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A CRITICAL OUTLINE

OF

THE LITERATURE OF GERMANY.

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P R E F A C E.

THIS introduction to German Literature has been written mainly for the use of those who require such aid in preparation for any of the various Competitive Examinations of the day. It is hoped that it will also prove acceptable to a more general class of readers, who may desire some acquaintance with the classic authors of Germany. A large experience with pupils in the University of Dublin has convinced the Author that no existing book on the subject aptly answers the object which this little volume is intended to serve. One principal defect in such manuals as are already in use is the exaggerated importance given to the earlier portions of the Literature at the expense of the later. Far too much stress is usually laid on the Mediæval Legends, and a great deal of unnecessary criticism is expended on certain minor writers; whilst but very scanty notice is taken of those important authors and subjects which, in modern times, have claimed our chief attention. In the present work this error has been avoided; and an effort has been made to

offer to Students a well-balanced account of the entire subject, with such conciseness as may not be inconsistent with precision of form and distinctness of colouring.

The following pages seek to attain their object by the twofold method of historical narrative and comparative criticism. On the one hand, they chronicle the successive developments of German Literature—its first glimmerings and early dawn, its morning brightness with temporary obscurations, its meridian splendour, and, lastly, the sultry afternoon heat which seems now to oppress the literary atmosphere of Deutschland. On the other hand, it has not been forgotten to compare the literary treasures of Germany with the analogous productions of other countries; for without such criticism the Student's information would lack breadth and accuracy. Extracts from the various authors have been introduced with a very sparing hand, partly from a fear of unduly swelling the volume, but principally from a conviction of their general inutility. Such selected passages are usually skipped by the reader, especially if in a foreign language, as they must be in a work of this character; and, besides, no adequate idea of a writer can be gathered from a few fragmentary passages. What notion of Schiller can be derived from a scene of one of his dramas, or of Jean Paul from a few pages of his novels? As well study zoology in the skin of a leopard, or architecture in a brick of St. Paul's. The Author has, therefore, imported into the work no "elegant extracts," except such as

were absolutely required to illustrate some peculiarity of dialect, metre, &c., or to fortify and elucidate some particular statement in the text; but the paucity of extracts demands, in compensation, a fuller analysis of the chief characteristics of German Literature, as contrasted with others, and with their English and French rivals. This, therefore, has been supplied.

An introductory chapter contains a brief history of the German Language and its Dialects—a most useful topic, generally passed over, or inadequately treated, in other manuals of this kind. Of the German Drama a succinct, but comprehensive account, has been given, with original comments upon it, in relation to the Theatres of other lands. The four chief writers—Lessing, Schiller, Göthe, and Heine—have been discussed at some length; and in the final chapter will be found a survey of the Philosophical Literature of Germany. Under this last head the reader need be under no apprehension. Unambitious of the labours of Sisyphus, the Author has not attempted to follow out this branch of his subject into its labyrinthic ramifications, but has simply indicated, with sufficient distinctness, the chief masters of Teutonic Philosophy, with their principal publications, as well as their main tenets. Having himself sat at the feet of Schelling, Gabler, and Trendelenburg, in his student days at the University of Berlin, the author enters with confidence on this part of his task.

Besides German sources, the principal English autho-

rities have been consulted, particularly Mr. Carlyle's "Life of Schiller," Mr. Lewes's "Life of Göthe," Professor Max Müller's "German Classics," and the Rev. F. Metcalfe's "History of German Literature," based on the German of Vilmar.

The Author, with these observations, commits the volume to the indulgence of the public.

A. M. S.

Trinity College, Dublin,
Easter, 1865.

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GERMAN LITERATURE.

CHAPTER I.

ON THE GERMAN LANGUAGE : ITS HISTORY AND CHARACTER.

The German Language—why called Hoch-Deutsch.—The present dialect of Germany, or the modern High-German, owes its name of Hoch-Deutsch to the circumstance of its having arisen in the higher, *i. e.*, in the mountainous or southern portions of that country. A glance at the map of Europe will show that the tracts adjoining the North Sea and the Baltic are level, up to at least two or three hundred miles from the mouths of the Rhine, Weser, Elbe, Oder, and Vistula; while in the region of Bonn, Kassel, Halberstadt, and Dresden, the country becomes more and more hilly, until it culminates in the lofty scenery of the Alps. Hence a very marked difference between the tribes as well as the dialects of Germany, has been observable ever since the time of the great migration. In the Northern Lowlands a variety of languages, such as Dutch or Netherlandish, Flemish, Frisian, Westphalian, Platt-Deutsch, Anglo-Saxon, and others, all denominated by the general term of Low-German dialects, used to be employed, and some of them are still in use there; while in Upper Germany, or south and east of the tribes aforesaid, another dialect called Hoch-Deutsch has always been spoken; both again differ from the Scandinavian, which is the third great subdivision of Teutonic, and spoken in Sweden, Norway, and Denmark. In the course of the middle ages Low-German was gradually eclipsed, and finally superseded by the southern dialect. That species of

Hoch-Deutsch, which established itself as the national tongue of all Germany, was originally the language of the Franconians and Swabians; but kindred forms of speech existed also in Austria, Switzerland, the Tyrol, Silesia, and Upper Saxony. When Pomerania, with East and West Prussia, were colonized by the German knights, these Baltic provinces also adopted the Highland dialect as the idiom of their inhabitants, and thus the Low-German, being shut out from the Oder and Vistula, and all the upper regions of the country, retained for itself only the mouths and lower courses of the Rhine, Ems, Weser, and Elbe, as its peculiar domain.

History of the Low-German Dialects.—Although restricted within these narrow limits, the Low-German tribes strictly maintained the peculiarities of their national tongue. When in the fifth and sixth centuries the Angles, Saxons, and Jutes migrated to England, they carried their language with them, to be there afterwards mixed with Scandinavian and Norman French. In the time of Charlemagne a Low-German chieftain, Wittekind, a native of Westphalia, defended his independence with obstinacy against the superior power of the Franks. After the disruption of Charlemagne's empire, the Lowland Saxons became one of the leading tribes of Germany. Their prince, Henry the Fowler, founded in 919 A.D. the first dynasty of Teutonic emperors, and his lineal descendants continued to fill the throne for more than a century. We have every reason to suppose that, so far at least, the Low-German dialect was in no respect inferior to the High-German, but enjoyed the protection of the Saxon sovereigns as well as that of the clergy. At all events, it was not interfered with on the territory where it was domiciled. But a total change in the relations of the two languages took place after the year 1024, or at the end of the Saxon line of emperors. For at that time the imperial dignity and the chief government of the country passed out of the hands of the Low-Germans into those of their southern neighbours. First the Franconians supplied Ger-

many with feudal chieftains ; and when these emperors had reigned for a century, the leadership went still more southward, to the Swabians. It was to be expected that the princes of both these tribes, or the Salian and the Hohenstaufen emperors, would favour the High-German nationality, which they represented, and thus it cannot surprise us to find that from that epoch the Lowland dialect sank in importance, until it finally succumbed to its rival. Perhaps the loss of political prestige alone would not have been powerful enough to throw the Low Germans and their language into the background, had not other causes supervened. But in addition to their greater political influence and their superiority in point of numbers, the High-Germans also possessed greater capacity for intellectual development. The Hohenstaufen emperors became the declared patrons of German poetry ; and the knightly minstrels, who repaired to their court, were induced to compose verses in High-German, even if it did not happen to be their native idiom. Thus before long the Low-German dialect sank down to the level of a patois, and soon it received that stigma of vulgarity or rusticity, which now is attached to it in the eyes of the present inhabitants of Germany. For presently we shall see that the Reformation only tended to establish still more firmly the exclusive reception of the rival and more favoured language. The only Low-German dialect which successfully withstood the encroachments of the Highland tongue was the Dutch, which is the national form of speech in Holland. All the others have long since ceased to exist as printed or written languages ; and except about two millions of country people in the North-west of Germany, they are only known to the comparative philologist or to the Teutonic antiquarian.

. *Remains of Low-German Literature.*—From what has been said it will appear that the remnants of Low-German literature can only be few, and that none can be later than the Reformation, except those in the Dutch idiom, which we exclude

from the range of our consideration. There are, however, frequent traces of Low-German in all the older prose and poetry, especially in the Hildebrandslied. Beowulf is an Anglo-Saxon poem, composed in Germany about 800 A. D. More important is Heliand, or the Anglo-Saxon harmony of the Gospels, which the monk Otfried translated into his High-German dialect. One of the earliest Minnesänger, Heinrich von Veldeke, was born on the lower Rhine; but so ashamed was he to write verses in the Low-German dialect, that he chose the fashionable language of the day in preference to his native idiom. Only at times his Westphalian provincialisms seem to steal into the text, and to vitiate the even flow of his poetry. The fable of Reineke the Fox was composed in the Lowland dialect about 1250 A. D. after a Dutch model, and republished in a masterly version at Lübeck in 1498 by Hermann Barkhusen. Lastly, Gerhard of Minden paraphrased in 1350 Æsop, or 103 fables ascribed to that Greek poet, in the same language. These are nearly all that remains of Low-German writings. Since, however, a nearly extinct dialect still excites a certain degree of interest, more especially in scholars, Low-German verses and stories have sometimes been composed by learned writers as a kind of literary curiosity. Thus Simon Dach, of Königsberg, a Protestant hymn-writer, composed some moral and religious poems about 1640, which adopted the tone and language of the rural population in Prussia, and were, therefore, in part written in Low-German. The same experiment was tried by Voss, the great translator of Homer, and member of the Göttingen Dichterbund. He has left two idyllic poems, which are as rustic in their dialect as in their contents. But recently the brothers Grimm again thought fit to publish some specimens of Low-German tales. The learned authors visited the cottages of the Westphalian peasantry, and listened to the recitations of their Märchenfrauen, or story-tellers. They faithfully noted down both the ideas and the words of their rural entertainers,

and placed the result of their investigations in their admirable and *naïve* collection of old German tales, or Haus-Märchen.

Dialectic Differences of High-German and Low-German.—Let us now consider a few main points in which the two sister dialects differ from each other. It will easily be seen that these distinctions are but trifling. If we may venture a supposition as to their origin, they arose from the fact that the Lowlanders, being a sea-faring or a sea-coast tribe, and probably also mixing more frequently with foreigners, parted with some of the harsher consonants and gutturals, as well as with the broader vowels of their inland compatriots. As regards the vowel-system, the difference of the inland Doric and the sea-side Ionic dialects in Greece will offer to the scholar an explanatory parallel, while for the interchange of consonants the Latin and Greek word-forms may be compared with advantage.

