton was barely able to escape from his antagonist's myrmidons, but took refuge in the Sanctuary of Westminster, where he seems to have resided up to the time of his death on June 21, 1529.

Before taking our final leave of the greatest English poet of this period, we shall still have to consider him as a dramatist.

III.

It was of the utmost importance to the future of the Drama that—even before this date—its development no longer remained exclusively in the hands of *dilettanti*, and that there were persons who made dramatic art a profession. And even though it can scarcely be said that there were professional dramatists in those days, there were undoubtedly professional actors.

A sign of the time may be found in the endeavour which the municipal authorities of York made, in 1476, to improve the art of acting. It was decreed that annually at Shrovetide four of the more eminent and skilled actors in the city, should be called before the mayor and requested to undertake a strict examination of all the players, plays, and pageants for the performances at the feast of Corpus Christi; and that such persons as were found to be unsatisfactory, as regards their art, their voice or appearance, should forthwith be dismissed.

Such rules, however, would have been of little avail—in fact, could not have been carried out—had there been no choice but to engage honest workmen, whose custom it had been once a year to quit their workshops for the stage, which represented the world.

There are various other indications also to prove that, as early as the reign of Henry VI., there existed a considerable number of professional actors. The account-books of York mention three players from Donington, one from Wakefield, four from London, who had performed in the northern metropolis in 1446–1447; in the payment-books of the Augustinian canons at Maxstoke, in Warwickshire, there is frequent mention of players and mummers from different English towns, also of such as were in the service of the nobility, and who had visited the above-mentioned monastery. The Prologue to the so-called Coventry Mysteries, and the Prologue to the Moral Play entitled "The Castle of Perseverance," both refer to a troop of wandering players who were in the habit of performing at fairs and on other such occasions.

It is significant that in the reign of Edward IV. the

technical expression *interludentes*—players of interludes—came into vogue. For the interlude was precisely the species best adapted to further the development of dramatic art, in a far higher degree than were the numerous other performances given on the great popular festivals; and the dramaturgic advance of the interlude was mainly dependent upon the advance of the mimic art itself.

Richard III., who is known to have been an enthusiastic patron of music, and to have encouraged bear-dancing and bear-baiting, was also in no way averse to dramatic performances, and, even as Duke of Gloucester, had his Company of Players. Henry VII. kept two special troops: the Players of the King's Interludes and the Gentlemen of the Chapel. In addition to these, shortly after the birth of Prince Arthur, there were the "Prince's Players." And other companies, also, not unfrequently gave performances at court: the Players of the Duke of Buckingham, of the Earls of Oxford and Northumberland, the players belonging to various English towns, and finally the French troop. When Henry's eldest daughter (Dunbar's "Rois") started for Scotland to be married to James IV., there was among her retinue a troop of comedians who, partly at least, were recruits drawn from the players of interludes, formerly in her father's service. Characteristic of the increasing interest in masques, plays, and other such entertainments, is the appointment of an "Intendant," whose duty it was to superintend all such matters at court, and who, under the first of the Tudor sovereigns, bore the title either of Abbot or Lord of Misrule.

Under these circumstances, dramatic composition, too, acquired somewhat more of an artistic and literary character. Poets, who might be regarded as possessing culture and scholarship, began to direct their attention to the drama, and in many cases their works were handed over in print, to the reading world of the day as well as to posterity. To poets of culture and learning the Mysterium, or "religious play," had but little attraction. It remained principally in the hand of the Guilds, as an inheritance from the Past, and appears not to have developed at all, or but little, during this period. As regards the Miracle Plays, the case was somewhat better. Thus, in the reign

of Henry VII., a pious ecclesiastic in Chester dramatized the Legend of King Robert of Sicily, and this drama, at a much later date—in 1529—was performed by some of the Guilds of the town at the High Cross. But the Moralities, or Moral Plays, had even greater attraction for industrious writers, and it is no mere accident that the Moral Plays of this epoch are always referred to under the name of interludium. It is in keeping with this that the Interludes—although of the same tendency—nevertheless present a somewhat more secular character than the Moralities of an earlier date; that we look in vain among the *dramatis personæ* for "God," and even very rarely find the Devil introduced; and that, on the other hand, the number of personages is, in many cases, a limited one.

The Moral Play entitled "Nature," from the pen of *Henry Medwall*, chaplain to the Archbishop of Canterbury, Cardinal Morton, may have been written in the last decade of the fifteenth century—at all events, no later, for it was performed in the presence of the Cardinal, who died in 1500. This play dramatizes the same theme as the "Castle of Perseverance," is divided into two parts, and introduces a tolerably large number of persons; still, the subject is here not regarded so strictly from a theological point of view, it is treated more philosophically, if we may say so. But, above all, Medwall, in his representation, exhibits far more intelligence and talent than his predecessors. His play is also eminently distinguished by the flow of his verse, the changing measures of which are, in one passage, even joined to a short passage in prose. Another drama by the same author has been lost. It was performed at Christmas, 1514–15, at Richmond, before Henry VIII. and his court. But, according to a witness—who is not altogether impartial, however—"it was so long it was not liked: it was of the finding of Troth who was caried away by Ignoraunce and Hypocresy. The fool's part was the best, but the King departed before the end, to his chamber." *

The beginning of the sixteenth century, probably, saw the first appearance of *The Worlde and the Chylde*, the title

* As it seems the witness is William Cornyshe—of the Chapel Royal—author of another Interlude, played on the same occasion; see Collier, *Annals of the Stage*, i. 64, ff.

of which, as is often the case, applies only to the first part of the action. The hero, who is first introduced as the Chylde, appears in the further course of the play under different appellations: as Youth, Manhood, and Old Age. Hence, here again, we have in all essential points the same subject we have met with already on various occasions. Noteworthy is the simplicity of the construction of the play. With only a small outlay of means the poet manages to attain his object, at least as well as any of his contemporaries. Besides Worlde and the Chylde—who proves himself so capable of development—only three other personages appear on the stage: Conscience, Folly, and Perseverance. We hear of others—such as the Seven Deadly Sins—and they also interfere with the action, but do not appear in person. With such limitations and reserve, the play affords but little nourishment for the love of theatrical representation; however, it is by no means poor in dramatic life, which, indeed, is effectively displayed on various occasions in the dialogue as well as the monologue.

Hycke Scorner, which belongs to about the same date, is, above all, a drastic satire on the godlessness, the dissoluteness, and the coarseness of the time. The dramatic action makes a curious impression; it lacks lucidity and proper consistency; yet the representation is very animated, at least in those passages where the poet's satirical humour has free play. In the centre of the action stand a dissolute trio: Freewyll, Imagynacyon, and Hycke Scorner, who has just returned from a journey to distant lands; they all look upon scruples of conscience with contempt, and scoff at all virtue and religion. Is Hycke Scorner to be considered to represent an abstract idea, or, as seems more likely, a type of character? In the latter case, perhaps, he must be looked upon as a man who has been spoiled by the world. His intercourse with his two wild companions, their extremely realistic doings, and their talk among one another even about themselves—which makes one forget the ideas they represent—do not altogether enlighten one on this point. As little are we assisted in this by the fact that the name Hycke Scorner had become proverbial—perhaps even before the appearance of the drama—as a designation for a sophist or frivolous scoffer at religion. Be this

as it may, the action is developed somewhat in the following manner: the three comrades quarrel, and cudgel one another; Pytye enters in order to establish peace, but is seized by all three and put in chains, whereupon the mischief-makers quit the field. Contemplacyon and Perseverance rescue the prisoner, who thereupon goes off in pursuit of his tormentors. Freewyll returns, and after a good deal of talk to and fro, is converted by Contemplacyon and Perseverance; Imagynacyon acts much in the same way, and—as it seems—mainly to please his friend. What happens to Pytye and Hycke Scorner we do not learn.

At the beginning of the reign of Henry VIII., and at latest in 1517, there appeared a curious play called *The Nature of the Four Elements*. In this drama Knowledge is brought upon the stage, and takes possession of it much in the same way as it had done earlier in an allegorical romance—Stephen Hawes's principal work—only in a more pronounced manner. And, in fact, this constitutes the actual interest of the play; for it gives a reflex of the proud spirit of the period which exulted in its extended knowledge and new discoveries, more especially the discovery of America. Otherwise the serious part of the action is but little animated, and not exactly attractive with its disquisitions on physics and cosmography. Nature-Naturate and Experience hold rather lengthy discourses, and the allegorical representation becomes absurd where Studious-Desire, thrown upon his own resources during Humanity's absence, receives instruction in geography from Experience. A dramatic element is introduced into the action by Sensual-Appetite and Ignorance. They try to entice the hero (Humanity) to leave his studies, persuade him to lead a voluptuous life, and, with this object in view, introduce him to somewhat loose company. A comical Taverner then appears, dancers come forward, songs of a fantastic and popular character are sung, and all sorts of loose and coarse humorous remarks are let drop.

It is upon this background that Skelton's activity as a dramatist now presents itself for our consideration. The poet-laureate directed his attention to dramatic poetry apparently at different periods of his life, and, so far as is known, wrote altogether four plays.

Of one of these, which has wholly disappeared, we learn something through Warton,* who had the good fortune to see a copy of it. It was printed by Wynkyn de Worde, in 1504, and bore the title of "*The Nigramansir*, a morall Enterlude and a pithie, written by Maister Skelton laureate, and plaied before the King and other estatys at Woodstock, on Palme Sunday." The main substance of the piece is the trial of Simony and Philargyria or Avarice, and ends in their being found guilty. The Devil acts as judge, and the Public Notary as an assessor or scribe. The necromancer opens the play with a long prologue, in which he invokes the Devil and summons the court. The last scene closes with a view of hell and a dance between the Devil and the necromancer. At the end of the dance the Devil trips up the necromancer by the heels and disappears amid fire and smoke.

Three other dramas are mentioned by Skelton himself in his "Garlande of Laurell:" "The Sovereign Interlude of Virtue," "The Comedy of Achademios"—of which nothing whatever is known beyond the titles—and lastly his *Magnyficence*, which has been preserved. This Moral Play—probably the earliest in the series of Skelton's dramas—may possibly have been written about 1517,† not long before "Colin Clout." All the figures in the play prove themselves to be personifications of abstract ideas—even the hero himself, as Magnificence. Accordingly, it would seem as if we had here a retrogression towards the earlier Moralities, but this is only apparently so. In reality we have to welcome the advance presented by a specialization of the old problem. Skelton's drama does not deal with mankind in general, with sin and virtue in general, but with one individual of a special kind of disposition, who succumbs to a special kind of temptation, and whose conversion is, indeed, then effected in the customary manner. The play was intended to represent a type of man, warm-hearted and liberal-minded, at first in the society of Felycite and Lyberte, with Measure as his adviser; he is then led astray by Fancy (who assumes the appearance of Munificence), by

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* *History of English Poetry*, ed. Hazlitt, iii. 287, ff.

† Certainly after 1515, the year in which Louis XII. of France died, and before 1523, the date of *The Garlande of Laurell.*

Counterfeit-Countenaunce, Crafty-Conveyaunce, Clokyd-Colusyon, Courtly-Abusyon, and Foly, till he is attacked by Adversyte, is robbed, and handed over to Poverte as a prisoner. In the gaol, Dyspare and Myschefe offer him a rope and knife to commit suicide; but at the right moment Goodhope and Redresse (Repentance in the positive sense) come to his aid, and he is ultimately saved by Cyrcumspecyon and Perseverance. In the working out of his plot, we recognize the hand of the great master of language; and the poet himself, by the variety of his ingenious ideas, satirical bent of mind, and strange vagaries. Still, great disappointment is felt in passing from Skelton's better poetry to his "Magnificence." Of the qualities of mind which constitute the dramatist, the author of "The Bouge of Court" possessed several in no mean measure; the more important gift, however, the faculty of allowing an action which has proceeded from its primary source in the brain, to present itself before the spectator's eyes, and then to attend to its own further development—this he lacked altogether. And, besides, he had no notion of the demands made by dramatic form. Content with elucidating his theme very fully after the manner of a Morality, he does not trouble himself about other considerations. Of the conciseness which Skelton aimed at and attained in the "Bouge of Court" there is little to be found in his "Magnificence." Also as regards elegance of expression and correct versification, Skelton has taken less trouble here than in his "Bouge." On the other hand, it is to be regretted that in the comic passages of the Moral Play, he does not more frequently let us hear the tinkling sound of his own peculiar verse—the Skeltonian metre.

Skelton was not the only one—and perhaps not even the first—to give the Moral Plays a more specific character, a less general significance. If his "Nigramansir," as it seems, attacked ecclesiastical abuses more especially, and his "Magnyficence" held up a mirror to the rich and mighty, still, the performances given at the Inns of Court had, at an earlier date, introduced Moralities with a political tendency. Somewhere about 1507 John Roo, a serjeant at law, is said to have written a play on the following subject: "Lord Governaunce was ruled by Dissipation and Negligaunce,

by whose misgovernaunce and evil order Lady Publicke-wele was put from Governaunce, which caused Rumor-populi, Inward-grudge and Disdaine of wanton Sovereegntie to rise with a great multitude to expell Negligaunce and Dissipation and to restore Publicke-wele again to her estate." According to Hall, the Chronicler, the piece was played at Christmas, 1527–28, at Gray's Inn, in the presence of Cardinal Wolsey, with extraordinary pomp. The suspicious prelate took the satire of the play to refer to his own government, and had the author of the piece and one of the young gentlemen who had taken part in it, sent to the Fleet; but upon subsequent representation that the performance had been misapprehended, they were released.

If King Henry had been as sensitive as Wolsey, he might well have regarded "Magnificence" as a warning to his Majesty's own conduct. For during the very first years of his reign—at court festivals and in his own household—he began to manifest a love of display which might frequently have been regarded as extravagant, and would have made his father's economical household appear a most miserly establishment.

Henry VIII. at this period was a man in the flower of his youth, full of life, and enamoured not only with the power but also with the splendour of royalty; of a robust physique fully developed by a variety of physical exercises, and a mind endowed with many intellectual and musical gifts; perhaps a poet, but above all a musician and composer. It can readily be imagined that he patronized plays, entertainments, performances of all kinds, displays of magnificence, and feats of skill of every description. At regular annual festivals, and on other special occasions—and very often without any special occasion—his court presented the most brilliant and animated appearance. Tournaments, banquets, balls, masquerades, pageants, and musical performances were given in crowded succession, and captivated eye and ear by the magnificence of the arrangements. Even in the field the King could not dispense with the delight he took in his accustomed pomp and æsthetic pleasures. The brush of Italian and even of German artists, the genius of Italian, German, and French actors, were engaged to assist native energy in enhancing the splendour of his entertainments.

From Italy, too, came the "masques" which are said to have been introduced into England on the Feast of the Epiphany in 1513. In the evening, after the banquet, the Queen and her ladies were surprised by a visit from twelve men of lordly and magnificent appearance. These were the King and eleven gentlemen of his household, who entered the hall apparelled in garments embroidered with gold, and caps and vizors of gold, and accompanied by six men dressed in silk bearing staff-torches. The ladies were invited to join in a dance—some of them at first refusing—and then all danced and amused themselves after the manner of masqueraders, whereupon the gentlemen took their leave. Much in the same way, in 1516, a brilliant company assembled at a banquet at Cardinal Wolsey's—minus the entertainer—and were surprised by the King and his suite in the attire of shepherds, an incident of which Shakspere, basing his representation on Cavendish's report, has made such happy use in his "Henry VIII."* Disguisings and mummings were no novelties in England, and masques were known there of old, but it may not have been customary to give them with all the magnificence and splendour that had attached to them in Italy; and, above all, it had not hitherto been the custom for any part of the court circle to take part in the performance for its own amusement, or to make any other part of the circle at court join in the semi-improvised play. But even the pageants and mask-balls which were not in any way improvisations, but in various ways connected with actual dramatic performances—or a frame-work for them—were affected by the influence of the Italian masques, which exhibited a peculiar development in this direction. And the drama, too could not withhold itself from this influence.

In the same way as King Henry kept in his service and paid good salaries to a whole bevy of trumpeters, musicians, and singers—in fact, to officials and caterers for every possible kind of entertainment—so likewise the fees to actors form a much heavier item in his budget than they had done in the reign of his predecessor. Since 1514 the number of

* That such masquerades were also favourite amusements in Elizabeth's reign, is shown by the unsuccessful venture of King of Navarre and his nobles when disguised in Russian habits, in Act V. sc. 2 of *Love's Labour Lost.*

the "players in the king's interludes" had been doubled, or, more correctly, the existing company, which now figured as "the old players of the king," was supplemented by a new troop under the title of the "King's Players." And the "Gentlemen of the Chapel," of whom he kept thirty-two, received much larger remunerations for their accomplishments as actors. Even the "Children of the Chapel" on various occasions appeared on the stage, and were also very well remunerated. At a subsequent date we hear of another body of children under the name of "The King's Children." The example set by the sovereign, as may be imagined, was followed by the nobility. Most of the high aristocracy appear to have kept their own company of players, and, indeed, like the King's troop, they often travelled about the country to give dramatic entertainments. And, after the manner of the young lawyers at the Inns, the scholars of St. Paul's School—not to speak of the young men at the Universities—also made attempts in mimic art. The love of theatrical performances increased to such an extent, that families of distinction rarely celebrated a festival without some dramatic performance being provided, and an interludium came to be a necessary addition to every grand banquet.

What was generally called an interlude, and now from time to time began to receive the more appropriate title of "mumming," assumed, accordingly, a very diversified character, not only as regards equipment, but also in substance. Early English forms of the interludium—some of them temporarily forgotten—were connected with new forms which had developed under the influenee of foreign works and of the Renaissance.

Among the festivities with which the court was entertained at Richmond during the Christmas gaieties of 1514–15—when Medwall's Morality had so little satisfied the King—was an interlude by William Cornyshe, the performance being given by the Gentlemen and Children of the Chapel, under the direction of Master Cornyshe himself. This work had the good fortune of meeting with the very highest favour, and of receiving the very highest awards. It described the triumph of Love and Beauty over all their enemies. Among other things the Goddesses tame a savage man, and a lion "that was made very rare and

natural so that the king was greatly pleased therewith. Venus did sing a song with Beauty, what was liked of all that heard it, every staff ending after this sorte—

> " 'Bowe you downe, and do your dutye
> To Venus and the Goddess Beauty:
> We trymphe hye over all
> King's attend when we do call.' "

In this play the female figures, as it seems, were represented by ladies of the court, there being, at this period, no women among the professional actors; it was followed by a mumming and a morris-dance.*

On another occasion, a Dialogue, a kind of disputation, formed the nucleus of the interlude. At a brilliant fête which the King held in honour of the French ambassador on May 5, 1527, at Greenwich, a solemn joust was followed by a luxurious banquet in a hall specially erected for the purpose, in most extravagant style. When the banquet was over, and the guests had admired a large painting on the wall by "Master Hans," representing the siege of Téruenne (1515), they passed "by a long gallery richly hung, into a large chamber, the roof of which was conningly made by the astronomer, the ground thereof was made the whole earth environed by the sea;" and, after a Latin oration, the performance began. Eight members of the Chapel Royal appeared on the one side of the stage, leading in an actor magnificently apparelled; immediately thereupon the same number of exactly similar persons entered from the opposite side. When the members of the Chapel Royal had finished singing, the two actors commenced their dialogue. It was a dispute as to whether "Riches are better than Love." As they cannot come to an agreement, each actor calls in to his assistance three knights clad in full armour; "a faire battle" is fought before "a bar all gilt that fell down out of the arch" and delighted the spectators. When the knights quit the stage, an old man with a silver beard enters to settle the dispute. "Love and Riches," he says, "are both necessary to a prince, (that is to say) by love to be obeyed and served,

* The Moresco, or Morris-dance, belonged to a much earlier date than the "masque," in England. Probably, in this case, a traditional popular dance, modified under southern influence, had assumed the name of "Moresco."

and with riches to reward his lovers and friends." The author of this interlude, it seems, was one John Redeman.

Biblical figures and motives were not excluded from the Interludes or from the accompanying pageants; but the secular element, no doubt, predominated. The chief part was naturally still occupied by the morality which, at times, took a very remarkable form. The Latin Moral Play which was performed by the "Children of Pauls," on November 10, 1528, at Greenwich, in the presence of the King, Cardinal Wolsey, and the French ambassador, was an ecclesiastical satire, which, so far as we can see, showed a certain affinity with the *Ludus de Antichristo*, but more pronounced actuality. Apparently the theme was the conflict aroused between the Church and the State by the Reformation in Germany—a conflict which, however, again gave place to peace and order—at all events in secular affairs. The play presented figures such as—Religio, Ecclessia, Veritas; also Errysy (Heresy), Falls-Interprytacyon, Corupcyo-Scryptorris; War, Lady Peece, Lady Quyetnes and Dame Tranquylyte; the Apostles Peter, Poull, and Jhames; and, above all, Lewter (Luther), in "russett damaske" and black "taffata," also Luther's wife "in red silk, like a frow of Spiers in Allmayn;" further, the Dauphin of France and his brother, and a Cardinal who, perhaps, represented Wolsey as the promoter of peace. This play may have been the work of John Rightwise, Master of St. Paul's School; Rightwise himself superintended the performances of the boys, and is otherwise known as a writer of dramas in Latin. His tragedy of "Dido" had the honour of being performed before Queen Elizabeth in 1564, thirty-two years after his death. As had been done on this occasion, and others as well, Latin plays were frequently given at court when foreign guests were entertained. In 1520 King Henry had "an excellent comedy of Plautus" performed for the entertainment of the four French gentlemen, who had been left in England as hostages for the execution of the treaty relating to the surrender of Tournay.

The typical dramatist of this epoch is *John Heywood.* Endowed with a good voice and musical ability, he was at an early age attached to the court of Henry VIII., in whose

Account Books his name is mentioned in 1514, again in 1519 with the express epithet of "singer," and in later years as a "player on the verginal." But in addition to these accomplishments he developed others of an entirely different character. His happy disposition and ready wit —things upon which great value was set in the days of Thomas More—made Heywood a favourite in society, and have been immortalized in a number of anecdotes. He was a man of penetration, and one who, more especially, knew how to look at the comic side of situations, and also possessed the gift of giving vivid and, above all, dramatic delineations. Accordingly, he began to write pieces for the stage, and his genius was stimulated partly by contemporary productions, partly by reminiscences left on his mind by having read Chaucer. His gradually increasing reputation as a dramatic poet, combined with his well-known merits as a musician, may have obtained for him the post which he held during the last decade of Henry's reign. At that time he was "Master" of the band of Children Comedians who probably acted principally in the plays he wrote, and were perhaps identical with the troop called "The King's Children." In this capacity Heywood, among other things, had the honour of amusing the Princess Maria with "his children."

Heywood's dramatic remains consist of six pieces which, probably, were written partly before and partly after 1520. Four of them were printed in 1533, a fifth without a date, and the sixth has come down to us in manuscript. The poet very likely began his activity as a dramatist somewhere about the time when Skelton's came to a close. How long he continued to work is unknown. The pieces which have been preserved probably all belong to a date anterior to 1530, presumably even before 1527.

His plays are light in construction and of no great length, and so far may be compared with the one-act plays of the modern stage. Of dramatic development, however, they cannot be said to possess anything. The story in them is generally as simple as one of Æsop's fables. The poet's intention seems mainly concerned in presenting some sort of moral truth, or even a moral incident in a couple of vivid scenes, for the delectation of the spectators.

Of allegorical figures we have in them as few as we have of Biblical personages; yet the buffoon, who is ever present in the Moral Play, appears in two of the plays, once under an abstract name, but in both cases described as Vice, an appellation probably first met with in Heywood. In one of these plays several mythological personages appear; otherwise the characters are all from actual life, typical characters, it is true, but types which one feels sure existed, and some of them with genuinely individual features of character.

The six plays all belong to the genus Interludium, even though they may not have exactly been presented under this title. If we leave out of consideration the actual Moral Play, and the treatment of affecting or terrifying subjects, we shall find that Heywood's plays present all of the then existing forms of the interlude, from the theorizing disputation to the dramatized farce. That Heywood was not the inventor of the *genus* he cultivated, need scarcely be mentioned to those who have attentively followed our account. And yet his works may be said to mark an epoch in the history of the drama. Inclination and a knowledge of his own powers wisely determined him to limit himself, to concentrate his faculties. The era in which he lived had gropingly attempted to produce dramas of various kinds; and Heywood, by taking up such as were best suited to his ability, and by developing them after his own fashion, threw new life into forms of mediæval dramatic poetry that had almost become extinct.

The *Dialogue on Wit and Folly* which—like the similar work of John Redeman—was performed before the King, consists simply of a learned discussion. John and James dispute the question as to whether a fool or a wise man is the happier; Jerome comes in to settle the matter. Towards the end, James, the advocate of the fool, declares himself vanquished by protesting he had rather be "Sage Solomon than sot Somer" (the well-known jester of Henry VIII.).

The *Play of Love* already contains somewhat more dramatic life, mainly by the fact that the contradictory opinions are here discussed by persons who may be said to be justified in so doing—nay, who have made their own experiences in the matter. A Lover-not-Beloved and a Woman-Beloved-

not-Loving each maintain their own condition to be the most wretched. A Lover-Beloved and a Neither-Loved-nor-Loving dispute the question as to which is the happier. The latter, who plays the part of the Vice, brings a merry element into the dialogue. And the action, too, is enlivened by the fact that he comes tumbling on to the stage, and even among the audience—a huge jugful of burning squibs on his head—and runs about terrifying the assembly with the alarming cry of "Water! Water! Fire! Fire!" The Lover-Beloved, on learning that the house of the Woman-Beloved-and-Loving is on fire, falls down unconscious. However, all proves to be but a silly joke of Vice's; and when the excitement has calmed down, the controversy begins anew. The intrigue here was not capable of any actual solution; the disputants finally agree to a kind of compromise, in which the play has a religious ending.

In *The Play of the Wether* we no longer have a theoretical controversy, but a dispute of interests. And this dispute we have reflected in two regions—among the weather-making gods, where the one interferes with, checks, and frustrates the doings of the other; and among the mortals who desire different kinds of weather. First we have the sun-god Phœbus, frosty Saturn, and watery Phœbe quarrelling among one another, and appealing, all three together, to the wind-god Æolus. Then, the representatives of mankind, called together to settle the dispute in heaven—a Gentleman, Merchant, Ranger, Water-Miller, Wind-Miller, Gentlewoman, and Landerer (laundress), and, finally, a boy who delights in snowballs—and create new confusion by all desiring different kinds of weather. The chief god and supreme judge, Jupiter, determines to abide by the conditions hitherto existing, and gives the motives for his determination with convincing clearness. To satisfy everybody, at one and the same time, would be to destroy the one by the other, and to create a chaos. And if all the others were to be sacrificed for the sake of a single individual, this one individual, even, would be thrown into the saddest plight. Hence he declares, let every rank in life take the weather as it comes—sometimes one way, sometimes another—and have confidence in Jupiter's wise arrangement. Heywood has here, by an ingenious treatment of

the subject, given a very ancient idea something of the charm of novelty. It is noteworthy that Vice appears in this play, as well as in the preceding one. On this occasion he plays the part of Jupiter's messenger, and bears the name of Merry Report.

The Four PP—so-called from the initial letters of the persons represented: Palmer, Pardoner, Potycary, and Pedlar—is a merry play full of satirical thrusts. The four individuals, who appear one after the other, enter upon a controversy as to which of their professions is the more important, and the more advantageous for their soul's salvation. The Pardoner maintains that the indulgences he sells so cheaply lead people more comfortably and safely to heaven than any sort of pilgrimage. The Potycary remarks that no one can enter heaven who has not died first, and "whom have ye known dye honestly without help of a Potycary?" The arrival of the Pedlar creates a diversion, and leads to a discussion about women, who, the Pedlar thinks, are his best customers. The poet's intention to prepare us for what is to come seems unmistakable. At the suggestion of the Pedlar, who has offered his wares to his three companions in vain, they devise some pastime for their own amusement, and joke and jest, and finally strike up a song; however, the Pardoner contrives to renew the old dispute about their professions. At length they come to an agreement that whichever of them can tell the biggest lie shall have the preference, and be considered superior to the others; the intermeddling Pedlar is made the judge. The Potycary, therefore, relates in drastic Münchhausen fashion an effect produced by his syringe. Then comes the Pardoner with a delightful farce, a story full of fun and humour, of how he had rescued from hell a lady-friend who had died without having received spiritual aid. Two circumstances had greatly facilitated the undertaking. It happened that a festival was being held in hell, the anniversary of Lucifer's fall; all the devils "stood in array, in apparell mete for the day," and were playing at ball, and all had fire-brands in place of rackets in their hands. Lucifer himself was in the merriest humour. However, the Pardoner, as the rescuer, found an even greater advantage in the fact that the devils all disliked the society of women. When

the Pardoner made his appeal, and gave the name of the lady he wished to release—Margery Corson—

> "Now by mine honour sayd Lucifer
> No devill in hell shall withholde her;
> And yf thou woldest have twenty mo,
> Wert not for justyce, they shulde goo.
> For all we devylls, within thys den
> Have more to do with two women,
> Then with all charge we have besyde;
> Wherefore, yf thou our frende wyll be tryed
> Aply thy pardons to women so,
> That unto us there come no mo."

This idea the sly Palmer immediately links to another, which is to appear absolutely beyond belief and inconceivable, and hence asks how it is—

> "That women in hell such shrewes can be
> And here so gentyll as farre as I se.
> Yet have I sene many a myle,
> And many a woman in the whyle.
> Not one good cytye, town, nor borough,
> In Cristendom, but I have been thorough,
> And this I wolde ye shulde understande,
> I have sene women five hundred thousande;
> And oft with them have longe time taried,
> Yet in all places where I have ben,
> Of all the women that I have sene,
> I never saw, nor knewe, in my consciens,
> Any woman out of patiens."

All present maintain this to be a most monstrous lie, the Pedlar maintaining it to be the "most excellent" one he had ever heard. The Palmer thus wins the wager, and his vanquished opponents are let off their fines, which they would have been unwilling enough to pay. An edifying discussion, in which the Pedlar again takes the lead, brings the play to a close. The religious ending, which strikes one as strange in this case, was, however, to be expected. The ingenuousness with which Heywood—after the fashion of the Middle Ages—makes fun of everything connected with religion and its representatives, was somewhat risky in the days when Luther's voice was beginning to reverberate throughout Europe, and had also roused many an echo in England. Hence, it was advisable at the close of the play to take the

dangerous edge off the fun by exhorting his audience to pious submission to the authority of the Catholic Church.

The *Mery Play between the Pardoner and the Frere, the Curate and Neybour Pratte** appears to be older than "The Four PP," an inference drawn mainly from the different style in which some motives, common to both, have been treated. We here find ourselves completely on dramatic ground. Only a few scenes are introduced, it is true, and there is nothing whatever of an intrigue, still, in these scenes we have a struggle of interests in a genuinely dramatic fashion, they are developed with irresistible fun, and end in a regular fight. The Frere and the Pardoner, one after the other, enter a parish church; the one, it seems, takes up his position in the pulpit, the other at the altar steps, and each now begins to harangue the congregation in his own way. The two competitors then direct their attention to each other with abusive language, but neither is willing to give up his position; each continues his discourse in a voice louder than ever, and praises the salvation he offers with all the vehemence of a mountebank. The pious congregation have, accordingly, two sermons to listen to at one and the same time; first a few words of the one, then of the other are heard, in between the storm of abusive and spiteful language and vehement denunciations which the two preachers hurl at each other. Heywood, in the most delightful manner, contrives to frustrate the one disturbance by the other. Finally, the rival orators lose all patience and take to their fists. In the heat of the fight the Curate enters the church to put a stop to the riotous proceedings. He calls Neybour Pratte to his assistance, in order to have the two fellows put in the stocks. The Pardoner prays Neybour Pratte's forgiveness in vain; while the Frere challenges the Curate to a fight. A grand cudgelling ensues on all four sides, till the Curate cries out for help under the Frere's blows, and intermeddling Neybour Pratte comes off with a bloody head, so that both are in

* This play can be given a more definite date than the others, as Pope Leo X. died in 1521, and in the play he is mentioned as being still alive. Upon what facts literary historians have based the current assumption that the play is the earliest of all the existing dramas of Heywood I have been unable to discover. The absolutely wrong supposition that Heywood wrote most of his Interludes about 1530 can surely not be considered a sufficient foundation.

the end only too glad to let the disturbers of the peace beat a free retreat.

No less dramatic, and with even a fuller delineation of individual character, is the *Mery Play between Johan the husbande, Tyb his wife, and Sir Jhan the Priest.* This piece introduces a hen-pecked hero who, when his wife is absent, is fond of playing the bravado, but in her presence acts the humble. Johan finds himself compelled by his wife, to invite to supper a man whom he detests and also suspects of being a false friend—the Priest Jhan. The guest arrives, and it soon becomes evident from his behaviour to the wife, that the husband's suspicions are only too well founded. He himself is treated like a menial, despatched to fetch water to wash their hands, and when it turns out that the pitcher has a hole in it, he is given wax to mend it. Meanwhile, Tyb and her spiritual friend finish the pie. Johan finally loses all patience and, in his wrath, flings the pitcher on the ground. This outburst of feeling does him no good; wife and guest fall upon him, beat him, and "make the blood roune about his erys," and then leave him to himself. Johan feels somewhat elated at being left master of the field; but it then strikes him that the retreat of the insolent couple might have a different meaning, and prove damaging to himself. He determines, therefore, to follow them forthwith, to see what they are about.

Heywood did not actually create English comedy, but certainly many of its essential elements. He prepared the way for it much in the same way as the *commedia dell'arte* served as the first stage to Molière's art.

Successful delineation of character (even though not carried to any great depth), an inexhaustible fund of whimsical ideas, dramatic animation, the development of an effective though drastic species of comicality,—these are the qualities we specially value in Heywood's works. In his best pieces—in "The Four PP," the "Play between the Pardoner and the Frere," and in the one describing the hen-pecked and deceived husband (though less evidently in the last)—Heywood has utilized, combined, supplemented, and skilfully dramatized delightful motives from "The Canterbury Tales." And this of itself was no small merit.

The earlier blossoms of English Comedy cannot compete

with his modest one-act plays in freshness of life and vigour. In their own period, and in their own way, they stand unrivalled. How tedious, in spite of the gratuitous introduction of abusive epithets and the awkward use of the cudgelling motive, is the *Dialogue between the Merchant, the Knight, and the Plowman On gentylness and nobylyte,** when compared with Heywood's "Dialogue on Wit and Folly"! Many of the plays written during this period have been lost, it is true, still there is no reason to suppose that just the better plays have all disappeared.