1. The L. G. (*i. e.*, Low-German) dialects substitute the a-sound as in mate for the H. G. (*i. e.*, High-German) a-sound as in father. In other words the former modify and de-gutturalize the broad vowels and diphthongs of the latter. Just as the Doric δᾶμος became δῆμος in Ionic, so the H. G. hat (= he has) becomes in L. G. hedd. Haus (= house) is in L. G. hûs; auf is in L. G. ûp; sein (= his) pronounced sâ-yn, becomes in L. G. seen, pronounced nearly like sane in English.

2. Most Low-German dialects, excepting Dutch, drop the gutturals of the High-German; either they substitute a *k*, a *ck*, or a *y*, or else they ignore them altogether. Thus, for suchen (= to seek) the L. G. is söken; for auch (= also) the L. G. is auck; for sich it is sick, but for mich (= me) it is mie.

3. The Low-German dialects avoid sibilants (tz) and the letter *s*, when it is final, substituting almost invariably a *t*. Thus zwei (= two) is twee in L. G.; grossen becomes groten, setzen is setten; was becomes wat; but ganzen becomes in L. G. gansen.

4. The past participle of Low-German verbs does not prefix *ge* as in High-German. Thus, for hatte gesagt (= had said) the

L. G. is *hädde sagd* ; and for *hat angefangen* (= has begun) the L. G. is *hadde anfangen*.

5. But by far the most interesting phenomenon is the singular interchange of soft, aspirate, and middle consonants, which, for reasons not yet accounted for, has taken place between High and Low-German words of the same root and meaning. It appears that, either during or after the migration, the Low-German dialects commenced to put a middle (B, G, and D, or Dh) in the place of the High-German soft consonant or tenuis (P, K, and T). On the other hand, they put a soft (P, K, and T) for the High-German aspirate (Ph, Ch, and Th). Lastly, they put an aspirate for the High-German middle (for B, G, and D). This peculiar law was first pointed out by Grimm, and is sometimes called Grimm's law. It is connected with similar phenomena in all the various subdivisions of the so-called Indo-Germanic languages. The tendency to mispronounce consonants in the sense indicated exists still in Germany, especially on the lower course of the Elbe, or in Saxony. The following table will present the nature of the law to the eye of the reader :—

P, K, and T in High-German	are B, G, and D, or Dh, in Low-German.
Ph, Ch, and Th in High-German	are P, K, and T in Low-German.
B, G, and D in High-German	are V, H, and Th in Low-German.

Instances of the above law are furnished by the following High-German words :—*Tochter* is in L. G. *Dogter* ; *Mutter* is *Mother* ; *Dampfen* (= to smoke) is *Dampen* ; *Sieben* is *seven* ; *Tag* (= day) is *Dag* ; *Tief* (= deep) is *dê-ip* ; *Dritte* (= third) is *thridde*, and so on.

In the preceding quotations the Westphalian dialect has been taken as the representative of Low-German. It will be admitted, on comparing these two languages, that the differences which exist between them are as nothing when set

against the general identity of both grammar and vocabulary. High-German and Low-German are but one language ; and the latter is only a very old and systematic mispronunciation, or a local malformation of the other, which has better claims to antiquity. The distinction is not much greater than that of any other broad inland dialect compared with a sea-coast dialect of the same nation.

History and Stages of the High-German Language.—Hoch-Deutsch, or the present national tongue of Germany, is certainly one of the oldest as well as the most original languages in Europe. The Southern Germans, who spoke it in its earliest form, dwelt, before the migration east and south of the Saxon Low-Landers, in the large tract which lies between the Baltic and the Danube, as far east as the north of the Hæmus mountains, and perhaps as the Euxine. They bore the name of Suevi, Goths (Getæ and Daci), Burgundians, Alemanni, Alani, Vandals. Subsequently they wandered to the south of Germany, to both sides of the Danube. Some think that in an age very remote their ancestors, as well as those of most other Europeans, inhabited the mountains of Persia or Iran, from which, according to this supposition, all the Aryan or Indo-European nations at one time or another descended. This is the theory of Bopp in Berlin ; its most distinguished advocate in this country has been Professor Max Müller. We should not have thought necessary to refer to it here, were there not, just on the threshold of German literature, an unmistakeable vestige of the connexion between Sanskrit and the oldest German. The surprising similarity of these two forms of speech is rendered probable by a newly discovered book, the oldest specimen of German which is in existence. This is the translation of the Bible by Bishop Ulfilas, a Thracian or Visigothic prelate of the fourth century. His dialect, called the Mœso-Gothic, is the oldest form of High-German, and, singularly enough, contains already traces of Low-German mispronunciation. The Gothic of Ulfilas is remarkable for the lengthened

endings of his nouns, many of which end in *ubni*, a termination much akin to endings of Sanskrit nouns. Ulfilas has a separate form for the Dual of substantives. He also forms some tenses of the Passive voice without any auxiliary verb, just as in Greek. His adverbs end in *ba*; the consonants are frequently compounded into forms such as Dd, Gm, Zn, Zv, Zg. For the preposition *under* he puts *uf*, which in later German meant the reverse of under. For *that*, the conjunction, he puts *ei*; and for *through* he has *and*. After the period of Ulfilas there comes a blank in the history of the German language, until in the ninth and three following centuries we find the two principal dialects, High and Low-German, fairly settled side by side, and struggling for the supremacy. The native soil of Hoch-Deutsch was Franconia and Swabia, where Otfried and Notker, two monks, first employed it as a written and literary language. This stage of the dialect is usually called Alt-Hoch-Deutsch. The next stage begins about 1150, or with the second Crusade, and ends with the Reformation. This period is called Mittel-Hoch-Deutsch. It has been already related how the rise of the Salic or Franconian, and afterwards that of the Hohenstaufen or Swabian dynasties, gave an undisputed superiority to the South, not only in politics but also in literature. Thus began the heroic age of German poetry. Prose was not written at all; but the study of Canon Law and Divinity began already to bring into the language a number of Latin and Greek words, more especially those which refer to ecclesiastic or political matters as well as to philosophic subjects. In the main, however, the changes of the High-German tongue during the middle ages are attributable rather to the incessant wear and tear which go on in every language and in every age, than to any extensive importation of foreign words. The want of regularity, and a corresponding tendency to decomposition, were moreover increased by the circumstance that so many sub-dialects of High-German existed all over the country. There were not two districts of more than

fifty square miles, which spoke exactly alike. Of the ten circles into which the emperor Maximilian divided Germany, the three northern spoke either wholly, or in part, a species of Low-German. The Burgundian circle spoke Dutch; the Lower Saxon and the Westphalian spoke each their own Platt-Deutsch. But in the seven other circles as many subdivisions of High-German were employed. Thus we get Bavarian and Swabian Hoch-Deutsch in the south; a Palatinate-, a Rhenish, and a Franconian dialect in the middle; and Austrian with Upper Saxon High-German in the east of Germany. These motley provincialisms might have gone on developing themselves for ever; they might have settled down into seven High and three Low dialects, just as it happened in one part, viz. in Holland; in a word, there might have been a total end to the unity of speech in Deutschland, had not the new era of the Reformation put a stop to this state of things, and by its consequences raised one of the dialects just enumerated to such a decided pre-eminence over all the others, as to procure to it alone an exclusive recognition as the standard language of the country.

Guttenberg and Luther, the inventor of the art of printing, and the champion of the Reformation, by their labours brought about this salutary change. They, and especially the latter, have finally decided the uniformity of speech for all the inhabitants of Germany. Guttenberg, by discovering type, provided the mechanical means for fixing the spoken word in such a shape that it could reach the eyes and ears of millions, and could spread in printed books far beyond the limits of a single province. Luther, by preaching the Reformed faith, supplied the stimulus for using the discovery of Guttenberg. He first taught his countrymen to read and hear no other sort of German but his dialect. The great Reformer lived in Upper Saxony, and employed that species of High-German which was in use at Meissen and Eisenach, some twenty or thirty miles north of Dresden. Thus it came to

pass that the Upper Saxon dialect triumphed over all the others. For such was his personal influence, such the popularity of his pamphlets and the celebrity of his sermons and translation of the Bible, that not only his own admirers but also his Catholic adversaries began to adopt Luther's diction, and to abide by his spelling, grammar, and word-forms. Nor since his days has any material departure from his dialect been essayed, or even imagined possible.

Thus, in the year 1534, when Luther published his complete translation of the Bible, the modern Hoch-Deutsch was fixed for all subsequent ages. The additions which since have been made to the German vocabulary did not increase the stock of household words, but only supplied appellatives for technical and artificial objects and occupations. The largest portion of these came from France. They were imported during the seventeenth century, when the influence of French manners and the French language reached an almost ignominious height at several German courts. Among others, all the verbs in *-iren*; the adjectives in *-abel*, *-ös*, *-ant*; and the nouns in *-age*, *-eur*, *-trice*, and *-erie*, are importations from the French. The terms of *étiquette*, cookery, dress, heraldry, dancing, and some in military art, are usually of this class. The Italian language furnished its quota of musical terms. England lent to Germany her political and naval expressions; the latter of these had originally been derived by the English from the Dutch, so that the naval dictionary of Germany presents the singular phenomenon of indigenous words with a foreign pronounciation.

General Character of the High-German Language.—Taking now the result of the process of formation we have just described, and comparing German with other European tongues, we cannot but perceive its peculiar advantages, as well as its peculiar defects. On the score of euphony, German must yield the palm to other languages. It is not a melodious language, nor such as would please an ear accustomed to Italian.