A remarkable production is the Interlude *Thersites*, which was written in 1537. It exhibits a certain classical style, not a little power of language, a strange species of humour, a very elementary form of wit, very little taste and even less appreciation for the demands of dramatic art. We miss here, not only—as in Heywood—dramatic complication, for it has no action of any kind of significance or connection; a series of loose scenes, the one more absurd than the other, and, so far as they have any object in view, exist only to illustrate the character of the hero. The principal qualities of his mind are: coarseness, cowardice, and bumptiousness, and these are carried to excess, and brought forward with most realistic detail. The author must be granted the talent for laying on colours thickly, and, at the same time, the possession of the most reckless spirits, which delight in running over into absolute nonsense. There is something of Skelton in him, which, at times also, shows itself in the fluency of his language and the free change of his rhythms. Still, he has not Skelton's wealth of ideas, and his Muse so revels in coarseness and nastiness that it becomes more than one can tolerate.

As an historical production it is of considerable interest. In more than one series it forms the earliest recognised link: as an attempt to describe the *miles gloriosus*, as a dramatic representation of ancient personages, as a parody on ancient tradition, and—above all, in spite of its buffoonery—as a drama of character.

Meanwhile, dramas with a serious and sentimental tendency had likewise come to the fore in the frame of the

* Without sufficient reason, the statement at the end of the (undated) print: "Johannes Rastell me fieri fecit," has been concluded to mean that the printer, John Rastell, was the author of the play as well.

Interlude. About the time when Heywood wrote his delightful farce the "Pardoner and the Frere," a celebrated Spanish work, *Celestina, tragi-comedia de Calisto y Melibea*,was turned into an English interlude. The original is a narrative in dramatic form, consisting of twenty-one acts, the first of which was probably written about 1470–75 by Rodrigo de Cota, and, some ten to twenty years afterwards, the other twenty acts were added by Fernando de Rojas. It was published for the first time in 1500, and met with extraordinary success, as is evident from the immense number of new editions issued, and the host of translations of it into foreign languages, above all into Italian. This success was not the result of any novelty in the subject of the action, where a gay young man is madly in love, and, in order to gain possession of the object of his desire, consults a procuress, a woman unable to control the combined effects of her own hot blood and devilish seductive arts. Such subjects had already been treated by Mid-Latin poetry, and also by the poetry of the common people. What was new in the drama was the knowledge of human nature it displayed, the intellectual culture and poetical genius with which all the motives were handled. The terrible truth of the representation on the one hand, and on the other the brilliancy, poetry, rhetoric, and dialectics, which vie with one another in giving a dramatically vivid and psychologically accurate delineation, reaching its climax in the demoniacal figure of the procuress Celestina, with her high intellectual gifts, which are devoted, however, solely to her infernal machinations and utter hypocrisy,—all this, together with the beauty and richness of the language, as well as other excellencies, made "Celestina" a work to mark an epoch. Cervantes says of it, "it would be divine if it more fully concealed what is human;" he had better have said, if what is human had been purified by what is Divine. However, there is nothing whatever of this idealization in "Celestina." In spite of their refined culture and their moral philosophy, the authors of "Celestina" belonged to what we should nowadays call the realistic school, and, accordingly, their work, as a whole, is poetically untrue. The evil in it has absolutely nothing to counterbalance it; sin is without repentance. And although the deaths of the

bawd and of the miscreants at whose hands she falls, correspond to poetic justice, yet how arbitrary, and merely accidental, is the death of the hero who falls from a ladder in the dark; how pitiable the death of Melibea, who in her despair throws herself from a tower!

Compare this with the poetical justice of Chaucer's somewhat questionable "Troilus and Cresside." And how much healthier than the admixture of naturalism and morals is the naïvely humorous cynicism with which the Middle Ages narrated the story of the "little weeping dog"!

The catastrophe in "Celestina" was not to the taste of the English dramatist who handled the subject. Yet it was not the catastrophe alone which displeased him. The pessimistic conception of life upon which the whole representation is based, was opposed to his moral feeling; the very earnestness and persistency exhibited by the Spanish poets in the treatment of so dismal a subject, may have gone against the grain with him. Accordingly, feeling both attracted and repelled by the method pursued in "Celestina," the English dramatist settled his difficulty in a peculiar fashion. He broke the point of the action and forcibly bent it in another direction. He follows the realistic narrative of the original up to the point where his heroine's virtue, where her steadfastness, appears to be shaken, and then makes Providence interfere and come to the rescue in a somewhat wondrous way. Immediately after the great scene between Melibea and the bawd, which closes the fourth act of the original, Melibea's father Danio* appears in the interlude, full of anxiety, having been warned of what was happening by a distressing dream which had shown him his daughter's fate. He succeeds in inducing his dear child to return with him and to tell him all that has passed. Fortunately nothing had befallen her that could not be remedied. At the father's request Melibea beseeches God for forgiveness. Whereupon the interlude ends by Danio giving an edifying speech. It is only right, therefore, that the play bears the title of: "A new comodye in englysche, in manner of an Enterlude, ryght elygant and full of craft of rhetoryk, wherein is shewed and dyscrybyd, as well the bewte and good propertes of women, as theyr

* In the original he is called Pleberio.

vycys and evyll condicyons, with a morall conclusion and exhortacyon to vertew."

No further words need be wasted on the English dramatist's gross mistake. And yet he deserves thanks for having brought the essential substance, the more important motives of the first four acts of "Celestina" on to the English stage. The action lacks sustained connection and firmness of texture; many excellent points of the original have been lost in the adaptation, or have, at least, lost their effect; the figure of Celestina appears divested of her demoniacal grandeur; language and verse of the interlude, although treated somewhat carefully for that day, cannot at all be compared with the fully developed prose of the Spanish work. Nevertheless, this interlude—owing to elements of striking characterization, and a truly dramatic presentation of important situations—possesses an importance in the history of the English drama not to be undervalued, and held its position on the stage for more than half a century after its first appearance.

IV.

In now turning to prose-literature, we again find ourselves led to that circle of humanists upon whom we have already directed a passing glance. And on this occasion our attention will be mainly engaged with Thomas More, a man above all adapted to form the centre of our discussion.

Even at that early date, when More was still acting as a page to Archbishop Morton, the latter was in the habit of saying to his guests, "This child, here, who waits at table, whoever shall live to see it, will prove a surprising man." And at a later day Colet's words in regard to him were, "England hath but one wit and that is young Thomas More." More was, in fact, a so-called Sunday-child, born to good luck, endowed by good fairies, who, however, made one mistake by placing him in an epoch the storms of which could not fail to ruin a nature such as his.

More was a man full of genius and quick intuition; a distinguished lawyer and historian, with a thorough knowledge of the Ancients and a devoted student of their works;

a keen and unprejudiced observer of life; a man with a perfect command of language, both in speech and writing—in Latin as well as in English; and, above all this, and more than all this, of deeply moral sentiments and genuine humanity, of manly simplicity and strength of character. His fervent religiousness, which at times even took the form of self-mortification, was combined with the harmless enjoyment of the noblest pleasures the world can offer: family life, friendship, literature, and every kind of intellectual interest. His unselfish, kindly, and sympathetic nature, his modesty, and the unaffected way he would join in social intercourse, gave his presence an irresistible charm. His temperament, which was so happy in itself, shed a sunny cheerfulness upon all around him. Even amid the most perilous circumstances he would retain his light-heartedness, his love of fun and harmless mischief, and this often found expression in witticisms which never left anything but a pleasant impression.

More began his career under brilliant auspices. After finishing his studies in law, he was called to the bar, and appears to have soon gained renown for his legal knowledge. About this time he also delivered lectures in St. Lawrence's Church in Old Jewry, on Augustine's "De Civitate Dei," the first Books of which he discussed from a philosophical and historical point of view. Not long after this—in the spring of 1504—he was elected one of the burgesses of Parliament. His maiden speech was a brilliant success. At the last reading of a bill which had granted an enormous subsidy to the money-loving Henry VII., whose demands became greater from year to year, More, only five and twenty years of age at the time, rose to oppose the grant. His manly, convincing words triumphed over the hesitation of a Parliament accustomed to be submissive, and defeated the sanguine hopes of the King, who thus found himself compelled, "with royal benignity and grace," to be content with less than one third of the sum that he had demanded.

The result was as honourable as could be, for the youthful statesman—a very triumph. Yet, owing to the opinions expressed by Henry VII. and his ministers, the consequences threatened to become serious. Meanwhile, they took their

revenge on More's father, who was one of the Commissioners appointed for calling in the subsidies that had been granted. Upon a trifling pretext, John More was sent to the Tower and kept a prisoner there till he had paid an amends of a hundred pounds. Hence the son, the actual culprit, considered it advisable to withdraw himself from the King's displeasure, and retired from public life into absolute seclusion.

This period marks a crisis in Thomas More's life. The uncertainty of his position, the blow to his cherished hopes, the arrest of his father,—all this, which he could regard only as the result of a manly action, threatened to rob him of his joy in the struggle for existence. The inclination towards asceticism which slumbered in him, assumed a more definite form, and he seriously entertained the thought of entering the ecclesiastical profession and of taking orders; meanwhile, he put himself to the test by living, in his London hiding-place, in accordance with the strict rules of the Carthusian friars.

Time, the intercourse with his older friends and original work, gradually helped him to overcome these inward struggles and doubts.

It was fortunate that the Oxford circle in which More had felt himself so at home as a youth, was now gradually reassembling in the metropolis. For some years previously Graye and Linacre had been in London, and now noble Colet, too, was about to take up his residence there. In 1504 he had been elected Dean of St. Paul's, and in May of the following year came into actual possession of the preferment. Colet had now a wider sphere of action, and soon gave proofs of his rich learning, his Christian virtues, of his power and gentleness, and of his eloquence which flowed from the purest sources. The sermons he preached in the cathedral formed connected discourses, in which, for example, the Gospel of St. Matthew, the Lord's Prayer, or the Apostles' Creed, received full elucidation. It was Colet's endeavour in the pulpit, as it had formerly been in the Lecture-room of the University, to give plain but exhaustive accounts of the earliest Christian records and their historical foundation, in order thus to arouse the spirit of Christianity in his audience. His words bore testimony of his deepest

convictions and holy enthusiasm, and his actual life, which was wholly in keeping with his teaching, recalled the apostolic times.

Thomas More was conscious that his intercourse with Colet produced upon him an influence which cleared, calmed, and, at the same time, exalted his mind. He also felt himself affected much in the same way by his study of the Life and Works of an Italian of gifted mind, who had recently died at the age of thirty-five years. In Pico della Mirandola, the famous scholar and distinguished student of Oriental languages, More found a man who had been converted by Savonarola's influence from a more or less theoretical form of Christianity—Platonic or neo-Platonic—to a full life in the Christian faith, to a life of fervent love and voluntary asceticism, without its having obliged him, on that account, to enter a cloister or to become unfaithful to Learning. More, owing to the state of his mind at the time, was so greatly attracted by Pico that he translated his Life into English, and also some of his works: three important Letters, a Commentary on the 16th Psalm, and some spiritual poems. All of these works are imbued with a deeply religious spirit and fervent piety—a simple form of Christianity without any discussion of dogmas, yet full of reverence for the Scriptures. More's translation, like the original, is partly in prose and partly in verse. In both forms of speech the language is simple and expressive, the poetical portions giving proof of a skilful handling of metre and strophe.

More had, at an early date, tried his hand at English verse—as a mere boy in his parents' home, again as a youth, and perhaps, also, as a rising barrister in London. The poetic impulse was not exactly powerful in him, even though later in life he occasionally produced poetical work. He took up poetry as a relaxation, as a pleasant exercise for his intellectual energy. His poetical remains show us that he handled the Chaucerian forms with ease, though not with the power of a master; that he equipped allegorical figures with striking attributes, and, at times, also managed to give happy expression to deeper sentiments. He was sometimes successful in writing poetry of a lighter species, more popular in tone; in his "A merry Jest how a Serjeant would learn

to play the Friar" he tells an amusing anecdote with much humour, though not with much point, the metre being the same as in "The Nut-brown Maid."

In later years, however, Latin poetry attracted him more than English; indeed, as an enthusiastic humanist he, generally, gave preference to the language of the Romans, where a practical object did not call for the use of English.

More's renewed intercourse with Colet, Graye, and Linacre, must, at that critical period of enforced leisure, have again powerfully aroused in him his old leaning towards the study of the classics, which, though checked by his father in every possible way, had never been entirely suppressed. The influence exercised upon him by William Lily was even more powerful. Lily was an old Oxford student of Magdalen College, a few years younger than Colet, but certainly known to him from former days. Lily had for some length of time withdrawn himself from the horizon of his English friends, had been in Jerusalem, Rhodes, and in Rome, where he had distinguished himself in his study of Greek. He was now living with More in London, in the latter's hiding-place, and an intimate relation sprang up between them. They were drawn to each other, in the first place, by the religious views they held in common, and by their ascetic tendencies, but also by their mutual studies. They competed with each other in translating Greek epigrams into corresponding Latin forms of verse. And More subsequently continued this exercise alone much in the same way, and also wrote epigrams, short satires, eulogies, and other small things in verse, partly after Greek models and partly of his own invention; in these productions striking thoughts and happy ideas are often clothed in elegant and vigorous Latin.

In the year 1505 More married—it is said at Colet's advice. His wife, Jane Colt, the daughter of a gentleman of property in Essex, proved herself a loving companion to him, and an apt pupil in spiritual matters; by her he had three daughters and a son. Soon after his marriage, More, in his new home in Bucklersbury, received a visit from Erasmus.

Erasmus had meanwhile, on the Continent, been working his way through life laboriously, in a perpetual struggle with

poverty and delicate health, trying his fortune first in one place, then in another, but ever uninterruptedly at work devouring Greek authors and, in between, publishing original work, and in his "Adagia," in particular, giving wide proofs of his many-sided learning and superiority of mind, and, in his "Enchiridion," an admirable guide to a deeper and simpler conception of religion. He had now come to England in order to refresh his spirit in the society of his old friends and, if possible, to collect the means for his long contemplated journey to Italy, where he hoped to finish his studies.

More received from Erasmus not only various kinds of suggestions and encouragement, but found him directly interested in the subject he was himself engaged with at the time. More was busy in turning Lucian's Dialogues into Latin, and Erasmus followed his example by himself choosing some for similar treatment. In like manner Lucian's Speech in favour of the murder of tyrants was translated, and, at More's suggestion, the two friends both wrote a reply to that declamation. More's work exhibits the rare acumen and readiness of speech which made him such an excellent advocate.

If More's marriage put a happy and definite end to the period of his extreme asceticism and struggles with his conscience, still the perils he had drawn upon himself by his short parliamentary career were by no means over—indeed, they seem rather to have increased during the last years of Henry VII.'s reign, with the King's growing love of money and the terrorism exercised by his ministers. Hence the young father was perpetually troubled by the uncertainty of his position, which not only obliged him to refrain from taking any part in public affairs, but often made him fear for his life. At length, however, the crowned miser paid the debt to nature.

With the accession of Henry VIII.—who had been a pupil of learned Skelton's, and whom More, at an earlier date, had been allowed to approach—England began to breathe again. Many hopes were linked with the young monarch, and not a few were fulfilled within a short space of time. More was one of those who found reason to rejoice at the change of ruler. As early as 1509 he was

appointed to the honourable office of Under-sheriff of the City of London. In this responsible position he gained both the confidence of his fellow-citizens as well as the favour of the King. His practice as a barrister, too, won for him additional reputation; for his sense of justice and his knowledge in all legal matters became so widely recognized, that in almost all the important disputes in the kingdom, the one or other party generally endeavoured to secure the assistance of Thomas More. Besides being so successful in his profession, More's domestic happiness was no longer disturbed by constant fear, so that his position at that time appeared a very enviable one.

Humanism, a subject which More also had so much at heart, was making one conquest after another. With the reign of Henry VIII. the revival of learning in England entered upon a period of renown and splendour. The King himself was favourably disposed towards classical study; his immediate surroundings, his secretaries and mandatories, included eminent students of the ancient languages. And by the side of the old masters, a luxurious and vigorous undergrowth was observable. Among the English prelates and highest dignitaries of the State there were not a few who took part in the efforts of the humanists, or, at least, offered them encouragement. There was pious and learned John Fisher—born in 1459 at Beverley, in Yorkshire—who was appointed Bishop of Rochester in 1504, and, in spite of his strict orthodoxy and ascetic inclinations, was nevertheless liberal-minded enough to prove himself a friend to learning and scholars. As father-confessor to Margaret, Duchess of Richmond, mother of Henry VII., he had not, by any means, made a narrow-hearted use of the influence he gradually obtained in that position. His influence had been exercised not only on the occasion of founding a Chair of Divinity in Cambridge and in Oxford, but also in establishing two extremely important colleges at the former university, Christ's College (1505) and St. John's College (1511). There was versatile Fox, Bishop of Winchester, who in 1516 founded Corpus Christi College at Oxford, endowed with three professorial chairs—Greek, Latin, and Divinity—and who had attracted to the new institution a number of eminent scholars,

partly from abroad. There was, further, Warham, Archbishop of Canterbury and Lord Chancellor of England up to 1515, the most faithful of all Erasmus's distinguished English patrons. And, lastly, there was Wolsey himself —Warham's successor to the chancellorship—who, while mounting Fortune's ladder, whatever may have been his reasons, showed himself kindly disposed towards the humanists, and on reaching the highest rung displayed grand though cheap munificence in the service of learning when a favourable opportunity presented itself. For in 1528 he laid the foundation stone for the Cardinal's College, richly endowed with the wealth of suppressed monasteries, a college which was to surpass in magnificence everything that had hitherto existed of its kind. Wolsey's fall put an end to this scheme, which had already made considerable progress, and for some time no further steps were taken in connection with it. Subsequently, Henry VIII. took the matter in hand himself, and completed the undertaking started by his former favourite, with some modifications; such was the manner by which Christ Church College was called into life.

By the side of these brilliant institutions the one established by Colet possessed a value and importance peculiarly its own. Colet had come into the possession of a large property on the death of his father in 1510, and as Dean of St. Paul's he now applied his wealth in founding St. Paul's School, an institution which became a model one for a classical and Christian education, and has exercised a far-reaching influence on the spread of classical culture. Colet appointed his friend William Lily first headmaster of the new institution. The want of a Latin Grammar suitable for beginners induced Linacre to produce a large work in eight books,* which subsequently enjoyed a great reputation, but does not appear to have satisfied Colet's immediate object. Hence he made attempts of his own, which were supplemented by works of Erasmus and Lily, and eventually—under the latter's name—became famous throughout the country, and received canonical recognition. Even Wolsey offered a contribution, in the

* *De Emendata Structura Latini Sermonis, Libri VI.* Printed by Pinson, 1524.

form of a Preface, to the first edition of "Lily's Grammar," published in 1513.

About this time Erasmus was again in England. Not long after the accession of Henry VIII., he had come from Italy on an invitation from his friends in the hope of being able to settle there permanently. But this hope was not fulfilled, for in the long run Erasmus did not find in England the life, the sphere of activity, he was seeking, and which was a necessity to him: fate had, in fact, destined him to be a wanderer. His sojourn in England, however—interrupted only by a short visit to Paris—was on this occasion longer than usual, extending as it did from four to five years, and was in every respect an important time. In More's house Erasmus wrote his famous "Praise of Folly," a general sort of satire, bold, witty, and pungent. Afterwards he went to Cambridge, and gave instruction in Greek; from time to time also he took part in Colet's efforts for the benefit of St. Paul's School, and gave lessons in Latin; but, above all, he was making great progress with his critical studies on the text of the New Testament and the Works of Jerome. In the year 1514 he went to Basle in order to superintend the printing of the two editions in Froben's office. In the spring of the following year he was again attracted to England, but before the summer was over he had again returned to Basle to finish his work there.

Erasmus looked upon England as his second home. And the light emanating from him increases the splendour that radiates from the English learning of the period.

The revival of learning had as yet but little benefited English prose. Its influence had probably mainly affected oratory, of which literature, unfortunately, preserves but few specimens: parliamentary, forensic, ecclesiastical. In the Courts of Law, as in Parliament, More was a master of eloquence. Colet, in the pulpit, carried all before him with his courageous and soul-inspiring words. John Fisher, too, was one of the distinguished pulpit orators of his day. His sermons, in plan and tendency, generally move on the usual lines. His subject is usually divided in a somewhat systematic way, as is evident, for instance, on a comparison of his Funeral Sermon on the death of Henry VII., with

his Discourse in memory of the Duchess of Richmond. Still, he fills up his scheme with rich material, and not unfrequently finds striking thoughts and impressive language. It would be especially difficult to read, without emotion, the last-mentioned discourse in memory of the noble lady to whom he had stood in so close a relation. Fisher's language, when compared with the earlier homilies, often exhibits—with all its plainness—a more fully developed construction of sentence, and a more abundant use of rhetorical device.

Historical writing made an important step in advance with Thomas More. His *Historie of Kyng Richarde the Thirde* marks an epoch in the rise of English prose. Unfortunately the circumstances under which this work originated are enveloped in utter obscurity, and it is doubtful whether they can ever be brought to light. The Latin version, first printed in the second edition of More's Latin works,* cannot well—owing to its defective form—be regarded as having proceeded from the pen of the highly cultivated humanist. There is proof, however, that the English version is based upon it; so that More seems merely to deserve the credit of having transferred to his mother tongue the work of an unknown writer, more or less contemporary with himself, and to have added some passages to it—an assumption which again has its own internal difficulties.†

Be this as it may, the English version deserves the praise lavished upon it by the most eminent prose-writer of the succeeding generation: "Sir Thomas More, in that pamphlet of Richard the Third doth in most part, I believe, of all these points so content all men, as, if the rest of our story of England were so done, we might well compare with France or Italy or Germany in that behalf." ‡ English prose here makes an energetic start forwards towards artistic construction. Although, in many passages, it may still exhibit something of the early Frankish character, yet by its choice and vigorous expressions, by the more careful construction of its sentences, by effective and not too frequent an application

* Louvain, 1566, p. 44, ff.

† That the Latin version is not likely to have been the work of Cardinal Morton was plainly enough shown a few years ago by an English historian.

‡ *Roger Ascham's Works*, ed. Giles, iii. 6.

of antithesis and other methods of style, it rises far above the level of everyday language, without in any way falling into affectation. More's prose seems the appropriate instrument for an historical treatise, which endeavours energetically to grasp the connection of events and, more especially, to give a vivid representation of the inner motives of the persons who take part in the proceedings. The delineation of the character of the demoniacal usurper is given in such clear outlines that it impresses itself upon the reader's memory. But also the fulness of detail in the narrative, and the successful arrangement of the material from simple but effective points of view, deserve acknowledgment. The question as to the trustworthiness of the account, which has so often been brought forward and been answered in a variety of ways, cannot be taken into consideration here. It would seem as if a tradition, very evilly-disposed towards Richard III.—and perhaps started by Cardinal Morton—had cast a good deal of romantic additions round the historical nucleus; yet, on the other hand, it has also preserved many trustworthy reports which would otherwise have been lost.

The account in both versions is incomplete; beginning with the death of Edward IV., the history is carried on only to the coronation of the usurper. Thomas More had been engaged with the work while acting as Under-sheriff, and seems to have put the last touches to it in 1514. It did not appear in print till after his death, at first anonymously among Grafton's Compilations,* and later in the authentic editions of the "Works of Sir Thomas More in the English Language" (London, 1557), upon which the later editions of the "Historie of Richarde III." are based.

More's wife, Jane, had died in the year 1512. A few years afterwards he married a second time, and chose as his wife Alice Middleton, a widow, by whom he became father of another daughter. Alice never came so closely in contact with his inner nature as his first wife had done, still she was inspired with the best of wills, was a worthy and true-hearted woman, and succeeded in bringing More's domestic life again on to the path of quiet, restful happiness. The

* His edition, and continuation, of *Hardynges Chronicle*, 1543, and of *Hall's Chronicle*, 1548.

father's whole heart was centred in his children—a tenderness of feeling which finds the most touching expression in his life as well as in his literary work—and he was specially attached to his eldest daughter, Margaret. Any separation from his family he always felt to be extremely hard to bear, whether it was that a royal command took him abroad, or that his services at court necessitated his leaving home for a time.

In May, 1515, More had to accompany an embassy despatched to Flanders to bring about a better understanding between England and the Netherlands, and, more especially, to represent the interests of English commerce. The negotiations were greatly protracted, and More was unable to return home till the end of the year. However, a pleasant and fruitful episode connected with this embassy was a visit to Antwerp, where a friendly and stimulative intercourse sprang up between him and the secretary of the municipality, Peter Giles [Ægidius], a young man of refinement and classical education. It was here that More's idea of his *Utopia* became fully developed; and the Second Book, the nucleus of the work, was finished in all essential points, during that year. The First Book which, in point of form, has the value of an introduction, but is essentially an antithetical illustration and complement, was written in the following years.

The impulse which induced More to write his "Utopia" was his keen sensibility of the conflict between the ideals he bore within his own breast and the harsh realities of life. In his study of the ancient writers, and in his intercourse with Colet and Erasmus, More had formed for himself a picture of a world where the victory of Christian ideas and the advance of learning might have obtained equal consideration: the picture of a human community where justice and beneficence would endeavour to alleviate the ills of life for every individual, where religion and reason would bear the sceptre, and enlightenment and genuinely humane sentiments exercise their influence on the masses. And yet the reality which he had before his eyes stood in the utmost and most glaring contrast to this ideal. Short-sighted egoism controlled the relations between the European States among one another, as well as the relations between the various

ranks of society, and, indeed, between the individuals of every State. The political intrigues of the different Cabinets, which were constituted more and more after Macchiavelli's model, rendered it impossible for the world to enjoy peace. The Christian potentates squandered the blood and property of their subjects by their incessant wars, which in most cases produced no result. Relentlessly the right of the stronger asserted itself in the outward as well as the inward life of the State. Mercilessly the hand of the rich and mighty weighed upon the poor, and when the latter in their extremity, for very life's sake, were driven to seize what belonged to others, they were struck down by the harshest of judgments, without any endeavour being made to prevent the repetition of the wrong-doing. The Christian doctrine itself, which every one had on their lips, appeared to have become a mere myth, was active only when its object was to defend—with hand and foot, or even with fire and sword—some dogmatic opinion, some proposition of the Schoolmen against those who thought differently; yet it showed itself powerless to prevent potentates breaking their sworn agreements, or prelates and laymen from disregarding the most sacred commands of religion or the most elementary principles of morality. And nowhere did this vice assert itself more barefacedly than in the ranks of the secular clergy, among the powerful and wealthy prelates, and on the very throne of Rome itself.

Colet and Erasmus, like many other well-meaning men before and after them, had been combating the evil which was growing on all sides, with different kinds of weapons.

What Colet had attempted in his Sermons and Lectures, and Erasmus had tried in various forms of satire and exhortation, More now, in his way, undertook in his *Utopia*. He here gives a sketch of an ideal State, of a condition of things where all the defects of reality are done away with, his intention being that the immense contrast should lead his readers—the learned men, statesmen, and potentates of Europe—to consider the evils that afflict society, and the means by which they might be remedied. More borrowed important features for this sketch from Plato's "Republic," and many other suggestions he owed to Plutarch's account of Lacedæmon under Lycurgus. Yet

the work, which is planned and carried out with strict consistency, is altogether More's own, and full of manly resolution, inspired courage, and Christian kindliness of spirit.

A delineation of this kind will produce a more vivid effect when it is made, not so much the embodiment of a mere postulate of the intellect or the emotion, but rather a reflex of something which exists or has existed, somewhere and in some fashion, even though it were but the truthful narration of a dream remembered in all its details. For the author, whether conscious that the eye of the reading public is upon him, or only of the presence of his Muse, will thus feel himself less biased in relation to his subject; it will be easier for him to abstract himself from the actual conditions of the life around him, to throw off the burden of tradition weighing upon him, when he gives the "airy nothing" he has reared "an habitation and a name." More's jocose disposition was satisfied with the transparent veil—opaque to duller minds *—of the Island Utopia (Nowhere). We are given a full account of the size and shape, of the physical and political geography of this country, and learn all that is necessary with regard to the names and the customs of the neighbouring nations. As to the actual position of this favoured island and its surroundings we are, however, left in the dark. On this point, More's authority had, we are told, omitted to give him any information, and More, himself, had not thought of making inquiries on the subject. However, as soon as he again meets his roving acquaintance, this omission is to be rectified, and seems all the more necessary, as a worthy English ecclesiastic after reading More's "Utopia," contemplated going there as a missionary.†

The form which More gives his narrative connects it with Amerigo Vespucci's voyages of Discovery. An account of them had appeared in print in 1507, under the title of "Quatuor Americi Vesputtii Navigationes;" it was there stated that Amerigo, on his last voyage, when about to return to Europe, and before leaving a place on the coast of Brazil, which has been identified with Cape Frio, left there

* Cf. The Letter of Beatus Rhenanus of Pirkheim of the 23rd of February, 1518, *Thomas Mori Opera Latina*, 1566, f. 19.

† More to Peter Giles [Ægidius] in the Letter that accompanied his *Utopia*

—on the 3rd of April, 1504—twenty-four Christian men in a castle he had built, with the necessary weapons and appurtenances for warfare, as well as with provisions sufficient for six months. It is one of these four and twenty men who had remained behind and been lost sight of, that More takes as his Raphael Hythlodaye;* he is said to be a Portuguese by birth, a very learned man, who has travelled far and wide, gained great experience, and has studied the customs of various nations with the eye of a philosopher and political economist. Raphael had accompanied Amerigo on his last three voyages, and on the last had provided himself with a goodly number of books—chiefly Greek—as he had no intention of returning home immediately. After Amerigo's departure from Cape Frio, Raphael with five of his companions—two of them, it seems, died on the way to Utopia, the others may have perished later—sets out to make new discoveries, westwards, by land and sea. On one of these expeditions he reaches the island of Utopia, where he remained for five years. Then he travelled on—always westwards—till at length he reaches the island of Ceylon, and thereupon Calcutta, where he meets a Portuguese vessel which took him home.

Admirable is the way in which More has contrived to weave fantastic with everyday experiences, and thus made them appear quite credible. Masterly is the way in which he introduces his authority, Hythlodaye, in the first Book. Connecting it with his own diplomatic mission to Flanders, his enforced stay in Antwerp, and the intercourse which, at that time, sprang up between him and Peter Ægidius, More relates that, one day, upon quitting the Church of Our Lady, where he had attended Mass, he observed his friend engaged in conversation with a stranger—"a man well stricken in age, with a blacke sonne-burned face" and a long beard, who had somewhat the appearance of a mariner. Ægidius introduces him to More as Raphael Hythlodaye, and briefly refers to his travels, especially to the interesting one of which they happened to be speaking. Unknown lands, however, and Utopia in particular, are not as yet mentioned by name. More and Raphael make

* The name signifies a person who is an adept in mere gossip—as it were, a story-teller, or one fond of practical jokes.

each other's acquaintance, and all three repair to More's residence and to the garden attached to it, and there, on a turfed seat, the men continue their conversation and enter more fully into details.

This conversation is given with astonishing skill. By roundabout ways, yet in the most natural manner in the world, they at last come to the actual subject—to Utopia. And what has been previously stated is in no way superfluous, or even dispensable. Everything serves to put the reader in the proper frame of mind, and to win his attention and confidence, and also to show those with a deeper insight into things, the point of view to be taken with regard to what is to follow. We get to know Hythlodaye from his own remarks and from the impression he makes upon More, and find him to be an observant, clear-headed, and earnest man; the sound and correct judgment he gives of well-known matters, makes him appear absolutely trustworthy and reliable where he is referring to unknown things. By hearing him discuss far-off nations, then European peoples, and the customs, institutions, and politics of first the one and then the other, we are gradually made acquainted with what seemed strange, and accustom ourselves to that comparative method of viewing things which the account of Utopia demands of its readers. For, by giving a striking and graphic account of the circumstances of the different European States and of the policy of the King of France, Hythlodaye serves the final object of the work no less emphatically, and more directly, than where he informs us of the institutions of the imaginary model State. Happy, above all others, is the English episode in Raphael's narrative. He says that, about the year 1495, he had been in England for some months, and had become acquainted with some of the conditions of the country. He gives a report of a conversation he had joined in with some of those present at the table of Cardinal Morton, and in which the entertainer himself had taken part. The reader is reminded of home; and affected by the impression this communication makes upon him, More too seems, for the moment, carried back to his own land, to his earlier years, and inclined to look upon the narrator as an old friend. Yet the subject of their

conversation has a melancholy background. A sad picture is unrolled of the position of the English nation under Henry VII., a position which—as the readers of More's day knew better than we can know—had in no way improved in essential matters under Henry VIII., and remained much the same under his successors. Circumstances against which poets and prose-writers had repeatedly raised their voices in bitter complaints, are here presented in horrifying form by Raphael's drastic account; the insecurity of public affairs and the increase of crime against life and property, are made a necessary consequence of the increasing poverty of the people. And this impoverization is described as the result of the warlike propensities, the love of pomp, and the avarice of the ruling classes. The foundation of the general welfare—agriculture—is in a state of decay, because the nobility keep a bevy of useless young fellows in their retinue, who are good for nothing in times of peace, and hinder those who wish to be at work. The tempting profits obtained from the trade in wool, induce the rich and powerful to take to the breeding of sheep; the fields are turned into meadowland, and fertile land into a wilderness; the peasants are driven from house and home with every device of trickery or force, and become beggars with wife and child. And the complaint in England is that the number of vagabonds is ever on the increase; laws are made more and more rigorous, while the poor, who are almost forced into crime, are punished with death for the smallest theft, the injustice of which is only equalled by its folly; for, as the punishment is the same, the thief is necessarily driven to murder, owing to the possibility that his deed may thus remain undetected.

By such representations the reader is prepared for the account of Utopia. For, in Utopia, the wise man, the peace-loving and righteous may breathe freely. Here we have the true form of a State, the only real *res publica*, where the individual possesses nothing of his own, where everything belongs to the Commonwealth, for and by which all the individuals exist. Compared with Utopia, the typical European State appears to Hythlodaye to be a mere confederacy of the rich, who, under the name and

pretext of the "weale publique," take only their own affairs into consideration.

In Utopia there are no rich and no poor, no idle folk, and none are over-burdened. Every one has to work, every one has to earn the necessaries for a happy life, every one receives a sufficient education, every one has the opportunity of developing himself further. It is the ideal of a communistic State, somewhat Spartan in character, yet most humane in tendency. It is an ideal, however, which, taken as a whole, would prove but little attractive to the communists of to-day, for the ethical supposition upon which it is based is rational self-denial. More, with remarkable sagacity, had devised all the institutions and laws which, by their harmonious co-operation, have led to the enviable state of affairs in Utopia. But the chief marvel, though only lightly touched upon, is formed by the morals of the people, which rendered it possible to have such laws and to uphold them. If we do not strain this point which More himself passes by with quiet irony, everything else corresponds so admirably with the political system that the result is a complete illusion of actual reality. The perfect consistency and detailed accuracy of the presentation, produces an effect similar to that which was obtained at a later day by Swift, in his account of Lilliput and Brobdignag, which appeals more to the sensuous perceptions.