Its vowels indeed are long and musical enough, far broader at least than English vowels. But its consonantal system is rather harsh, and the frequency of hissing sibilants and compound or uncompounded gutturals tries both throat and tongue very considerably. But the vocabulary is at once more original and more copious than that of other languages. It includes, after all, but little that is not strictly Teutonic; and the native stamp of German speech is as undeniable as the profuse wealth of verbal roots, and the numerous inflections which German commands. Perhaps no other language, except ancient Greek, ever possessed such facilities for inverting sentences, for deriving new expressions from old ones, and for compounding words and clauses with others. But this superabundant pliancy, while it enables German authors to be forcible and subtle in their diction, also betrays them frequently into excess of colouring, and from this cause spring the majority of the defects of German style. The length of the compound words renders them unharmonious, if not unpronounceable. The expansion of the sentence, though intended to improve the argument, in reality confuses and hampers it. The inversion of the natural order of words, however expressive at times, often tends to render the meaning obscure; and the vast number of purely Teutonic words in the dictionary makes the language all the harder to acquire for a foreigner. Thus the very advantages which German boasts of become a source of weakness—not indeed of necessity, because there is no intrinsic impediment to prevent German from being as concise and readable as any other language—but as a matter of experience, and in consequence of the enormous architectural capacity of the language. Schiller and Heine, to mention no more, have for instance avoided this danger of excessive intricacy, to which Hoch-Deutsch naturally tends, and have given ample proof that it can be written with simplicity and elegance. But there are also many other authors in Germany whose books cannot be literally translated into any foreign language, so ramified is the

formation of their sentences, and so artificial the composition of their words. It would be a serious mistake, if on that account we were to form a low estimate of their merits as sources of information. However desirable perspicuity may be, the most transparent rivers are also the most shallow, and the most lucid writers are sometimes the most common-place and the first laid aside.

We shall fitly conclude this chapter on the history of the German language by subjoining a table, showing the stages through which it has run, and its affinity with other forms of speech of the same family in Europe.

Indo-European languages:—I. Classical, Latin and Greek. II. Celtic. III. Lithuanian. IV. Slavonic. V. Romaic, or mixtures of Latin and Teutonic: A. Italian; B. French; C. Spanish; D. Portuguese; E. Rouman, or Moldo-Wallachian. VI. English, or a mixture of Anglo-Saxon, Norman-French, and Scandinavian.

VII. Teutonic Languages:—

A. Scandinavian;

Old Norse;

Swedish;

Danish;

Norwegian.

B. Low-German Dialects:—

Anglo-Saxon;

Dutch;

Flemish;

Frisian;

Westphalian Platt-Deutsch;

Lower Saxon Platt-Deutsch.

C. High-German:—

Moeso-Gothic of Ulflas (350);

Franconian and Swabian;

Alt-Hoch-Deutsch (800—1150);

Mittel-Hoch-Deutsch (1150—1534);

Neu-Hoch-Deutsch (1534 to the present time).

CHAPTER II.

ON THE PERIODS AND GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS OF GERMAN LITERATURE.

Zenith of Literary Excellence, about 1800 A. D.—One of the things that will be observed by the student of German literature is the very recent date at which it flourished, as compared with that of other European nations. It is not more than eighty or a hundred years since Germans could first boast of any great poets or prose writers, while in France literature had already reached its climax at least two centuries before the present age, in England nearly three, and in Spain and Italy at a still earlier period. The High-German race took its place in the literary world after the Western or Romaic nations in point of time; and the poetic impulse, which first originated in Greece, and thence came to Italy, had previously gone the whole round of Europe before it stirred up the Teutonic nation, and roused it likewise to song and inspired thought. The year 1800 A. D., may be looked upon as the culminating point of literary excellence in Germany. The lateness of this date may seem surprising; nor can we say what exactly may have been the cause which delayed the dawn of poetic genius in that country. The most probable solution of the question seems to be, that religion had absorbed the whole attention of the Germans, and that the disastrous contests subsequent to the Reformation blighted the spring-time of their intellectual fertility, just at the moment when the national language had been fixed, and nothing but peace and prosperity seemed wanting to bring the bud to maturity. Be that as it may, there is a space of fully 220 years between Luther and Lessing, who commences the classical era, so that the great national authors of Germany coincide only with the end of the last century; unless, in-

deed, we should claim for the mediæval bards the title of national poets, which their now discarded dialect and their solely antiquarian importance forbids us to attribute to them.

By dividing the mediæval literature into two sections, coextensive with the two earlier stages of the language, and by allotting to modern literature three sections, one rather longer than the others, we get five periods, as specified below. Each period commences and ends with some great event in the history of Germany, except the classical era, which began amidst comparative peace, though it ended with the Revolution.

First Period, the monastic age, or the Old High-German literature, from 360 A. D., to 1150, or from Ulfilas to the Crusades. During this age we shall have to record the labours of several pious monks, such as Otfried and Notker, whose translations from the Bible, along with some alliterative popular legends, form the oldest relics of German.

Second Period, the chivalrous and artisan poetry, or the Minnesänger and the Meistersänger, embracing the Middle High-German literature, from the Crusades to the Reformation, or from 1150 to 1534. This is a very brilliant period, yielding in the splendour of its literary performances to none among the nations of that time. A magnificent epic or heroic poetry was accompanied and succeeded by happy lyrical effusions.

Third Period, the learned literature of the theologians and scholars, or the Modern High-German literature in its primary stage, from Luther to the dawn of the classical era, or from 1534 to 1760. During this period little was written, except hymns and rules of poetry. It was *critical* for Germany in politics, and also in literature.

Fourth Period, the classical age of Modern High-German, beginning in 1760, and ending with the storms of the French Revolution, or the death of Schiller, in 1805. Besides Schiller and Göthe, who died in 1832, but whose productiveness falls chiefly into this, not into the next period, many minor stars illumine the literary horizon; the German drama reaches its

perfection; and Göttingen, Jena, and Weimar become in succession the rendezvous of the most eminent authors whom Germany has seen.

Fifth and last Period, from 1805 up to the present time, the polemical age, in which we see the recent writers of Germany divided into two large camps, struggling the one for Progress in Church and State, the other for Conservatism. The Romantic School sets the fashion at first, but soon Heine and the poets of Young Germany drive them off the field. At the same time, philosophy and history flourish, as well as novels, and every department of scientific writing.

General Characteristics of German Authors.—Before we commence the history of special periods, or detail the works of separate authors, it seems advisable to take a prospective view of German literature in its totality. Without some such general observations, without a clue to the prevailing tendencies of German writers, it is greatly to be feared the student will not see his way through the mass of detail which must be gone through. Besides, the history of a nation's literature gains in interest and utility in proportion as it enables us to recognise the peculiar genius of that nation, as revealed in its literary treasures. It is this alone which imparts value and significance to their analysis, which otherwise would be a dead letter, or a dry list of names. It is purposed, therefore, briefly to point out the most striking characteristics of German writers; and, as contrast heightens the vividness of description, it has been thought advisable to compare their manner and taste with those of French and English authors.

Contrast with French Authors.—In the literature of France the conventional sentiment, or the regard for social propriety, acts as the criterion of good taste, and forms also the most remarkable merit and demerit of poetic and prose compositions. This truth has often been averred by French writers,* and is

* Thus Sainte Beuve says in his "Critiques et Portraits," § 2—"La préférence de la littérature française consiste dans l'esprit de conversation et

in fact the direct consequence of the peculiarly sociable and lively character of the French as a nation. Men always write as they think, and we must expect to discover visible marks of national character in the literature of any people. Thus, as the French possess great talent for conversation, a due appreciation of good manners, much anxiety to please and shine, and withal more brilliancy than substance, more versatility than gravity, so also the tenor and style of French compositions are similarly affected. The language is easy and declamatory, as the verse is always light and flowing. There is never any obscurity in the style, but occasionally we meet some rhetoric and surprising, or effective turns, which charm rather than convince. The kind of composition most in use is another, and a very decisive, test of the national genius. Of all the branches of poetry which have been cultivated in France none has found more distinguished votaries than comedy, or the representation of manners. Who does not remember *Tartuffe* and *Harpagon*, *Monsieur Jourdain* and *Alceste*? Their names and characters will perhaps outlive all the literary performances of the countrymen of Molière. In the light, the gay, the frivolous, in the portraiture of the external aspects of society, no literature has been either so prolific or so felicitous. While the novels of Dumas, or Paul de Kock, fill the shelves of lending libraries, the vaudevilles of Scribe find their way, in one shape or another, into all the theatres of the world. The case is different with other branches of poetry. Thus, for instance, the tragedies of French authors have not been equally well received by non-Gallic audiences. Nor is this astonishing, because the tragic vein requires far other qualifications than the comic. The *Rodrigues*, *Orestes*, and *Tancredès* of a *Corneille*, *Racine*, and *Voltaire*, declaimed too much

de société, l'entente du monde et des hommes, l'intelligence vive et déliée des convenances et des ridicules, l'ingénieuse délicatesse des sentiments, la grâce, le piquant, la politesse achevée du langage." Similarly M^{me} de Stael in "De l'Allemagne," Partie I., § xi.

like French *galans*; they were always vindicating their *honour* or complimenting their *belle*. Besides the disregard of the conditions of historic truth, there was also a painful want of tragical sublimity—a want so serious, that no other quality can redeem it. The same absence of deep poetic feeling has usually characterized the lyrical compositions of France. Voltaire has written some elegant light poetry; Béranger has produced some convivial songs; Lamartine and Victor Hugo have versified, the one many pious, the other many political meditations in elevated language; still we miss in their verses the genuine flame of poetic inspiration, the note of thrilling joy, and the cry of piercing sorrow. We read their volumes with pleasure; but we lay them aside unmoved—regretting, perhaps, that the “sentiments distingués,” which figure so often in letters or in conversation, should be so little realized in the poetry of France. Contrasted, therefore, with such a literature as this, the poets and prose writers of Germany may seem inferior in elegance, in wit, in ease, in comic talent, in shrewd perception of social foibles, and in their sense of conventional propriety; above all, they may be less accessible to a foreign student than the writers of France; and yet their merits will suffer nothing by the comparison. There are qualities of prose more vital than facility and legibility—namely, soundness of information and depth of research, just as there are beauties of poetry more delightful than varnish and wit—namely, imagination, pathos, and sublimity. It is in these latter qualities rather than in the former that the authors of Germany will be found to excel.