The impression made by the political system of Utopia is altogether admirable, rational, and worthy of esteem, somewhat monotonous certainly, and not entirely satisfactory to our æsthetic ideas. For, as luxury is excluded from this model State, art, as a necessary consequence, is excluded as well. Pearls and precious stones are the toys of children, grown-up persons would be ashamed to prize such bawbles. Gold is used for making chains for bondmen, and for the manufacture of vessels that need not be more closely specified. Plates, basins, and dishes are made of clay or glass. They are, it is true, "curiouslye and properlie made," still, we hear nothing whatever of the productions of plastic art that are not devoted to some useful purpose, and, above all, nothing of sculpture—a trait characteristic of More, and also of the English humanism

of the period. The only one of the arts cultivated is music, which exercised its influence in connection with their church services, their public banquets, and during their hours of relaxation. It is not quite clear whether this music included poetry as well, in the sense in which the ancients understood it. Still, of poetry there is no special mention.

In most branches of knowledge the Utopians had advanced about as far as the ancient philosophers, and—as the narrator adds with but little disguised contempt—were far from being able to compete with the "new Logicians in subtyl inventions." Very attractive is the detailed statement of the ethical ideas in Utopia. The highest "felicitie" is pleasure; even virtue strives after pleasure; for virtue is defined as "a life ordered according to nature," and pleasure as "every motion and state of the bodie or mynde, wherein man hath naturally delectation." The doubtfulness that might attach to such a doctrine is annulled by the manner in which these ideas are further developed, and, above all, by the idealistic sentiments of the philosophers of Utopia. Pleasure, according to their idea, excludes not only wrong-doing and all dishonourableness, but finds one of its richest sources in sympathy, and in giving proof of mutual goodwill. Very remarkable, too, is the energy with which the ethics of Hedonism are combated, for the ancient maxim, "Do unto others as thou wouldst have others do unto thee," is held up in its inverted form: what thou considerest thy duty to do to others, thou must also consider good for thyself.

The philosophy of the Utopians is crowned by their religious views. These views, or more correctly the mythological ideas connected with them, take very different forms. Every conceivable system and sect finds a place among the Utopians. These different kinds of religions, however, stand opposed to the common fundamental form of faith: the belief in a supreme God—Creator and Providence—the belief in the immortality of the soul, and retribution after death. This so-called natural or rational religion is, at the same time, the acknowledged religion of the State. Those who do not accept it are excluded from

all public offices; otherwise the person is not interfered with, and may dispute his opinions with the clergy and earnest-minded men, though not with the unlearned multitude. In so far, however, as the followers of any religious creed are not antagonistic to the religion accepted by the State, they are to enjoy equal rights with the rest; hence the Christian faith could without hindrance be proclaimed in Utopia by Raphael and his companions. Every one may make propaganda for his system without being interfered with; but intolerant preachers who make use of invective or violence are exiled or made bondmen. Public worship, however, is held only according to the general form of religion, and avoids everything that may give offence to the followers of other creeds. Anything beyond this has to be attended to at home. And as the form of worship in Utopia is extremely simple, reverent, and earnest, there are only very few priests, and these are deserving, god-fearing men elected by the people.

Utopia is a beautiful dream, the realization of which More never for one moment considered possible—one which, indeed, he could scarcely have wished to see realized in every point, even though it had been in his power to effect it. And yet who would declare the working out of such a dream to be useless? Who would close his eyes to the pleasant fact that, with the course of time, we have approached considerably nearer to the ideal which More held up? Religious tolerance has in our day become a political principle in most civilized countries, even though the State—not being based on Utopian ideas—is often unable to carry it out consistently. Another trait in More's account may be touched upon here. The Utopians are as devoted to peace as they are ready for war; they detest bloodshed, but are unremittingly active in their preparations for war. What German will not by this be reminded with pride of his new empire?

More's "Utopia" appeared in print towards the end of 1516, at Louvain. In 1518 two new editions were issued from Froben's office in Basle (in March and in November). Meanwhile the original edition was reprinted in Paris. English scholars were delighted with the work, and scholars on the Continent, with Erasmus at their head, even more

so; a burgomaster in Antwerp had read the book so often that he knew it by heart.

Without doubt "Utopia" is the most brilliant achievement which English humanism of that period has to show. The choice Latin which carries on the narrative so smoothly is but one of its lesser merits, for the treatise as a whole makes the impression of a work of art, and also contains a fund of deep thoughts and striking observations. Yet what makes the work, above all, valuable in the estimation of posterity, is the expression of More's unbiased and courageous opinions on political and religious subjects, the peculiar combination of deeply moral and religious seriousness, and thoroughly conservative ideas, with a fearless advance to higher culture. In this respect the work appears to us the matured product of that intellectual movement in which Colet, Erasmus, and with them More, stood as the central figures.

The same year in which "Utopia" was first published, saw Erasmus reach the zenith of his astounding productivity. In August, 1516, appeared his "Instructions of a Christian Prince," written for young Charles of Habsburg, afterwards Emperor Charles V.; some months previously the first edition of his New Testament had appeared, under the title of *Novum Instrumentum*, also his edition of the Works of St. Jerome. And much in the same way as the first-mentioned work was based upon tendencies absolutely similar to those in "Utopia," the two grand works which he edited were the outcome of the same spirit which had urged More to produce his ideal picture. What these two writers, as well as noble Colet, whom they looked up to with the utmost reverence, were, above all, striving to accomplish, may briefly be stated in a few words. Their endeavour was to do all in their power to throw new life into Christian ideas, and this they hoped to accomplish by independent inquiry into the subject, the study of the languages, conditions, and the master-minds of Antiquity; they further wished to see the life of individuals, and also that of the various States, inspired and guided by a purified form of the Christian conception of the universe. They deeply felt the necessity for a reformation in the Church, but they did not believe that this reformation need

take the form of any complete break with tradition, or the ecclesiastical power that had developed with the course of history. They hoped that the advance of knowledge, the teaching and the example of nobler minds, would gradually come to exercise a conciliatory influence upon the Head as well as upon all the various members of the Church. They attacked none of the Church dogmas; their whole conception of religion was a wider one, and directed to the very heart of the matter. Dogma interested them much less than the true spirit of Christianity; and, in order to set free this spirit of Christianity, nothing appeared to them more appropriate than to return to the first beginning of the Christian Church, as the living embodiment of the life, the teaching, and the death of its Divine Founder. Hence their earnest study of the Bible, and, above all, of the New Testament, as inaugurated by Colet and continued by Erasmus on the same lines with all the resources of his learning. Hence—in spite of deep reverence for the Scriptures—their unbiased attitude in the interpretation of the Bible by a purely historical and philological method, which rejected the system of the Schoolmen who gave subtle or allegorical interpretations, and explained away or disregarded contradictions in details. In fact, they rejected the method which made the Scriptures the basis of an artificial system of dogmas and learned opinions.

What made Erasmus's edition of the Greek Testament a work to mark an epoch, was the spirit in which it was undertaken and the method by which it was carried out. Neither the excellencies nor the errors which the criticism of the text, the Latin translation and Commentary may display, can be set against the two other points. And thus his edition of the New Testament stands in direct connection with his edition of the Works of Jerome, that Father of the Church whom Colet, and all kindred minds, revered most highly among the Latin authors, and regarded as the representative of the old, genuine style of theology and criticism which had "so long been obscured by the subtleties of the School;" for Jerome, in his day, had endeavoured to present the Scriptures in the language of the people.

Erasmus himself, in his Biblical as well as in his other works, in the first instance addresses the learned, but his

intentions went much further. In the introductory "Paraclesis" to his New Testament he writes: "In so moch that the sonne is not more comen and indifferent to all men, then this doctrine of Christ. She forbeddeth no man at all: except he abstayne willinglye, a envyinge his awne profitte. And trulye I do greatly dissent from those men which wold not that the scripture of Christ shuld be translated in to all tonges, that it might be reade diligently of the private and seculare men and women. Other as though Christ had taught soch darke and insensible thinges, that they could scante be understonde of a few divines. Or else as though the pithe and substance of the christen religion consisted chiefly in this, that it be not knowne. Peradventure it were moste expedient that the councels of kings shuld be kept secret, but Christ wold that his councelles and misteries shuld be sprede abrod as moch as is possible. I wold desire that all women shuld reade the gospell and Paules epistles, and I wold to God they were translated in to the tonges of all men. So that they might not only be read and knowne of the scotes and yryshmen, but also of the Turkes and saracenes. . . . I wold to God the plowman wold singe a texte of the scriptures at his plowbeme. And that the wever at his lowme with this wold drive away the tediousness of time. I wold the wayfaringe man with this pastyme wold expelle the wearyness of his jorney."

These wishes of Erasmus were, in a certain measure, to be fulfilled, but under very different conditions to those he had had in his mind. If he entertained the hope that under Leo X.—who had accepted the dedication of his "Novum Instrumentum"—learning as well as religion would reach their full development in Rome, and if he and his friends believed it possible that the reforms in the Church could be settled amicably—it was their Utopia.

A year after the publication of Erasmus's New Testament and of More's "Utopia"—in 1517—Dr. Martin Luther commenced in Wittenberg that mighty struggle which was to exercise a conclusive influence on the fate of Germany and of Europe. The idea with which Rome at first comforted itself, that the disturbance in Germany was a mere quarrel among the monks, could no longer be entertained. It soon became evident that there had arisen against the established

Church system an opponent more determined, ready, and fierce in combat than any before him. And with terror it was now perceived that his words and deeds reverberated throughout Germany; that, everywhere, people eagerly devoured the treatises which flowed from his fearless pen, and that they were quickly circulated in all directions by the young printing-press. What Luther now uttered, thousands had already felt in the depths of their hearts, while some were only dimly conscious of it; it was as if the German conscience had become incarnate, and arose before all the world to give its testimony.

Barely four years had passed since the commencement of the struggle when persons with an insight into matters must have clearly foreseen that any peaceable settlement, any reconciliation, between Wittenberg and Rome had become impossible. In his address "To the Christian Nobles of the German Nation" (1520) Luther had powerfully aroused German pride and German uprightness against the arrogance and perfidy of Rome, had sketched his programme for the reformation of the Church with bold strokes, and solemnly exhorted all the nobles of the land, with the Emperor at their head, to take the great work in hand. In his treatise "On Christian Liberty" (1520) the great Man of the People had revealed his inmost thoughts and the central idea of his religious views, with affecting as well as captivating force. The Pope had hurled his bull of excommunication against Luther, and his books had been publicly burnt in Cologne and Louvain; but, on the 10th of December, 1520, Luther himself cast the Papal bull and decretals into the flames. A few months later, at Worms, he stood before the Emperor and the assembled representatives of the empire in the whole steadfastness of his faith. No other decision was possible than to condemn him as an outlaw; but it became more and more evident how great had become his influence among the German people in all directions.

While this movement, which was agitating Germany, was still in its first stages, the death of venerable Colet took place in 1519. Erasmus was watching the struggle of intellects with sympathy, surprise, and perplexity; when the waves began to roll high, he appealed to both parties in his

endeavour to mediate. The turn which matters subsequently took, brought him disappointment upon disappointment, and caused him increased perplexity of mind. Sir Thomas More, who was perhaps the most courageous of the three friends in theory, and the most conservative in practice, had, at an early date, recognized the vast difference between Luther's Reformation and the aims of his own party.

This difference is very remarkable, and of such a kind that an investigator of our day—were he a true child of his age—would, in the first instance, be disposed to give his whole sympathy to the Oxford men. For it cannot be denied, theoretically at least, that the latter stand much nearer our modern point of view, and that Luther, when compared with them, seems still to belong completely to the Middle Ages. Luther attached himself to Augustine, like the Middle Ages in general, while the Oxford men followed Jerome. The former avowed his adherence to an uncompromising theory in the (literal) inspiration of the Scriptures; the latter, with all reverence for the Word of God, held more liberal views. With the former, dogmatism formed the centre of the religious interest; with the latter it was the primitive history of Christianity and Christian morality. Strict adherence to the Confession was maintained by the former, whereas the latter showed a decided leaning to tolerance. But all this was light in weight compared with the two points which, in the judgment of History, have to be placed in the scales in Luther's favour. For Luther gave his own day what it required, and had the courage and the power to carry the multitude with him. Colet, Erasmus, and More were unable to do either the one or the other.

How premature the standpoint of tolerance adopted by the Oxford men was, is revealed with horrible clearness by the position in which generous-hearted More subsequently found himself when, in all seriousness, he was called upon to defend the airy principles he had put forward by his own actions. It had been easy to discourse, playfully as it were, on wider views as long as there seemed no immediate danger that the existing system of Church and State would thereby be imperilled, as long as no manifest signs of the beginning of a struggle were apparent to force

every one to take an energetic part in it. The hour of danger came at last, with the prospect of an endless series of doubtful consequences, and More seemed to himself like one who had been playing with fire and whose duty it now was, first of all, to help in quenching the flames that were spreading. The time was not ripe for tolerance, and the reformation it was panting for, could be obtained only by means of fierce conflicts and violent agitations.

If pious humanists and learned priests had been allowed quietly to pursue their attempts at reform, and they had not been turned aside in their aims by the bitter attacks made upon them, the result would probably have been that existing abuses would not have been removed, or mitigated only at one or the other point, and that the advance of culture would have alienated an ever-increasing number of men from the Church and from Christianity. The people, on the other hand, would have become more and more entangled in superstition, in the reverence for what was purely outward; while the number of those who cherished true Christianity would have become ever less and less.

This danger Luther helped to avert, and herein lies his greatness. If the Christian religion has been saved, it is in a great measure owing to his distinguished services. Knowledge and art would probably—even without him—have developed more fully and freely during the succeeding epochs. But it was Luther who stirred men's consciences, it was he who gave the impulse to the religious movement which spread from Germany to other lands, and even carried its adversaries with it. He broke up the world, and, above all, his own country, into hostile armies, and kindled a war the consequences of which are still evident among us, and which, in fact, has not yet been fought out. Priceless things have been destroyed by it, but greater than our loss has been our gain in the end. For inasmuch as Luther freed and strengthened men's consciences, he prepared the soil from which all the culture of later times was to draw its best nourishment.

Luther was not, as a scholar, equal to Erasmus, nor perhaps as a dialectician equal to Thomas More; but he surpassed both by the enormous power of his religious spirit, and by the force of a nature which included the

noblest characteristics of the German nationality. In many-sidedness of intellect he could not compete with the two humanists; but he possessed the sterling nature, the robust decision, the self-sufficiency, the fearless courage of a man of action, and, within his own sphere, an inexhaustible wealth of ideas, such as is met with only in the greatest heroes of history.

Luther's ideas arose from the depths of his own struggling soul. The fundamental thought of his system upon which —almost of necessity—everything else was based, satisfied the inmost needs of his own nature as well as the demands of the German character generally. People had become more than ever painfully conscious of the ever-widening gulf between the real and the ideal, between the law and its fulfilment, between the claims and the actual performances of the Church. To the simple German mind the niceties of distinctions, so delectable to the quick-witted nations of the south, were as little intelligible as the mercantile treatment of things sacred, which to the Italians seemed natural enough. Minds were in a state of ferment and perplexity, and it was the better men, in particular, who thirsted for comfort and support. It was then that Luther appeared, and it was precisely those ideas most apt to burden the conscience that became, through him, the means of freeing it. Augustine's doctrine of grace Luther followed to its harshest consequences; human will appeared to him absolutely unfree, insensible of good. How, therefore, was man to exist in face of the majesty of the law, the sinner before the Eternal Judge? Christ had atoned for us, yet how was the individual to obtain his share of the grace that had been acquired for him? By faith. By faith we are saved and receive the certainty of salvation. He who believes that Christ has delivered him, is actually delivered, and needs nothing beyond this for his happiness. Full of gratitude and love for the unmerited favour of God, man does the good which God has effected in him, without regard to his own future, which, indeed, is already secured, but only through our love for God and our neighbour.

Who would fail to recognize the questionableness but, at the same time, the grandeur and sublimity of this doctrine? Virtue appears here to be the fruit of joy and

love—the result, not the condition, of happiness. Happiness is granted solely by the Divine grace through faith.

Such a doctrine left no scope for any device to remedy the evils in the Church with all its complicated apparatus. In place of the priest there was to be only the Servant of the Word, the proclaimer of the glad tidings; of the Sacraments two only were retained that had any direct reference to faith: Baptism, through which as children we enter the community of the faithful, and the Lord's Supper, whereby the faithful Christian—but he alone—receives the Body and Blood of Christ, and partakes of the fruits of His Passion. All else that does not proceed from the central dogma, that even doubts its absolute certainty, or implies any manner of attempt "to make assurance double sure," is unessential, dispensable, nay, even hurtful and damnable. There was to be an end to the Sacrifice of the Mass, and to Latin in churches, because it constituted an invisible barrier between the clergy and the laity; there was to be an end to the more actual barrier of the celibacy of the clergy; there was to be an end to the adoration of saints, to the worship of pictures and relics; there was to be an end to religious houses, to the life of anchorites—in short, to all the institutions and devices invented by anxious solicitude for the avoidance of sin or the acquisition of spiritual benefits.

The church service was to be centred in the sermon, but, in connection with it, the congregation were to join heartily in the singing of hymns in their native tongue, proclaiming their own faith and arousing it in others. And the Bible alone was to teach what had to be preached, and what had to be believed. By annulling the authority of the ecclesiastical hierarchy, ecclesiastical tradition was also destroyed.

Luther's doctrine was in more than one respect allied to Wycliffism, and is, of course, historically connected with it by interposition of the Hussite movement; in fact, it may even be said to represent the crowning point—the fulfilment of Wycliff's system. That the German Reformation found receptive ground in England above all other countries was, therefore, inevitable. For, in spite of the bloody persecution of the fifteenth century, the Lollard sect still existed there in secret, although greatly diminished in numbers,

and had adherents especially among the artisan and mercantile classes. In these spheres, but also at the universities and among the lawyers and clergy, Luther's writings, at an early date, found numerous readers, and won enthusiastic disciples for his doctrine.

Still, the greater the danger that threatened the old Church in England, the more zealous were the ecclesiastical and secular authorities in their determination to combat it. The interest in theological concerns which we observed in Henry VII. manifested itself in his son Henry VIII. in a remarkably heightened degree. A certain contemplative kind of nature with considerable energy of mind, strong passions, and a reckless policy formed a strange combination in him. On more than one occasion the King had given proof of his zeal for the Catholic cause, and of his reverence for the Pope. When Louis XII. forfeited the title, Henry VIII. was proclaimed the Most Christian King and Defender of the Faith; and, in 1521, at one of the Roman consistories, a proposal was even made to confer upon him the predicate of *rex angelicus*. That same year Henry wrote his treatise "Against the arch heretic Luther," with special reference to Luther's "On Babylonian Captivity," a Latin thesis on the seven sacraments; * and thus his claim to the title of *defensor fidei* received brilliant confirmation and recognition. The English prelate who at once and most energetically followed the King's example was the Bishop of Rochester. At the command of Wolsey—"within the octaves of Ascensyon Day"—he delivered, before a large and brilliant audience, a most eloquent and learned discourse "against the pernicyous doctryn of Martin luuther," † which was shortly afterwards printed by Wynkyn de Worde.

"Full often"—said the orator—"whan the daye is clere and the sonne shyneth bryght, ryseth in some quarter of the heven a thycke blacke clowde, that darketh al the face of the heven and shadoweth from us the clere light of the sonne, and stereth an hydeous tempest and maketh a great lyghtnynge, and thondereth terrybly, so that the weyke soules and feble hertes be put in grete fere and made almost

* First edition, London, 1521; second, Antwerp, 1522.

† *The English Works of John Fisher*, ed. John E. B. Mayor, i. 311, ff.

desperate for lacke of comforte. In lyke maner it is in the chyrch of christ, whan the lyght of fayth (that shyneth from the spyrytual sonne almyghty god) hathe bene clere and bryght a good season, hathe rysen many a time some blacke clowde of heresy, and stered suche a tempest and made such a lyghtlynge and so terribly thondered that many a weyke soule hath myscaryed therby." Pathetic, energetic, and impressive as the sermon is, it nevertheless exhibits, in spirit and tendency, a certain moderation which affects us favourably when we consider Fisher's strict, unswerving orthodoxy. In his Latin controversial writings we, indeed, look in vain for any such moderation, and he was the first to advise forcible, bloody means for the suppression of heresy.

Meanwhile the religious agitation had found its spiritual head in England, who, at first, worked secretly in spreading the new doctrine. Luther's German translation of the New Testament had appeared in September, 1522, and by December a new edition was issued. It was about this same date that *William Tindale* formed the plan of translating the Holy Scriptures into English.

Tindale, who was an ecclesiastic without a living, and already close upon forty, was at that time preceptor in the house of Sir John Walsh, a gentleman in Gloucestershire, and already pretty well known on account of his bold religious views. Like William Langland and Nicholas de Hereford, he was born on the borders of Wales. He had first studied at Oxford, where he had seen Colet—and may even have heard him—afterwards at Cambridge, where he came under the influence of Erasmus and studied Greek. Love for the Scriptures and an earnest desire to study them, are said to have been an early trait in his character. Accordingly, the seeds scattered by Erasmus fell on fertile soil in his case, and in the school of the great Dutchman he became ripe for Luther's doctrine. Owing to the pre-eminently practical bent of his mind, he was less clearly conscious of the differences that existed between these two teachers, than he was of the principles upon which they agreed. For both men Tindale entertained the deepest veneration, and honestly shared their detestation of idle monks, the ignorant clergy, sophistical schoolmen, luxurious priests, and ambitious prelates. At the table of Sir John

Walsh and elsewhere, Tindale had to fight out many a battle with doctors and priests on the theological questions and the theological lions of the day. This led to many unpleasantries, to suspicious and hostile feelings being raised against him, at last even to spiritual inquiries being instituted, and to his receiving strong reprimands. However, he continued his studies and work, and translated an oration of Isocrates and the "Enchiridion" of Erasmus into English. And while constantly studying his Bible, his religious convictions were ever taking more definite shape. Luther's doctrine of justification by faith he took up eagerly, yet, in him, it became diluted with a certain amount of English "common sense." Where he enters upon this subject in his works, we occasionally meet with a want of uniformity, with a species of timidity endeavouring to mediate, and with a certain degree of inconsistency, at all events in expression. And with regard to the Lord's Supper, in the course of time Tindale arrived at a conviction which differed from Luther's and was more in keeping with the views of Zwingli. However, in the interests of peace he zealously endeavoured, as far as possible, not to bring this subject of dissent prominently forward. The essential point for Tindale was to do away with the Papal system, in order that freedom and grace might be looked for solely in Christ, and truth solely in the Holy Scriptures. He expected wonders from the circulation of the Bible in the language of the people, and hence took in hand the work by which he hoped—as Erasmus had done—shortly to enable every ploughboy to understand the Scriptures as well as the theologians who had made life so hard for him. Tindale was a man of sincere piety, kindly, peace-loving, modest, and of insignificant appearance, distinguished more for solid than for brilliant qualities of mind, persevering, unwearied, and self-sacrificing. And to his convictions and to the task he had set himself, he sacrificed not only the peace and comfort of life, but, in the end, life itself.

When he could no longer remain in Gloucestershire, Tindale, in the autumn of 1523, repaired to London. He there preached several times in St. Dunstan's in the West, and meanwhile looked about for employment. The praise

which Erasmus, in his writings, had bestowed upon Cuthbert Tunstall, Bishop of London at the time, induced the idealist to try and obtain a chaplaincy under him. In this, however, Tindale was unsuccessful, but was fortunate enough in finding a home in the house of Humphrey Monmouth, a wealthy and benevolent cloth merchant. With him he lived for six months, hard at work with his translation of the New Testament, till it became evident to him that, in order to complete his task thoroughly, he would have to quit his native land. In Germany, Tindale knew he would be sure to find men ready to help him in his undertaking, men acquainted with Hebrew; and in Germany, too, he could have his translation printed—in fact, felt that he would be freer in every respect. Some connection with the Hansa Steele Yard in London may have determined him, in the first instance, to travel to Hamburg, where he remained for a year or more.* In the summer of 1525 he repaired to Cologne, with the view of having his New Testament printed. He was accompanied by a fellow-countryman, William Roy, formerly a Franciscan, who now assisted him in revising and collating his text; this Roy was a somewhat turbulent, uncouth individual, but Tindale had to put up with his society as long as he required his help. The printing was carried on briskly in the printing-office of Peter Quental, till Cochlæus, Luther's well-known opponent, who was in Cologne at the time, got wind of the matter. Cochlæus stirred up the friends of the English Government and of the Papacy, and through their intervention succeeded in getting the civil authorities in Cologne to stop the printing of the dangerous book, which had not got beyond the Gospel of St. Matthew. The two Englishmen escaped up the Rhine with their printed sheets, and did not halt till they reached Worms. Tindale here forthwith made arrangements for a new edition of his translation in octavo form, and had the one which had been commenced in Cologne, completed in quarto, more sumptuous in form and furnished with marginal references and glosses. Both editions were published at the beginning of 1526. Of the octavo edition,† one complete and one

* Perhaps with interruptions. During this period Tindale seems to have revised his translation of the Gospels of St. Matthew and St. Mark. Of these editions, however, nothing has been preserved.

† Facsimile reproduction by Fry, Bristol, 1862.

fragmentary copy have been preserved. The only copy now existing of the quarto edition contains merely a portion—the greater part, it is true—of the fragment printed in Cologne by Peter Quental.*

This translation of the New Testament is an achievement which deserves to occupy our attention somewhat. If Tindale's adversaries reproach him for having in all essential points merely reproduced Luther's version, and if this verdict has even been confirmed by his admirers of our own day, later inquiry has thrown fuller light upon the injustice done him. Tindale was, of course, acquainted with Luther's translation, and it had been carefully compared; he also proves himself to have been wholly dependent upon his German predecessor for the outward arrangement of the quarto edition, and also for the wording, or at all events the contents, of most ot the glosses introduced; and in his Prologue—which, likewise, is to be found only in the quarto edition—he quotes more than half of Luther's short preface. But, on the other hand, it is a very different matter as regards the actual translation of the New Testament. Here the original Greek text of Erasmus's second or third edition † was unquestionably his actual source; while as regards the works which influenced Tindale's views and his choice of expression, Erasmus's Latin version must rank first and Luther's translation only second. The influence exercised on Tindale by the Latin Vulgate and Wycliff's translation of it was much less—nay, altogether insignificant.

The conspicuous feature of originality which has just been insisted upon is not the only trait by which Tindale's work is distinguished. This first attempt at an English translation of the Bible since the efforts of Wycliff and his friends, is one of the most successful that has ever appeared, being particularly excellent as regards language, and, above all, is the one which has exercised the widest influence. This earliest printed form of the New Testament in English, is the first of a long series of English editions of the Bible, of attempts in translation and revision, which was not brought to a close till nearly a century afterwards, in 1611. It is a universally admitted fact, that the Authorized English

* Facsimile reproduction by Edward Arber, London, 1871.
† The former had appeared in 1519, the latter in 1522.

version of the Bible is a work in which the English language is presented in its full and simple grandeur and vigorous beauty. It is a fact as widely recognized that the English Bible has exercised an immense influence upon the whole culture of the nation, on its life as well as its thought, and on the development of its literature both in poetry and prose. Now, among all those who have helped, by sketching the plans and hewing the stones, to raise this magnificent structure—which was completed in the reign of James I.—there is no one to whom so large a share of the whole success is due, than to William Tindale.

Soon after the publication of this New Testament, copies of both editions were sent to England. As early as the spring of 1526, several appear to have existed there. Some months later the authorities had their attention drawn to the encroaching danger, and determined to take energetic measures to suppress it. Cuthbert Tunstall delivered a sermon at St. Paul's Cross—probably in September—which left nothing to be desired in the way of vehemence and resoluteness; he condemned the new translation of the Bible as heretical, and warned all good citizens and Christians against reading it, as it contained over three thousand errors. Whole baskets full of the work were burnt in public. Other measures followed: pastoral addresses, strong protests, and threats of punishment were issued against all such persons as read the heretical Bible, who secreted copies or helped to circulate them.

The resistance which the authorities met with in these endeavours was the more persistent, as it was carried on in secret, and could neither be watched or even estimated Tindale's adherents formed a close phalanx, the individuals as such, being in most cases known only to one another, and they had at their disposal no inconsiderable sums of money and a variety of means of communication. The main body of their party was formed by English merchants on the Continent, especially in Antwerp; they were joined by a number of persons of the mercantile and working classes in England, who held similar views, but also by persons in other spheres of life. Tindale was continually being provided with money for carrying on his work, and new means for smuggling his publications into England and

for circulating them there, were ever being devised. It was in vain that Archbishop Warham, in 1527, purchased all the copies of Tindale's translation which his agents could manage to collect in order to have them burnt; in vain that Bishop Tunstall, a few years afterwards, took measures of a similar kind. New editions—sometimes surreptitious reprints—were for ever being issued by the Antwerp press, and the money which the English prelates spent in trying to suppress the heresy, proved a great boon to the followers of the new doctrine.

It also proved of no avail that in addition to hunting down the books, they persecuted people as well; that some of the heretics and those who befriended heretics—those who read or concealed heretical works—were regarded as responsible for them, and hence imprisoned, tortured, and executed. All such measures were but as oil to the flames.

Tindale had meanwhile been incessantly at work, great as were the difficulties he had to contend with. Agents of the English Government were always on his track, and endeavoured to place every conceivable obstacle in his way; in many places his life was in danger, or persecution awaited him, and he was forced to lead a restless, wandering life; we find him in Marburg, then in Antwerp, then again in Marburg, again at Hamburg, and finally, again in Antwerp; ever zealously at work with the continuation of his great undertaking—the translation of the Old Testament. In 1531 the Pentateuch * appeared, in the translation of which he had been assisted by Miles Coverdale, an Augustinian from Yorkshire. Tindale, at the time of his death, had finished the other historical works of the Old Testament as far as the Second Book of Chronicles. And in addition to this chief performance had written other smaller works: introductory and exegetical papers, and a number of tracts, doctrinal, exhortative, and polemical in character.

In his Prologue to the quarto edition of his New Testament, Tindale had already briefly declared Luther's doctrine of justification by faith to be the main substance of the Gospels. Subsequently he published the main contents of this Prologue, with some additions, as a separate tract

* *Genesis* was printed in Marburg, the rest partly in Hamburg, partly again in Marburg.

under the title of "Life and Pathway into the Holy Scriptures." Before the end of the year 1526, however, he had again handled the same theme in his "Prologue upon the Epistle of St. Paul to the Romans," which in all essential points is a paraphrase of Luther's Preface to that book. This same subject is worked out more fully and independently, and from a broader point of view, in his "Parable of the wycked Mammon," which appeared in 1527.

In the following year Tindale published the most important of his tracts, "The Obedience of a Christian Man." The English Reformer here presents a fuller account than elsewhere of his own views as opposed to those prevailing in the Romish Church. He, in the first place, broaches the subject of the obedience of children to their parents, of wives to their husbands, of servants to their masters, of subjects to those in authority, and connects all this with a sharp diatribe against "the Pope's false power." Thereupon he explains the duties of those in authority—of the father, the husband, the master, the lord of the manor, and, above all, the duties of kings and magistrates. This is followed by an account and criticism of Antichrist and his adherents, a discourse on the Sacraments, of the value to be set in miracles and the adoration of the saints, an address on Prayer, and finally a vehement protest against the fourfold interpretation of the Holy Scriptures adopted by the Schoolmen.

In judging of Tindale as an author he must not be compared with Luther. The concise brevity, the striking logic, the genial flashes of intellect, which characterize the writings of the German Reformer, will be looked for in vain in the Englishman. The breadth of Tindale's presentation, his various digressions, render it difficult for the reader to concentrate his attention upon the subject; whereas in Luther one argument follows the other in the simplest manner; each succeeding one strengthening the last, and placing it in a new light; all is unexpected, surprising, and, taken as a whole, a powerfully riveted chain which holds the reader's attention and keeps him to the subject. Tindale does not lay hold of his reader like Luther, time and inclination are needed to enjoy him. But, on the other hand, the reader is powerfully affected by the depth of his convictions, the

fulness of his arguments, the force of his descriptions, and many good ideas—and, above all, affected by the sincerity of the man. Thus, in his Preface, Tindale says, "Let it not make thee despair, neither yet discourage thee, o Reader, that it is forbidden thee in pain of life and goods, or that it is made breaking of the king's peace, or treason unto his highness, to read the word of thy soul's health. But rather be bold in the Lord, and comfort thy soul: forasmuch as thou art sure and hast an evident token through such persecution, that it is the true word of God; which word is ever hated of the world, neither was ever without persecution, (as thou seest in all the stories of the Bible, both of the New Testament and also of the Old) neither can be, no more than the sun can be without his light; and forasmuch as contrariwise thou art sure that the pope's doctrine is not of God, which (as thou seest) is so agreeable unto the world, and is so received of the world; or which rather so receiveth the world and the pleasures of the world, and seeketh nothing but the possessions of the world, and authority in the world, and to bear a rule in the world; and persecuteth the word of God, and with all wiliness driveth people from it, and with false and sophistical reasons maketh them afraid of it; yea, curseth them, and excommunicateth them, and bringeth them in belief that they be damned if they look at it, and that it is but doctrine to deceive men; and moveth the blind powers of the world to slay with fire, water and sword, all that cleave unto it: for the world loveth that which is his, and hateth that which is chosen out of the world to serve God in the spirit, as Christ saith to his disciples, John xv.: if ye were of the world, the world would love his own, but I have chosen you out of the world, and therefore the world hateth you." *

Several other combatants besides Tindale joined in the religious literary feud. A member of Grey's Inn, Simon Fish, who had taken part in Roo's political Moral Play,† and been persecuted by Wolsey in consequence, wrote, somewhere about 1529, a short but able treatise against the wealth of the luxurious and useless prelates, priests, and

* *Doctrinal Treatises*, etc., by William Tyndale, ed. for the Parker Society, Cambridge, 1848, p. 131, ff.

† See above, p. 123.

monks, in the form of a "Supplicacyon for the Beggars," addressed to the King. This tract was smuggled into the King's hands, and he is said to have been delighted with it; it was one of the forerunners announcing the coming dissolution of the monasteries and the secularization of Church property. William Roy, Tindale's former assistant, and Jerome Barlowe—also a truant Franciscan—published, on the Continent, vehement satires, partly in verse, against High Mass, Wolsey, and the clergy generally. John Frith, too (who stood faithfully by Tindale in his later years of wandering—as Timothy had stood by St. Paul—and who, finally, when sent by his master to the English community, fell into the hands of the authorities, was imprisoned, and executed), wrote on various subjects, more especially on the Lord's Supper, which he, like Tindale—and, indeed, all of their party—regarded more from Zwingli's point of view than Luther's. This same subject was also handled by George Joy, another associate of Tindale's, who, in the end, caused him much sorrow. Tindale himself, who had long been cautiously silent on this matter, and had exhorted others to remain silent, found himself compelled to take up the knotty question, and to discuss it fully and publicly.*

The chief combatant on the Catholic side, after 1528, was Sir Thomas More.

After entering the service of the court, More's career had been one of constant promotion. He had been Chancellor of the Exchequer, then Master of Requests or Examiner of Petitions; he had been knighted, had been elected Speaker of the House of Commons, and, in 1528, had been appointed by the King, Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster. In October of the following year, Wolsey's fall paved the way to More's reaching the top of the ladder by being appointed Lord Chancellor of England. Such a career could not fail to exercise a definite influence upon More's opinions and the manner in which he upheld them. The bold theoriser, as we have already seen, was most conservative in practice. The court atmosphere he breathed, the personal influence of the King, the responsible offices he held,—all this contributed to make him more than ever conservative and

* *A fruitful and godly treatise*, etc., printed in the *Doctrinal Treatises*, etc., p. 347, ff.

cautious. Under any circumstances, proceedings like Luther's and Tindale's must have aroused great displeasure in a man who was deeply attached to the institutions of his Church. As matters stood, the turn which the religious agitation had taken, was to him intolerable. Theological interests had affected him deeply from early youth, and the tendencies which prevailed in court circles brought them more home to him than ever. Hence the King's wishes as well as his own feelings were followed, when he took up his pen to warn and to protect his countrymen against the pernicious innovations and heresies. The most fortunate part of the matter was that in doing this More was for some length of time again engaged in writing in his mother-tongue.

Sir Thomas More began his polemical activity as Chancellor of Lancaster. In March, 1528, he obtained from his friend Bishop Tunstall permission to read heretical books with a view to denouncing them. That same year he made use of the permission obtained, and wrote his "Dialogue," * a comprehensive work in four Books, where he discusses the veneration and worship of images and saints, praying to saints, pilgrimages, and many other matters, but above all, the "pestilential sect of Luther and Tindale." In the following year he replied to Simon Fish's "Supplicacyon for the Beggars" with a "Supplycacyon for Souls" in purgatory, who, it seems, could not dispense either with the Masses to be read for them, or with the intercession of pious priests and monks. When Tindale, in 1530, had written a reply to More's "Dialogue," which was published in the spring of the following year, More commenced his extremely lengthy "Refutation of Tindale's Reply." He had finished the first three Books of his treatise—which refer only to thirty pages of his adversary's work, yet in Rastell's edition (1532) occupy over three hundred and sixty folio pages—when he found himself compelled to seek permission to retire from his post as Lord Chancellor, which permission was granted on the 16th of May, 1532. During the leisure which followed his retirement, More published the six other

* *A dialogue of Sir Thomas More, knt., one of the council of our sovereign lord the king, and chancellor of his duchy of Lancaster. . . . Made in the year of our Lord*, 1528. It is supposed that this work was not published till the summer of 1529.

Books of his "Refutation," and, in fact, throughout this short period of rest and domestic happiness, which, however, was already affected by the thunder-clouds looming in the distance, More's pen was incessantly at work. This period also saw the publication of his treatise on the "Separation of spiritual and temporal powers," his "Apology" (1533), his "Defence of his Apology," and other two controversial papers on the Lord's Supper, the first (1532) against John Frith, the second (1533) against an anonymous heretical writer,* considered by some to have been Tindale, by others—probably with more justice—to have been George Joy.

The "Apology," although not a work of art, will always have a personal interest to More's admirers. The literary historian, however, would very gladly draw a veil over his polemical treatises on religious subjects. They certainly give us the opportunity of admiring More's enormous capacity for work, the fluency of his pen, his great learning and command of the English language; but one cannot help wishing that his capacity for work and his learning had been utilized for other purposes, and his good English applied to other subjects. We recognize in these writings the acute dialectician, but he appears here as the impulsive advocate who—with a somewhat guilty conscience—endeavours to make amends for his own errors, or what he considers to be errors, and thus ends in contradicting his own statements. His wit—one of his most delightful gifts—even manages to flavour his polemical treatises: very ingenious is the form given to his "Supplicacyon for Souls," and we meet with good ideas and happy turns here as elsewhere; still, very often his wit is applied at a wrong moment, very often it gives his presentation the colour of a malicious pasquil. His inclination to jest, which sprang from a kindly and cheerful nature, becomes mere mannerism and even absurd, when gaiety has vanished and all beauty seems obscured. Everywhere traces of abundant talent are observable; but the occasion, More's own frame of mind, and the fatal diffuseness to which his ability

* *An answer to the first part of a poisoned book which a nameless heretic hath named "The Supper of the Lord."* The anonymous treatise is to be found in the collection of papers entitled *An Answer to Sir Thomas More's Dialogue*, etc., by William Tyndale, ed. for the Parker Society, Cambridge, 1850, p. 222, ff.

and haste have misled him, do not allow of any æsthetic impression being made. Something of the old More is met with at times, inasmuch as in fundamental and general matters he manifests a certain large-heartedness and moderation; but this fundamental large-heartedness does not exclude much narrow-heartedness in his judgment of special cases. His moderation in general cases is coupled with great personal bitterness against his adversaries. More was unquestionably far superior to Tindale in intellect and learning, and yet in his dispute with Tindale he plays a miserable figure. Tindale can refer to his own former statements, and to his intercourse with Erasmus; More, who had become unfaithful to his opinions of former days, has to defend himself with wretched evasions, and to take his opponent's supposed evil intentions as his shield. Tindale appears to be playing the part of a persecuted man suffering for his faith; More—once a preacher of tolerance—comes forward as the persecutor, the merciless judge of heretics. He had so far forgotten the principles he expressed in his "Utopia" that he spoke openly in favour of burning stubborn heretics. We cannot forget that the man who had the heart to do this was Lord Chancellor of England, that, in this capacity, he examined poor wretches suspected of being heretics, and that, even though he was not guilty of having ever condemned one to death—we unhesitatingly accept his own assurance on this point—still, on many occasions he made life bitter enough to them.

Few things are more adapted to make us realize the weakness of human nature, and the immense gulf that lies between mere theoretical speculation and the proof we have to offer of the sincerity of our ideas, than this melancholy episode in More's life, when it is compared with the glorious days of his earlier years. Rarely has fate allowed herself to indulge in such trenchant irony as in the metamorphosis by which the author of "Utopia" became the author of the "Confutacyon of Tindale."

Fate owed More some compensation, the opportunity for making atonement; and this was granted him, but in such a manner that the irony of fate again asserted itself, and even more powerfully than it had done before. In the King's

service, and to some extent for the King's sake, More had become untrue to his better self. The King now gave him the opportunity of rehabilitating himself in the eyes of the world and before his own conscience.

Even when More had first entered upon his duties as Lord Chancellor in Wolsey's place, events were already at work that were eventually to turn the *Defensor fidei* into the Head of a schismatic Church. For several years past King Henry's brooding nature had been in doubt about the validity of his marriage with Catherine of Aragon, the widow of his brother Arthur. And these scruples, nourished by the policy of Wolsey, became of real force and importance when, about the year 1527, a passion was aroused in the King's heart for the lovely Anne Boleyn. Energetic measures were now taken in Rome to obtain the Pope's sanction for a divorce from Catherine; theologians, canons, and learned bodies were appealed to for their opinion. All Europe was occupied with the question, and a number of persons brought forward their ideas uninvited. Luther and Tindale were absolutely opposed to the divorce. The latter, who had recognized Wolsey's hand in the whole affair, wrote a powerful treatise on the subject, and one of the most attractive that had proceeded from his pen, entitled "The Practyse of Prelates" (Marburg, 1530). Tindale here censures the course pursued by the Government, and at the same time presents an historical account of the development of the hierarchy and of the crafty policy of priests from the very outset up to his own day, and included Wolsey's proceedings. When this treatise appeared, Wolsey had already fallen into disgrace. His endeavours to obtain the wished-for divorce through the Pope's authority had proved unsuccessful, owing to the policy of the Spanish court, and mainly because of the Pope's fear of the power of Charles V. Wolsey was regarded as the guilty party when the King now appeared the victim of base intrigues, as a perplexed and deceived man, and hence the fall of the universally hated prelate was inevitable. Sir Thomas More was a resolute adherent of Catherine's cause, yet did not venture to come forward in her favour, but endeavoured rather, in his position as Lord Chancellor, to act in accordance with the King's commands as far as possible. When a

forcible solution of the weighty question became unavoidable and was actually taken in hand, More asked and received permission to retire from office. Thereupon, under the combined influence of patriotic sentiments and egotistical impulses, of the national consciousness and strong passions, events of the gravest kind were forced to the front: the King's secret marriage with Anne Boleyn, his public divorce from Catherine, the coronation of the new Queen, and, above all—as the crowning deed to a series of prefatory acts—the proclamation of the King's supremacy in all ecclesiastical matters, and his absolute break with Rome.

Thomas More had, meanwhile, been residing at his country house at Chelsea, devoting himself to his family and to his studies; and although he continued the religious controversy in his former style, still, in the midst of his domestic circle and in the society of his wife, children, and dependents, the pure humanity and genuinely religious character of his mind burst forth more brilliantly than ever. Yet, when called upon, with the other nobles of the kingdom, to give his oath to the act of succession—which, in consequence of preliminary formulas, included the oath of the King's supremacy—More steadfastly refused to sacrifice his conscience to King Henry, and was accordingly sent to the Tower, and died on the scaffold on the 6th of July, 1535.

The last months of More's life and his death have enveloped his memory in a glorified light; the man's faithfulness to his convictions, his strength of character, his deep piety as a Christian, his touching tenderness as husband and father, the cheerful nature of his stoicism, combined with the refined humanity and kindly wit which adorned the character of this noblest of all humanists—were never more beautifully revealed in him than while in prison, confronting his judges, or facing death. And as the best of what existed in him, and lives on for posterity in his "Utopia," culminates and is concentrated in his death, so the figure of Thomas More, in literature and in history, radiates with inexhaustible splendour as the image of one of the greatest intellects and noblest characters which the English nation has ever produced.

A fortnight before More's execution, John Fisher had suffered the same death for the same cause. Soon after this

Tindale was arrested in Antwerp, imprisoned in the Castle of Vilvorde, and after a long term of confinement, was strangled and burnt as a heretic on the 6th of October, 1536. On the 11th of July of that same year Erasmus closed his rich life at Basle, amid great sufferings and bitter disappointments.

A great period of culture had come to an end, but the more important of the questions that had been broached remained unsolved, the development which had been begun had not reached its full maturity in any one domain.

We shall now, in the first place, follow the progress of prose on more neutral ground, and with this object in view shall have to retrace our steps somewhat.

V.

In the year 1523 the first volume of the English translation of Froissart's "Chronicles" had appeared, and was followed two years later by the second volume. The translator, John Bourchier, *Lord Berners*, was a gentleman of position, and a faithful servant both to Henry VII. and Henry VIII. in their wars as well as in diplomatic affairs. Under the first of the Tudors he had assisted in quelling a rebellion in Cornwall, and under Henry VIII. had taken a prominent part in the war with Scotland at the time when the English gained the battle at Flodden. As Chancellor of the Exchequer and at the Spanish court he had undertaken diplomatic work. He had also repeatedly acted as negotiator of peace, and yet never neglected attending the meetings of Parliament, of which he was a member. In 1520, after receiving many honours, and already a man of fifty, with his health greatly impaired, in perpetual monetary difficulties, and involved in vexatious legal proceedings, Berners was appointed Governor of Calais; here, after a life of varied activity, he enjoyed at all events some degree of leisure, and this he devoted to literary work.

Berners was an industrious reader, and his chivalrous temperament was mainly attracted by historical works, whether true or fictitious, by accounts of great men, descriptions of battles, heroic deeds, and remarkable

adventures. His acquaintance with the French language, together, perhaps, with some knowledge of Spanish, opened up to him many literary sources which were sealed to the majority of his countrymen, and it was his wish to make at least some of these works accessible to the English barons and knights. That his choice should have first fallen upon Froissart, whose vivacious account centres finally upon the differences between England and France, was natural enough in a Governor of Calais. In translating the old Chronicler, Berners was at the same time complying with the wishes—nay, with the commands—of the King, whose policy had meanwhile taken a direction antagonistic to France. Froissart's work was well adapted to stir up in the English people the old feelings of rivalry with France; and, by reminding them of their lost possessions there, and the glorious deeds of the Black Prince and other national heroes, aroused the English love of warfare.

The most suitable form that can well be imagined for this material and a vivacious interpretation of the subject, is the purely epic presentation it had received in Froissart's hands. In endeavouring to reproduce approximately its charm in a foreign language, those will succeed best, therefore, who translate it with the greatest possible fidelity, so far as their own idiom corresponds with the naïve and striking form, and the simple construction of the sentences of the French Chronicler. Lord Berners' language and translation are of this kind, and hence his version makes the impression almost of being an original work. Powerful, therefore, was the effect it produced, particularly upon the English aristocracy. The national sentiments, as well as the chivalrous and romantic tendencies of the day, drew new nourishment from Berners' "Froissart;" for, as the work presented a detailed, picturesque, and vivid account of an important epoch in England's past, it aroused an interest in historical matters which could now, for the first time, find gratification in an admirable delineation in native prose.

Lord Berners, however, thereupon directed his attention to subjects of another species, and translated the French prose-romances of "Huon de Bordeaux," "Artus de Bretaigne," or, as he calls it, "Arthur of Little Britain,"

and also the Spanish romance of "The Castle of Love," * perhaps from a French version. The most important of these works is the one first mentioned. "Huon de Bordeaux" is one of the best and most attractive romances of chivalry which the Middle Ages have handed down to our day. For even though the French prose-version (produced about 1454) lacks strict unity of conception and construction—for, in addition to the nucleus offered by the *Chanson de Geste* of the twelfth century, it includes also the greater portion of the additions the "Chanson" received subsequently—still it contains so much grace in the narrative and descriptions, such happy motives for the story and the delineation of the characters, that, with some abbreviations, a reader of our day even would find pleasure in perusing it. In Berners' translation the narrative lost nothing of its attractiveness, and hence the book became, in England, one of the favourite romances of the sixteenth century, and an important volume in the library of every gentleman. It was not published till about 1534, a year after the author's death; a second edition appeared about 1570, and a third in 1601. If the hero of this romance won, for a time, a place in the popular estimation by the side of such memorable heroes as Arthur, and Geoffrey of Bouillon, the circle of figures connected with the poetry of England, received a far more illustrious addition in another of the romantic characters; for Lord Berners' translation of "Huon de Bordeaux" introduced Oberon, king of the fairies, into England. Oberon's Germanic descent, however, cannot be denied, in spite of Keltic and Oriental influences, and in spite of his romantic disguise in the early French epics; still, he now became a naturalized subject in English literature.

Lord Berners' gifts were somewhat many-sided. If the old authorities are to be trusted, in addition to translating romances, he was also the author of a religious drama on the Parable of the Vineyard (*Ite in vineam*); and he is even said to have made attempts at turning Petrarch's Sonnets into English.

During the last years of his life he set himself a task in

* *Huon of Bordeaux*, *The Hystory of Sir Arthur of Lytle Brytayne*, and *The Castel of Love.*

his actual sphere, a task that differed essentially from the kind of literary undertakings he had hitherto been engaged with. On this occasion—as had so often happened in Lord Berners' career—his determination was affected by the request of another.

One of the most influential foreign writers of that day was a Franciscan, Don Antonio de Guevara, a Biscayan by birth, who played a conspicuous part at the court of Charles V. as historiographer and preacher. He was a man of distinctly classical training, rich in experience, and full of talent, but one-sided in his tastes, and with but small intellectual depth. Of the tendencies which prevailed during the Renaissance, we find him affected specially by a pronounced inclination to moralizing, in fact, the didactic attitude, also with an almost sickly effort at originality and perfection of style. Now, just as the moralizing vein constantly exposes the disciple of the classic writers to the danger of degenerating into platitudes, so the anxiety concerning style easily leads astray into a superstitious regard for form, so that the expression as such is made to assert itself, without reference to any particular subject-matter, the result being that in place of style an objectionable mannerism is developed. Guevara did not manage to escape either of these pitfalls. What strikes one most in his writings, however, is the affectation and unnaturalness of his language. His writings make the impression of school exercises where all the forms and figures of rhetoric —so far as they can be applied to prose—are employed to excess. Of the figures depending upon tropes, the parable and the example, in particular, play a conspicuous part; simile also is frequently made use of, not so much to lend its aid to the presentation, or to add clearness to the narrative, as to dazzle the mind of the hearer with an endless display of unexpected relations. The artificial schemes of rhetorical syntax, too, are no less frequently made use of. But, above all, in the construction of his sentences, antithesis and parallelism are altogether misapplied.

Guevara met with great success with his "Libro aureo del emperador Marco Aurelio," which appeared in 1529; it is a species of historical romance, in which, however, the

action is obstructed by discursive moralizing, in fact, by didactic explanations in the form of monologues, dialogues, letters, and complete treatises. In addition to the meditations of Marcus Aurelius, Guevara made good use also of Plutarch's ethical works.

Guevara's book Lord Berners had in his possession in a French translation. Sir Francis Bryan, his nephew, a brave soldier, an accomplished courtier, and a man of cultured mind—whose name was already known among the representatives of the new art-poetry associated with Petrarch—had probably drawn his attention to the foreign book, which had become a fashionable favourite and a veritable *bon-bouche* in literature. At all events, old Lord Berners consented to his nephew's urgent request to undertake the translation of the already famous work. The last months of his very active life were, accordingly, devoted to the task. On the 10th of March, 1533, the "Golden Boke of Marcus Aurelius, emperor and eloquent orator," was completed in English just six days before "my lord deputy" departed this life.

In addition, therefore, to the entertaining and attractive works which Lord Berners' industry had presented to his country, he added towards the end of his life, as we think, a somewhat tedious and pedantic patchwork, and his various examples of a simple, picturesque style, were supplemented by one full of affectation and unnaturalness; Guevara's mannerisms, however, were, to their advantage, somewhat toned down in having passed into English through the medium of French, and partly also, perhaps, by the English translator's own peculiar method. However, as far as the success of the work comes into question, it is evident that Sir Francis Bryan was not wrong in the advice he had given his uncle. For the "Boke of Marcus Aurelius" was even much more widely read by the succeeding generation than his "Froissart" or his "Huon of Bordeaux." Published in 1534, for the first time, this curious work within a quarter of a century appeared in eleven successive editions, and was reprinted in 1586. Sir Francis Bryan himself, translated another work of Guevara's as carefully and, if possible, even more elegantly rendered than the "Marco Aurelio;" it was published first in 1548 under the title of "Dispraise

of the Life of a Courtier," and appeared in a new edition in 1575.

Hence, at the time when English prose was endeavouring to find artistic forms adapted for the new learning, it was, at the very outset, led into very doubtful byways. Under these circumstances it was fortunate, that before Lord Berners' career had come to a close in a manner so little consistent with his earlier days, another prose-writer came to the front with the object of satisfying, in a more rational way, the need of a more highly finished style of writing—this was Sir Thomas Elyot.

Thomas Elyot was the son of a distinguished judge, Sir Richard Elyot, who had early determined to make him study law. Since the summer of 1511 Thomas had, for several years, acted as clerk of the assize on the western circuit, where his father officiated as one of the judges. Wolsey then tempted him into the service of the Government, and made him clerk of the Privy Council. However, the patronage of the powerful prelate proved of but little advantage, for Elyot received but poor remuneration for the faithful and tedious work he had done for his King. As he received no regular salary, and had no regular appointment—for the post had been officially given to some one else, who received its emoluments—Elyot had reason to regret having resigned his position at the assize court, at Wolsey's persuasion. In 1530 he quitted the clerkship at the Privy Council, and received by way of reward for his services merely the order of knighthood, the burdens of which were felt to be greater than the honour attached to it.

Elyot was not much more fortunate later in life, in spite of his connection with Cromwell, who was rapidly and steadily mounting the ladder of royal favour. He found himself called upon to transact important business of various kinds, and was, for instance, twice (in 1531–32 and in 1535) despatched on embassies to Charles V.; and had also, very much against his inclination, thrice to undertake the duties of a sheriff. Yet the services he rendered in these different capacities never brought him promotion, or any lucrative Government appointment. Fortunately he was not altogether without private means, although a vexatious lawsuit and the expenses incurred by his position

and title were not exactly adapted to improve his financial circumstances. Partly by inheritance, partly by purchase, he gradually acquired property in Oxfordshire, and more especially in Cambridgeshire. Being a man of moderate requirements, he was thus enabled to devote his chief hours to study and literary work, and in this way sought consolation for the King's ingratitude. In the evening of his life he may even have considered himself fortunate, when reflecting on the fate that had befallen several of his friends, for Wolsey, More, and Cromwell had all, at first, enjoyed the King's favour, only to feel the whole force of his cruelty in the end. Elyot died on the 26th of March, 1546, at his residence at Carleton, Cambridgeshire, probably about the age of sixty.

When compared with Lord Berners, who makes the impression of a highly cultured *dilettante* of rank, Sir Thomas Elyot appears the scholar. Yet he was not one of the Schoolmen, being essentially a self-educated man. He had never attended a university, and had not received any tuition after his twelfth year. However, he acquired a good deal of sound learning of a variety of kinds, a full classical culture. He was so well-read in the classics, and was even so intimately acquainted with other entirely different domains of knowledge—for instance, with medical literature—that it is quite astonishing in a man of his training and of such varied activity in life. He owed his culture mainly to his own enthusiastic energy, to his unwearied industry; partly, also, however, to the stimulus and encouragement he received from his intercourse with contemporary scholars. When still a youth, he was led by Linacre to study medical authors. He also owed much to Sir Thomas More, with whom he stood in a close and friendly relation. The famous "School" which More had opened in his house—an informal gathering of learned men and of all those desiring knowledge, and which we are told by contemporaries resembled a university more than a private school—was frequently visited by Elyot as well as by his wife, Margaret Abarrow. After More's fall, Elyot felt some unpleasant consequences of the intimate relation in which he had stood towards his friend; for the King's suspicions once aroused were not easily allayed.

Sir Thomas Elyot stands as a character altogether typical of the period, and is one of the pleasantest figures of the time; as an able lawyer and man of business, a clever diplomatist with a grand capacity for work, and an ornament to English knighthood because of his extensive knowledge, a man strictly honourable in nature, and of genuine piety. The unselfish Renaissance-zeal for culture, the impulse to learn and to teach, live vigorously in him, and his entire literary activity testifies to the fact. In addition to this we have in him that naïve, joyous hopefulness, lost for the greater part to our age, the faith in the power of aiding the enlightenment and improvement of men by means of popular moralizing writings. This middle kind of literature, which sets forth the general principles of education, of morals, of politics, not primarily in the interest of theory, but in an eminently practical sense for the educated world, has become almost unknown to our day. So far as they are found at all, the tendencies by which it was upheld are to be found now only among our poets. Scientific literature has become strictly specialized, and in popular writings we handle by preference natural science or history, rather than ethics or pedagogism. When our writers pursue practical objects, they deal with subjects sharply distinguished and narrowly defined—burning questions of the day, party interests. Whoever would, nowadays, think of writing a "dial of princes"?

It was with a species of "dial of princes" that Sir Thomas Elyot began his literary career. The year 1531 saw the publication of his *Boke named the Governour*, the dedication of which was graciously accepted by Henry VIII. The domain which Elyot thus entered had frequently been cultivated during the Middle Ages, and not least so in England; and during the period of the humanists this work had been continued with increasing zeal. Elyot was well acquainted with the literature in question and made use of many of the works of his predecessors, of the "Polycraticus" of John of Salisbury, and of the "Institutio principis christiani" of Erasmus, upon which he bestows extravagant praise; he is also greatly indebted to Giovanni Pontano's treatise "De principe," and, above all, to the work of Francesco Patrizi of Siena (Bishop of Gaeta between 1460–

1496), "De regno et regis institutione," the first edition of which had appeared in 1518, and the first French translation of which was printed as early as 1520. Both as regards the plan and very many of the details, great similarities have been pointed out between Patrizi's work and "The Governour." Being intimately acquainted with the ancient writers, Elyot gathered in handfuls from the Greek and Latin philosophers, poets, historians, and collectors of anecdotes; and thus was produced a book such as the period delighted in—a book full of borrowed, but by no means undigested wisdom. "The Governour" is more than a mere compilation; it distinctly shows us the author's individuality: a clear-headed man, whose learning is supplemented by experience and applied with judgment and tact, a man with thoughts and convictions of his own, and who sets out towards his self-imposed object by somewhat roundabout ways, it is true, but with conscientious endeavours. The object which Elyot has here in view is a political one, the paths by which he endeavours to reach it are pædagogic and ethical. In his introductory chapters he investigates the nature of the State which he defines thus: "A publicke weale is a body living, compacte or made of sondry astates and degrees of men, whiche is disposed by the ordre of equite and governed by the rule and moderation of reason." He then tries to prove that a commonwealth cannot, in the long run, be successful, except when controlled by "one sovereign governour," and goes on to show that this chief governour requires "inferior governours called magistrates" to superintend the various branches of the State. These "inferior governours" of the second and third orders, Elyot then deals with in the further course of his work, and in such a way that what is stated about them applies likewise to the governor-in-chief, the monarch. For example, after stating that he means to defer his examination of the organism of the State—the limitation and sphere of action of the several offices of the State—to a later opportunity, he turns to discuss the education and training of those who may one day be called upon to fill leading positions in the commonwealth, and then broaches the question as to what principles should be inculcated upon those appointed to offices in

the State, and what virtues they should cultivate. The rest of the first Book is devoted wholly to pædagogical subjects, the second to ethical matter, and the third to the Governour. Specially interesting are the Books referring to education; where teaching is discussed we have the enthusiastic student of classical learning, where physical exercises and games are dealt with we have a man of refined culture and wide views and, more especially where the question of archery is mooted, the downright Englishman in all his intensity. The other two Books, however, are in no way without interest; the whole work is rich in good and striking thoughts, and shows us an experienced, able, well-intentioned man and a warm patriot. At the same time, as the author himself remarks in his Introduction,* the work "is infarced (stuffed full of) with histories and sentences" from classic antiquity and the Bible, partly also, from later times as well. Elyot has, in particular, borrowed many an episode from English history, and the admirers of Shakspere will be interested in the fact that the story of Prince Henry and the Lord Chief Justice is met with first in "The Governour." † But Elyot narrates most fully the story of Titus and Gesippus, as the pattern of true friendship,‡ perhaps not directly from Boccaccio's "Decameron," § but from the Latin version of Filippo Beroaldo, yet his own version differs in essential features both from the copy he had before him, as well as from the original.

The abundance of subject-matter in "The Governour" and the attractive manner it was dealt with, won for it a large circle of enthusiastic readers. In the course of half a century the book ran through eight editions, and by having influenced the intellectual culture, the opinions of a large number of Englishmen of the upper classes, it also left its mark on the literature of the day. Even though it may be doubtful whether Budé,‖ or even Johannes Sturm,¶ betray, in their works on the subject, any knowledge of Elyot's "Governour," still it is certain that subsequent educational and ethical works in England are in many ways

* *The Governour*, ed. Croft, i. 27.
† *Ibid.*, ii. 61, ff.
‡ *Ibid.*, ii. 133, ff.
§ Giorn. x. No. 8.
‖ *De l'institution du prince*. 1547.
¶ *De educandis erudiendisque principum liberis*. 1570.

connected with his book, and that, besides this, traces of his influence are observable even in the historians and poets.

Much as Elyot wrote and published at a later date, this first work of his has remained the most famous of all his productions. And perhaps justly so, as what is peculiar to him as a man and a writer is exhibited, probably, most fully and from the most varied points of view in his "Governour." Many of the themes which Elyot only touches upon there, received special and fuller treatment in his subsequent works. Of his pædagogic treatises, one is a translation from Plutarch, and is entitled "The Education or bringinge up of Children," and is dedicated "to his only entirely beloved syster Margery Puttenham;" in his Introduction he expresses the hope that she will endeavour, in accordance with Plutarch's principles, "to adapte and forme in [his] lyttel neuewes inclinacion to vertue and doctrine." Among Elyot's political treatises we have "The Doctrinal of Princes" (1534), a translation of the famous oration of Isocrates to Nicocles, and another "dial of princes" of more doubtful origin in "The Image of Governance compiled of the actes and sentences notable of the moste noble Emperour Alexander Severus, late translated out of Greke into Englyshe by syr Thomas Elyot, Knight, in the fauour of nobylitie" (1540).* The first sketch of this last work belongs to the period when "The Governour" was produced, and is closely connected with it—in fact, a supplement to it. In tendency and plan it reminds us of Guevara's "Marco Aurelio," but is superior to it in genuine richness of substance, in greater steadfastness of form, and simplicity of presentation. Elyot has been reproached, as it seems wrongfully, for intentional deception with regard to this work. It is probable that he was deceived himself, and that, in fact, he fully believed the statement of a later Greek treatise—no longer extant—which claimed to be the work of Encolpius, a contemporary of Alexander Severus. This treatise was his chief authority, and the accounts given by it he afterwards supplemented from communications given by other ancient historians and other authorities.

Elyot's tendency in philosophy, as exhibited in his

* Other editions appeared in 1544, 1549, 1556.

works, and more especially as regards moral philosophy, finds its most beautiful expression, perhaps, in his "Dialogue" between Plato and Aristippus, which had been suggested to his mind by reading Diogenes Laërtius, and which was published in 1533, and again in the following year, under the title: *Of that Knowledge which maketh a Wise Man.* Two other Dialogues by Elyot deal with subjects less far-reaching, and, if we may say so, more specific in character. His *Pasquil the Playne* (1533 and 1540), which is satirical and half jocose, deals with the theme of speech and silence, and may perhaps have been suggested by a work that had shortly before appeared in Rome, and introduced local types from that city: "Dialogus Marphorii et Pasquilli." Altogether serious, on the other hand, is his *Defence of Good Women*, which in addition to defending the weaker sex from its calumniators, was also written with the view of teaching good women to know their duties. These dialogues exhibit a certain resemblance to the poetical contests of the Middle Ages, above all to the dramatic disputations that John Heywood and others wrote for the stage.

In the above-mentioned works Elyot moves in domains which are gladly conceded to a man of refined culture in his position in life. But his activity far exceeded the limits to which tradition or prejudice would have confined it. As a humanist he set himself a strictly philological task in undertaking to compile a Latin-English dictionary. When almost half of the first draft of this work had been set up in type, Elyot remodelled it entirely by making use of material which Henry VIII. had placed at his disposal, and then had the work published in 1538 under the title of *Bibliotheca.* He very properly dedicated the work to the King, while one copy, with an introductory letter in Latin, was dedicated to Lord Cromwell. This Dictionary not only far surpassed everything of the kind that had hitherto appeared in England, but, in fact, in spite of all the defects attached to it, marks a very important advance in the field of Latin lexicography. A second edition appeared in 1545. After Elyot's death the work was again remodelled by Thomas Cooper, afterwards Bishop of Lincoln, and published in 1550, with various improvements

and additions, under the title of *Thesaurus*. A second edition appeared in 1552.

Elyot required an even greater amount of courage than he had displayed in undertaking this work of professional philology, when, as a *dilettante*, he ventured to enter domains that are jealously guarded by members of the confraternity. He had, at an early age, become acquainted with medical literature, and was pretty well read in almost all of the authorities of antiquity and of mediæval times that had come within his reach. His own indifferent health, injured by continuous work, had led to his constantly doctoring himself, and he was somewhat skilful in treating his own ailments. Accordingly, the thought struck him to note down the results of his own observations and experience in a medical guide, his intention being to induce the public to take a rational care of their health, and in case of illness to help them to understand the physician's reports. This treatise, which was entitled *The Castel of Helth*, must have appeared as early as 1534, was dedicated to Cromwell, and had run through at least ten subsequent editions by 1595. The professional men, who, from the outset, had looked disparagingly at Elyot's proceedings, and ridiculed the knight who tried to play the part of a physician, can hardly have become reconciled to the book considering the success it met with.

As Elyot had here entered into competition with medical men, he, on another occasion, competed with the clergy. A deeply religious temperament is evident throughout all his literary work, and he proves himself to have been as intimately acquainted with his Bible and the Fathers of the Church as he was with the classical authors. In his *Bankette of Sapience*,* a collection of moral maxims from different authors dedicated to the King, he, however, draws his material chiefly from the Fathers. He translated in full a sermon which St. Cyprian had delivered on the mortality of man when a plague was raging in Africa: *A swete and devoute Sermon of Holy saynt Ciprian of Mortalitie of Man.* This was published (July 1, 1534) together with a translation of the twelve "Rules" of Mirandola—*The Rules of a Christian lyfe made by Picus erle of Mirandula*—the same

* It probably appeared first in 1534, and subsequently in 1542, 1547, 1557, 15[illegible].

author who had given occupation to the pen of Sir Thomas More at an earlier date. Elyot came forward more independently as a religious writer in another treatise. In 1544, when the close of his life was drawing near, and he may have already felt the chill of sunset upon him, he wrote a little book—in keeping with this feeling—which was intended to offer comfort, edification, and exhortation in view of death, and combined passages from the Bible and the Fathers of the Church with reflections drawn from the depth of his own heart. This treatise, which he named *A preservative agaynste deth*, was published on the 2nd of July, 1545, and dedicated to Sir Edward North, a friend made in his later years in business transactions, as a near neighbour. To such persons as may have considered a work of this kind unsuited to his position, the unwearied controversialist, in his preface to his "Governour," * addresses the following noble words which are characteristic of his whole life: "A knyght hath received that honour not onely to defende with the swerde Christis faithe and his propre countrey agaynst them whiche impugneth the one or inuadeth the other, but also, and that most chiefly, by the meane of his dignitie . . . he shuld more effectually with his learning and witte assayle vice and errour, most pernicious ennemies to christen men, hauinge thereto for his swerde and speare, his tunge and his penne."

In glancing back at Elyot's literary activity, which, however, by no means fully occupied his life, we are astounded at his capacity for work and its many-sidedness. And the number of his productions is not exhausted by those that have been mentioned above. Some anonymous treatises, partly translated from Plutarch, partly compiled from various classical authors,† are also assigned to him, not without good reason; and although no great weight is attached to a remark of one Bale, that "he had written many other things," still we cannot doubt the well-authenticated report, according to which he is said to have had in hand an historico-national work, *De rebus memorabilibus*

* Ed. Croft, p. clxix.
† From Plutarch he translated: *Howe one may take profite of his enmyes;* while *The maner to chose and cheryshe a frende* is a compilation.

Angliæ. Although Elyot occupied a less prominent position in life than Erasmus and Sir Thomas More, still—taking him all in all—he was a worthy contemporary of such men, and not undeserving of the friendship of More. By nature Elyot was more receptive and reproductive than gifted with creative power; he has rendered inestimable services to the English culture of the epoch as the contributor of popular literature, as a compiler, adapter, and communicator of rich and varied material.

Elyot's chief merit, however, at least that by which he has most distinctly influenced the development of literature, rests upon his importance as a writer of good style. And even this he did not acquire accidentally or without labour. From the commencement of his career as a writer, his endeavour was directed, not only to communicating knowledge, correct views, but as much to forming the English language into an instrument that might rival the idiom of the classics in power of expression. With this object in view he, on the one hand, introduced many new words into the language from Latin and French sources, always, however, taking into consideration that—either by their relationship to words already in use, or by the connection in which they appeared—their meaning should at once be intelligible; on the other hand, his desire was to confer upon the English formation of sentences something of the peculiar style of the Greek mode of expression, and for this his handling such writers as Isocrates must have been a good training.