Contrast with English Writers.—The English mind is cast in a sterner mould than the French, and the contrast which it affords to the genius of Germany differs entirely from that which exists between the Germans and their neighbours beyond the Rhine. Both literatures, English and German, are rather of a sober and serious cast. There is in both the same

absence of the light and frivolous, the same earnest looking into the future as well as into the past. Starting as both nations did with considerable affinities in language and nationality, having since then added a like religious movement, it was but natural that in their literature also they should sometimes give utterance to similar sentiments. With all that, the contrast of English and German authors is such as cannot be overlooked. To begin with the former, the predominating feature of British literature is its much more practical and moralizing tendency. This character is generally acknowledged by the historians who have recorded its past. It moreover corresponds with the qualities usually attributed to Englishmen by other Europeans—their reputed reserve, their prudence in social intercourse, their excellent business-habits, their strong feeling of personal independence. Above all, it is engrafted on the history, as well as on the religious and political condition, of the British nation. “Le génie de l’Angleterre,” says Lamartine, “est habile et superbe.” The question is, what light this may throw on the language and literature of England. A variety of observations soon present themselves to bear out the analogy. In the first place, English style is remarkable for its sober and dispassionate diction, and thus fully corresponds with the reserve and *sang-froid* attributed to the national character. Much declamation will not suit it. To insert frequent interjections, or to employ a string of interrogations; to indulge in emphatic marks of either dislike or admiration; to dot whole lines with unutterable sentiment, would in English appear supremely ridiculous; and this is the reason why many a page of French cannot be literally translated so as to make good English. On the other hand, the language equally rejects the intricacies of the German style, the yard-long sentences, the inverted constructions, the artificial composition of words, and the deep subtlety of the argument. Next, we can trace in the pages of English philosophers the effect of the same practical tendency which so strongly characterizes the

nation. No class of British authors illustrates this spirit more clearly than philosophers, whose favourite doctrines have usually been those of Utilitarianism, and a recommendation of common sense and experience. In advocating the useful and well-tested, in preference to the idealism of the Greek and German Schools, they expressed the most deep-rooted sentiment of the national mind. But not only in British philosophy, but also in English poetry, vestiges abound which point in a similar direction. The drama in England arose out of the so-called "moral" plays, and the sublime art of Shakspeare retains many traces of this origin in its plan and construction. Indeed, the moral is the prevailing sentiment of English poetry. It inspires the verses of Milton, it forms the theme of Pope, it animates the lines of Goldsmith, and has the largest share in the prose of Dr. Johnson. How man might improve his condition, and what result his actions will have, this seems to have been, on the whole, the main topic of English poets and prose writers; but not abstract theories of right and wrong, nor the mystery itself of man's earthly existence, the problem which has so often engrossed the attention of German poets and thinkers.

Theorizing Tendency of German Prose; Lyrical Tendency of German Poetry.—After the preceding digression, we shall all the better be able to delineate the character of German literature. It may be described as eminently theorizing and lyrical, wherein it stands contrasted with the conventional or social tendency of the French, and the practical or moralizing spirit of English compositions. The characteristic feature of German authors, and perhaps in general of Germans, is their more contemplative disposition, as compared to most of their neighbours. Political circumstances, no doubt, co-operated with natural disposition to produce in them such a turn of mind. The division of the soil into a number of small states, the prevalence of despotic rule, and the want of opportunities for extensive commerce or distant navigation, all these causes

have had the effect of rendering society in Germany more stagnant than elsewhere, and of diverting attention from politics and public questions. Beyond the practice of arms, but few active occupations could become habitual, and hence greater attention was bestowed on science and learning. The more the educated found themselves excluded from participation in state affairs, and lacked a suitable sphere for the exertion of their talents, the more they devoted themselves to the pursuit of abstract science. Thus the problems of Metaphysics and Divinity, of History and Language, in a minor degree also those of physical science, jurisprudence, and medicine, became the absorbing questions of the day; and the literati followed, with the rest of the public, in the wake of the scholars and metaphysicians. However, the characteristics of a literature can only in part be explained from political or social causes; the main cause must be sought in the bent of the popular mind. On this question we cannot do better than quote again the French authority already adduced:—"Le génie de l'Allemagne," says Lamartine, "est profond et austère." The German character is earnest, meditative, inclined to be stern; it is less desirous to please, and less fond of display than the French. Possessing neither the business tact nor the decision of many of his neighbours, the German can yet show a considerable amount of devotion and tenacity both of purpose and action, especially when his enthusiasm is once roused in behalf of a cause which he has made his own. He is naturally unostentatious, and pays but little regard to external indications of what passes within him. The truth of this observation cannot be better illustrated than by instancing the singularly undemonstrative form of worship which is in use in many parts of the country. The Lutherans have discarded not only the incense vessels, the crucifixes, the saints' images, and other pageantry of their Catholic ancestors, but abstain even from litanies, responses, kneeling, and other outward signs of prayer. With them religion addresses the mind ex-

clusively, and not the senses; and as they are at the same time unwilling to abide by precedents, unless they recommend themselves to their reason, the Protestants of Germany have stripped their churches and worship of all ornament and formal embellishment. Much of the same contempt for forms and externals can also be traced in the literature of Germany. On the whole, the matter of composition is superior to its form. Teutonic authors evince more originality and perseverance in the pursuit of truth, than either attention to style or respect for authority in its enunciation. They usually possess much endurance in collecting laboriously a number of facts; they also have the talent and penetration requisite for generalizing these facts, and veracity enough to communicate them accurately; but their style sometimes appears dry and theorizing, to which the natural tendency of the language contributes its share. This theorizing tendency of German literature is especially proved by the great number of philosophical productions published in Germany. But a sort of speculative vein runs through the majority of German prose compositions. The writings of a Lessing, a Schlegel, a Niebuhr, or a Pufendorf abound in criticism and analysis; and even in Schiller's and Göthe's works we could point out passages which exhibit the same tendency.

The principal characteristic of German poetry fully corresponds with the predominant feature of Teutonic prose. A contemplative disposition is always manifested in poetry by a predilection for lyrics. There is an evident connexion between the lyrical and the speculative sentiment; the one and the other presuppose a calm, a pensive, a serious tone; both dwell in the domain of reflection; both are removed from action; both express the world within us, rather than that without. For this reason the lyrical element is the largest in the poetry of Germany, just as the comic vein distinguishes that of France, and as the didactic predominates in that of England. The reader will not forget, at the same time, that in a country

where a taste for music is so universally diffused as in Germany, there would be an additional inducement to lyrical verse composition. The melody needs its text, and song cannot warble without articulate notes. Most rich and varied, therefore, is the literature of *Lieder* in Germany. The larger portion of both Minne- and Meister-Gesang, the whole sacred poetry of pre-Lutheran and post-Lutheran times, the best effusions of Klopstock, Schiller, Göthe, and Heine, belong to this class of compositions. The lyrical tendency can even be traced in departments where it is less legitimate, as we shall have sometimes to point out in speaking of the German epos and drama. The Messiah of Klopstock, and the tragedies of Göthe, often labour under this defect.

CHAPTER III.

FIRST PERIOD—THE MONASTIC AGE. 350-1150.

Character of this Period.—The record of the literary remains of Germany during the Middle Ages opens with the Monastic age—an epoch which embraces no less than eight centuries, from the great migration to the Crusades. It is a period full of mystery and darkness, illuminated but here and there by a ray of light. Its scanty relics, however important for ethnographical and historic purposes, possess but little interest from a literary point of view. They bear witness to the great moral struggle which convulsed Germany in that space of time, the struggle between Heathenism and Christianity. The triumph of the cross over Thor and Wodan was tardy and slow, marked by a reluctant surrender of their national traditions on the part of the natives, as well as by martyrdoms on the part of those who converted them. The Church had to encounter far greater obstacles in Germany than she met with in England, France, Italy, or Spain; for here the spread of the Gospel was preceded by a long acquaintance with the Roman race and the Latin language, which served as the vehicle of communication to the early missionaries. No Roman had ever trodden the virgin soil of the interior of Germany; and the Apostles of the Gospel had to cope with a new race of stubborn Pagans, whose tongues they did not know, and whose superstitions they did not understand. The most successful attempts at conversion proceeded from those preachers who owned some kind of kinsmanship with the tribes among whom they laboured. Thus already in 350, under Valentinian, an ecclesiastic of Cappadocian descent, but who had lived among the Visigoths in Mœsia, Bishop Ulfilas, gained over large numbers of his new countrymen to the Christian faith. But the tide of the migration swept away the fruit of his labours, and the disper-

sion of his tribe over Italy and Spain prevented the seed from taking root among other Germans. It was not until four centuries later, when the waves of the great Wandering had ceased to flow, and when several Teutonic tribes had become thoroughly Latinized abroad, that a new and successful resumption of the work of Ulfilas could take place. The conversion of the Germans was chiefly due to the zeal of the Anglo-Saxons and Irish, and to the arms of Charlemagne and his Franks. It was so destined that the mother-country should receive back Christianity as a return for her sons whom she had sent to people the land of her neighbours. Supported by their courage alone, a number of pious monks from Ireland and England came across the German Ocean in the seventh and eighth centuries. They preached among the Frisians, penetrated into the forests of the Saxons, and, nothing daunted by the death of many of their brethren, succeeded in erecting churches on the banks of the Rhine, Weser and Elbe. Such men were St. Gall, who founded the monastery of Sanct Gallen, in Switzerland; St. Kero, St. Columban, St. Kilian, all four Irishmen; and the great Apostle of Germany, St. Boniface or Winfried, an Englishman, whose name is almost identified with the Christianization of the ancient Germans. In 744 A. D. the abbey of Fulda was founded on the bank of the River Fulda, an arm of the Weser. Sturm, a friend and disciple of Winfried, was the first abbot who presided over it. A third missionary station was that of Corvey, in the same region of Germany.

As the early delegates of the Church were perfect strangers to the land of their adoption, they made it their first business to acquire a certain acquaintance with the language of the natives, though their horror of idolatry prevented them from showing any very liberal interest in popular traditions. To facilitate their intercourse with the Germans, they drew up some Latin-German vocabularies, or rather lists of Teutonic words, oddly spelt, and but ill understood, with some equally barbarous equivalents in monastic Latin opposite. Two such

lists have come down to us. The one is said to have been made by St. Gall, the other by St. Kero; both are in a fragmentary state. These documents are very amusing, as exemplifying the linguistic exercises in which these primitive monks were engaged. If either they or the Church who sent them had been guided by enlarged principles of ecclesiastical policy, they might have preserved the songs or ballads of the old Germans; or, if their dread of Heathenism did not allow this, they might at least have translated the Bible into German, in imitation of the spirited undertaking of Ulfilas; but the narrowness of their views did not allow such an enterprise. We find among the German clergymen of the eleventh and twelfth centuries reiterated attempts to execute for the good of their flocks some versions of the Creeds, the Homilies, the Benedictine Rules, and parts of the sacred volume; but the voice of the Roman Church distinctly interdicted the use of the native idiom for purposes of public worship, and any attempt at replacing the authorized Latin version of the Bible by a German translation would have been visited with her severe censure. Hence the few versions already alluded to had no other value than that of literary experiments, or works of private devotion; still less attention was bestowed by the monks on the native poetry of their converts. Thus the Church took with one hand what she gave with the other. She taught writing and reading, but she refused to emancipate the national mind. She patronized literature and learning, but she proscribed all literature which was not Latin. Under such circumstances we may fairly question the obligations under which Germany rests to the early monks for her literary cultivation. The monastic era of literature means, indeed, its first awakening as well as its first stammer, but it means also its unworthy vassalage to Latin, its mutilation by its monkish foster-fathers, and its obscuration by the hands of the servants of the Church.