Elyot's efforts, in which King Henry took a lively interest, were in the main successful. He created a style which was both thoroughly adapted to his own purpose and to the requirements of his day. For, while showing a considerable wealth of words, a complicated construction of periods, and a sufficient command of rhetorical means, he is altogether moderate in the manner he applies them, and only very rarely falls into affectation and pomposity, as, for instance, when spinning a simile into an allegory, as happens in the Preface to his "Bibliotheca." Upon the whole, his presentation is simple, clear, and vivid, even though, as a rule, it does not exhibit that higher inspiration, that sublimer flight, which proceeds from the inward workings of a creative mind.

Around Elyot, who occupies the central position among the prose-writers of that period, there are grouped a number of authors who worked upon a variety of different materials, each in his own way, yet do not exactly show any connection among one another.

Of these, *Thomas Starkey* takes a prominent position, although his influence remained a limited one, inasmuch as his books were not printed. He was a man of good family, with interests and knowledge of a variety of kinds, an ecclesiastic, with some political ambition, but more endowed with theoretical acumen than with a knowledge of the world and human nature; he had, in fact, a clearer idea of things afar off than of those close at hand, otherwise a man of sound principles, although not altogether steadfast in character. In temperament he was patriotic, kindly, and affectionate, pious in his way, but, owing to the narrow confines within which the despotism of Henry VIII. drove so many consciences, settled matters with himself by means of a species of naïve hypocrisy. At Oxford he had studied theology and the classics, and in Italy, where he had made a number of learned acquaintances, he devoted himself with enthusiasm to the "contemplacyon of natural knowledge;" thereupon, in consequence of some new ebullition, became a zealous student of the Scriptures, and, finally, with the view of playing a political part, took up the study of Roman law, in order that he "myght thereby make a more stabyl and sure jugement of the polytyke ordur and customys usyd amonge us here in our countrey."

At Wolsey's instigation Starkey, in 1522, was elected one of the proctors of the University of Oxford; in 1530 Archbishop Warham appointed him to the rectory of Great Mongeham, in the diocese of Canterbury; towards the beginning of 1535, through Cromwell's influence, he was made chaplain to King Henry. In this capacity he hoped to be able to render services of importance, both as an ecclesiastic and as a politician; for he was a staunch adherent of the Reformed Church, and had probably, even at that date, attacked the Pope's supremacy in his treatise entitled "An Exhortation to the people, instructynge them to Unitie and Obedience." Henry VIII. made use of him in the first place, to win over to his cause a man to whose opinions he

attached much greater weight than to those of his court-chaplain. Starkey had been a fellow-student and travelling companion of Reginald Pole who, owing to his connections — he had Plantagenet blood in his veins — his talents, his learning, as well as the King's favour, seemed destined to fill the highest position in the English Church. However, Pole would not give his assent to Henry's divorce and to the separation from Rome; he had hitherto avoided coming into personal conflict with the King, and received his permission to reside on the Continent. Still, to draw Pole over to his side had long been a thought that engaged Henry's mind; he would have given a good deal to get Pole to express his opinion in favour of the divorce and against the supremacy of Rome. The new court-chaplain appeared to Henry a fit instrument for assisting him in this matter, and was accordingly chosen as a mediator. Unfortunately, Starkey, zealous and confident as he was, proved himself in no way Pole's equal as a diplomatist; the hopes he had aroused in the King were discredited in the cruelest manner. Pole contrived to keep his correspondent in suspense till the proper moment seemed to have arrived, and then his utterances were such that they acted like a thunderbolt. In the early summer of 1536 Pole forwarded to King Henry his *De unione ecclesiastica*, which was not only a vehement attack on the subjects of special interest to the King, but also on the King's person and character. A few months afterwards—in spite of remonstrances and threats from England—Pole accepted an invitation from Pope Paul III., and was thereupon created a cardinal. In consequence of these proceedings, Starkey's position at court was considerably shaken, and, as usually happens under such circumstances (for but few men are without enemies), he was then found fault with for various reasons, among others for having been too indulgent in his references to the Pope in some sermon he had preached. The result was that Starkey had to retire from court and give up taking part in practical politics; he was, however, appointed Master of the Collegiate Chapel of Corpus Christi, attached to the Church of St. Lawrence in London, in 1537, and in the peaceful enjoyment of this living, devoted himself to literary work and theoretical speculations. His death, which took place about

1538, put a premature end to his literary activity; but one ripe production has been preserved in his *Dialogue between Cardinal Pole and Thomas Lupset*,* a work dealing with subjects in political economy.

The interlocutors are Pole and Thomas Lupset, a well-known scholar, who had also stood in a close relation to Sir Thomas More, and had lectured in Oxford on rhetoric. The principal speaker, however, the actual leader in the dialogue is Pole, whose intellectual ability is set forth in a bright light. If this may be said to do honour to Starkey's sense of justice, still, as the *Dialogue* is dedicated to the King, it also proves that Henry had not at the time given up the hope of seeing the renegade converted to his own views. Besides which the discussion is regarded as having taken place at a period when Pole had not yet drawn the King's displeasure upon himself, when, in fact, many a question which had since then found an answer, was still an open one — accordingly somewhere about the end of the year 1529.†

The theme of the *Dialogue* is similar to that of More's "Utopia." Here, again, the discourse is about a commonwealth; here, likewise, the contrast between the ideal and real is brought to the fore; here, too, a very practical object is made the basis of the theoretical discussion. But whereas Thomas More presents his theory in the form of a poetical fiction, which leaves him free to carry out his ideas in all their completeness, Starkey presents his account in the most systematic form possible. He first examines the idea of the "common wele," what it is based upon, and under what conditions it is most prosperous. Then we have the question in how far the England of the day corresponds with the idea thus developed; all the ills and wounds in the

* *England in the reign of Henry the Eighth. A Dialogue between Cardinal Pole and Thomas Lupset* . . . by Thomas Starkey . . . ed. J. M. Cowper. London, 1871.

† Cf. i. 1, 860, ff. (p. 25): "Seyng that our most nobul prince hath assemblyd hys parlyament and most wyse conseyl, for the reformatyon of thys hys commyn wele." This can refer only to the parliament which was opened on the 3rd of November, 1529. For after 1523, Wolsey (who, on the 18th of October, 1529, had to deliver up the Great Seal) had avoided calling a parliament; Pole, however (who, in 1523, was only twenty-three years of age), did not return to England from the foreign universities he had visited till 1525; and the scene in the *Dialogue* is in England. In other passages, it is true, a later date is assumed; compare, in particular, ii. 3, 484, f. (p. 210), where Erasmus's *Boke of the Prechar* is mentioned as a new work; the *Ecclesiastes, sive de ratione concionandi* appeared as a first edition in 1535.

organism of the State are then exposed to view dispassionately and without regard to consequences. And, finally, remedies are looked for, by means of which the evils referred to may be checked, and the English State transformed into a real commonwealth.

The picture of the condition of England we obtain from Starkey's "Dialogue" corresponds with the one in "Utopia," and is, at the same time, a supplement to it. Single features are met with in other writings of the period, in treatises, sermons, petitions, and pamphlets, also in poems of a popular character. Starkey's descriptions are, in many instances, more moderate than those of his contemporaries; he lays his colours on less thickly, some matters are only hinted at or left in semi-obscurity; on the other hand, the subject, as a whole, is discussed by him more fully and exhaustively than almost anywhere else. All essential points are brought forward by him: the decay of villages and towns; the immoderate attention bestowed upon sheep-farming at the expense of agriculture; the miseries resulting from enclosing lands, the scarcity of the population, and the increase of poverty; the decay of the "crafts," and the growing evil of "ill-occupied people" and luxury; the weak state of the country, which is less able now to defend itself against enemies; the ill-feeling between the various ranks of society; the egoism and wealth of those in power; the ignorance, laziness, and immorality of the clergy; the covetousness of lawyers; the corruptibility of the judges.

The root of all the evil, however, Starkey (or rather Pole) considers to lie in the tyranny of the rulers, and in the universal rudeness and ignorance of the nation, the consequence of inadequate education; and, with characteristic courage, he brings forward the remedies to be applied. He condemns in the strongest manner the unlimited power of a king who has possession of the throne by inheritance. It would be a better plan, he thinks, that the ruler were appointed by parliament; and if this should prove impracticable, owing to considerations of public peace, to the traditional custom of long years standing, at all events the royal power might be placed within definite bounds—on the one hand, by parliament, that is, by the permanent members representing it, or by a Council of fourteen, who are to watch over the

laws on the part of the government, and also to give their decision in all matters connected with foreign confederations, in war and peace; on the other hand, by a Council of ten members, who, together with the king, are to bear the burden and responsibility of the government. And the Pope's power, he thinks, should be as much kept within definite bounds, for in the same way as the king should not be allowed to undertake anything without the consent of his parliament, the Pope should not be able to decide any matter without the sanction of his College of Cardinals, the members of which should in future be elected. No Englishman should be permitted to appeal to the Pope against the authorities of his own land, except in cases that concern the unity of faith. The custom of Peter's-pence might, he thinks, be retained; whereas annats are, in almost every case, to be done away with. The Pope may appoint only the archbishops, the latter are themselves to appoint the bishops. In his educational plans, Starkey pays special attention to the nobility and to the clergy; he proposes public schools and—at all events for the nobility—a species of compulsory school-attendance. And the young nobles are to be prepared not only for times of peace—more particularly by studying the laws—but are to be trained for warfare by chivalrous exercises; while those destined for the Church are to devote themselves to Latin and Greek. In both cases, however, though specially in the latter, moral and religious precepts are to be inculcated while the mental faculties are being trained. The schools for the clergy would thus serve as preparatory institutions for the universities, which are to be attended only by such students as are capable of appreciating the teaching given there, and where the instruction is to be carried on in the spirit of Erasmus and Sadoletus. Only learned and pious men are to become priests—and then, not before they have attained their thirtieth year. Starkey further hopes to secure the observance of the laws, and to carry out the necessary measures by appointing censors, ediles, and other officials. Current laws are to be simplified and divested of the "barbarous tong and olde French;" the better plan, he thinks, would be simply to introduce Roman law. Laws for keeping luxury within bounds, and for regulating trade

and commerce, are to do all in their power to direct the economic needs of the nation; the right of entail is in some cases to be done away with entirely, in others—among the higher grades of society—to be altered. One of Starkey's earnest endeavours is to promote marriage by conferring favours on those who marry, and he even suggests that bachelors should be taxed. It is also proposed that celibacy among the secular clergy should be abolished. The system of monastic life is not absolutely condemned, but in order that the abuses that have become attached to it may be removed, two measures, in particular, are to come into force: the admission of youthful novices is to be prohibited, and the election of abbots and priors is to be only for a term of three years. In order to encourage religious sentiments among the people, it is demanded that the Church Service shall be held in the language of the country, and that an English translation of the Gospels be circulated.

The proposals made by Starkey, under Pole's name, are no doubt framed for the most part upon Pole's own ideas, even though the author of them might in the course of time have felt disposed to see some of them modified—not by any means all. Some of the ideas are no less Utopian than the conditions described in Sir Thomas More's ideal State; some, if realized, would have but little coincided with the object in view, and yet many others are excellent. As a whole, the treatise shows a breadth and impartiality of view which distinctly marks the influence of a classical education. We recognize the disciple of Plato and Aristotle, who has likewise studied Roman history, and also watched the contemporary state of affairs in Italy, more especially in Venice.

Hence the *Dialogue* is an important document in a double respect: it furnishes us with a report on the economic as well as on the moral conditions of the England of the day, and at the same time gives us an idea of the stage of culture which the better portion of the nation had attained under the influence of the study of the humanities. Starkey's classical training is also exhibited by the whole arrangement and treatment of his subject—even though it may not be entirely free from a certain kind of pedantry—but, above all, by his language, which is thoroughly English, and, in

spite of occasional complication in the construction, shows both force and flexibility.

Side by side with the interest taken in political matters arose the interest in the history of the English State itself. Scholars from abroad, residing in England, set Englishmen a good example by their works on the subject. A Frenchman, Bernard André of Toulouse, who became *poeta laureatus* to Henry VII. and preceptor to Prince Arthur, and who subsequently lost his sight, wrote a biography of the first Tudor King, interspersed with a number of poetical exercises in style, and also occupied himself in making memoranda in the form of annals, or even day-journals, more especially of the occurrences at the English court; an Italian, Polydore Vergile (already referred to on p. 92), dedicated to Henry VII., in 1533, a Latin history of England in twenty-seven Books, a work which found a wide circulation on the Continent because of its classical form, and probably also owing to its orthodox Catholic attitude.

Meanwhile Sir Thomas More had written his "Historie of Richard III.," so important as regards style, and Lord Berners had published his charming translation of Froissart's "Chronicle." Seven years previous to the publication of the English version of Froissart there was printed for the first time, in 1516, another historical work which, although not distinguished by any merit in the way of style or criticism, deserves notice as the first attempt at a comprehensive treatment of the history of the nation in English prose. It bore the title of *Concordaunce of Hystoryes*, but subsequently received the name of "The New Chronicles of England and France." The author, *Robert Fabyan*, was a wealthy citizen of London, a member of the Drapers' Company, and the father of a large family; he rose to the dignity of alderman, and in 1493 was appointed one of the sheriffs of Middlesex; he retired into private life in 1502, and died, probably, towards the beginning of 1513. His History begins with the time when the mythical "Brute entryd firste the Ile of Albion," and carries on the course of events up to the days of Henry VIII.; it is a somewhat skilful compilation from chronicles written in Latin and French, and also in English for the later periods. Metrical

portions from his Latin sources, Fabyan reproduces in English verse, and otherwise also intersperses verse in suitable passages. He shows himself to have been a man of strong ecclesiastical and clerical sentiments and of limited views, and hence is frequently unable to distinguish between what is important and unimportant. Accordingly, he often devotes undue consideration to his native city, and although his account may offer matter of local interest to investigators, still but small value can be attached to his authorities as a whole, and they are mainly confined to the author's own lifetime.

More attractive is the so-called "Chronicle" of *Edward Hall*, who became a judge in the court of sheriffs. Hall's career falls wholly within the reign of Henry VIII., for his death took place in 1547; he proved himself not only a decided adherent of the Tudors, but also a friend of the Reformation. And with these tendencies of mind he wrote his Chronicle, which extends from the reign of Henry IV. to that of Henry VIII.; its title is "The Unyon of the two noble and yllustrate famelyes of Lancastre and Yorke;" the same tendencies also colour, for instance, his account of the reign of Henry VII., which is based upon the work of Polydore Vergile. Hall's historical account, owing to the limitation of its subject, acquires a kind of dramatic interest, and this is sometimes effectively heightened by his naïve and vivid representation. The historical value of the work consists in its containing various independent communications, and, above all, its full information concerning the state of civilization in the days of Henry VIII. The history of literature, too, is indebted to him for important notices relating to the firstfruits of the secular drama.

Hall's Chronicle was published in 1548 by Richard Grafton, who completed the work from papers left by the author. This same Grafton, a few years previously, had printed the metrical Chronicle of John Hardyng, and published it with a prose supplement from the reign of Edward IV. to that of Henry VIII. Hall's activity as an historiographer subsequently became more independent, and proved rather productive within modest bounds.

All of these ventures in historical writing are not of any

actual scientific value. But the epoch we are discussing produced other works which present a more careful examination of the past history of England. These are connected with the name of *John Leland*, the first English scholar who was aroused by the study of the classics to undertake comprehensive philological work, which was devoted, at first, to existing material, and to national subjects.

Leland was born in London, and educated at St. Paul's School under William Lily. He then attended the University of Cambridge, where he took his degree of B.A., went afterwards to Oxford, and thereupon, for some length of time, continued his studies at Paris. Henry VIII. appointed him his chaplain and keeper of his library, and conferred upon him the rectory of Poppeling, in the marches of Calais. Leland's nature was essentially that of a scholar, eager for research of all kinds, and of great receptivity of mind. He was a distinguished humanist, and wrote very readable Latin verse, was one of the first eminent Greek scholars in England, and, at the same time, made himself acquainted with the more important Romance languages and—what was even more remarkable in his day—with Welsh and Anglò-Saxon. King Henry, who gave various proofs of his interest in learning, and who had a correct judgment of personal merit, encouraged Leland's efforts in every way. About the year 1533 he appointed him the "King's Antiquary," and granted him a dispensation for non-residence upon his living, and the longed-for permission to make an extensive examination of the historical remains of the country, wherever such might be found. For six years, accordingly—from 1536 to 1542—Leland travelled all over the kingdom, engaged in extensive geographical and topographical inquiries, but pre-eminently in antiquarian research. Towns, villages, castles, cathedrals, and monasteries—their position, style of architecture, their inhabitants and memorials—all aroused his attention, and accounts of them were added to the material he was collecting. He ransacked libraries for valuable books and records, which he described or quoted, as his purpose might require. Leland's researches were made at the time of the dissolution of the monasteries, a period when the most terrible havoc was made among literary treasures that England has

ever witnessed; and although unable to check the mischief, Leland, at all events, succeeded in saving a number of valuable manuscripts from destruction.

He gives an account of his work in a Latin Address to the King, dedicated to him as a "Newe Yeere's Gyfte" in 1546. John Bale, the vehement, anti-papal but patriotic pamphleteer, translated it into English, and had it printed in 1549, with renewed lamentations over the havoc made in the libraries of the monasteries, which, however, his own zeal for the Reformation had indirectly encouraged. Both men studied the past history of their nation the more devotedly, as, to a certain extent, the early circumstances of the English Church enabled them to represent the separation from Rome as nothing new, but the original state of affairs. Both men, however, were mainly concerned to prove that their own country possessed a great history and literature in the past, as well as those of the renowned Greeks and Romans. This ambition found expression in Leland's work, *De Viris Illustribus*, in four Books, which dealt with the learned men and poets of Britain from the time of the Druids up to the end of the reign of Henry VIII., and again in Bale's *De Scriptoribus Britannicis* in five Books. They are the first noteworthy attempts at giving a review of the writers and literary work produced by England, and, in spite of all their deficiencies, deserve the thanks of the history of literature.

Leland was, unfortunately, not destined to see the fruits of his industry reach their full maturity. After having for long been accustomed to a life of travel, he settled down for five years quietly in his home, in the parish of St. Michael-le-Querne, in the city of London, in order to arrange the enormous mass of material he had accumulated—relating to coins, inscriptions, ancient works of art, private collections, extracts from books, etc., all manner of things connected with what we should nowadays call folklore. Leland's object was, as he had promised in his Introductory Address to the King, to write one Book on ancient British topography, fifty on the history of the more important towns and castles, and finally six on the islands adjoining England. But death intervened, and robbed him of his King, his benefactor, the indispensable patron of the undertaking he

had in hand. Leland had already begun to feel the necessity of looking about him for a "forward young man about the age of xx years, learned in the Latin tongue," and who could "*sine cortice nare* in Greek." His work, however, became too much for him. While Bale was rising from the position of rector to that of a bishop, Leland, who was ten years his junior, fell into a state of melancholia, and then lost his reason completely, and died after two years of mental darkness. Bale had published his work—which he considered the inferior—in Ipswich, as early as 1548, first in quarto; the edition of 1557 appeared in folio augmented to two volumes. Leland's works remained unpublished. It was a piece of good fortune, and indeed the best acknowledgment his antiquarian work could have received after his death, that Edward VI. handed over his manuscripts to the care of a scholar. Subsequently they were placed among the Bodleiana and the Cottonian Collections, and became a powerful stimulus to the famous antiquarians of the seventeenth century, and also a well-plundered mine for Camden, Drayton, and Dugdale. It was not till the days of Bentley that two Oxford men * had Leland's manuscripts set up in print, and in doing so paid a debt of honour to the father of English antiquarian lore, to a man who, by taking up a province peculiarly his own, led the Renaissance on to national paths.

VI.

During the very period when prose, by the combined efforts of Lord Berners and Sir Thomas Elyot, was endeavouring to assume greater perfection of form, poetry, too, was venturing upon bolder flights. Mental culture had gradually reached an eminence where it could no longer find adequate expression in the faint echo of the earlier school of art, with its prosaic and pedantic style of diction and its rugged form of verse. Skelton alone had been able to make a break in the customary sing-song verse of the

* *De Scriptoribus Britannicis Commentarii*, ed. Ant. Hall, 1709; *The Itinerary of John Leland through most parts of England and Wales*, ed. Th. Hearne, 1710–1712; and *De Rebus Britannicis Collectanea*, ed. Th. Hearne, 1715.

day, by giving it fresher tones. In allegorical poetry he had, upon occasions, attained the completeness of the great era, and had also discovered new domains in the realm of poetry. And yet, precisely in those points where he showed most originality, his manner was much too eccentric for it to be taken as a model in style; his method was too unequal, his versification too playful, partly not sufficiently correct, his language at times too extravagant, at times too coarse; his tendency was too preponderatingly on the side of satire and pasquil in burlesque form. Consequently he exercised only a one-sided influence on the development of poetry. The old Master, Chaucer, in fact remained the only English classic. Yet his language had in many ways become antiquated, his poetry could no longer be read correctly, many of the beauties of his works could no longer be understood. His spirit, however, continued to act with all its old freshness, and all the better writers endeavoured to regulate themselves by him. The time had come for his work to be again taken in hand, to be continued and completed. What Chaucer had accomplished alone in a still immature period, was now, at a more advanced epoch, to be attained in a similar manner by the joint and reciprocal work of a number of men. Herein lay the security for the permanence and continuity of the development about to take a fresh start. The new stimulus was, moreover, derived at first from the same source from which Chaucer had drawn his material.

Learned culture, if it is to exercise a fruitful influence upon national art and poetry, requires transmission through a third element which we may call knowledge of the world and practical culture. This is no more than the infusion of the outward forms of life and the general outlook upon it and its manifestations, with the silently working influences of mental culture. There are epochs when a particular rank of society or a particular people become the bearers of culture and help to complete for others that essential intermediation. At the period of mediæval *minne*-poetry, this was the part played by the nobility and those living in that atmosphere; and such, too, at the period of the Renaissance, was the mission of Italy. In England, under Henry VIII., both these factors were in operation together.

The reform in poetry proceeded from enlightened minds among the younger members of the nobility and court, who combined a classical education with the polish of men of the world, and owed to Italy their determining impulse.

The beginnings of the new court-poetry belong to the first years of the fourth decade, or a little earlier. And the first living centre round which it turned was the beautiful, unfortunate, but not guiltless, Anne Boleyn. The originator of the new tendency, *Thomas Wyatt*, had sung her charms in the poems of his earlier years. One of the first of those at Henry's court to devote himself to similar efforts was Anne's brother, George Boleyn, who had been raised to the rank of Lord Rochford. Anne's solemn coronation at Whitsuntide, 1533, gathered all the more eminent poets of the new circle round the throne, and enabled them all to take part in the festivities. Sir Francis Bryan (see above, p. 191), like Lord Rochford, had, indeed, shortly before been despatched to the French court with an embassy in charge of the Duke of Norfolk. There was, however, Thomas, Lord Vaux, one of the fortunate young men dubbed Knights of the Bath on the morning of the coronation day, and thus enabled to escort the procession of the young Queen as she passed through the metropolis to Westminster, riding between the judges and abbots, and arrayed in violet robes with caps trimmed with grey. There were, above all, the two heads of the new school of poetry, Thomas Wyatt and Lord Henry Howard, the latter, since his father's promotion to the Duchy of Norfolk, being generally addressed as the Earl of Surrey. Henry Howard is said to have carried "the fourth sword with scabbard upright" in front of the King.* Thomas Wyatt, at the coronation banquet acted in his father's (Sir Henry Wyatt's) place as "ewerer to the king." Those who on that occasion saw the two poets, could have had no idea to what distinction the younger of them would rise in English literature. Even those who stood in closest relation to him could scarcely,

* Cf. Nott, "Memoirs of the Earl of Surrey," p. xxvii. I have observed that in Hall's detailed report of Anne's coronation, as reproduced in Holinshed (ed. 1808, iii. 779, ff.), there is no mention of this; and that according to the same authority the King was not present either at Anne's entry into London, or at the coronation ceremony; further, that he viewed the scene of the banquet from a box in which were also several of the ambassadors. On what occasion, then, was it that Surrey carried the sword in question in front of the King?

at the time, have foreseen that Surrey was destined successfully, though provisionally, to complete the poetical reform inaugurated by Wyatt. Yet the difference in their characters, as reflected in their poetry, was sufficiently evident then in their outward appearance. Wyatt was in the full bloom of life, thirty years of age, tall and graceful in figure where "force and beauty met," of manly countenance, a penetrating light in his eyes, yet mild in expression. Surrey, a youth of seventeen, was short and of insignificant stature, yet of sustained strength of physique, his oval face full of life and expression but with a touch of melancholy, a quiet but glowing fire in his dark eyes.

The elder of the two men, who had already passed the first stages of his poetical career, will now occupy our attention.

Thomas Wyatt was the son of Sir Henry Wyatt, a nobleman with estates in Kent, who had stood high in the favour of Henry VII. as a faithful adherent of the Lancastrian and Tudor interests, and who was held in high esteem also by Henry VIII. Sir Henry Wyatt had been one of the Privy Council of the first Tudor, and one of the executors of his will, and Henry VIII. created him a Knight of the Order of the Bath, and then a "Knight Banneret," and various appointments at court were conferred upon him; he received further proof of the King's favour by having landed property presented to him. Young Thomas Wyatt had, accordingly, grown up amid pleasant circumstances and in the full light of court favour. He had received a careful education and an academical training, and took his degree of M.A. at Cambridge at the age of seventeen. In those days life was lived quickly in aristocratic circles. The same year in which he took his degree he married a lady of good family. At eighteen years of age, having had a son born to him and named after him, he had gradually to accustom himself to being called Thomas Wyatt, the Elder. He had early entered court service and became one of the gentlemen of the king's bed-chamber; and he may early have tried his fortune in the army. He was skilful in the use of weapons, at all events in the opinion of his contemporaries, and also took part in the jousts and feats of arms performed at court. In every respect he was a man to shine in the circle that

surrounded the throne; for he was attractive in appearance and inspired respect and confidence, was free and distinguished in his bearing, manly and noble in nature, full of fine feeling, firm in determination, with an insight into and a knowledge of human nature, of a rich and varied culture, and with intellectual gifts which made him captivating in conversation. It is not known whether, like many others of his age and rank, he had, in his youth, resided in France for any length of time, but in the year 1527, of his own accord, he accompanied Sir John Russell to Italy; this involuntarily reminds one of Chaucer's first journey to Italy in 1372. The Renaissance, which was then in its full spring-time, had in Wyatt's day already produced its most glorious fruits, and, indeed, symptoms already existed which might have revealed to a careful observer the first signs of its approaching end. Yet, greater than ever was the lustre which Italian scholarship, rhetoric, statesmanship, art, and poetry shed over the world. Englishmen had, as yet, but little appreciation for plastic art; they were, however, powerfully attracted by rhetoric and poetry, and their musical instinct was also about to become strongly developed. In learning—and probably in politics as well—they had, both directly and indirectly, for long been receiving instruction from the Italians, and were very differently prepared for a revival of poetry to what the fourteenth century had been.

It may be assumed that Wyatt's poetical talent, even though not awakened in Italy, may have received fresh nourishment there. And though he did not make his first acquaintance with the Italian poets at that time, still he became much more intimately acquainted with them, and learned to love and reverence them. He, probably, soon began to make attempts of his own in accordance with their methods.

In tendency Wyatt was specially drawn to lyrics, a form of poetry for which those engaged in active life, in business or pleasure, most readily find leisure and opportunity. Hence it was no wonder that the great Petrarch, who was still considered the chief Italian lyrist, should have pre-eminently become his model, much as Wyatt's own style may have differed from the Italian master's. In one essential point, at least, they resembled each other

distinctly, in the earnestness with which they devoted themselves to their poetical calling—although with both of them poetry was, after all, only a secondary occupation—also in their endeavour to attain perfection of form, by the unwearied finishing touches they gave their poems. In Wyatt's case there was a peculiar cause for this; the linguistic and technical difficulties he had to overcome were great.

When Wyatt read the works of contemporary English poets he missed in their verse a systematic metrical principle; for neither in respect to number of syllables nor accent was metre regulated in such a manner that the rhythm, aimed at by the poet, was always distinctly brought out. And even Chaucer's verse, which he could read only with the pronunciation of the sixteenth century, did not produce any very different impression upon him. Now, when the lover of Horace and Juvenal, the admirer of Petrarch, on finding himself dissatisfied with the customary method, looked round for a firmer basis for his versification, naturally the metrical principle of the Romans must have first struck his attention, and, accordingly, was the principle adopted by him.

A fixed syllabic metre was, as a rule, what Wyatt had in view, although he may not always have succeeded in accomplishing this in his first ventures; for in this endeavour he often omitted to take into consideration the adjustment of the relation between rhythm and accent. And in this respect he not only indulged in the licences sanctioned by the English practice throughout the Middle Ages, but also in other licences which had cropped up amid the confusion of his own day, and thus unaccented syllables have sometimes to bear the stress of the line. But Wyatt, who occasionally took pleasure in imitating the artistic forms of strophe, found rhyme specially troublesome. The uncertainty which characterizes the versification of his contemporaries seems, in his case, to have retreated to the close of the line, and to have taken its stand there with a certain amount of obstinacy, as though this were its last stronghold.

Very often, however, Wyatt's musical instinct helped him over the difficulties of his metrical theory. Gradually,

too, he became clearer and surer in his ideas, without exactly obtaining absolute consistency. Many of his poems, from beginning to end, are built up of faultless lines, and produce at times a good deal of melody.

The verse is merely a vehicle for words. From Petrarch and other Italians—and also from the Latin poets—Wyatt had acquired more refined elegance of expression than had hitherto been customary among English poets. To use the right word in the right place, diligently to avoid inversions, vigorously to push forward the thought by antithesis, to throw life into the presentation by metaphor and simile,—all this Wyatt had adopted from them, and made it the common property of English art-poetry. The new style of diction had indeed its drawbacks; the position of the words often obscures the sense in place of elucidating it; the spinning out of a simile into an allegory at times produces curious results or proves wearisome; metaphor, especially when mixed, and also ornamental epithet, often present an unnatural, conventional character; and antithesis, and especially oxymoron, are frequently altogether misapplied. The whole style of diction is of a kind that might readily have degenerated into mannerism, and, indeed, in many of the poets of the sixteenth century actually becomes mannerism. When we hear again and again such expressions as "the heart's forest," in place of simply "the heart," or of "a rain of tears," or "a cloud of dark disdain," and other such things; when sighs at one time are spoken of as "forced," then as "burning" or "flaming," or again perhaps as "frozen;" when the poet is, at one and the same time, both poor and rich, free and captive, and neither dead nor alive—and such untenable situations recur somewhat too often—one longs to return to Chaucer's more varied and, upon the whole, much simpler style. However, as a school exercise fulfils its object only when it offers a sufficient and, indeed, an apparently superfluous opportunity for impressing the rules that have to be inculcated; so the gradations of expression which English poetry was in need of, could be attained, perhaps, only by the heads of the school who struck the note, not being afraid of presenting a certain uniform superfluity in the models they set up. Wyatt himself, by

no means always favours exaggeration; his poems, even in this respect, distinctly show the progress of the time; but, in him, even the different species of poetry have often a peculiar style of their own in addition to a peculiar tone.

A stately, showy, and somewhat conventional form of diction predominates in Wyatt's Sonnets, of which some thirty in all have been preserved. To Wyatt belongs the merit of having introduced this elegant form of art-poetry into England, and, in fact, he was, as a rule, over-anxious in his endeavour to construct his arrangement and order of rhymes strictly in accordance with the Italian method. Still, his method exhibits a feature which already proclaims the freer and more convenient practice of other English poets: the marked preference for employing the *terza rima* in such a manner that it ends with a rhymed-couplet.

In his Sonnets Wyatt shows himself to have mainly followed Petrarch; the majority are merely translations from the Italian master, or, at all events, pretty faithful imitations. Yet the imitator is not exactly happy in his choice of the poems, and where, in individual features, he quits his original, the result is often not an advantage to the poem as a whole. To give an illustration of his method, we give the Sonnet that stands first in the collection, and is neither the best nor the worst of them.*

> "The long love that in my thought doth harboùr
> And in mine heart doth keep his residence,
> Into my face presseth with bold pretence,
> And therein campeth spreading his bannèr.
> She that me learns to love and suffèr
> And wills that my trust, and lust's negligence
> Be reined by reason, shame, and reverence,
> With his hardiness takes displeasùre.
> Wherewithall unto the heart's forest he fleèth
> Leaving his enterprise with pain and cry,
> And there him hideth, and not appearèth.
> What may I do, when my master fearèth?
> But in the field with him to live and die•
> For good is the life, ending faithfully."

Besides following Petrarch, Wyatt, in his Sonnets, made use of other Italian lyric-writers. Yet he was by no means

* Ed. Nott, p. 1.

always content with playing the part of a translator or faithful imitator. Sometimes he would take a good original written in a different species of verse, and turn it into a sonnet. He frequently alters, expunges, or supplements, according to the requirements of the moment; for even in Wyatt's imitations a connection with a more or less real present is, as a rule, unmistakable. Sometimes, also, he creates independently, borrowing from his models only individual features, single lines, or even none at all. Nay, even thoughts which are linked with national reminiscences, with memorials of Chaucer, have to adapt themselves to the measure and order in which "the tenderest and grandest of songs" were produced.

It is probable that even before writing in sonnet form, Wyatt had tried his hand at rondeaux, and subsequently returned to this form on occasions. No doubt French models may have hovered in his mind, but at times, also, rondeaux in Petrarch's style, and he has even turned one of the master's sonnets into this form of verse. Wyatt is at his best in courtly jests, in light-footed verse, yet he did not, upon the whole, win any laurels in this domain.

Wyatt's method is exhibited more powerfully in his poems of freer construction. The stately structure that generally characterizes the stanzas of Petrarch's canzonets, he did not attempt to imitate, although he borrowed many a thought and many a line from these poems, and, at times, endeavoured, in his own way, to rival them in structural effect. The strophic systems which Wyatt made use of are of various kinds; we find the seven-lined Chaucerian stanzas, we find new artistic forms of unequal lines, and, by way of exception, a rhymed-couplet consisting of Alexandrines and lines of seven feet; as a rule his strophes consist, by preference, of short lines, simple and graceful in construction, with a distinctly musical effect. Motives and suggestions the poet drew from very different sources—from Italian, French, and probably, also, from Spanish writers, from Latin authors, and Chaucer—but also very frequently from his own experiences, reflection, and condition of mind. Not all of these poems are equally successful. We everywhere have proof of Wyatt's intelligence, his psychological insight, his ingenuity; but more frequently

than could be desired he gives way to artificiality, and hence the voice of genuine sentiment is not always to be heard in his poetry. Where the poet gives spontaneous expression to deep feeling, particularly where manly sorrow reveals itself freely and worthily, there the right expression is found unsought for.

Love is the great theme in by far the larger majority of these and the rest of Wyatt's poems. This was the result of the example set by Petrarch and many other lyric-writers, and was also necessarily the consequence of the atmosphere of the court where all Wyatt's poetry was written. It has even become a matter of tradition that he rarely sings of the happiness of love, and as a rule only of its sorrows. Laments of mournful longing, alternate with the expressions of callous resignation; fervent entreaties to his obdurate mistress, with warnings of the punishment her proud coldness will bring upon her. Then the voice of jealousy is heard, his beloved lady is charged with faithlessness. Then, again, to meet some capricious accusation, the poet discourses on his own faithfulness and constancy. Upon occasions the lover bestirs himself and withdraws his attentions from his heartless or faithless mistress; he even bids good-bye to love or determines to abandon his art, as in the lovely Ode which also makes such happy use of motives from Horace,* purifying and increasing their effect—

"My lute awake! perform the last
Labour that thou and I shall waste,
And end that I have now begun;
For when this song is sung and past,
My lute! be still, for I have done.

"As to be heard where ear is none;
As lead, to grave in marble stone,
My song may pierce her heart as soon:
Should we then sing, or sigh, or moan?
No, no, my lute! for I have done.

'The rock doth not so cruelly
Repulse the waves continually,
As she my suit and affection;
So that I am past remedy,
Whereby my lute and I have done.

* Cf. Ode I., 25.

"Proud of the spoil that thou hast got
Of simple hearts, thorough Love's shot,
By whom, unkind, thou hast them won;
Think not he hath his vow forgot,
Although my lute and I have done.

"Vengeance may fall on thy disdain,
That maketh but game of earnest pain.
Trow not alone under the sun,
Unquit to cause thy lovers plain
Although my lute and I have done.

"May chance thee lie wither'd and old
The winter nights that are so cold,
Plaining in vain unto the moon:
Thy wishes then dare not be told;
Care then who list! for I have done.

"And then may chance thee to repent
The time that thou hast lost and spent,
To cause thy lovers sigh and swoon:
Then shalt thou know beauty but lent,
And wish and want, as I have done.

"Now cease, my lute! this is the last
Labour, that thou and I shall waste,
And ended is that I begun;
Now is this song both sung and past,
My lute! be still, for I have done."

At times the earnest and sorrowful tones give way to strains that are lighter, jocose, and even audacious in spirit. It is very rare on these occasions that any unpleasant or cynical bitterness resounds through Wyatt's poetry, more frequently it is a feeling of self-confidence, with a play of good humour around it, as in the following:—

"I am as I am, and so will I be;
But how that I am, none knoweth truly.
Be it evil, be it well, be I bond, be I free,
I am as I am, and so will I be.

"I lead my life indifferently;
I mean nothing but honesty;
And though folks judge full diversely,
I am as I am, and so will I be.

"I do not rejoice, nor yet complain,
Both mirth and sadness I do refrain,
And use the means since folks will feign;
Yet I am as I am, be it pleasure or pain."

We are not yet in a position to arrange Wyatt's poems in chronological order, to separate the different love-dramas which they reflect, and to present all in their connection. There seems, however, to be no doubt that, as a young man, he had been in love with Anne Boleyn, and some of his poems clearly prove to be a declaration of this passion—

> "What word is that, that changeth not,
> Though it be turn'd and made in twain?
> It is mine Anna, God it wot,
> And eke the causer of my pain,
> [Who] love rewardeth with disdain;
> Yet is it loved: what would ye more?
> It is my health, and eke my sore."

Subsequently, it would seem, she acted more kindly towards him, yet tormented him with her waywardness and aroused his jealousy. Then, when a relation sprang up between her and the King, Wyatt was compelled to withdraw his attentions. Yet it was not without a struggle that he quitted the arena; he calls to his beloved—

> "If thou seek honour, to keep thy promess,
> Who may thee hold, but thou thyself unbind?"

Finally he gives up all hope—

> "Whoso list to hunt? I know where is an hind:
> But as for me, helas! I may no more,
> The vain travail hath wearied me so sore;
> I am of them that furthest come behind.
> Yet may I by no means my wearied mind
> Draw from the deer; but as she fleeth afore
> Fainting I follow; I leave off therefore,
> Since in a net I seek to hold the wind.
> Who list her hunt, I put him out of doubt
> As well as I, may spend his time in vain!
> And graven with diamonds in letters plain,
> There is written her fair neck round about;
> 'Noli me tangere; for Cæsar's I am,
> And wild for to hold, though I seem tame.'"*

Only for three years did the beautiful lady hold her place on the English throne, which she had ascended in

* Ed. Nott, p. 143. The fundamental motive of this sonnet is taken from a sonnet of Romanello's, who, on his part, had borrowed from Petrarch; cf. Nott, p. 571. The working out of the motive is Wyatt's own, and justifies its being found to contain a personal reference.

the wilfulness of youth. On the 1st of May, 1536, during a tournament held at Greenwich, where Lord Rochford and Sir Henry Norris played a conspicuous part, the King showed the first signs of his displeasure with her in public. And on the 19th of May the Queen's head had already fallen beneath the executioner's axe. The question of her guilt, which would never have been doubted had any other than Henry VIII. occupied the English throne at the time, cannot be entered into here. Two days previously her brother, who, with her, had been accused of a detestable crime, had met with the same ignominious death. With him there sank into the grave one of the most brilliant figures at the English court, a favourite with women, a poet whose elegance was extolled by the old writers, and whose lyrics, it may be, still charm us without our knowing their first author.

Shortly after this Thomas Wyatt too was sent to the Tower, having roused the Duke of Suffolk's hatred. His imprisonment, however, did not last long. The King, who had dubbed him a knight on the 18th of March of that year, not only granted him his freedom again, but conferred upon him new and distinct marks of his favour and confidence. He was first given a post in the army despatched under the Duke of Norfolk to quell a rebellion in the north of the kingdom. In the following year he was nominated High-Sheriff for Kent, and subsequently became Henry's ambassador at the court of Spain.

The terrible events he had witnessed, and the sudden changes of fortune he had himself experienced, affected Wyatt's disposition in more than a passing manner. His outward circumstances also took a new turn at this period of his life. Devotedly as he may at an earlier date have served his King, it was only now that he began to play an historical part, by receiving the infinitely delicate and extremely responsible task of representing the English Government at the court of Charles V. How he accomplished this task; what measure of skill, tact, presence of mind, zeal, perseverance, and courage he showed; what success crowned his efforts, and what the circumstances were that prevented his achieving more than he did,—all this must be left to the political historian. We are less interested in the crested

waves that rolled over the brilliant surface of Wyatt's life than in the current that ran beneath in the depths of his soul, although our attention may be withdrawn from it at times, and it only occasionally gave signs of its existence.

Fuller maturity and more earnestness in his views of life —with even a touch of melancholy—seem to distinguish this new phase in Wyatt's existence. The celebrated *Letters* to his son Thomas belong to this first period of his sojourn in Spain, and give perhaps the most brilliant testimony of the depth of his religious and ethical sentiments. This depth of feeling is associated with a pleasant sort of *naïveté* that suggests the Middle Ages rather than of the standpoint of fully developed Protestantism. Wyatt was a staunch adherent of the Reformation, and may have thought that King Henry scarcely did sufficient by his break with Rome and the dissolution of the monasteries. Wyatt, however, was not a theologian, and not controlled by any theological system; hence, therefore, in spite of his leaning towards the Lutherans, certain lingering remains of Roman Catholicism may have still asserted their influence undisturbed. Nothing can be more touching than the manner in which—in the Letters referred to above—he recommends his son to follow his grandfather's example, representing his own life as clouded by many "follies and unthriftness," and goes on to say, "My wish or desire of God for you, shall not stand you in as much effect as, I think, my father's did for me."

Wyatt had, nevertheless, not become unfaithful to poetry. New forms and new styles of versification begin at this period to exhibit themselves in his work and to attract attention. He delights in employing the Italian *ottava rima*, which he likewise introduced into the repertory of English forms of verse; this he did mainly in poems of the apophthegmatic species where the train of thought attains its object in a single stanza. In these apophthegms in the *ottava rima*, which are often epigrammatic in character, Wyatt followed Seraphin Cimino d'Aquila with his "*strambotti*," taking him as his model in general and sometimes also in special cases; still, he also introduced things borrowed elsewhere, as well as things he had thought out himself or had himself experienced, into this artistic form

where conciseness was much more obligatory than in the sonnet. For poems of longer effort he invented a rhymed-couplet which appears also to have been the outcome of regulating the mediæval uncertainty; an alexandrine combined with a seven-footed line, and the last syllable short. It speaks well for Wyatt's appreciation of form that he has only once or twice made use of this high-sounding metre, which, however, has also a restless and somewhat monotonous effect, while the lyric-writers of the following decade (as well as Surrey), and sometimes epic-writers as well, cultivated the form with evident pleasure.

In spite of all his religious sentiments, Wyatt, as a poet, had not altogether abandoned erotic poetry nor, accordingly, its necessary accompaniment—his semi-Platonic, semi-Troubadour-like devotion to Love. One stanza, which may have been composed shortly before his departure for Spain, reflects, with good taste, the ideal charms of a new mistress—

"A face that should content me wond'rous well,
  Should not be fair, but lovely to behold;
With gladsome chere, all grief for to expell;
  With sober looks so would I that it should
Speak without words, such words as none can tell;
  The tress also should be of crisped gold.
With wit and these, might chance I might be tried,
And knit again the knot that should not slide."

A poem belonging to the later period of his sojourn in Spain, perhaps to the beginning of the year 1539, shows us the poet pining for his absent love, probably left behind in his native land. The somewhat lengthy poem of stately structure is based, it is true, upon an imitation of a well-known canzonet of Petrarch's; * yet, however, much of it may be only a reflection of another's sentiments, the cry of longing for his native land that reverberates through the whole poem, comes from the inmost depths of Wyatt's own heart.

Wyatt's mission to Spain lasted fully two years although he did not spend all the time continuously in that country, for business in connection with this official work took him, in June, 1538, to Nice, to the Villa Franca, and even to

* Si è debile il filo, a cui s'attiene. La gravosa mia vita, etc.

England for a few days. It was not want of change that made him feel his position irksome. This arose mainly from the circumstance that the arduous work at the Spanish court had no real connection with the success he had already achieved or might yet achieve. And beside this, he found himself perpetually in an awkward position as a Protestant residing in a strictly Catholic country and under the eyes of the Inquisition. Wyatt longed for quiet, profitable work in his own country. His financial affairs too, which had been handled with the open-handed generosity of a man of rank, demanded his personal presence in England. And, finally, he was well aware that jealousy and slander had been at work injuring his reputation, that Dr. Bonner and Dr. Haynes—who had been entrusted with an extraordinary embassy to the Emperor and had since returned home—were now (especially Bonner) leaving nothing unturned to damage him in the eyes of Lord Cromwell, the Keeper of the Privy Seal.

Hence, during the last months of his residence at the Spanish court, the ground seemed to burn beneath Wyatt's feet, and his appeals for permission to return became more and more urgent. At last, in June, 1539, the longed-for hour of his release sounded, and joyfully the poet exclaims—

> "Tagus, farewell! that westward with thy streams
> Turns up the grains of gold already tried;
> With spur and sail, for I go seek the Thames,
> Gainward the sun that sheweth her wealthy pride;
> And to the town which Brutus sought by dreams,
> Like bended moon, doth lend her lusty side.
> My King, my Country, alone for whom I live,
> Of mighty Love the wings for this me give."

Wyatt, who returned with important information, met with a good reception, both from the King and from Lord Cromwell. The latter—who had full confidence in Wyatt's dexterity and in the faithful services he had rendered, and was, in fact, his personal friend—reassured him as to the complaints that had been brought against him. As soon as all business matters had been attended to, Wyatt retired to his country residence at Allington, in order to devote his leisure to literature and other pursuits. However, he was not to enjoy this quiet life for long. The journey of

Charles V. through France to the Netherlands at the beginning of the winter, and the various political considerations to which it gave rise, the important interests which came into play, was the cause of Wyatt's being again called upon to act as ambassador at the Emperor's court. Sir Thomas, accordingly, again had an anxious and busy time before him, and again gave brilliant proofs of his skill as a diplomatist, of his energy and perseverance. At one time he had to follow the Emperor, at another to travel in advance of him, seeking audiences, inquiring into matters everywhere, sounding, examining, writing reports, arranging with couriers and himself receiving instructions; these and other matters of a similar nature engaged Wyatt's attention throughout the winter of 1539-40 up to the month of May, and kept him in a constant conflict with difficulties. A memorial of his activity during these months has been preserved in his official correspondence, which, among other things, shows us Wyatt as a man of quick observation and an excellent writer. His reports of his audiences with the Emperor, in particular, are veritable masterpieces of characterization, finely drawn and true to life. Wyatt had quickly enough perceived what were the Emperor's intentions, and from his earlier and more recent experiences, had become thoroughly convinced that no diplomatic veneering or temporizing would be of any avail with this profound politician—in fact, that energetic measures alone would prove effectual. However, the policy which Wyatt held to be right, and which had been most energetically promoted and supported by Cromwell, viz. a close alliance between England and the Protestant princes of Germany, did not prove in keeping with the erotic or even with the theological inclinations of the King. Henry's matrimonial alliance with Anne of Cleves (January 6, 1540) had been accomplished by Cromwell, but the great political league which was to be the logical outcome of the marriage, he could as little manage to bring about as he could prevent the King—immediately after his marriage—from thinking how he could, with good grace, rid himself of his fourth consort.

Wyatt made frequent and urgent appeals to be allowed to retire from his post, on this occasion also, before his request was granted; and when he returned to England

towards the middle of May, he found his mighty patron's position shaken to its very foundations. To all outward appearance Cromwell still stood erect, for as late as the 18th of April he had been created Earl of Essex. However, the King's favour had been turned against him, and the hostile feelings he had aroused among the nobility, the clergy, and the nation at large, by his merciless severity, daily assumed a more menacing attitude. The mighty man's fall was at hand. On the 10th of June, 1540, he was arrested for high treason, and on the 28th of the same month his head fell on the scaffold.

A well-known sonnet of Petrarch's laments in the same breath, the deaths of Cardinal Colonna and of his adored Laura: "The lofty column is shattered, the green laurel is rent in pieces, which afforded shade to my weary spirit;" this sonnet Wyatt has imitated, though he retains only the column and rejects the laurel—

> "The pillar perish'd is whereto I leaned,
> The strongest stay of mine unquiet mind."

Thus altered, the sonnet is scarcely to be taken otherwise than as an allusion to the death of Cromwell. And if this supposition—which is not my own—is correct, the poem is a proof how deeply Wyatt felt the loss of his powerful friend. But more than this, the end of the poem differs from the original, for Wyatt says that he shall hate himself as long as life lasts, and this is intelligible only when regarded as containing a condemnation of his own actions. Wyatt must have been conscious that he was greatly to blame for the failure of Cromwell's policy, in thus reproaching himself for his friend's fall.

Wyatt's attention was soon turned from broodings of this kind, by the troubles which were drawing close round his own person. His enemies, particularly Bonner who had meanwhile become Bishop of London, believed that, with Cromwell's fall, the right moment had arrived for renewed accusations against Wyatt. And their poisonous falsehoods now found ears ready enough to listen to them. Wyatt was arrested and sent to the Tower on the double charge of having been in conspiracy with Reginald Pole, and of having spoken maliciously and derogatorily of his

Majesty the King; both points of the accusation referred to the period of his first embassy to Charles V. For months Wyatt was kept in the Tower in mental as well as physical torment, previous to being brought before his judges. In impressive lines he describes his position and state of mind—

> "Sighs are my food; my drink they are my tears;
> Clinking of fetters such music would crave:
> Stink, and close air, away my life wears;
> Innocency is all the hope I have.
> Rain, wind, or weather, I judge by mine ears;
> Malice assaults that righteousness should have.
> Sure I am, Bryan, this wound shall heal again;
> But yet, alas! the scar shall still remain."

But hope does not forsake him in his prison—

> "He is not dead that sometime had a fall!
> The sun returns, that was under the cloud;
> And when fortune hath spit out all her gall,
> I trust good luck to me shall be allow'd."

Nor does he fail to remember that good accompanies evil–

> "Venemous thorns that are so sharp and keen,
> Sometime bear flowers fair, and fresh of hue.
> Poison oft time is put in medicine,
> And causeth health in man for to renew.
> Fire that purgeth all thing that is unclean,
> May heal and hurt; and if these been true,
> I trust sometime my harm maybe my health;
> Since every woe is joined with some wealth."

While under arrest, Wyatt was called upon to furnish a written statement of the circumstances, which would certainly have proved a pitfall to any less clear-headed man. He was called upon to declare in what way he had committed himself, or could have come under the suspicion of having committed himself, during his stay at the Emperor's court, and especially during the days spent at Nice, in the Villa Franca. Wyatt's "Declaration" gives proof of his great dexterity as well as of the absolute confidence he felt in his own innocence. After being undeservedly ill-used in this manner, Wyatt was at length brought before his judges, and heard what his accusers and their witnesses had to say against him. He himself was not allowed any legal assistance or to call witnesses on his own behalf, or even to have

those who had witnessed against him cross-examined; it was evident to him now that what alone could save him was his own speech in his defence. This speech, which has been preserved, deserves to rank by the side of the great masterpieces of forensic eloquence; for, together with his keen logical distinctions, the clearness with which he keeps to his points, we have a fulness of presentation which is concise as well; and according to his necessity or the occasion we find in his tone and the turn of expression, at one time calm deliberation, and at others, manly pathos, vehement self-defence, or caustic wit; and as an undercurrent to the whole there is a confidence that compels conviction and a continuous low appeal to the sense of justice and fairness in his judges. The bright sword of innocence, sharpened as it was by such a mind as Wyatt's, cut through the network of Bonner's sophistry as though it had been material of the flimsiest kind.

Wyatt was acquitted and restored to life somewhere about June, 1541, and the King thereupon showed himself anxious to make his faithful servant some compensation for the ill-usage he had received. To the earlier marks of the royal bounty, which had been of a very substantial kind, new ones were now added in double measure. Wyatt's estates were considerably increased by grants of land, by exchanges of property in his favour, and a redistribution of estates; his income, too, received important additions by this, as well as by salaries for managing royal estates and the usufructs. Wyatt, who certainly had a number of debts, and had never been very capable of managing his own money affairs, was now a wealthy and influential man, and, accordingly, in a position to live much as he chose.

Life at court no longer attracted the man of many experiences. In one of his stanzas he gives a drastic description of the life of courtiers, and compares them to prisoners "fetter'd with chains of gold," and goes on to say—

> "Stand whoso list upon the slipper top
> Of high estate; and let me here rejoice
> And use me quiet without let or stop
> Unknown in Court, that hath such brakish joys.
> In hidden place so let my days forth pass;
> That when my years be done withouten noise
> I may die aged, after the common trace."

Hence he withdrew to a sphere of his own, to a sphere of more restricted duties and simpler pleasures, and chose by preference his estate at Allington. There he occupied himself in managing his property, and looking after the interests of those who stood under his protection, devoting himself also to entertaining his friends, a little to sport, and above all to the Muses.

Of erotic poetry he no longer wrote any. Since Cromwell's death he had definitely relinquished the service of Love –

> "Farewell Love! and all thy laws for ever;
> Thy baited hooks shall tangle me no more:
> Senec and Plato call me from thy lore,
> To perfect wealth my wit for to endeavour.
> In blind errour when I did persever,
> Thy sharp repulse that pricketh aye so sore,
> Hath taught me to set in trifles no store,
> And scape forth, since liberty is lever.
> Therefore farewell! go, trouble younger hearts,
> And in me claim no more authority.
> With idle youth go use thy property,
> And thereon spend thy many brittle darts;
> For, hitherto, though I have lost all my time,
> Me lusteth no longer rotten boughs to climb."

Contemplative, moralizing poetry, spiced with satire, flourished in the atmosphere of Allington. The models made use of were chiefly Horace, and Luigi Alamanni, a man who had been banished from Florence and was residing at the court of Francis I., to whom Alamanni had dedicated a volume of his collected poetical works under the title of "Opere Toscane." From Alamanni, Wyatt adopted the *terza rima*, a form of verse that had not yet been introduced into English poetry, and which, at the time, must at all events have been an absolute novelty. And together with the new form of verse, the Florentine's influence in style was somewhat distinctly evident. But in spite of being swayed by the influence of his models, the satirist of Allington gave proof of the independence of his own talent which had now reached its full maturity.

Only three *Satires* have been left by Wyatt, but these may readily be regarded as among the best things that have proceeded from his poetic pen. They are the earliest

English satires, in the sense of that artistic form which originated in Rome, and at the same time breathe that spirit of refinement and freedom from constraint which characterizes, or at least should characterize, the language of the higher circles of society. In these poems Wyatt is generally in advance of the intellectual culture of his age, and, for long, none of those who came after him succeeded in rising to his level in this. The culture of the humanist we here find combined with that of the experienced man of the world—a man with a knowledge of human nature and the artistic instinct of a genuine poet; above all, however, Wyatt here shows himself to be completely a man of honour, a sincere friend to truth and virtue.

The "Satires" are occasional poems in the best sense of the term. To his friend John Poyntz, who had expressed his surprise at Wyatt's withdrawing into the seclusion of country life, the poet replies in his second Satire with a successful imitation of the tenth of Alamanni: "I cannot frame my tongue to feign—to cloke the truth for praise without desȧrt—I cannot speak with look right as a saint; Use wiles for wit, and make deceit a pleasure—and call craft counsel—I cannot, I, no, no, it will not be."

> "This maketh me at home to hunt, and to hawk;
> And in foul weather at my book to sit,
> In frost and snow; then with my bow to stalk.
> No man doth mark whereso I ride or go,
> In lusty leas at liberty I walk;
> And of these news I feel nor weal, nor woe,
> Save that a clog doth hang yet at my heel.*
> No force for that; for it is ordered so,
> That I may leap both hedge and dyke full well.'

Wyatt goes on to say—

> "I am not now in France to judge the wine;
> With savoury sauce the delicates to feel;
> Nor yet in Spain, where one must him incline
> Rather than to be, outwardly to seem:
> I meddle not with wits that be so fine.
> Nor Flanders cheer letteth not my sight to deem
> Of black and white, nor taketh my wit away
> With beastliness; they beasts do so esteem.

* This can refer only to some public duties he had still to attend to, or to some temporary confinement to the house at Allington.

Nor am I not, where Christ is given in prey
For money, poison, and trahison, at Rome
A common practise, used night and day;
But here I am in Kent and Christendom,
Among the Muses, where I read and rhyme:
Where if thou list, my Poyntz for to come,
Thou shalt be judge how I do spend my time." *

In addressing another friend, Sir Francis Bryan—who was still in the King's service, with his expenses greater than his income, as had been Wyatt's own case at one time and who could not be persuaded to withdraw to a life of inactivity—Wyatt shows him how he may come into the possession of money. In doing this the poet gives his friend advice similar to that which in Horace, Theresias gives to Ulysses, but Wyatt's is more original in the turn his thoughts take and they are also more forcibly expressed. In the middle of his discourse he suddenly breaks off, exclaiming—

"Laugh'st thou at me? Why! do I speak in vain?
'No, not at thee, but at thy thrifty jest.
Would'st thou I should for any loss or gain
Change that for gold, which I have ta'en for best?
Next godly things to have an honest name!
Should I leave that, then take me for a beast.'
Nay, then farewell! an' if thou care for shame,
Content thee then with honest poverty;
With free tongue what thee mislikes to blame,
And for thy Truth some time adversity;
And therewithal, this gift I shall thee give,
In this world now little prosperity,
And coin to keep, as water in a sieve."

His most important Satire on a *Mean and Sure Estate* is one again addressed to John Poyntz, where Wyatt undertakes to prove, from the contentment he feels in his present circumstances, that happiness is not to be found where men seek for it. He begins with the fable of the Town and Country Mouse, which he knew not only from Horace's elegant version, but undoubtedly also from Henryson's pleasant and graphic treatment of the subject.† Wyatt

* Ed. Notts, p. 90.

† Among the features in which Wyatt and Henryson show agreement, is the circumstance that the two mice are sisters, and also the appearance of the cat (in Henryson the second incident of disturbance, in Wyatt the only one) which brings about the tragic end.

alters the fable in important points to suit the object he has in view: the field-mouse, being dissatisfied with her position, visits the town-mouse, without any invitation, in order to share her more flourishing circumstances, and does not escape with a mere fright, but meets with a cruel death. The details and tone of the narrative are admirable in Wyatt, and produce the pleasantest effect. The poet found it an easy matter then to pass over to the thoughts which lay next his heart, and in impressive words and vivid pictures, accordingly, presents them to his readers. He recapitulates all in the most striking manner, and finally brings his satire to a magnificent close with a turn borrowed from Persius—

> "Then seek no more out of thyself to find
> The thing, that thou has sought so long before;
> For thou shalt feel it sitting in thy mind,
> Mad, if ye list to continue your sore.
> Let present pass, and gape on time to come,
> And deep yourself in travail more and more.
> Henceforth, my Poyntz, this shall be all and sum,
> These wretched fools shall have naught else of me:
> But to the great God, and to his high doom,
> None other pain pray I for them to be,
> But, when the rage doth lead them from the right,
> That looking backward, Virtue they may see,
> Even she is, so goodly fair, and bright;
> And whilst they clasp their lusts in arms across,
> Grant them, good Lord, as thou may'st of thy might.
> To freat inward, for losing such a loss."

It is strange, yet not astonishing, that Wyatt should have passed from such poems to religious poetry in the narrower sense. He wrote a paraphrase of the Penitential Psalms, and, in addition to this, translated several passages from the other Psalms, for instance, the thirty-seventh.

In these also he made use of the *terza rima*, and may again have been guided by Alamanni's example, but by Dante's as well. Wyatt's translation suffers, at times, from harshness of metre, is, however, distinguished by the power and nervous vigour of his poetic language, by dignity and sincerity and, as far as the subject permitted, by plastic vividness. Perhaps no other English poet has ever so closely approached Dante's style, by which remark we do not exactly refer to Dante's "Psalms." Wyatt's contemporaries

preferred his paraphrases of the Psalms to all his other poems, an opinion to which posterity, being less theologically disposed, will certainly not be able to subscribe. No poet will ever succeed in equalling the original Psalms, and what he may venture to add of his own, however happy in itself, will always be felt to be a disturbing adjunct. Wyatt's translation is not wanting in independent turns, additions which reveal individual thought, but they signalize the pious Christian, the theologian, the thinker, more than the poet.

The "Penitential Psalms" are introduced by narrative and descriptive passages, which may have been suggested by Béze's "poetical preface" in Latin hexameters; Wyatt chose for these the *ottava rima.* In these introductory portions there might have been more display of invention, but owing to the subject and the poet's own frame of mind, this was kept within tolerably narrow limits.

Periods of religious agitation are wont, in the Christian world, to revive an interest in the Psalms. Hence, at the time of the Reformation we find various attempts of this kind produced in various parts of the world. On English ground, Wyatt preceded the disciples of the Renaissance by the example he gave.

Wyatt's paraphrase of the Psalms was, it seems, his last work. The poet was not destined to enjoy his reacquired freedom much over one year. An urgent commission from the King requesting him, in the autumn of 1542, to proceed to Falmouth to receive the Emperor's ambassador, who had already landed, led Wyatt to start off forthwith on a hurried journey; the physical effort he had made, combined with unfavourable weather, brought on an attack of fever while he was on the journey, and from this he was not to recover. After a few days' illness, death claimed him in the full strength of his manhood. In the great church of Sherbourne, on the 11th of October, he was carried to his last resting-place.

Wyatt is not one of the great master-minds, but certainly occupied one of the most distinguished positions in the history of his own nation. Owing to the soundness and complete harmony of his nature, he exercised an enduring influence upon English poetry at a period when its culture was specially in need of inward consistency.

When Wyatt's poetic voice was about to become silent for ever, Surrey's lyrics began to take flights to higher subjects and purer melody.

Henry Howard had grown up in an atmosphere of literary interests—in fact, the very roots of his existence were connected with an appreciation for learning and poetry. His grandfather Thomas, Duke of Norfolk, had been the patron of Barclay, the poet; his own father (of the same name), who had succeeded to the title in 1524, had patronized, among others, the scholar Clarke, and the fantastic humourist Andrew Boorde; his mother, in her day, had entertained Skelton at Sheriff Hutton, and presented him with a laurel wreath, and, in return, had been fêted by the sensitive and imaginative poet in inspired verse. In the families related to, or connected by marriage with the great House of Howard, there was a succession of men during the reign of Henry VIII., who had written both in poetry and in prose, and some of whom had made their mark. One of these was Lord Berners, to whose excellence as a prose-writer and translator of Froissart we have already endeavoured to do justice; there was also Henry Parker, Lord Morley, who was thoroughly well-read in the ancient as well as the later poets, and who had translated Petrarch's "Trionfi" into English verse, which, though not rendered in Wyatt's style, was at all events well-intentioned. Thomas, Lord Stafford, who had a lively interest in poetry, and frequently tried his hand at verse, was Surrey's uncle on his mother's side. Brilliant Lord Rochford was his cousin on his father's side. Eminent scholars and writers frequently enjoyed the hospitality of the Howards, sometimes for a considerable length of time, or found permanent occupation at their residences. Although there exists no information concerning the particulars of Surrey's education, it seems a matter of course that he must have received a thoroughly classical training, for Horace and Vergil became his favourite poets, and Chaucer shared this preference with them. With Petrarch, too, he became intimately acquainted, and yet this great lyric-writer did not exercise upon him the overpowering influence he had obtained over Wyatt. It is an important feature which distinguishes the younger from the older poet, that Surrey's

culture was more deeply rooted in the national soil than Wyatt's had been, and hence he could give surer proof of his independence when brought face to face with the Romanic influence on the Continent.

And in addition to this there was Surrey's love of nature and his intimate acquaintance with all its beauties, which had been encouraged in him from childhood upwards, at his father's country-seat, Tendring Hall, in Suffolk; the surroundings there had ripened his poetic temperament and given it a definite tendency. In close association with all this, Surrey's bent of mind was naturally contemplative, with a certain touch of melancholy, which he may have inherited from his mother, who had been forced by her family to break her troth with her beloved Westmoreland and to marry Thomas, Earl of Surrey, a man much older than herself.

It can well be imagined that the court, with all its brilliance, its chivalrous jousts and tournaments, its beautiful women and gallant men, must have made a great impression upon a youth of Surrey's disposition, and that it proved both fascinating as well as repellent to him, yet, upon the whole, rather increasing than checking the tastes he had inherited or acquired. Ideals of chivalry, thoughts of splendid feats of arms, and the love of women must soon have played a prominent part in the young poet's dreams. A similar effect was produced upon him by the romantic friendship which had sprung up between him and a natural son of the King's, Henry Fitz-Roy, who was born in 1518, and created Duke of Richmond in 1525. Surrey, who had served at court as a child and attended King Henry as cup-bearer, must have, at an early age, become acquainted with young Richmond. Their friendship increased as years went on, and found nourishment in the opportunities which enabled them to meet from time to time. In 1532 both young men accompanied the King to Calais, and Surrey was among those who followed him to Boulogne, where King Henry was to meet Francis I. The two monarchs then proceeded to Calais together, and were met by Richmond on the way. Soon after this Henry sent his son to Paris to attend the university; and when Richmond returned to England in November, 1533, his

friendship with Surrey became even more firmly cemented, for Richmond became engaged to Surrey's only sister, the Lady Mary Howard. Surrey, too, had become betrothed the year before, his bride being a daughter of the Earl of Oxford, Lady Francis Vere. The marriage contract had been signed, but the wedding was postponed owing to extreme youth of the young couple. It was during this period of waiting, in 1534, that the two friends spent so delightful a time at the royal residence at Windsor, golden days, which Surrey looks back upon with sad memories twelve years afterwards. When at Windsor they had engaged in manly exercises and sports, in small harmless adventures, and had imparted to each other, in soft confidence, what hopes they had of attaining the happiness of their dreams.

Surrey led home his wife the following year, and on the 10th of March, 1536, his first son was born to him. Fate had no such happiness in store for his friend, young Richmond.

The year 1536, which had brought Wyatt so much trouble and joy, proved no less eventful and terrible to Surrey. Anne Boleyn, who was executed in May of that year, was Surrey's first cousin, and he, as well as his father, had found themselves obliged to take part in her trial. In June his uncle, Lord Thomas Howard, who had married the Lady Margaret Douglas without the King's consent, was accused of high treason and sent to the Tower, where he died two years afterwards. July brought even worse trouble, for on the 22nd of the month the young Duke of Richmond died, a loss which Surrey felt for years afterwards.

Meanwhile his own career continued to prosper; he was dubbed a knight in October, 1536, an honour which Wyatt had had conferred upon him the preceding spring. Probably not long after this Surrey wrote the poem which is the earliest production of his pen that has been preserved. In spite of his youth, he had seen so much of life himself and what he had brought for others, that he must perfectly have understood—theoretically, at least—the lessons of the ancient philosophers and poets concerning the equanimity of mind befitting a wise man in times of good fortune as well as of misfortune, the spirit of moderation, the golden mean,

that should be observed in all things in life. It was with these sentiments in his mind that he addressed his friend Thomas Wyatt, who, after days of trouble and anxiety, again found himself in the full sunlight of royal favour—

> "Of thy life, Thomas, this compass well mark:
> Not aye with full sails the high seas to beat:
> Ne by coward dread, in shunning stormes dark,
> On shallow shores thy keel in perill freat."

As may be seen from this first verse, the poem is nothing but an imitation of one of Horace's well-known Odes. What is, above all, characteristic in this attempt are two points: the conciseness of the poetical expression, in which Surrey tries even to surpass the original, and the simplicity of the strophic system. Elegance and grace are as yet but little apparent, and the treatment of the versification reveals a disciple of Wyatt who had not yet attained full independence.

The time which Wyatt had spent at the court of Charles V., and during which he had given proof of his dexterity as a diplomatist, Surrey had spent partly in his own home (where, in the spring of 1539, a second son, Henry, was born to him), and partly at court. No fuller information exists as to what offices or other important matters may have attached him to King Henry's *entourage*. It is merely on occasions of solemn court functions that his figure is seen in some eminent position: as at the Reception on New Year's Day, 1538, when he brought the King a rich gift; at the funeral of Lady Jane Seymour, who, soon after presenting the King with the long-desired heir to his throne, was carried off by death in October, 1537; or at the brilliant tournament on the 1st of May, 1540, held in honour of the new Queen, Anne of Cleves, where the Earl greatly distinguished himself. English queens, in those days did not, as a rule, occupy the throne for any length of time; Henry VIII. was not very fortunate in his wives, and they were still less fortunate with him. Anne of Cleves, whose appearance had disappointed Henry the very first time they met, and who, day by day, became more distasteful to him, had been married to him on the 6th of January, 1540; and in the following July he was divorced

from her with the consent of the highest ecclesiastical and State authorities. In the September following, he married Lady Catherine Howard, and for thirteen months felt thoroughly happy in his new marriage. Thus, for the second time in this reign a niece of the Duke of Norfolk was wearing the English crown; but again it brought but little honour to the Howard family, with whom the Queen was this time directly connected. In November, 1541, many scandalous things became known of Catherine's life before her marriage; and it turned out that even since her marriage, her life had been most culpable. She acknowledged her guilt, and was executed in February, 1542.