Ulfilas, 350.—This great preacher of the Gospel was born in 318. His parents were Cappadocians; so that by descent

he cannot be claimed as a German. He had embraced the Arian doctrines; and as he had lived among the Visigoths from a very early age, he converted a great many of them to Christianity, and was dignified by other Greek prelates with the title of Bishop of the Visigoths. He translated the Bible into the Mæso-Gothic dialect; but omitted the books of Kings, because he feared (so it is said) to rouse the martial spirit of his tribe by a perusal of the wars of the early Jewish rulers. When, in 355, his friends and converts were closely pressed by the Ostrogoths, Ulfilas solicited and obtained for himself and them a refuge on the soil of the Roman Empire. Twice he attended general synods at Constantinople, where he died at last in 388. He did not live to see either his doctrines repudiated, or his tribe dispersed. The best manuscript of his Bible is now in Upsal in Sweden, whither it was carried from Prague after the siege of 1648. The following is the text of the Lord's Prayer in the Visigothic High-German:—"Atta unsar, thu in Himinam, weihnai Namu thein. Quimai Thindinas us theins. Wairthai Wilja theins, swe in Himinah, ja ana Airthai. Haif unsarana thana sinteiman gif uns himadaga. Ja aflet uns thatei Skulans sijaima, swa swe ja weis afletam Skulam unsaraim. Ja ni briggais uns Fraistubnjai, ak lausei uns of thama Ubilin. Unte theina ist Thiudanjardi, jah Maths, ja Wulthus, in Aiwins."

After Ulfilas we have to make a leap of several centuries, in order to arrive at the next data in the literary history of the Germans.

Influence of Charlemagne.—Of all the tribes who changed their abodes during the migration, the Franks were the first who attained a fixed state of society. They had left the banks of the Rhine and Maine about 420, accompanied by numbers of Burgundians and Visigoths, and founded in France an empire under the sway of the Merovingian, and subsequently the Carolingian kings. It is surprising how little they intermixed with the population whom they had conquered. For

several centuries they lived among them, rather encamped than peacefully settled. They continued to speak the German language, in addition to the Gallo-Roman patois then used in France. The names and the descent of their sovereigns, from Pharamond to Childeric, and even to a later period, are thoroughly German, so were their laws and manners; nor can we speak of a specific country and a definite language of France until after the treaty of Verdun in 843, since up to that time the Franks looked upon themselves as being still one with those Franconian compatriots whom they had left behind, but from whom as yet no political boundary separated them. German Franconia, the cradle of the conquering race, formed part of Austrasia, or the eastern portion of the empire. Since the reign of Clovis but few Frankish sovereigns bestowed any attention on other Teutonic tribes besides their own subjects. Charlemagne was the first who adopted a different line of policy, and acted as a conqueror towards other Germanic races. To his determined exertions the gradual extinction of Paganism among the Saxons is principally due; but, though he treated these tribes as Heathens and barbarians, the great emperor never forgot his connexion with them, but always remembered the Teutonic origin of his race. He resided at Aachen, and spoke the German language as his "patrius sermo," according to the express testimony of his biographer, Einhard, or Eginhard. He himself drew up some grammatical principles of German, and used to recite the old ballads, in which the exploits of Teuton kings and heroes were celebrated. He charged the clergy to translate their Latin homilies into German as well as Gallo-Roman, since both these dialects were the recognised idioms of his subjects. Finally, he fixed by law the German and Gallic equivalents for the winds and months, when their denominations had become confused in the ideas of his people. On Charlemagne's death the necessity of dividing the two nationalities became more and more apparent, and this led to the formation of the separate empires of

France, Germany, and Italy; but even after the treaty of Verdun in 843, we find many proofs that the use of the High-German dialect still continued in the north and east of France. About 900, for instance, a Frankish monk, whose probable name was Hucland, living in St. Amand, in Flanders, composed a High-German ode, or song, dedicated to Louis III., and celebrating the victory which that French king had gained over the Normans in 881. This song is called "Das Ludwigslied;" it was edited lately by Hoffmann von Fallersleben, and possesses a peculiar interest, as showing that the use of the Teutonic dialect survived for fully five centuries after the Frankish conquest among the inhabitants of the north-east of France.

Alliterative Popular Ballads.—The Irish, English, or French monks, who converted the ancient Germans, often heard them sing certain ballads, which embodied at once the history and the poetry of their own forefathers, and probably the same poems which Charlemagne is said to have recited. These songs glorified the grand deeds of native chieftains,—combats with dragons, expeditions to distant lands, rescues of captive damsels, and cruel acts of retaliation for past injury. The names of the chief heroes were Siegfried of the Netherlands, Dietrich of Bern or Verona, with his armour-bearer Hildebrand, and Günther of Burgundy. Another heroine was Guthrun, the Frisian maiden; and in all probability the tricks of Reynard the Fox formed also part of their poetic themes. As the majority of these ancestral legends breathed a thoroughly Pagan spirit, and were intimately bound up with the mythology of the native religion, it was plainly the interest, if not the duty, of the ecclesiastics to discourage and ignore this kind of composition. Thus the popular poetry of the ancient Germans was doomed to oblivion by their Christian civilizers. Had the natives possessed the art of writing, they might, notwithstanding, have saved their poetry from destruction. But, as all literary culture, which required the aid of pen and ink,

was strictly limited to the monasteries, but one or two fragments of the old ballad-poetry could escape from the universal shipwreck; and it remained for an age such as the following, when all fear of the return of Paganism had ceased, to retrieve the losses of the monastic era, and to rediscover and poeticize the almost forgotten traditions, which were then embodied in the *Nibelungen-Lied*, and other epics of the thirteenth century.

The form of the old ballad-poetry is no less remarkable than its subject. It employed a verse distinct from the *Nibelungen-stanza*, and is, in fact, unlike any other known verse of any literature. Its melody was regulated by syllabic emphasis, not by quantity, as in Latin and Greek poetry. There were always three accented or emphasized syllables in each of the two hemistichs of a line, and there were usually as many unaccented syllables inserted between or after them, so that on the whole the trochaic rhythm prevailed. But what is far more peculiar is the total absence of rhyme. Instead of it, Alliteration was employed, i. e. the repetition of the same consonant or vowel in the beginning of several words of the same line.*

All the oldest poetry of the Teutonic nations of Europe, including English, is alliterative. This had probably its origin in the manner in which these ballads were recited by the ancient Germans. They used to sit round a table or in a circle, with their shields, lances, and swords in their hands. Their minstrel stood in the middle, and his hearers accompanied his recitation by the martial sound of their weapons. Each time that the alliterated syllable fell from his lips, the whole band would dash their lances on their shields, or strike

* A specimen is given lower down, page 31. Alliteration is still found in a large number of old proverbs, or proverbial locutions, of nearly all Teutonic languages. In German, for instance, the following cases occur:—“Land und Leute;” “Mann und Maus;” “Haut und Haar;” “mit Schimpf und Schande;” “Wohl und Wehe;” “über Stock und Stein,” and others.

their armour with their swords, and thus the return of the identical letter served them as an indication of the right moment to sound the chorus-note. The scene must have been grand and imposing, and its rude but manly simplicity forms a striking contrast with the effeminate rhyme-jingling of modern poetry.

Beowulf, 750.—The oldest alliterative legend that is known is Anglo-Saxon, and was composed in the North of Germany, about 750. It relates an old Norse saga of Beowulf, a Danish prince, who encountered a fiendish cannibal, and slew him by the aid of enchanted weapons. But the prince finds at length his death after another successful combat with a sea-monster, which he also destroyed. The tale is not only more supernatural, but also longer, than might be desired, containing upwards of six thousand lines.

Hildebrandslied, 800.—More probable, as well as more brief, is the incident related in the Hildebrands-song, the oldest High-German poem extant, though it is of later origin than the Low-German Beowulf. The story of this famous ballad transfers us at once into the cycle of legends which form the substance of the Nibelungen-lay. The aged Hildebrand, who had accompanied his master, Dietrich of Verona, on his journey to Hungary, returns home, after the fight with the Nibelungen heroes, and their bloody destruction in the camp of Attila. While proceeding on his way with his Gothic followers, he is met by a hostile band, and among the latter is Hadubrand, his own son, whom he had left behind when still an infant. The two parties challenge each other, and their chiefs advance, each in front of his army, as the champions of their friends. They ask and tell each other's names before engaging, and soon Hildebrand becomes aware that he has his own child for his antagonist. He conjures him, by Irmingott, to desist from the fight, and informs him that he is his parent. But the youth only laughs at this assertion, and attributes it to a ruse of battle. "My father Hildebrand," quoth he, "has

been dead this many a day; the sailors told me so, who came over the Wendel-sea (the Adriatic, or Mediterranean). You are a cunning Hun—you think to cheat me.” Hildebrand still bewails his strange lot, which, after sixty years of danger and many a narrow escape, dooms him either to die by the hands of his son, or else to become his slayer. But all parleying is fruitless, and the fatal combat commences. Ere long their lances are broken, their shields are dashed to pieces, and already their swords are drawn to decide the fight. But here the ballad suddenly breaks off. The two Fulda monks, who culled its lines from the mouths of the natives, left their manuscript unfinished, or else part of it was lost. But from other sources we know how the ballad concluded. The father succeeded, after a desperate struggle, in disarming his son, and by sparing his life convinced him of his paternity. They then return together to their common hearth in Lombardy.

The lay of Hildebrand contains 66 alliterative lines. Its language is Old High-German; but there are in this, as in other specimens of that dialect, a number of Low-Germanisms, such as *seggen* for *sagen*, *det* for *das*, *enti* for *und*, and so on. The following are the four beginning lines—the Alliteration is marked by italics:—

“Ih gehorta det seggen, dat sih urhettun ænon muotin
Hiltibrant enti *Hadubrant*, untar *Herium* tuem.
 Sunu anti Fatar ango iro Saro rihtun
 Garntun se ihro *Gudhamum*, gurtun sih iro Suert ana.”

[I heard it said that once each other had met
 Hildebrand and Hadubrand, between two armies;
 Son and father their armours did adjust;
 They prepared their battle-tunics, girded their swords on.]

Religious Poetry of the Monastic Age.—The other relics of the monastic era are all religious poems, dating from the end of the eighth century, when Christianity had fairly dawned on Germany, up to the twelfth and thirteenth. In addition

to translations of the Creeds, the Church hymns, and the Benedictine vows, there occur some independent pious effusions, either simple prayers or versions of Scripture-history, and such Scripture-doctrines as inspired the new converts with particular awe.

One of the earliest is the *Wessobrun Prayer*, a short alliterative poem, in use among the monks of the cloister of Wessobrun, in Bavaria, which had been founded in 750, and is still in existence. It celebrates the power of the Creator, and prays for His mercy and assistance.

Muspilli, 830.—The older religious poetry throughout employed the same metre and poetic forms as the popular ballads. This may also be observed of *Muspilli*, a poem which sets forth the horrors of Doomsday. The name *Muspilli* meant fire, and was borrowed from Heathen mythology, although here it was used to denote the judgment day of the Christian religion. According to the anticipations of its author, the Antichrist shall come on the last day, and fight with Elias. When the first drop of the innocent prophet's blood has trickled on the earth, then in that moment the firmament shall be torn asunder, the general conflagration shall commence, and the nations of the earth, both dead and living, shall be called to their reckoning.

Heliand, 840.—But the greatest circulation was acquired by a third poem, called "*Heliand*" or the Saviour. It is written in Low-German, and was the work of a Westphalian rustic. According to some it was Louis le Débonnaire, according to another report it was a nocturnal vision, which encouraged him to undertake the lofty task of describing the life and death of the Saviour. Whatever may have induced him to forestal Milton, he was no mean competitor for the laurels of the British bard. His verse displays the most admirable simplicity of diction, as well as a judicious fidelity to the text of Scripture. It is only to be regretted that of his poem but fragments should have come down to us; the rest, along with the name of the

poet, is lost, although there is an imitation of his poem, which is not equal in merit to the extant specimens of the "Heliand."

Learned Monks.—The three religious poems hitherto enumerated show by their alliterative form, as well as by their contents, that their authors were still novices in the Christian faith, and recollected the mythology and poetry of their forefathers, whose poetic metre they preserved in their verses. But about 870 the alliterative form of writing was abandoned, and rhyme, the modern form of poetry, put in its place by a Franconian monk of the name of Otfried. After the generation of foreign missionaries,—such as St. Gall, St. Kero, St. Kilian, and Winfried,—there had sprung up a number of native ecclesiastics, some of whom were distinguished for their learning, and a few also for their poetry. To this class belonged Rhabanus Maurus, the Archbishop of Mayence, who composed some learned glossaries; and especially the Franconian Otfried. This monk paraphrased in High-German the "Heliand" of the Saxon rustic, and dedicated it, under the title of "Krist," or "Evangelien-Harmonie," to the first King of Germany proper, Ludwig the German. Otfried lived in the abbey of St. Gallen, which had been founded by an Irishman, St. Gall. In the latter part of his life he retired to a monastery in Alsatia. His metre is very careful, though his poetry is mediocre. He interspersed the simple Scripture narrative with too many homilies and reflections of his own, which mar the effect. His motive for abandoning alliteration was either a desire to imitate the Latin homilies, which used to employ rhyme, or else an idea that alliteration was a Heathen form of poetry, because it was found in all the native ballads.

About one hundred years after Otfried another monk, of the name of Notker, and surnamed Labeo and Teutonicus, meditated and composed within the precincts of St. Gallen. He executed a version of the Psalms in the Swabian High-German dialect. This translation, together with Otfried's "Krist," are the true types of the present language of Germany in its ear-

liest stage; for the Mæso-Gothic, the Low-German, and other idioms employed in the earlier ages, are only so many kindred dialects; whereas the Southern German of Notker, and the Franconian of Otfried, are the direct antecedents and parents of the modern Hoch-Deutsch. The forms of Notker show an astonishing similarity to the diction of the present day. The following is the first verse of his "Psalms:"—

"Der Man ist salig, der in dero Argon Rat ne geging, noh an dero Sündigon Ueuge ne stuont, noh an demo Suht-Stuole ne saz."

In this passage we need but alter the spelling a little, drop the reduplication in the past of *gehen*, put for the stool of the mocking or *Sucht-Stuhl*, as De Wette has it: "In dem Kreise der Spötter," and we have German as it is now spoken.

Some time after Notker, a monk of Fulda, in Franconia, called Williram, translated the Song of Solomon (in German "Das hohe Lied"). He became afterwards an abbot in a Bavarian monastery, where he died in peace in 1085. A recluse of the name of Ava composed, about 1120, a poetical account of the life and work of the Saviour and likewise indulged her imagination on the subject of Doomsday and the Antichrist, two topics which seem to have possessed peculiar charms for the fancy of the earlier converts. These compositions conclude the Old High-German period, or the monastic era; and we now proceed to the epoch of the Crusades, in which the literature of Germany entered on a new and brilliant phase.

CHAPTER IV.

SECOND PERIOD.—ERA OF THE MINNESÄNGER (1150-1300) AND MEISTERSÄNGER (1300-1534).

Character of the Period.—The second period of German literature embraces all the poetry and prose, composed in the Middle High-German dialect, a form of the language simply more advanced than the Old. This period differs, however, from the preceding in something more than the diction. There is also a marked alteration in spirit and tone. Down to the time of the Crusades, monasticism had held possession of literature, and had manifested itself in devotional, occasionally also in erudite compositions. Monkish ideas and clerical objects had so thoroughly monopolized all writing as to procure the total neglect of the national ballad-poetry. But all this was suddenly changed by the Crusades. For though these colossal expeditions were got set on foot by the Church, and constituted in reality but another offshoot of the same religious enthusiasm which had been so predominant throughout, they were, notwithstanding, accompanied by a powerful cooling-down of the ecclesiastical spirit, and led to a consequent waning and decay of clerical authority. Germany was more than other countries the seat of this reaction against the influence of the clergy. For here the Salic emperor, Henry IV., had involved himself in a virulent quarrel with Pope Hildebrand and the Church; and this mutual animosity had, if possible, still increased under his son, and under the emperors of the Hohenstaufen line. The reigns of Frederick Barbarossa and his grandson, Frederick II., are one uninterrupted struggle against the Papacy and its allies. No wonder, therefore, if the kind of poetry which such sovereigns patronized breathed a more secular spirit than that which had preceded. The mind of Germany, though not less religious than before, had thrown

off the yoke of clerical guidance in all literary productions. Not only were the subjects of composition no longer devotional—not only was the old national ballad-poetry drawn from its obscurity, and the prejudice, which hitherto had stood in the way of its cultivation set at defiance—but also the authors themselves ceased to belong to the clerical order. A new class of composers now started into existence. In the first century and a half they were the knights; in the following age, up to the Reformation, they were the artizans.

Chivalrous minstrelsy, with which we have first to deal, is called in German *Minne-Gesang*, from *Minne*, which means Love, its main theme, though not the only one. The impulse to this kind of composition came from France; the poets of Provence, called *Troubadours*, were its first inventors, and thence it spread to Flanders, and subsequently to Germany. The first Crusade, from 1096 to 1099, was the chief medium through which minstrelsy was thus propagated. In that great enterprise the Flemish, and generally the Northern French nobility, had taken the lead; and as there were also a large number of German Crusaders in this, and still more in all the following Crusades, this had the effect of acquainting the German knights with the poetry of their neighbours. At every pilgrimage to the Holy Land, at every tournament, at every hospitable visit, in the hostelry, and in the banqueting-hall, as well as on the lonely highroad that led to the East, the German knights met these minstrels from France; and often stood speechless while they listened to their soul-stirring songs about Roland the Brave, or Arthur and his knights, or about the far-off lady of their devotion. The troubadour touched the innermost chord of their music-loving heart. They caught his spirit, and soon began warbling love-ditties, or celebrating heroic exploits, in their own native idiom. The more gifted among them became composers themselves, now called *Minnesingers*, while the others were content to repeat the poetry of their more talented companions. The choice of

a fitting hero for their effusions could not puzzle them long. Some, indeed, borrowed the topics of the troubadours, especially the legends about "Arthur and his Round Table;" but the more judicious among them thought of their own ancestral heroes, and selected Siegfried, Hagen, and Dietrich, with the rest of their fellows, as the most worthy subjects of German minstrelsy. Thus the epic and the lyric began to flourish in a degree unprecedented either in Germany or in any other part of Europe. The new art had soon become the universal fashion of knighthood. Several mighty princes set the example by assembling around them their favourite minstrels, and occasionally composing verses themselves. Thus the courts of the Hohenstaufen emperors became the resorts of the Minnesänger; but also the Dukes of Austria, and, above all other princes, the Landgrave Hermann of Thüringen, devoted all the means in their power to the encouragement of chivalrous poetry. The latter held, in the year 1207, a famous meeting, or contest, at his castle of Wartburg, and bestowed prizes on the most successful composers. Hence this event is often called the "Wartburg war," although it was but a harmless pastime. No less than 150 Minnesänger are enumerated between the years 1150 and 1300. In giving an account of their compositions, we shall fitly class them and the whole poetry of the age under the four following heads:—

1. Poetical chronicles and epopees based on history. Among these, poems on Alexander the king of Macedon, on Cæsar, Æneas, and Bishop Hanno of Cologne, lead the van. But the mighty names of the Nibelungenlied and Gudrun, both taken from German traditions, obscure all others.

2. Then there are some more fictitious romances, borrowed from the troubadours, and founded on the vague Celtic legends about King Arthur and his Round Table. In these Hartmann von Aue, Wolfram von Eschenbach, and Gottfried von Strasburg, are the most successful.

3. A third class of composition is made up of amorous and

other lyrical songs, called *Leiche*, or *Lieder*. In these Walther von der Vogelweide, and afterwards Meister Konrad von Würzburg, chiefly excel.

4. The last class are fables, satires, and didactic poems, such as the semi-epic fable of the Reynard; Amis, the roguish priest; Freidank's wise saws; and the Renner of Trimberg. With these the poetry of the thirteenth century ended. Prose writings there were none of any importance throughout this age.