Norfolk and his high-minded son must have deeply felt the disgrace brought upon their family by this member of it who had risen to so exalted a position; however, the relation in which they stood to the King does not appear to have been affected by the tragic occurrence. On St. George's Day of this same year Surrey was even installed Knight of the Garter.

Surrey was now somewhere about six and twenty years of age, yet of great achievements he had as yet none to show. His high rank, the distinguished position of his family, his father's influence, and his own talents seemed, however, to promise him a brilliant future, and he was already well known and highly esteemed, even beyond the court circle, for in September, 1541, he had been elected a stewart of the University of Cambridge at the same time as his father. His actual career, in fact, had scarcely begun. The whole tendency of his nature had destined him for a soldier's life, in the same way as Wyatt's seemed to have destined him for diplomatic work. A brief prelude to his military activity was made towards the end of the year 1540, when he travelled to Guisnes in the retinue of Lord Russel and of the Earl of Southampton, who were to make an examination of the English fortresses in France, owing to the constrained relations between the two countries. In October, 1542, he accompanied his father in a campaign against Scotland, which, however, lasted but a short time, and led to no action of any importance beyond devastating the country through which they passed, and burning several of the towns. Twelve months later Surrey was present at the siege of

Landrecy, mainly with the view to become more intimately acquainted with the military operations of the day. And his desire for learning could not have met with a more favourable opportunity, for, in addition to the English troops who were besieging the place, he met also their allies, the Emperor's army, with all its variety of European nationalities and different species of weapons. At midsummer of the following year his military career began in earnest. The years of his preliminary studies were now over, and in the war with France he was entrusted with important offices for which he proved himself altogether competent. Presence of mind, circumspection, and a clear insight into what was necessary were innate qualities in him; but he was pre-eminently distinguished for his untiring energy and chivalrous delight in warfare and danger.

Meanwhile Surrey's poetical ability had revealed itself in a brilliant manner. While engaged with his preliminary military studies, his talent burst forth in full force. Wyatt's example had acted as a determinating influence upon him, yet, in the depths of Surrey's nature, there were tendencies even more powerfully attracted by Chaucer. In his preference for what was simple, in his leaning towards what was noblest in the national spirit, he had soon struck out a path of his own.

Among Surrey's poems is one which, in spite of the obscurity which envelops the date of its origin, throws a significant light upon his life. The poem describes in the most original manner the alternating feelings of a lover in the absence of his mistress—a theme pretty well used up even at that day. It opens with a very vivid description of a sunrise: we see all nature, as it were, concentrated in an ideal landscape, gradually awakening to new life; the light drives off the anxious dreams of the night, and fills all creatures with unclouded gladness. The poet-lover alone is unable to feel the sensation of renewed life, and, accordingly, the description of the scene from nature is followed by a psychological picture, which is worked up into a most animated soliloquy, where first Doubt and then Hope are personified; and Hope, who takes her stand upon the well-known gentleness and fidelity of his mistress, gains the day.

The poem is developed in short and simple rhymed-couplets and unaffected language; but how delicately felt, how finely worked out it all is! How easy the flow of his verse, how gracefully animated his description! Many a time we fancy we are reading Chaucer, as he appears in the best portions of the "Book of the Duchess." The detailed account of his own state of mind, the personifications, and particularly the poetical technicalities in the detail even as regards metre and language, remind one irresistibly of the old master. There are other features, again, where he rises far above Chaucer—features that even point towards the future. The picture of the landscape at the beginning prepares us for Milton's "Allegro;" and when the literary sources of this famous poem, and its no less famous twin-brother "Il Penseroso," were looked for in various directions, Surrey's poem, which has the greatest claim to the honour of being named in the connection, should not have been overlooked; this fact, moreover, is an interesting example of the continuity of tradition to which English poetry can lay claim.

If Chaucer's influence upon Surrey shows itself intimately connected with his appreciation for nature, contriving to throw life into what is lifeless, and drawing all creation, as it were, within the sphere of human sympathy, it was Wyatt's influence which, in the first place, affected the formal, technical side of his poetry. Chaucer, one might fancy to have been the intimate friend in Surrey's parental home, who had unobtrusively taken part in his education, and whose image remained associated in the son's memory among the most cherished impressions of his childhood; Wyatt, on the other hand, seems the teacher to whose school he had been sent. And it is worthy of note that the pupil, in most points, soon outstripped his teacher in independence and, particularly, in his fine appreciation of the peculiarities of his mother-tongue.

Wyatt, in his versification, is found to aim at smoothness and regularity, and the same endeavour is met with in Surrey; but he is more successful than Wyatt in adapting foreign rules to the rhymical accent of the English language, and thus he is in reality the founder of the New-English metrical system. It is much the same as regards their

poetical diction. Surrey, too, was not satisfied with the first expression found; he, too, knew what it meant to have the right word in the right place; he, too, avoided what was inelegant and commonplace; he, too, was fond of surprising and captivating his readers by bold inversions and imagery. But he does not so frequently fall into conventional unnaturalness as Wyatt; we do not as frequently, in Surrey, meet with poetic or rhetorical embellishments which appear to exist only on their own account, in place of proceeding from the subject. The high-sounding notes sometimes struck by Wyatt, or even the playful and graceful method in which he is occasionally successful, Surrey scarcely ever follows or even tries to follow; for which reason his diction is more equal, sustained, of simple dignity and unaffected gracefulness, and, at times, of nervous force.

In his systems of versification, in the construction of his strophes, Surrey, in many ways, proves to be under the influence of his predecessors. Yet he exhibits much less variety, and much less frequently handles artificial, ponderous forms. Once or twice he has made use of the *terza rima;* but in all his poetry there are only two instances of his employing the *ottava rima.* He shows a preference for the rhymed-couplets formed of alexandrines and seven-footed lines, which were only very occasionally made use of by Wyatt who had introduced them. And as this form shows a resemblance to the popular ballad style, we find that whenever Surrey employs it, he studiously adopts a simpler and more straightforward style than in his other poems. Another system he is fond of employing is the four-lined stanza with alternate rhymes. Where such stanzas consist of heroic verse, the poet is fond of accentuating the close of the poem by a rhymed-couplet of the same species. There is also that freer form of sonnet which through Surrey's example became the customary one in the English lyric poetry of the sixteenth century; three quatrains followed by a rhymed-couplet. And, as Surrey almost invariably chooses or constructs forms in keeping with the spirit of the English language, he likewise manifests a closer relation to the national poetry, by making use of alliteration by way of ornament to a much greater extent than does Wyatt.

Of foreign poetry Surrey had studied the Italians even

more than he had the Latin poets, and, on the other hand, only in rare cases does he betray any French influence. Like Wyatt, he owes most to Petrarch; yet only on the rarest occasions (generally in his Sonnets) do we find him translating or even imitating the great Italian. As a rule we find only that free utilizing of reminiscences, whether of form or matter, thought or image, which has been permitted to poets in almost every epoch without prejudice to their originality, and is said to occur sometimes even in our modern poets.

The greater portion of Surrey's lyrics are, of course, of the erotic species. His earliest love-poems may have included poetical studies—translations from Petrarch and such things—some of which no longer exist. Two poems which place the poet's objectivity and power of imagination in a bright light belong to the last month of the year 1540. Surrey was abroad at the time—perhaps for the first time in his young married life—and thus separated from his wife by the sea. It is a distinctly Teutonic trait that the yearning and sorrow so affectingly expressed there are represented as coming from the loving wife rather than from the husband. In both poems the sorrowing wife appeals to other women to mourn with her—in the one case to those who are more fortunate than she is, in the other to those who are in the same position as herself. And in spite of the similarity of the situations and of certain fundamental motives, the construction and attitude of the two poems is as dissimilar as their metrical form. The one, in a species of stanza not otherwise met with in Surrey, reminding one of the Middle-English note, is more elegant in expression, and perhaps also more graceful, owing to the purer impress of its lyrical character; the other presents, in the customary system of unequal rhymed-couplets, a more straightforward, more epic form of diction, with a fuller elaboration of detail.

I quote the last four stanzas of the first poem, which consists altogether of six—

> "Alas! how oft in dreams I see
> Those eyes that were my food;
> Which sometime so delighted me,
> That yet they do me good:

Wherewith I wake with his return,
Whose absent flame doth make me burn:
But when I find the lack, Lord! how I mourn.

"When other lovers in arms across,
Rejoice their chief delight;
Drowned in tears, to mourn my loss,
I stand the bitter night
In my window, where I may see
Before the winds how the clouds flee:
Lo! what a mariner love hath made of me.

"And in green waves when the salt flood
Doth rise by rage of wind;
A thousand fancies in that mood,
Assail my restless mind.
Alas! now drencheth my sweet foe,
That with the spoil of my heart did go,
And left me; but, alas! why did he so.

"And when the seas wax calm again,
To chase from me annoy,
My doubtful hope doth cause me pain;
So dread cuts off my joy.
Thus is my wealth mingled with woe:
And of each thought a doubt doth grow;
Now he comes! will he come? alas! no, no!"

Compare this with a passage from the second poem—

"The fearful dreams I have, oft-times they grieve me so,
That when I wake, I stand in doubt, if they be true, or no,
Sometime the roaring seas, me-seems, do grow so high,
That my dear Lord, ay me! alas! methinks I see him die.
Another time the same, doth tell me he is come,
And playing, where I shall find him, with T. his little son.
So forth I go apace to see that life-some sight,
And with a kiss, methinks I say: 'Now welcome home, my knight;
Welcome, my sweet; alas! the stay of my welfare;
Thy presence bringeth forth a truce betwixt me and my care.'
Then lively doth he look, and salueth me again,
And saith: 'My dear, how is it now that you have all this pain?'
Wherewith the heavy cares, that heap'd are in my breast,
Break forth and me dischargen clean, of all my great unrest.
But when I me awake, and find it but a dream,
The anguish of my former woe beginneth more extreme;
And me tormenteth so that uneath may I find
Some hidden place, wherein to slake the gnawing of my mind."

Surrey returned home before Christmas. But during this winter a change came over him which—although it left

his relation to his wife undisturbed—gave quite a new form of life to his poetry. It formed the beginning of his lyrics in the languishing style of the Troubadours, love-sighs after the manner of Petrarch.

Surrey's Laura was the Lady Elizabeth of the old Norman family of the Fitzgeralds or Geraldines, which had settled in Ireland some time previously, and had played a conspicuous part there. Her father, Gerald Fitzgerald, Earl of Kildare, had nominally acted as Lord High Commissioner to the King of England, but in matter of fact had played the part of an independent Viceroy of Ireland, till a rebellion, in which many members of the family had taken part, compelled the English Government to resort to measures of severity.

The mother, a daughter of Thomas Grey, Marquis of Dorset, and hence related to the royal House of England,* had, since those days, lived in the poorest circumstances. The Lady Elizabeth, who was born in the Emerald Island, had been sent to England at a tender age, and was educated in the household of the Princess Mary, at Hunsdon. It was at Hunsdon that she first saw the Earl of Surrey. On a subsequent occasion, at a royal festival at Hampton Court, the beautiful Geraldine—for so she is called by the poet—made such an impression upon him that he elected her mistress of his heart and of his Muse. At that time she was still on the borders between childhood and womanhood; but the fascination exercised by her personal appearance and her nature, was even increased by the charm with which misfortune had surrounded her, as well as the high rank of her family and the old and somewhat romantic glory of her name. According to a tradition accepted by many, the Fitzgeralds were descended from the Norwegian mariner Ohthere, the account of whose voyages King Alfred has preserved to us in his "Orosius." Another legend speaks of the family as a branch of the Geraldi, who, in early times, migrated from Florence to Normandy, and thence passed over to England. The latter version of the story was the one which Surrey appears to have accepted, and for the literary

* Thomas Grey was a step-brother of Elizabeth, daughter of Edward IV., and mother of Henry VIII.

historian also it pleasantly enough symbolizes the origin of that species of poetry with which the Lady Elizabeth inspired the Earl. Even the story which subsequently came to be woven round the poet and his relations to Geraldine is connected with this family legend.

For some time Surrey was content to worship his lady-love in silence, betraying his feelings at most by glances, which, it seems, left the young beauty suddenly silent, after the manner of a schoolgirl, when in all artlessness she had been enjoying lively converse with the Earl; these glances, therefore, she met with cold surprise. Probably there is some reference to this—unless, indeed, it belongs to an earlier date—in the poem which is a translation of the same sonnet of Petrarch's which Wyatt had already turned into English: "Amor, che nel pensier mio vive e regna." In another Sonnet Surrey speaks of the two springs in Cyprus, the one "so hot, that whoso tastes the same, were he a stone, as thawéd ice should melt," the other so cold that its—

> "Chilling venom of repugnant kind
> The fervent heat doth quench of Cupid's wound,
> And with the spot of change infects the mind,"

producing indifference and inconstancy, and then says that he has drunk of the former, while his lady has partaken of the latter. Of a similar kind is the poem in which—again following Petrarch's but also Ariosto's track—he describes the "wayward ways of love, that, most part in discord, our wills do stand, whereby our hearts but seldom do accord." Here the poet, from his own bitter experience, seems well acquainted with all the torments to which a hopeless lover is subject. A lovely poem which betrays Chaucer's influence, and in particular his "Parlement of Foules," shows us Surrey, on a spring morning, leaving home and setting out for the open country in the hope of being refreshed by reawakened nature, and of being relieved of his weary burden. He enjoys the sprouting buds and blossoms; he enjoys hearing the birds warbling their thanks to Nature for the happiness of their loves. But the contemplation of all this happiness makes him all the more conscious of his own sad plight, and makes it all the more difficult to bear; he becomes madly enraged,

curses love, and defies its power. However, his "harms have ever since increased more and more," and he remains without love's help "undone for ever more."

In the summer of 1542 Surrey, who had carried matters too far in some quarrel—the cause of which is unknown—was imprisoned for some weeks, at first in the Fleet, and from the 1st to the 5th of August in Windsor Castle. While there he wrote the sonnet which revealed to the world the secret of his love—

> "From Tuscan came my Lady's worthy race;
> Fair Florence was sometime her ancient seat.
> The western isle whose pleasant shore doth face
> Wild Camber's cliffs, first gave her lively heat.
> Foster'd she was with milk of Irish breast:
> Her sire an Earl; her dame of Prince's blood.
> From tender years in Britain did she rest,
> With a King's child; who tasteth ghostly food.
> Honsdon did first present her to mine eyen:
> Bright is her hue, and Geraldine she hight.
> Hampton me taught to wish her first for mine;
> And Windsor, alas! doth chase me from her sight.
> Her beauty of Kind; her virtues from above,
> Happy is he than can obtain her love!"

Surrey recovered his freedom, but not his peace of mind; he says that even at night, when all nature is in a state of deep peace, there is no rest for him.* Finally he takes courage and determines to open up his heart to his mistress, to beseech her to show him some return of affection. The poem in which he ventures to do this stands at the head of Surrey's poetical works; and as he employs the *terza rima* in skilful and careful construction, it proves itself a product of his Italian studies, but of his study of Chaucer as well; for in addition to strains reminding one of Petrarch, there are reminiscences from the "Compleynte to Dame Pitie" of which, as is well known there is a continuation in the *terza-rima* form—

> "The sun hath twice brought forth the tender green;
> Twice clad the earth in lively lustiness:
> Once have the winds the trees despoiled clean,
> And once again begins their cruelness;
> Since I have hid under my breast the harm
> That never shall recover healthfulness.

* Cf. "*Alas, so all things now do hold their peace!*" a lovely imitation of Petrarch's *Or che 'l ciel e la terra e 'l vento tace.*

The winter's hurt recovers with the warm;
  The parched green restored is with shade;
  What warmth, alas! may serve for to disarm
The frozen heart, that mine inflame hath made
  What cold again is able to restore
  My fresh green years, that wither thus and fade?
Alas! I see nothing hath hurt so sore
  But time, sometime reduceth a return:
  Yet time my hurt increaseth more and more."

In this same tone the poet continues his complaint, repeating, summing up, and varying earlier motives. At the end he says—

"Lo! if I seek, how I do find my sore!
  And if I flee, I carry with me still
  The venom'd shaft which doth his force restore
By haste of flight; and I may plain my fill
  Unto myself, unless this careful song
  Print in your heart some parcel of my will,
For I, alas! in silence all too long,
  Of mine old hurt yet feel the wound but green
  Rue on my life; or else your cruel wrong
Shall well appear, and by my death be seen."

Surrey's confession of love does not appear to have been graciously accepted by his mistress at first; at all events his complaints are continued in various forms. One Sonnet, probably from the spring of 1543, may be quoted here as specially characteristic of the poet's sympathetic contemplation of nature—

"The soote [sweet] season, that bud and bloom forth brings,
  With green hath clad the hill, and eke the vale.
The nightingale with feathers new she sings;
  The turtle to her make [mate] hath told her tale.
Summer is come, for every spray now springs.
  The hart hath hung his old head on the pale;
The buck in brake his winter coat he flings;
  The fishes flete with new repaired scale;
The adder all her slough away she flings;
  The swift swallow pursueth the flies smale
The busy bee her honey now she mings;
  Winter is worn that was the flowers' bale,
And thus I see among these pleasant things,
Each care decays, and yet my sorrow springs."

Gradually the poet becomes more hopeful; he probably also learned to be satisfied with little, at all events he learned to show patience. Amid his love-troubles he

remembers the troubles and anxieties of the Greeks at the siege of Troy and says—

> "Then think I thus: 'Sith such repair
> So long time war of valiant men,
> Was all to win a lady fair,
> Shall I not learn to suffer then?
> And think my life well spent to be,
> Serving a worthier wight than she?'
>
> "Therefore I never will repent,
> But pains contented still endure;
> For like as when, rough winter spent,
> The pleasant spring straight draweth in ure;
> So after raging storms of care,
> Joyful at length may be my fare."

And goes on to sing as Horace and Petrarch had done in their day—

> "Set me whereas the sun doth parch the green,
> Or where his beams do not dissolve the ice;
> In temperate heat, where he is felt and seen;
> In presence prest of people, mad or wise.
> Set me in high, or yet in low degree;
> In longest night, or in the longest day;
> In clearest sky, or where clouds thickest be;
> In lusty youth, or when my hairs are grey:
> Set me in heav'n, in earth, or else in hell,
> In hill, or dale, or in the foaming flood;
> Thrall, or at large, alive where-so I dwell,
> Sick, or in health, in evil fame or good,
> Hers will I be; and only with this thought
> Content myself, although my chance be nought."

And with joyful pride he praises his beloved as the most perfect of Nature's works—

> "Give place, ye lovers, here before
> That spent your boasts and brags in vain;
> My lady's beauty passeth more
> The best of yours, I dare well say'n,
> Than doth the sun the candle light,
> Or brightest day the darkest night.
>
> "And thereto hath a troth as just
> As had Penelope the fair;
> For what she saith ye may it trust,
> As it by writing sealed were:
> And virtues hath she many mo'
> Than I with pen have skill to show.

"I could rehearse, if that I would,
The whole effect of Nature's plaint,
When she had lost the perfit mould,
The like to whom she could not paint:
With wringing hands, how she did cry,
And what she said, I know it, I.

"I know she swore with raging mind
Her kingdom only set apart,
There was no loss by law of kind
That could have gone so near her heart;
And this was chiefly all her pain;
'She could not make the like again.'

"Sith Nature thus gave her the praise
To be the chiefest work she wrought;
In faith, methink! some better ways
On your behalf might well be sought,
Than to compare, as ye have done,
To match the candle with the sun."

Geraldine, who had meanwhile married an elderly man, Sir Anthony Brown, began to find pleasure in the Earl's devotion, and accepted his harmless courtesies.

Such a relation necessarily presupposes on the lady's side a certain amount of coquetry, and hence it is natural that the poet, who is unwearied in the assurances of his own constancy, should at times show mild attacks of jealousy. In a tender Sonnet he reminds his beloved of her duty—

"The golden gift that Nature did thee give,
To fasten friends, and feed them at thy will;
With form and favour taught me to believe,
How thou art made to shew her greatest skill.
Whose hidden virtues are not so unknown,
But lively domes might gather at the first;
Where beauty so her perfect seed hath sown,
Of other graces follow needs there must.
Now certes, Garret, since all this is true,
That from above thy gifts are thus elect,
Do not deface them then with fancies new;
Nor change of minds, let not thy mind infect:
But mercy him thy friend that doth thee serve;
Who seeks alway thine honour to preserve."

A poem which may have been written in France in the summer of 1544 describes—like the *Allegro-Penseroso* mentioned above (p. 243), but not in the form adopted there—the

lover's state of incessant restlessness, the alternating feelings between fear and hope which fill his heart when separated from his mistress. Here, again, Hope comes off victorious, with the same motive as in the case already referred to—

> "Why should I thus mistrust
> So sweet a wight, so sad, so wise, that is so true and just?
> For loath she was to love, and wavering is she not;
> The farther off the more desired."

At the close of the poem, however, he vows that—

> "Yea, rather die a thousand times, than once to false my faith.
> And if my feeble corpse, through weight of woful smart
> Do fail, or faint, my will it is that still she keep my heart.
> And when this carcase here to earth shall be refar'd,
> I do bequeath my wearied ghost to serve her afterward."

The eternal service referred to here was to be of short duration. Somewhere in December of that same year Surrey returned to England. He had the eventful campaign in which he had played a conspicuous part and where he had narrowly escaped death to look back upon. His feeling of self-confidence, increased by the late events, may have rendered him less disposed to put up with the waywardness, the small or great capriciousness in his mistress. Soon a misunderstanding arose between them, but of the origin of this dispute there is no reliable information. At a court ball, however, the faithful Earl was insulted by his lady; when he invited her to dance, he was contemptuously refused. Surrey took his revenge in a poem, but very soon repented the step he had taken. Meanwhile matters became worse. From day to day the estrangement between them increased; and the poet expressed himself more and more bitterly against the cruelty, love of admiration, and fickleness of his mistress, whom he thereupon renounces, and, at last, addresses her in a tone of apparent indifference with biting satire. The poems characteristic of this period, and all of which are written in the sort of ballad-style referred to above, are distinguished by lifelike objectivity, partly also by an allegorico-epic form of presentation. As a rule, the poet writes as though he were an onlooker or reporter of what had occurred, while

his own part in the drama is represented by some other figure—sometimes by a lion which, in accordance with heraldic consistency, is opposed to a white she-wolf; sometimes by a despairing shepherd; sometimes by a friend to whom he offers good advice. In the last poem of this order Surrey envelops himself in the mantle of a careless onlooker, and gives a merciless picture of the behaviour of the lady, who is not mentioned by name, but is easily recognized. A friend and a new favourite of Geraldine's replied to this cutting satire in the same strain and the same form of verse.

Surrey was, nevertheless, not quite cured of his love. He was still full of it when he had again to leave for France at midsummer 1545 to open the last and eventful campaign of his military career. In September of that year, soon after he had been made Governor of Boulogne, he wrote the following sonnet, the last of his love-poems, from which it is evident that before his departure he had made a vain endeavour to forget Geraldine in a new love—

> "The fancy, which that I have served long;
> That hath alway been en'my to mine ease;
> Seemed of late to rue upon my wrong,
> And bade me fly the cause of my misease.
> And I forthwith did press out of the throng,
> That thought by flight my painful heart to please
> Some other way, till I saw faith more strong;
> And to myself I said, 'Alas! those days
> In vain were spent, to run the race so long.'
> And with that thought I met my guide, that plain,
> Out of the way wherein I wander'd wrong,
> Brought me amidst the hills in base Bullayne
> Where I am now, as restless to remain
> Against my will full pleased with my pain."

Surrey's love-poems exhibit outwardly less fulness and variety than Wyatt's; but in inward richness, in originality, they surpass them. They shine less by what is called intellect, than by depth of feeling. Simple truth is their distinguishing feature; and, even though they are occasionally difficult to understand, the difficulty does not so much arise from the form—which is almost invariably clear—as from the subject-matter, which is frequently of greater depth than at first appears.

Surrey stood closer to nature, Wyatt to cultured life; this

accounts for the fact that in Surrey's poems we do not meet with anything comparable to the satires of the elder poet, and that his lyrics contain few things beyond his love-poems.

A curious production is his "Satire Against the Citizens of London," the *terza rima* of which, in lines of eight syllables, determine both the date of its origin and the character of the poem. It was written in April, 1543, in the Fleet Prison, where Surrey was a prisoner at the time for having—in company with Thomas Wyatt the younger, and young Pickering—caused disturbance to the citizens of London by shooting stones at their windows from a cross-bow. The Earl, who was still a young man, may have acted under the influence of wine, but excused his mis-demeanour in an extraordinary way; he maintained that he had been led to the act because "it grieved me to see the licentious manners of the citizens of London. They resembled the manner of Papal Rome in her corruptest state. . . . I, therefore, went at midnight . . . to remind them of the suddenness of that punishment which the Scriptures tell us Divine Justice will inflict on impenitent sinners." It is scarcely possible that this can be a wilful untruth, for such would be as little in keeping with Surrey's character as it would be a proof of his wisdom; besides which, the same thought is worked out in all seriousness in his "Satire." It shows, at all events, that his lively imagi-nation—which was, nevertheless, apt to brood deeply over matters—sometimes made his quick, impulsive actions afterwards appear to him to have the semblance of some higher justification.

In the same way as Surrey, at an earlier date, had sung in praise of the "golden mean," he, at a later date, wrote an admirable imitation of Martial's verses, *Ad se ipsum*, upon the "happy life." The epigrammatical character-sketch which the Italian Renaissance delighted in, is repre-sented by his Sonnet on Sardanapalus, which is written with graceful discrimination; still, there are among his poems others of a kindred species which owe their origin to personal attachment.

It is mainly his relation to Sir Thomas Wyatt the Elder that comes into consideration here, for Surrey felt the

warmest sympathy and admiration for him. The following Sonnet was written on Wyatt's paraphrase of the Psalms—

> "The great Macedon, that out of Persia chased
> Darius, of whose huge power all Asia rung;
> In the rich ark Dan Homer's rhymes he placed,
> Who feigned gests of heathen princes sung.
> What holy grave, what worthy sepulture,
> To Wyatt's Psalms should Christians then purchase?
> Where he doth paint the lively faith, and pure,
> The stedfast hope, the sweet return to grace,
> Of just David, by perfect penitence;
> Where Rulers may see in a mirror clear,
> The bitter fruit of false concupiscence;
> How Jewry bought Urias' death full dear.
> In Princes' hearts God's scourge y-printed deep,
> Ought them awake out of their sinful sleep,"

In referring to the "sinful sleep" of princes, Surrey probably had Henry VIII. in his mind; even his sketch of Sardanapalus has, by many, been found to contain allusions to that monarch. It is certain that Surrey did not regard the wondrous saint who occupied the English throne at the time, with the respectful demeanour of Wyatt, who was so loyal and yet so moderate. Wyatt's death drew from his friend Surrey two Sonnets of warm appreciation, above all, however, an Elegy written in the form of an epitaph, which we will add here—

> "Wyatt resteth here, that quick could never rest:
> Whose heavenly gifts increased by disdain;
> And virtue sank the deeper in his breast:
> Such profit he of envy could obtain.
> A head, where wisdom mysteries did frame;
> Whose hammers beat still in that lively brain,
> As on a stithy, where some work of fame
> Was daily wrought, to turn to Britain's gain.
> A visage stern, and mild; where both did grow
> Vice to contemn; in virtue to rejoice:
> Amid great storms, whom grace assured so,
> To live upright, and smile at fortune's choice.
> A hand, that taught what might be said in rhyme;
> That reft Chaucer the glory of his wit.
> A mark, the which (unperfected for time)
> Some may approach, but never none shall hit.
> A tongue, that serv'd in foreign realms his king;
> Whose courteous talk to virtue did inflame
> Each noble heart; a worthy guide to bring
> Our English youth, by travail unto fame.

An eye, whose judgment no effect could blind,
Friends to allure, and foes to reconcile ;
Whose piercing look did represent a mind
With virtue fraught, reposed, void of guile.
A heart, where dread was never so imprest
To hide the thought that might the truth advance ;
In neither fortune loft, nor yet represt,
To swell in wealth, or yield unto mischance.
A valiant corpse, where force and beauty met :
Happy, alas ! too happy, but for foes,
Lived, and ran the race, that nature set ;
Of manhood's shape, where she the mould did lose.
But to the heavens that simple soul is fled,
Which left, with such as covet Christ to know,
Witness of faith, that never shall be dead ;
Sent for our health, but not received so.
Thus for our guilt, this jewel have we lost ;
The earth his bones, the heavens possess his ghost."

Prominent and pleasant features in Surrey's character are his cheerful recognition of the merits of others, his deep appreciation for true friendship, and his grateful remembrance of services and kindnesses rendered. And these traits are manifested not only towards Wyatt, but as much in his verses on Thomas Clere, his faithful friend and attendant ; at the siege of Montreuil, Clere saved the life of his severely wounded master and received himself, on that occasion, a wound the consequences of which proved fatal on the 14th of April, 1545.

The intervals of leisure which his military career left him, Surrey did not devote entirely to the development of his talent as a lyric-writer. His interests in art and learning were many-sided : he was a highly cultured Mæcenas as well as the leading poet of his day. The celebrated Hadrian Junius, whose acquaintance Bonner had made at the siege of Landrecy, and at whose invitation Junius came to England, found a home in Surrey's family as house-physician, and thus became indebted to him for a life free from care ; he received from Surrey a pension and a suitable residence at his country-seat at Kenninghall. Another member of the Earl's household was young Thomas Churchyard, the most prolific of the poets who linked that period with the Elizabethan era. Churchyard recognized in after years, with gratitude, that he owed his whole mental culture to the Earl's generosity. For plastic art,

too, Surrey had a cultivated taste, and he devoted much time and attention to erecting a new and magnificent country-seat on St. Leonard's Hill, near Norwich, which was built in the noble forms of a purely Grecian style of architecture. The building was completed about the year 1543, and was the first edifice of the kind that England had to show. For a short time "Mount Surrey" became a very home of the Muses, but the artistic structure was not destined to survive its noble architect in undiminished splendour beyond a few years.

The period which saw the palace completed was probably also the period during which Surrey made his translation of Vergil. The Latin poet stood incomparably nearer to all the educated persons of that era than he does to the present generation. Wyatt, too, had tried his hand at it, and in his "Song of Iopas" made the attempt to develop Vergilian suggestions on the Ptolemaic system.

To none of the poets of that day did Vergil's spirit stand in as close a relation as to Surrey. This was the case, more especially, with those two Books of the Æneid which have enjoyed the full interest of every epoch—the Second with the account of the downfall of Troy, and the Fourth containing the development and catastrophe of the Dido episode—they seemed as if created for Surrey. Like an Italian poet who had preceded him by a short period—whether Cardinal Ippolito de' Medici, or Francesco Maria Molza—and like Schiller long years after him, Surrey confined his translation to these two Books. In his case, also, it was an attempt in the epic style, and the selection of a measure for his epic was thus a matter of great importance. Surrey chose the heroic verse, an almost inevitable custom for such an undertaking in those days; but in doing this Surrey was the first Englishman to make the successful venture of using this verse in simple succession without any connecting rhymes. His Italian predecessor had set him an example in this, and if Surrey was unaware of it, he could not possibly have been ignorant of other Italian attempts of a similar kind, whether in the domain of the drama or in elegies. However this may be, with his so-called blank-verse Surrey handed over to English poetry a form of art without which its whole further development is inconceivable. It may be doubted

whether this species of verse was the appropriate form for the object he had immediately in view; in the case of a composition in independent lines, a species of verse with greater epic breadth would perhaps have been more suitable, and in longer poems the modern reader would, as a rule, unwillingly miss rhyme. Still, there is "Paradise Lost" to remind theorizers that there are exceptions even to this rule. No theorizer acquainted with Shakspere's dramas can, however, doubt that any other form of verse than blank-verse would only have proved a drawback to the full development of his matchless works of art.

Bishop Douglas's translation of the Æneid did not exist in print at the time,* and yet it was well known to Surrey, and he did not hesitate to make use of it. Numerous passages, occasionally whole lines, in Surrey's translation give evidence of the influence exercised upon him by the Bishop of Dunkeld. Still, the later translation, taken as a whole, makes an entirely different impression. With much greater consistency than his predecessor, Surrey avoids all that is trivial and inelegant in expression, and especially all such expressions which, although vividly graphic, nevertheless disturb the illusion by introducing unusual, modern ideas into the ancient world. And in pregnant brevity and elegance, the Scotch "Eneados" can in no way compare with Surrey's version. Many portions of the English translation are admirable; and if other parts exhibit a certain demureness, still, as a whole, it is not deficient either in vivid animation or dignity. Hence, it cannot be denied that to Surrey is due the credit of having furnished his fellow-countrymen with the first translation of an ancient poet that can rank as a masterpiece. The manner in which he handles the blank-verse cannot, except with injustice, be compared with the fully developed method of later writers, particularly of the dramatic poets. However, those who take into consideration the demands of the epic style, and do not undervalue the difficulties of a first effort, will fully appreciate the nervous construction of Surrey's verse, which, as regards the position of the pauses, already shows a certain variety and, in the happiest manner, often meets the requirements of the presentation. Occasional harshnesses in the accentuation may

* The first edition was published in 1553.

be accounted for by the still imperfectly developed character of the English language, partly, also, probably by the fact that the poet was not destined to put the final touches to his work.

After a life rich in experiences, in interests, and in distractions, Surrey's activity, towards the end of his life, had more and more to be devoted to military affairs. As Governor of Boulogne he showed the greatest zeal in his duties. Rest was foreign to his nature; when no opportunity offered itself for action—and this must often have occurred—he was busily occupied in making projects. Thus he drew up a Memorial in connection with the alterations to be made in the fortifications of Boulogne; then, shortly afterwards, a scheme for driving the French from the positions they had gained possession of, and which endangered the safety of the town. An unexpected occurrence, in January, 1546, led to his taking active measures, on his own responsibility, which resulted in the battle of St. Etienne, an enterprise that did not prove as successful as he had anticipated. A few months later he found himself removed from the command of the army; the Duke of Hertford was appointed the King's lieutenant-general within the English pale in France, while Surrey was recalled to England to give the King an oral statement with regard to his plans for the proposed alterations in the fortifications. However, no sooner had Surrey left Boulogne than Lord Grey de Wilton was made Governor of the town in his place. In return for all the faithful services he had rendered, Surrey, at first, received no further reward than general promises and indefinite prospects. Impatient and exasperated by this treatment, the hot-tempered man gave way to violent and reckless expressions insulting to Hertford and irritating to the King, whose health was failing; for, among other things, Surrey had vowed he would be avenged on Hertford under Henry's successor. As a result of this he was arrested and taken to Windsor towards the middle of July. For the second time, therefore, the royal residence became his prison. On this occasion the remembrance of the happy days he had spent there in his youth in Lord Richmond's company, forced itself upon his mind. The contrast between the past and present filled the poet with deep melancholy, to which he gave

full expression in a well-known elegy. Image after image rises up before him from bygone days, their pleasures free from all care, and their enviable woes; each image only increases his longing, his sadness, and in the end he exclaims—

> "'O place of bliss! renewer of my woes!
> Give me account, where is my noble frere?
> Whom in thy walls thou did'st each night enclose;
> To other lief; but unto me most dear.'
> Echo, alas! that doth my sorrow rue,
> Returns thereto a hollow sound of plaint.
> Thus I alone, where all my freedom grew,
> In prison pine, with bondage and restraint:
> And with remembrance of the greater grief,
> To banish the less, I find my chief relief."