1. *Versified Chronicles*.—The era of mediæval minstrelsy opens with several historico-political chronicles, composed between 1150 and 1200, and chiefly remarkable as having pointed out the way to a new and better style, namely, that of the national epic. The authors of this hybrid of truth and fiction lived nearly all of them on or near the Lower Rhine, and one or two of them are Low-Germans. This circumstance cannot altogether be accidental. In all probability it was nothing else than the proximity to Flanders, whence the current of troubadour poetry flowed into Germany, that gave the Rhenish minstrels the start of their southern compatriots. An additional reason may have been that at that time the Emperor Lothario II., and the pro-papal Welf family, shed considerable lustre on Saxony, their family possession, and thus procured to the north-west of Germany once more a temporary preponderance in politics as well as in literature. There were also some clergymen, or *Pfaffen*, among these authors. But this was the last instance for several centuries to come in which either the clerical order or the Low-German portion of Germany made any contributions to poetry. Henceforth the genius of minstrelsy departs from both; it withdraws to Swabia, and becomes secular in spirit.

The Hannolied (1150) seems to have been one of the earliest of these chronicles, though in this, as in the case of the others, we cannot give more than approximate dates. It was written in the rhymed iambics, and sang the praises of Saint Hanno, Archbishop of Cologne, who died in 1075. This pre-

late was a stern and haughty elector of the empire, remarkable in German history. It was he who seized, in 1062, the Emperor Henry IV., when yet a boy, and educated the youth, much against his will, at Cologne, until a still more unscrupulous dignitary of the Church, Bishop Adalbert of Bremen, managed to kidnap the imperial alumnus for his own ferula. The Church has canonized the Archbishop, and the Hannelied makes him the hero of its enraptured eulogies. However, to diversify the theme, the pious author reports, in the space of his forty-nine stanzas, a variety of other events but loosely connected with the prelate. As Hanno had been a reigning sovereign in Cologne, and as Cologne was an old Roman town, we are treated to some Roman history; and, *apropos* of the Romans, we also hear of some Greeks. Thus Lucretia and Scævola figure in the song with Cæsar and the bull of Phalaris.

The Kaiser-Chronik, or Chronicle of the Emperors, resembles the preceding poem in vagueness of conception, as well as in style; its date is about 1160. Whole stanzas of both poems are literally the same, perhaps because the authors both copied a third, but unknown chronicler. The original object of the Kaiser-Chronik was to celebrate the Emperors of Germany up to the author's time; but as these sovereigns bore the title of "Roman Cæsars," the chronicler thought it incumbent on him to go back to the history of Rome. The prototype of the Holy Roman Empire is found in no other personage than Romulus, first king of Rome.

The Rolandslied (1175) is the work of the Pfaffe or clergyman Konrad. It sings of Charlemagne's expedition into Spain, as well as of the exploits and death of his famous nephew, Roland the Brave. This illustrious knight had long been the hero of the troubadours, but now he was for the first time introduced into Germany. Konrad's poem is the earliest known imitation of the French. It is said that Henry the Lion, the head of the Welf family, and leader of the pro-Papal party, encouraged and patronized the author.

The Alexanderlied (1180) was composed by another Pfaffe, named Lamprecht. The Macedonian king was his subject, and a French troubadour, Aubri de Besançon, his probable source. We may judge of the historical notions of this age, when we read that Alexander tried to storm and capture Paradise, which all his expeditions were intended to discover. But both he and his Grecians are represented as obliged to depart, without getting inside the *pays de Cocagne*, because they lacked the essential which would have unlocked the gates—namely, humility.

The *Æneid* or rather *Eneit* of Heinrich von Veldecke (1185) is the last of this kind of compositions. Its author, who is often honoured with the title of “Father of Minstrelsy,” was a Westphalian by birth; and this accounts for the many Low-Germanisms observable in his chronicle, just as in the others of the same time and origin. The native dialect of these lower Rhenish writers sometimes coloured their generally High-German diction. Veldecke lived chiefly at Cleves, on the Rhine, with the counts of the Schwanenburg, in one of the classical spots of German legends. He also frequented the castle of Wartburg, where the contest of the *Minnesänger* was held under his presidency. He stood in great repute for skill in composition and acquaintance with the technical rules of minstrelsy. The chronicle, or rather the romance, to which he owed his reputation as a poet, was an abstract of his queer notions of the Trojan war and the fate of *Æneas*. It was not founded on either Virgil or Homer; for Veldecke could not read either, if he could read at all. His chief source was an obscure French troubadour, whose name and poetry are both unknown.

Lay of the Nibelungen.—Der Nibelungen Noth, or the Calamity of the Nibelungen, is the title of the most sublime monument of mediæval poetry. This epic, the *Iliad* of Germany, treats of the murder of Siegfried, an ancient hero of the earlier half of the fifth century, and of the ruthless revenge which his

implacable widow, Kriemhild, inflicted on her husband's assassins. It is founded on an old tradition, which ever since the time of the great migration had been current among the people; and it arose probably out of a number of ancient ballads, in which that tradition and other events like it were handed down in Germany for many generations past. The anterior existence of these ballads, comparable in all respects to the alliterative Hildebrandslied, is rendered probable by a variety of circumstances, one of which is the metre. The lay of the Nibelungen contains unmistakable traces of alliteration almost in every stanza, and we may reasonably surmise that these are but vestiges of the old ballads which were incorporated in the Nibelungen-lay. In other respects the verse is entirely different from that of the song of Hildebrand. The poem is written in rhymed stanzas, of four lines to each stanza; each line has two hemistichs of three iambs, and an unaccented syllable is added in the middle, before the pause. The final hemistich alone has four instead of three iambs, which increase in length was intended to give to the stanza a more majestic and sweeping close, just as in the famous Spenserian stanza which Lord Byron reintroduced. The first four lines run thus:—

“Uns ist in alten Mähren Wunders viel geseit
 Von Helden lobebären, von grosser Arebeit,
 Von Freuden und Hochzeiten, von Weinen und von Klagen,
 Von kühner Rechen Streiten mögt ihr nun Wunder hören sag'n.”

[There are, in ancient story, full many wonders told
 Of men of matchless glory, of labours great and bold,
 Of joys and festive revels, of weeping and of woe,
 Of daring heroes' battling, their wond'rous deeds ye now shall know.

In the earlier portion of the epic the scene is laid at Worms, the capital of the Burgundians, about the year 430 A. D., or thereabout, when King Günther was reigning there. The lay opens with the arrival of young Siegfried from the Nether-

lands. He comes to sue for the hand of the fair Kriemhild, the king's sister. His suit is accepted, and he is promised the hand of the princess on condition that he will first assist Günther in his own bridal expedition. The king was enamoured of Brunhild of Isenland, or Iceland, in the far north, a fierce amazon, or Walkyre, who refused to marry any one of her suitors unless she were previously overcome by him in single combat. Thus Siegfried accompanies Günther to meet Brunhild; and when the king fails to subdue his cruel antagonist, Siegfried rescues him from ignominy and death, by vanquishing Brunhild for him in disguise. His victory secures to both the attainment of their wishes, and a twofold marriage is speedily celebrated. But the proud amazon conceives a hidden contempt for her husband, as well as a passion for Siegfried, which, from not being gratified, turns into sullen rage, and mixes with jealousy and hatred towards Kriemhild, the adored bride of Siegfried. Years, however, roll on in undisturbed peace, while Siegfried lives at Hanten on the Rhine, in the Netherlands, some two hundred miles from Worms. One day, however, ten years after their marriage, Siegfried and his wife come on a visit to Günther, and stay some time with their relatives. With that opportunity the long-smouldering jealousy between Kriemhild and Brunhild bursts out in open flames. A quarrel about precedence in church (for they are represented as Christians) is the prelude. Brunhild treats the other as her inferior and her vassal's wife, while Kriemhild taunts her sister-in-law with her earlier defeat, and actually shows her, in derision, the very girdle and ring which Siegfried had taken from her as trophies of his victory. Thereupon Brunhild's rage knows no bounds. She assembles in secret a council, and demands vengeance. But, as it seemed dangerous to touch Kriemhild while her husband was alive, the death of the latter is decided upon. The king and his two brothers are induced to connive by the promise of the fabulous treasures which Siegfried was said to possess; and Hagen, a grim old knight,

and a vassal of Gunther's, pledges himself to do the deed. Siegfried is decoyed into a forest on a hunt; and on the brink of a cool streamlet, whither he had gone to quench his thirst, the hero is pierced by Hagen's javelin. After a brief struggle, he breathes his last, sadly moaning for Kriemhild.

The corpse is brought home, and carried to the grave amidst the agonies of his widow. She wishes to go home; but Günther, who half repents the deed, and professes to pity the condition of his sister, promises her safety if she will only stay in Worms. What is more, he artfully promises to fetch for her from the Netherlands all the treasures of her husband, especially the "hoard" of the Nibelungen, a fabulous heap of gems and gold, which Siegfried had taken from the giants of Fogland, or the Nibelungen, from *Nebel*, which means fog. Poor Kriemhild yields to necessity, and buries her plans of vengeance under the guise of a reconciliation. The treasure, which had so long excited the greediness as well as the curiosity of the Burgundians, is fetched. Twelve cartloads of gold and jewellery come down the Rhine, and are presented to Kriemhild. But before long Hagen seizes on the hoard, and deprives her of it in the name of the king, on pretence that she had employed it to bribe the people, and to spread disaffection. When thus the treasure is in the hands of the Burgundians, these become the Nibelungen Lords, or the Nibelungen, which title had before belonged to Siegfried after having taken it from its previous owners. But the hoard brings them no more luck than it had done to any of its earlier possessors.