Surrey's imprisonment lasted only a few weeks, but the elegiac mood continued for months.* The poet felt himself getting old before his time;† the sudden change in his own position and various other experiences had made him sceptical about so-called happiness. To this period belongs, probably, his metrical paraphrase of Ecclesiastes, comprising the first five chapters from the Scriptures. In more than one passage the final touches of the poet's own hand are missed; still, both language and versification reveal the mature artist, and the spirit is also successfully rendered.

Meanwhile the ailing King was rapidly approaching the end of his days, and ever keener around his bed of sickness, became the struggle of the two parties who were fighting for England's future, in their endeavour to obtain the upper hand during the minority of the heir to the throne. The conservative party, which included the majority of the older nobility, followed the leadership of the Howards; the advocates for a complete reformation recognized as their head the Earl of Hertford, Prince Edward's uncle on his mother's side, Surrey's old opponent, and the King's favourite at the time. Want of caution on the part of the Howards gave their adversaries an advantage they were not slow to make use of. Surrey was declared to be

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* Cf. *When Windsor walls sustained my wearied arm*, and *My Ratclif, when thy reckless youth offends.*

† Cf. *Laid in my quiet bed, in study as I were.*

entertaining ambitious and treasonable intentions, and his father, the Duke of Norfolk, was said to be involved in various suspicious proceedings. Witnesses were called with the view of obtaining from their declarations a plea for a formal charge, and Surrey's own sister testified against him. His adversaries—unlike some later historians—were, however, wise enough not to accept her testimony in the formal charge subsequently drawn up against him. Surrey had to appear before the Privy Council on the 1st of December. On the 12th of the same month both he and his father were sent to the Tower. The poet's state of mind during the time of his last imprisonment is reflected in his poetical Paraphrase of some of the Psalms. The deepest mental emotion finds its expression here, together with the trust in God felt by a man who acknowledges himself guilty in face of the Eternal Judge, but guiltless in face of his earthly judges. By degrees Surrey became reconciled to his fate; the last poem that we have from his pen—according to the testimony of his own son—breathes a spirit of resignation so far as a man of his disposition could be resigned—

> "The storms are past; the clouds are overblown;
> And humble chere great rigour hath represt.
> For the default is set a pain foreknown;
> And patience graft in a determed breast.
> And in the heart, where heaps of griefs were grown,
> The sweet revenge hath planted mirth and rest,
> No company so pleasant as mine own.
> [Who lives in privacy, is only blest]
> Thraldom at large, hath made this prison free.
> Danger well past, remembered, works delight.
> Of ling'ring doubts such hope is sprung, pardie!
> That nought I find displeasant in my sight,
> But when my glass presenteth unto me
> The cureless wound that bleedeth day and night.
> To think, alas! such hap should granted be
> Unto a wretch, that hath no heart to fight
> To spill that blood, that hath so oft been shed
> For Britain's sake, alas! and now is dead."

Surrey's trial took place on the 13th of January, 1547. He was condemned to death as a traitor for having assumed on his shield quarterings which interfered with the rights of the King and of the Prince of Wales. On the 19th or

the 20th of January his head fell on the scaffold. A few days afterwards, unfortunately only a few days too late, King Henry died. The Duke of Norfolk remained a prisoner till the succession of Queen Mary.

Surrey's tragic end in the flower of vigorous manhood was an immense loss to English poetry. Great things he might still have accomplished, but what he did accomplish has not been lost to posterity.

APPENDIX.

The following notes refer to passages in Vol. II. (Part I.).

To p. 5, l. 7 from below.—With regard to the year of Wyclif's birth I adhere meanwhile to the traditional date 1324, for I see as little necessity for moving it back (with Lechler and Matthew) to about 1320, as for bringing it (with Buddensieg) forward to about 1330.

To p. 8, l. 17.—The pamphlet against Garnier.—For what reasons does Matthew (*The English Works of W., ed. E.E.T.S.*, 1880, p. xiii.), I should be glad to know, refer this tract to the beginning of the reign of Richard II.?

To p. 18, l. 2.—A critical examination of Wyclif's works started by Shirley in the *Catal.* and the *Fasc. Ziz.* has scarcely as yet touched the works written in English; however, in connection with his Latin works a very good commencement has been made by Lechler, and above all by Buddensieg in his *Lat. Streitschriften.* The question of their chronological order is by no means satisfactorily settled, and even as regards the genuineness of some of the treatises published by Arnold and Matthew, all sorts of uncertainties and doubts remain to be solved (even where no mention of them is made by the editors). I shall here refer only to the circumstance still in need of explanation that the passages from the Bible quoted as texts of sermons and otherwise, in the *Sermons* published by Arnold, do not altogether correspond with the wording of Wyclif's Bible.—A careful examination is above all necessary with regard to the relation in which the English tracts and sermons stand to the Latin ones, and, in fact, not only in such cases where the question deals with different forms of a treatise in reality identical, but the treatises generally. Compare, for instance, *De Christo et Antichristo C.* 11–15 (see, more especially, p. 683, f., ed. Buddensieg) and the English treatises *De Papa C.* 2 (ed. Matthew, p. 462, f.); also *De Officio Pastorali C.* 32 (more especially Matthew, p. 457). The last-mentioned tract, moreover, does not appear to exist in

its original shape: it would seem absolutely clear that Chap. 15 (Matthew, p. 429, f.) belonged in a different connection, and was here an interpolation. Hence a whole series of questions still needs explanation. Without a careful study of the language and style, it can scarcely be hoped that much advance will be made in the criticism of Wyclif's writings.

To p. 21, l. 21.—Struggle against the mendicant friars. When Wyclif began it is uncertain, still Lechler may be right in referring the beginning of the *systematic* struggle to 1381 (comp. *Englisch. Uebersetz.*, ii. 143). After what was said above respecting Matthew's treatise it seems to me somewhat hazardous to draw with him (p. xliii., f.) far-reaching inferences from the English version *De Off. Past.* and the supposed date of its origin. As regards Buddensieg (*Lat. Streitschr.*, p. xvii. note 2), the following point must be taken into consideration. If Wyclif in his struggle with the mendicant friars remembered his predecessors, and among them Richard of Armagh, and said in regard to them (*Lat. Streitschr.*, p. 92): Que ergo mali suspicio, si nos *intrantes in labores eorum*, ex innovacione sceleris fratrum, addimus super eos? this in no way means to imply that the thought of continuing the work of his predecessors had led him to open the dispute, and much less that this thought had struck him immediately after the death of Richard of Armagh; and yet this is the point in question.

To p. 48, l. 23.—Chaucer invariably follows the rhyme system: *ababbcc*, whereas his prototypes more frequently show *ababbaa*. By the change of rhyme at the close of the strophe, the arrangement gains in clearness and the ending in decision.

To p. 74, l. 3.—In the Shirley MS. in Trinity College, Cambridge (R. 3. 20), the poem bears the title: Loo yee louers gladeþe and comforteþe you. of þallyaunce etrayted bytwene | þe hardy and furyous Mars. þe god of armes | and Venus þe double goddesse of loue made by. Geffrey Chaucier. at þe comandement of þe renoumed and excellent Prynce my lord þe Duc John of Lancastre.

To p. 75, l. 29.—"*The long Compleynte of Mars:*" it consists of 5 × 3 and of an introductory strophe. The strophe of the *Compleynte* shows itself to be an extension of the seven-lined stanza employed in the other portions of the poem: *aabaabbcc.*

To p. 107, l. 8.—*The House of Fame* has not come down to us altogether perfect in form. The structure of the traditional text, however, does not warrant the inference that it proceeded thus from the poet's hand, and taking everything well into consideration this is not exactly probable. Fortunately the missing end (for what the prints offer as such seems to have originated mainly with Caxton) can scarcely have consisted of many verses, although perhaps very interesting ones.

To p. 126, l. 12.—That we have an independent poem in the Preamble to *The Wyf of Bathe*—after withdrawing the parts from lines 163–192, and from lines 829–856 (in doing which, however, l. 828 would probably have to be altered)—and one that originated outside of the frame of the *Canterbury Tales*, seems probable for the following reasons: (1) because of the great length and singular nature of this delineation in monologue form; (2) because it begins quite independently (an important criterion for recognizing earlier portions of a large collective work, that have subsequently been brought into a new connection, *cf.* the stories of the Doctor, the Shipman, and the Second Nun—in the present case this is of course much more important where the question deals with a *Tale*); (3) because it in no way seems intended to lead over to any other regular story, but to have itself as its object, *cf.* lines 1–3 and 193–195 (while among the supplementary lines l. 831 contains a subsequent criticism of itself meant to anticipate that of the reader); (4) because the sketch of the Wife of Bath which adorns the general prologue to the Canterbury Tales appears rather to be a *resumé* than to have developed from it; (5) because it is mentioned in *Lenvoy de Chaucer a Bukton* as an independent work; and (6) what is more important, because it figures precisely in the same manner in the story of *January and May* (the *Marchauntes Tale*). With regard to the last-mentioned Tale, it is evident from the reference to the Wife of Bath that it cannot have been produced long after the latter (which is probable for other reasons as well); further, that the story of *January and May*, if intended to be used in some wider connection—which is not necessarily to be inferred from l. 1106, f.—can nevertheless scarcely have been written with regard to the *Canterbury Tales*.

To p. 131, l. 2 from below.—Very different in form—even though connected with the fundamental motive of the fable (probably belonging to the East)—are the contents of the detailed story in the *Comœdia Lydiæ* of Matthieu de Vendôme and those of a well-known tale from the *Decameron* (vii. 9), also made use of by La Fontaine.

To p. 143, l. 23.—The picture which Chaucer gives of his Mendicant Friar coincides exactly, in many an individual feature, with the accounts given in the poetical pamphlets of the time of the pious friars, generally without any attempt at delineating individual characters. *See* more especially the *Song against the Friars* (by a neophyte who had again withdrawn from the order) in Wright, *Political Poems and Songs*, i. 263, ff. Another poem, *l.c.*, p. 268, ff., is directed against the Franciscans in particular. Mendicant friars and monks are both sharply rebuked in a curious Latin poem written in 1382 by an adherent of Wyclif's, under the influence of the London

Council and of the Oxford disputations, *l.c.*, p. 253, ff. The poet, who had himself been a Benedictine neophyte, subsequently left the order (hence is not, as has been said, identical with the author of the *Song against the Friars*), in the first half of his poem is clearly under the influence of an English satire on all classes of society written in the reign of Edward II. (*See* this work, vol. i. p. 318, ff.). He, again, seems to have exercised an influence—as regards form at least—upon the author of the *Satire against the Franciscans.* The three above-mentioned poems are also printed in Breuer, *Monumenta Franciscana*, pp. 591–608, in part from better texts.

To p. 150, l. 14.—To my mind it is an arbitrary proceeding to make two fragments out of the group: Student, Merchant, Squire, Franklin, which in the earlier stages of the *Canterbury Tales* represents four fragments, yet at a later stage forms a definite whole. And I call it an act of violence, in so doing, to take the connecting-piece before the Merchant's Tale, which leads on to the following one, and to cut it right in two, although the traditional text preserves the unity, in spite of the variety of application.

To p. 160, l. 14.—The large majority of the MSS. read *squier* in place of *sompnour*, and this—in spite of the contrary opinion of so distinguished a Chaucerian scholar as Bradshaw—can as little correspond with the poet's first as with his last intentions. Only one manuscript, which is not specially trustworthy either with regard to the text or the arrangement of the parts, reads: *Shipman.* It must be confessed that of the pilgrims who come into question here, the Shipman would be the one best fitted to fill the vacant place. And, further, it cannot be denied that by connecting the fragment of the story begun by the Shipman, with the Man of Law's Tale, a number of difficult questions with regard to the poetical chronology and geography of the whole series would be solved. Hence it may, therefore, be advisable to accept this order in an edition of the *Canterbury Tales.* Why we have not made it the basis of our presentation has already been stated on p. 165. I shall here confine myself to the remark that it cannot have been Chaucer's intention to place the words originally written for the sompnour into the shipman's mouth unaltered—the less so as, among the reasons which induced him to assign the sompnour a position different to the one at first intended, the poet was probably also affected by the knowledge that it was wiser not directly to touch upon any question concerning the Lollards in his poem.

To p. 161, l. 5 from below.—Fabliau of Dan John, subsequently *Shipmanes Tale.* The subsequent intention of the poet is placed beyond doubt by the testimony of the traditional texts, and above all by the connecting link which Chaucer inserted between *The*

Shipmanes T. and *The Prioresses T.* The first tale, however, remained unaltered, and its transmitted shape still assumes it to have been related by a woman, and, indeed, a very worldly-minded, lascivious woman.

To p. 164, l. 9 from below.—*Le Dis de le vescie a prestre* by Jacques de Baisieux. Compare *Fabliaux ou Contes*, etc., par Legrand D'Aussy, 1829, vol. iv., at the end p. 18, ff.; also, among the *Publications of the Chaucer S.*, the *Or. and An. of some of Ch.'s C. T.*, ii. 135, ff.

To p. 165, l. 10.—*Clerk's Prologe.* An examination of the descriptive introduction to Petrarch's narrative in connection with l. 41–55 of the *Prologe* (Hertzberg, 7917–7931) appears to me to point to the fact that Chaucer had also translated the introduction, but omitted it when he incorporated the poem with his *C. T.*

To p. 170, l. 4 from below.—The singular position which we have vindicated for this Preamble is not shaken by this. The confessions of the Pardoner differ very essentially from those of the Wife of Bath, by the fact that they are not autobiographical, and that they stand in close connection with the following *Tale.*

To p. 171, l. 12 from below.—*Pardoneres Tale.* Its source is one of the *Cento Novelle antiche*, Ed. 1525, No. 83; Ed. 1572, No. 82. The two versions differ considerably from each other, the one in the edition n. 1572 stands closer to the *P. T.* than the other. A third version, in Latin, exists in *Morlini Novellæ*, No. 42. Compare *Ch. Soc. Or. and An.*, ii. 131, ff. (see also v. Düring).

To p. 173, l. 12.—Numerous names of Christian children said to have been killed by Jews and, hence, subsequently canonized, are given by the Bollandists. In England the stories of Hugh of Norwich and Hugh of Lincoln were current. The latter is the hero of an Anglo-Norman popular song from the days of Henry III. (Fr. Michel, *Hugues de Lincoln*, 1834; F. Wolf, *Ueber die Lais, Sequenzen und Leiche*, p. 443, ff.), and also of a later Scotch ballad (*Athenæum*, Jan. 19, '67, p. 96), while a third version, communicated by Percy, i. 32, ff., retains the name Hew while the scene of the action is transferred to Mirryland toune (Milan). The Latin prose-legend of *Alphonsus of Lincoln* has been published by the Chaucer Society (*Originals and Analogues*, ii. 107, ff.) from the *Fortalitium Fidei, Lugdun*, 1500. England is likewise the scene of the action in the version of the Miracle versified by Gautier de Coincy (see *Originals and Analogues*, iii. 251, ff.). On the other hand, a Paris beggar boy is the hero of the Middle-English legend in rhyme, edited by Horstmann from the Vernon MS. in the Bodleian (*Herrig's Archiv*, 1876, p. 4, ff.; *Originals and Analogues*, iii. 277, ff.). It is one of that collection of *Miracles of the Virgin* mentioned in our first volume on

p. 226. In Chaucer's account, the scene of the action is a large city in Asia. Its actual source is unknown; yet apparently it already contained the apostrophe to Hugh of Lincoln which occurs in the last strophe of the Prioress' Tale.

To p. 175, l. 8 from below.—Albertano of Brescia's *Liber consolationis, etc.*, ed. Thor. Sundby, *Pro Societate Chauceriana*, Londini, 1873.—(See Gaspary, *Gesch. d. ital. Lit.*, note to p. 189.)—The French version which Chaucer made use of is at present usually ascribed to Jehan de Meung.

To p. 176, l. 8 from below.—*Monkes Tale.* Definition of tragedy. This definition seems essentially a quotation from one of numerous glosses in Chaucer's *Bœthius* (ed. Morris, 887, f.), whether or not the poet may have drawn his idea of tragedy (which we became acquainted with when discussing his *Troilus*) from Dante's letter to Can Grande or originally from a Latin gloss to the original text of *Bœthius.*

To p. 177, l. 12 from below.—*M. T.* An attempt made a few years ago to settle the order of the origin of the several groups from the succession as preserved in the texts (Skeat) is based upon unjustifiable premises.

To p. 178, l. 6.—Cf. the edition of Ernst Martin, i. 2, 23 to 468.—Mediæval writers of fables also (among others Marie de France) have handled this subject, which—like *Reinardus Vulpes* and *Reinhart Fuchs*—was at an early date introduced into the Animal-epics of France; yet, to judge from the products of the plastic arts, it must have been even considerably older.

To p. 179, note.—The first words which the story of the Melibeus and Prudence draws from Mine Host are in all essential points identical with the contents of the seven-lined stanza which was originally to lead over from the Clerk's Tale to the following one, but subsequently became superfluous owing to the connection Clerk—Marchaunt. Accordingly, after Chaucer had eliminated this strophe, he made use of the thought it contained for a new continuity.

To p. 181, l. 9.—In the fifth year of the reign of Henry IV. it was declared to be a felony to multiply gold or silver or to practise the art of multiplying them.

To p. 182, l. 20.—Head-link to *M. T.* Connecting Parson with Manciple. One result of this connection was probably the absurd reading of: Ten of the clokke, in place of Foure of the clokke, *Prologe of the Persones Tale* 8, yet it is given thus in the best manuscripts.

To p. 183, l. 4.—An ingenious critic who has endeavoured to prove that Chaucer was a follower of Wyclif, says of the Parson's words in question: "Why all this, if he had wished to follow the well-trodden paths of the usual Church doctrines? It has no sense except in the mouth of one with different views, and

would have suited no one better than a Wyclifite, Wyclif having himself, at the beginning of 1378 (before the ecclesiastical Court at Lambeth, like Luther at a later date at Worms), declared himself ready to retract his statements whenever he was convinced that he was in error." But has Chaucer's company of pilgrims the smallest resemblance to a religious tribunal? Is a pious exhortation to repentance to be regarded as much the same thing as a defence of a theological thesis? This is a clear instance of the danger which is coupled with the desire to prove too much. The strength of Wyclif and his disciples lay in their interpretation of the text of the Bible, and he and his followers were distinguished by anything rather than by timidity or even an excess of modesty.

To p. 183, note, last line.—All that can meanwhile be maintained with certainty is, that the treatise on the Seven Deadly Sins which is interpolated in the second part of the sermon, is not Chaucer's; that the rest of the second part was not written by him, at all events in the form it has come down to us; and that also in the third part, traces of interpolation and corruption are recognizable. It is noteworthy that the parts referred to—as has recently been proved—are the very ones which show great agreement with corresponding parts of *Le Somme de Vices et de Vertue* of Friar Lorens, that were translated by Dan Michel into Kentish prose (see vol. i. p. 283), and have since then found more than one English translator.

To p. 187, l. 19.—It may here be observed that, occasionally, the word Minstrel seems to signify the Harper as opposed to the Singer or Segger; on the other hand, it not unfrequently signifies the Singer in contrast to the Harper or cittern-player, and this custom became an established one in the course of time when the word did not—as was frequently the case—stand for Singer and Harper in one and the same person.

To p. 188, l. 20.—In a ballad of *Robyn and Gandeleyn*—which belongs probably to the fifteenth century, but as regards subject-matter is connected with an earlier period, proceeding from the well-known cycle—Gandeleyn (whom some critics would identify with Gamelyn) appears the faithful servant of Robin and the avenger of his death. Cf. Child, *English and Scottish Ballads*, v. 39, ff.

To p. 188, l. 7 from below.—The long lines differ in structure from the customary ballad metre especially by the more archaic treatment of the unaccentuated syllables, which might be accounted for by the influence of the earlier lyrics of the minstrels, *e.g.* their political songs.

To p. 192, l. 13.—*Gower's French Ballads.* Editions: 1. Earl Gower's for the Roxburghe Club (1818); 2. *John Gower's Minnesang und Ehezucht-büchlein. 72 Anglonormannische*

Balladen . . . neu herausgegeben von Edmund Stengel, Marburg, 1886. Of the three parts comprised in Stengel's edition, *C*, *On the Dignity and Excellence of Marriage*, was apparently written in the tenth decade of the fourteenth century, *A*, "*Two French Ballads in honour of Henry IV.*," after the coronation of the first Lancastrian. There are doubts about *B*, which comprises fifty ballads and a poem of three strophes without refrain (51), one of these being a strophe in independent rhymes. The closing strophe to King Henry was doubtless a subsequent addition; probably No. 51 also did not originally form any part of the collection (cf. heading to *B*). But even the fifty ballads forming the collection were probably not all produced during the same period, although, so far as I see, there are no definite criteria for determining the date of their origin. Under these circumstances, to begin with, it cannot be determined with certainty whether Chaucer is indebted to Gower for the structure of his ten-syllabic verse, for the like formation of his seven-line strophes, and for various poetic motives (cf. more especially *B*, 34, 35, also 43), besides other matters, or whether, as seems to me almost more likely, the reverse was the case.

To p. 212, l. 8.—Of Shirley I know only scattered notices. That he was at times far wrong in the authorship he gives to the poems he copied, is evident above all from the title of *The Cronycle made by Chaucier*, printed in *Odd Texts of Chaucer's Minor Poems*, ed. by F. J. Furnivall, pt. i. p. vi., ff. (Chaucer Society).

Continuation of the Compleynte to Pitie: *The Balade of Pytee* printed in *Odd Texts*, pt. i. p. ii., f.

To p. 216, last line.—On the *Moder of God*. See John Koch, *Anglia*, iii., 183, f.; iv., Anz. 101; vi., 104, f. I have unwillingly become convinced that this poem is Occleve's and not Chaucer's; still, one is all the more ready to yield to the testimony of the traditional text (in my opinion the most weighty of all the arguments brought forward by Koch), as upon a closer examination even the presentation shows more resemblance to Occleve where he surpasses himself, than to Chaucer. But above all the manner in which the poet describes his own moral and religious circumstances appears to me more direct and particular than is usually the case with Chaucer. Expressions such as, *my soule . . . that troubled is by the contagioun of my body, and also by the wight of everich lust and fals affeccioun* (*St. Cecile*, 71, ff.), are surely very general compared, for instance, with *þat al the hete of brennyng lecherie he quenche in me blessid maiden Marie* (*Mod. of God*, 27, f.), or *and fro temptaioun delivre me of wikkid thoght, thurgh thy benignitee* (34, f.).

To p. 221, l. 1.—The year of Lydgate's birth can be inferred only approximately: (1) from the time when he became Sub-

deacon (1389); (2) from the statement in the Prologue to the *Storie of Thebes*, l. 93. These two points, however, only justify the years 1371 and 1373 being suggested as the limit, for the beginning of the *Storie of Thebes* can only be assigned to the period 1421–1423 with any degree of probability (see below). When the poet's death occurred can still less be stated. The last traces of his life are met with in 1446: Henry, Lord Warwick, died in that year, and his death Lydgate mentions in his *Philomela;* and the receipt communicated by Zupitza (Anglia, iii. 532) which Johannes Baret "armiger" drew up in his and Lydgate's names, is dated the 2nd of October of that same year. Horstmann's opinion (*l.c.*, p. 532, ff.) respecting the different editions of *Edmund and Fremund* I cannot subscribe to, so far as the version represented by the manuscript, section 46, in my opinion is certainly not Lydgate's own; and, accordingly, I do not see the necessity for bringing the year of the poet's death down into the days of Edward IV.

Lydgate's journey to Italy.—Its improbability has been discussed by Koeppel, *L. de Premierfait*, etc., p. 76, ff.

For the chronology of Lydgate's chief works, see Koeppel, *Storie of Thebes*, p. 14, ff. The reasons which lead Koeppel to assign the origin of the *Storie* to exactly within the period between April, 1421, and the 31st of August, 1422, do not seem to me satisfactory. The earlier limit must be self-evident to every reader; and as regards the closing date, the assumption that the poet would not have failed to bewail the death of Henry V. in his Epilogue, had the event already occurred, is scarcely sufficiently well-founded. When Lydgate addresses an inspired farewell to the King in his *Falles of Princes*, the peculiar character of the poem must be well taken into consideration. The only thing that can be maintained with any degree of probability is that the *Storie of Thebes* might find a place between the *Troy Book* and *The Falles*, hence that it must have been produced within the period 1421–1424, and, consequently, commenced somewhere within the years 1421–1423.

Translation of Æsop.—That it is not derived directly from Marie de France (and also Zupitza, in his notice of Sauerstein's treatise, finds this "exceedingly doubtful") could be proved among other things by there being no mention of Romulus in the Prologue, more particularly, however, from l. 46, ff., of the fable of the Cock and the Jewel. With regard to the position of Marie in the fable-literature of the Middle Ages, compare, more especially, the able essay by E. Mall in *Gröber's Zeitschrift IX.*, 161, ff.

Complaint of the Black Knight.—The fact that good MSS. assign this poem to Lydgate, I learned years ago from

H. Bradshaw, through the courtesy of Dr. Furnivall, and this is confirmed by Skeat in Bell's *Chaucer*, iv. 373, note 4.

Pseudo-Lydgatean poems.—This is the term given by Koeppel (*L. de Premierfait*, p. 76, note 1) to a number of the pieces printed in Halliwell's edition of the *Minor Poems*. There are, however, other poems the genuineness of which he does not question in the least degree, in fact, seems in part (see p. 84) expressly to recognize as genuine. Yet the ballad of *London Lyckpeny* (Skeat, *Specimens*, p. 24, ff.) is, above all, assuredly no work of Lydgate's, at all events not in the form it has come down to us, and the fabliau of the Lady Prioresse (Halliwell, *Minor Poems*, p. 107, f.) so distinctly shows the impress of another hand, that no further words need be wasted on the subject.

To p. 238, l. 13 from below.—*Ludus super iconia sancti Nicolai*, in *Hilarii versus et ludi*, ed. Champollion-Figeac, p. 34, ff.; du Méril, *Origines latines du théâtre moderne*, p. 272, ff.

The only two persons that speak are Barbarus and Saint Nicholas; there is no chorus, and no reference to liturgical hymns (different in this respect to the two *Mysteries* of Hilarius); the Saint's statue has a special actor to represent it, who, however, remains dumb, which points to the want of a suitable image.

For Hilarius, cf. *Hist. litt.*, xx. 627.

To p. 244, l. 15.—This play has been handed down in the Towneley Collection (*The Towneley Mysteries*. Publications of the Surtees Society, 1836, p. 43–48); unfortunately it is multilated at the beginning and also divided into two parts: *Isaac* and *Jacob*. However, it originally formed, and, in fact, still forms, one drama, which was produced independently without regard to any cycle of mysteries, and, indeed, earlier than most of the other, probably than all the other, parts of the cycle in which it was subsequently incorporated. All this can easily be proved by means now at the disposal of philology, but this is not the place for entering into the subject. Less certain is the local origin of the piece. The assumption that few of the rhyming words have been altered in their transmission would, for instance, allow of the supposition that the drama might have been produced in the north of the East-Midland territory, rather than in the southern districts of Northumbria, a supposition which would coincide very well with many other peculiarities of the work.

To p. 257, l. 7.—Thirty if *Jacob and Esau* is considered as one play, thirty-one if the separation of the piece into two "paginæ" (*Isaac—Jacob*) is looked upon as warranted by the later mode of presentation. And this alone can be taken into consideration here, where the question is the *result* of the development. Hence the *Lazarus*, too, is reckoned one of them,

although it was only subsequently admitted into the MS., and consequently was entered after the *Last Judgment*. The *Processus prophetarum*, likewise, stands in a wrong place between *Jacob* and *Pharao*. On the other hand, the one to be excluded altogether is the *Suspensio Judæ*, at the end of the whole group, which is copied by a considerably younger hand, and, so far as it has been preserved, is merely an autobiography in monologue form.

To p. 257, l. 9 from below.—That the *Conspiracio et capcio* consists of two separate plays has already been assumed in another quarter. Their having been connected has, no doubt, arisen from one guild having introduced into its own play another belonging to a different guild, and is a matter that cannot be explained simply by cutting the play into two portions at a given point (see p. 185, beginning of the speech of Pilate). The original dependence of the play of St. Thomas may be inferred, above all, from the fact that in the Chester Plays, as well as in the so-called Coventry Mysteries, the action appears but little developed, and does not become a distinct play in itself; and probably also from the fact that the strophe of the short York play of St. Thomas (*The Skryvener's play*, ed. J. P. Collier, The Camden Miscellany, iv.) may have been the original system of the Resurrection-plays in the Towneley MSS.; cf. more especially *Resurrectio domini*, but also *Peregrini*.

To p. 269, l. 16.—One record which Miss Toulmin Smith quotes (*York Plays*, p. xxiv., f.) would lead us to suppose that the drama in question had arisen from a combination of four earlier plays. However, there is in it as little distinct trace of the *pagina de lez Salsemakers ubi Judas se suspendebat et crepuit medius* as of the *pagina Molendinariorum ubi Pilatus et alii milites ludebant ad talos pro vestimentis Jesu*. This latter subject, upon which the *Processus Talentorum* of the Towneley Mysteries is founded, is, however, introduced in a few lines at the close of the 34th and also of the 35th play.

To p. 272, l. 8 from below.—A part similar to that played by these long lines in the York Collection of Mysteries, is met with in the Alexandrines with middle and end rhymes in the Woodkirk plays. In the Towneley Collection, where the strophes consisting of alliterative long lines are met with, it is generally a question of interpolations from foreign (not exactly *into* foreign) works, such as the Speech of Pilate at the beginning of the *Flagellacio*.

To p. 273, l. 2.—All the more so as the style occasionally shows Western influences, for instance, the shouts of "Hail! hail!" by the citizens at the close of the *Entry into Jerusalem*, *York Plays*, p. 216, f.

To p. 273, l. 6.—It is here in some measure an important

circumstance that in the *Chester Plays* traces of alliterative long-lines are rare, except in the one that treats of the *Fall of Lucifer.*

To p. 287, l. 2.—More accurately with the *Burial and Resurrection.* The beginning of the *Descent into Hell* is usually placed before the *Burial*, as was justified by the poet's intention. Compare *Coventry Mysteries*, p. 329, l. 12. This order is also met with in the programme set forth by the Prologue to the whole series of plays; only it gives the Longinus episode a different position to what it occupies in the text. Without wishing here to enter into inquiries into complicated details, I may be allowed to offer a few remarks for the delectation of those with a taste for philological delicacies. 1. This play of the *Descent into Hell*, which, in the so-called Coventry Mysteries, is torn in two and partly introduced into another play, appears from the outset to have had a peculiar ending: Christ's soul reanimates His body, and after His resurrection appears to His Mother (motives of which the typical Resurrection-play either gives no representation or knows nothing at all). 2. There is a strange analogy in the treatment of the *Descent into Hell* in the case of the *so-called* and the *actual* Coventry Mysteries. As is proved by notices that have been preserved, and which are communicated and discussed by Sharpe, p. 45, ff., the *Descent into Hell* was connected with the *Resurrection* in the play of the Cappers; and there, too, the Spirit of God was distinguished from God (a point altogether ignored by Sharpe), in the same way as in our text the Anima Christi is distinguished from Jesus; and Our Lady appears there also, whereas, according to the usual representation, she does not appear either in the *Descent into Hell* or in the *Resurrection.* From this it is surely conceivable, nay, almost probable, that at all events some portions of our cycle originated in Coventry, or that they obtained their materials thence. However, the ground we are here treading upon is too unsafe to afford any pleasure for continuing on the path.

To p. 288, l. 6 from below.—Candlemas Day and the *Kyllynge of the children of Israell.* In the drama the *Slaughter of the Innocents* stands first, in the Prologue the *Purification.* Owing to there being absolutely no connection between the two parts, in regard to which it is even quite uncertain whether they are the work of the same author, it is difficult to determine which is the right order. The order given in the text is supported by the custom followed in the collections of Mysteries (with the exception of the so-called Coventry Plays), and is opposed by the circumstance that, although the *Flight to Egypt* is represented, the *Return* is not, and is not even mentioned. If the *Purification* is the work of a versifier distinct from the author of

the *Slaughter of the Innocents*, that is, if the two actions were not originally intended to form one play, there would be no object in the question: we should then simply have to admit two different arrangers.

To p. 293, l. 8 from below.—Printed by William Copland, probably about 1561, in conjunction with *a mery geste of Robyn Hoode and of his lyfe, wyth a newe playe for to be played in Maye games, very pleasaunte and full of pastyme* (see above, vol. ii. 186).

To p. 296, last line.—Printed in *Reliquiæ antiquæ*, ed. Th. Wright and J. O. Halliwell, i. 145, ff. The girl swears by *seynt Michel*, Mome Elwis by *san Dinis*.

To p. 297, l. 13.—The source speaks only of "tableaux and gestures;" cf. von der Hardt, *Magnum Œcumenicum Constantiense Concilium*, Frankfort, 1700, iv., 1089, 1091, quoted by Karl Schmidt, *Die Digby-Spiele*, Berlin, 1884, p. 12.

To p. 311, l. 5 from below.—*Play of the Pater Noster.* Its cyclical character has been correctly recognized by Miss Toulmin Smith (*York Plays*, p. xxviii., f.) from the words in the Preamble of the statutes of the guild: "in which play all manner of vices and sins were held up to scorn, and the virtues were held up to praise." The same words, however, seem to prove that the play was a Morality. The words: "the whole was called the 'play' of the Lord's Prayer, just as the whole collection of our Register was called the Corpus Christi playe," do not give any explanation why it was so called.

To p. 320, l. 10 from below.—Gloucester's bequests to the Oxford Library, cf. the two lists of books in the *Munimenta Academica*, ed. H. Anstey, p. 758, ff., 765, ff., which refer to the gifts received during the years 1439 and 1443-1444.

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The Marburg printer, Hans Luft (air), mentioned on the title-page of Tindale's translation of the Bible, is what his name signifies: air. No such printer ever existed in Marburg. The types point rather to Holland; cf. A. von Dommer, *Die aeltesten Drucker aus Marburg* (1527-66), 1892, pp. 29-32. A letter from Antwerp to Wolsey refers to the printer directly as "a dweller in this town;" cf. *Letters and Papers of the Reign of Henry VIII.*, ed. Brewer, vol. iv. p. 1175.

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