In the meantime Kriemhild is fretting in solitude. For years she will not speak to her brothers—on Hagen she will not look. At length a better day dawns for her. Attila, or Etzel, king of the Huns, asks for her hand, and sends his vassal, Rüdiger, to Worms, with offers of marriage. Kriemhild long declines; but at last, when Rüdiger has sworn to avenge her wrongs, she consents to become King Etzel's wife, and departs from Burgundy to the camp of the Huns, far down the Danube

in Hungary. But, notwithstanding the kindness of her powerful husband, her former happiness will not return, and every day she prays, as she had done for years, that she may be avenged on Siegfried's assassins. At length she prevails on the king to invite her relatives in Burgundy to come to a festival in Hungary. Günther unsuspectingly accepts the invitation, but Hagen clearly perceives the snare laid for him. His apprehensions, however, do not deter him from accompanying his sovereign into the land of the strangers; and several hundred Burgundians start on the expedition, led by their Nibelungen chieftains. On their journey they receive repeated warnings, and ominous forebodings of impending danger; but they proceed, and are joined by Rüdiger, as well as by Dietrich of Bern (Verona), who, with his armour-bearer, Hildebrand, was likewise going to King Attila's camp. Shortly after their arrival, a part of the Burgundians are surprised in an hostelry, and mercilessly put to the sword. The princes and Hagen were just at a banquet in Attila's hall, when the fight began. Here at length Kriemhild rises, and reminds the Nibelungen of their old misdeed; she hurls at them furious threats and invectives, and advises them to surrender at mercy. But Hagen, who had foreseen this event, and knew he had nothing to hope, persuades his liege lord to refuse this proposal; and, leaving viands and goblets, both parties rush to arms. The doom of the Nibelungen is now at hand. Rüdiger, Dietrich, Hildebrand, and others, take up the cause of Kriemhild; the Burgundians are slain one by one; the hall is set on fire; and at last Günther and Hagen lie fettered at the feet of Kriemhild. The sight of the battle, and the loss of a son, whom she had by Siegfried, had exasperated her to such a pitch of fury, that on failing to elicit from her prisoners the secret of the hoard, which they had hidden, she first orders Günther to be beheaded, and then stabs Hagen with the sword of Siegfried. Her atrocious conduct, however, causes deep disgust among the heroes present; and, overpowered by his loathing, Hildebrand cuts

Kriemhild down to the ground. Thus the first and last of all the noble Burgundians lie bleeding or dead, and none returns but a solitary minstrel, who told their tale.

Such is a brief outline of this great epopee, which excels all other literary productions of Germany, both past and present, by as much as the *Iliad* excels all other Greek poetry. The grandeur of its action, the pathos of its scenes, the consistency of its characters, and the heroic simplicity of the narrative, are no less admirable than its general historic truth. As a picture of old German manners, and as a description of the state of society in and after the migration, the *Nibelungenlied* leaves little to be desired. The names of the principal personages are matter of history; so is also the destruction of Burgundian tribes and cities by King Attila, about the year 450; and as the king of the Huns had previously reduced several Teutonic princes to a state of vassalage, and used to assemble them in his camp, near Buda, in Hungary, the visit of the *Nibelungen* has nothing improbable in it; but little is known in history about Siegfried, whose name occurs all the oftener in ancient German mythology. The only palpable anachronism seems to be the presence of Dietrich of Verona. It is usually supposed that he is the famous Theodric, king of the Ostrogoths, who defeated Odoacer at Verona (German, Bern) in the year 476, and who became thereupon king of Italy, and died in 526. If this be really the case, and no other Dietrich be meant, though he had many namesakes among the Gothic chiefs of that time, nothing remains but to assume that the bard has in this instance taken some poetical liberty, in introducing a chieftain who, in the year 445, or thereabouts, when the catastrophe must be supposed to have taken place, could scarcely be more than ten years old, if he was at all alive at that time.

As regards the time of composition, the only thing known for certain is, that the poem received its present shape about 1210, by the hands of a minstrel whose name is not known.

Heinrich von Ofterdingen has been mentioned as the one who gave it its final touches, but on no sufficient evidence. The versification is of no very ancient date, as the Nibelungen stanza was only invented about the year 1170, and was never used before that time. In addition to the old ballads which served as a ground-work for the ultimate compilers, a Latin version, dating from the year 980, is mentioned in the "Wail of the Nibelungen," a continuation of the lay itself. Summing up all these circumstances, in their bearing on the origin of the poem, we come to the conclusion, that about 1210 one or more Minnesänger reduced some pro-existing ballads and a Latin version of the Nibelungen saga, to a single epic; that they altered the verse employed in these alliterative ballads, and introduced a stanza of their own instead of it; that they also introduced into the assemblage of separate stories greater coherence and connexion; and the result of this remodelling process is the Nibelungenlied, as it has come down to us. Such is the hypothesis now generally received in Germany. The late Professor Lachmann, of Berlin,—the same who attempted to trace seventeen original songs as the component parts of the Iliad,—is also the most renowned advocate of a similar composition-hypothesis, in regard to the old German epic; indeed, his case is stronger in the latter instance than in the former. His disciple Haupt, and Simrock, the translator of the Nibelungen into modern German, have adopted Lachmann's views. Others, especially Holtzmann and Pfeiffer, reject the idea of part composition, as unworthy of a work of genius; and by pointing to the marks of plan and design occurring throughout the epic, plead for a single author, though they allow interpolation and revision by later hands. The first composer is supposed to have preceded by some centuries the final version of 1210. The latter portions of the poem were evidently composed in Austria, or by one who had lived in Austria (F. Pfeiffer thinks it was Küremlberger); they show a close acquaintance with the scenery of the Danube and the geo-

graphy of the Hungarian frontier land. It is also probable that this part of the poem was written or re-written during the Hungarian wars, under Henry the Fowler and Otho I., in 933 and 955, because the terror at that time spread by the Huns or Magyars, would naturally tend to revive any old tradition about King Attila and the great migration.

Gudrun, and other Lays.—The second great epopee of this era is Gudrun, or Guthrun. This lay narrates an incident of Norman piracy, and of life on the shores of the North Sea. The heroine of the story is a faithful Frisian maid, who, in the absence of her father and bridegroom, is carried off by a rejected suitor, and has to perform menial services on the coast of Normandy. Yet she will never consent to break her vow, nor become the wife of the traitor who had carried her off. Meantime her friends seek everywhere to discover a trace of the lost one; but all their researches fail. At last, however, their efforts are crowned with success. One morning, when Gudrun is washing clothes by the seaside, and laments her cruel fate, her distress attracts the notice of two boatmen, who had but lately landed on the shore, and seemed to scour the country as if in search of something. One of these men is Gudrun's lover, who soon recognises, and forthwith rescues his former bride. The castle of the pirate is stormed; and after many acts of retaliation, though not unmixed with generosity, the fleet of the Frisians, which hovers in the bay, carries home the faithful maiden to better days of love and happiness. The pirate, who had become a prisoner in his turn, receives pardon from Gudrun, and gratefully accepts the hand of one of her friends.

The versification of Gudrun, and the date of its composition, are the same as those of the Nibelungen-lay. Other epic poems of lesser note are "Horny-skinned Siegfried," "King Dietrich's Fight with the Dragon," "Laurin the Dwarf," and "Ecke's Expedition." In the majority of these poems either Siegfried or Dietrich is the hero; and all were collected for

the first time in 1472, in the "Helden-Buch" of Caspar Roon, where also the ballad of Hildebrand and his son figures, in the shape of a heroic poem of about thirty stanzas.

2. *Romances about King Arthur and his Round Table.*—The class of writings to which we now pass differs from the preceding in two respects. It is more fantastic and unhistorical than most of the lays before mentioned. Besides, it is borrowed from a foreign literature, and celebrates other than German heroes. The Minnesänger selected their themes not only in the ancestral legends of their own nation, but imitated the troubadours in resorting to Celtic or British traditions. Arthur, king of the Dammonii, and the twelve knights who sat round his table, were the personages who filled their imagination; and the search for the holy Graal, or the cup from which our Saviour drank at the last supper, was strangely interwoven with the marvellous exploits of these worthies. In the romances of this class the laws of chronology, geography, and history, were utterly set at nought; the characters were unnatural, and devoid of local or national colouring; scarcely a vestige of resemblance to the Celtic traditions, themselves but shadowy legends, was left, save some distorted British name; while in the thread of their imaginary incidents a sickly affectation of saintliness was often followed by indelicate passages, or by proofs of excessive admiration for the female sex. Three Minnesänger acquired especial fame among their contemporaries for the pathos and brilliancy of their romances.

The first of these was Hartmann von Aue (1170-1210), a Swabian by birth. He learned some Latin and French in his youth, and joined the Crusades in 1197, but soon returned from the East. His two principal poems are "Erek," composed in 1197, and "Iwein" about 1210. Both are called after Knights of the Round Table; and the latter especially displays no mean skill in its narrative, which recounts the feats and mishaps of a love-sick and disappointed cavalier. Hartmann has also left a romance on a Swabian legend, called "Der arme Heinrich."

The second, Wolfram von Eschenbach, was born about 1200, at Anspach, in Bavaria. He was rather poor, and probably his life was chequered with struggles and disappointments. Landgrave Hermann, of Thüringen, often invited him to Eisenach. Wolfram had not learned to read or write; but he understood French, and this helped him on the road to composition, which was transmitted by the Minnesänger *vivá voce* to others, who could write. He has left many lyrical verses; among his romances his "Parcival" (1205) and his "Titurel" are the most famous. Wolfram was an earnestly religious poet, remarkable for deep feeling and scrupulous morality. Sometimes his sentimentality becomes rather morbid. The romance of Lohengrin, which describes the adventures of Parcival's son, is also ascribed to him.

The third romance-writer, Gottfried von Strasburg, was only a simple burgher, but well educated. He also worked upon French versions of British legends, and commenced in this style a poem entitled "Tristan and Isolde," but died, about 1225, without having finished it. His Tristan is a mediæval Don Juan, though the hero gets off without falling into the clutches of the devil, perhaps only owing to the unfinished state of the work, certainly not because he deserved a better fate. As the nature of the subject indicates, Gottfried was a far more worldly poet than either of his two predecessors. His principles were rather Epicurean, and he little conceals in his work his relish for physical pleasures. He seems most to appreciate those qualities which are calculated either to procure or to enhance sensual enjoyment.

3. *Lyrical Poetry*.—The Minnesänger employed themselves not only in heroic compositions, but also in lyrics; and in this class some of their happiest effusions must be reckoned, always excepting the great epopee of the age. The spirit of chivalry naturally tended to lyrical composition, from its gallant and amorous bias, and from its almost unbounded veneration for the female sex. Hence this is the true era of love-ditties. The

charms of the fair and the hopes of lovers, the sweets of reciprocated affection and the smart of a disappointed frame, the parting, the meeting, the expectation, and the farewell—all these have been expressed by the poetic knights in a thousand different ways from the pensive to the passionate, from the *naïve* to the cynical. Sometimes, however, the everlasting keynote changes a little. Their lyric verse describes also the balmy month of May, or the sunset irradiating the sky; or some devout religious aspirations break forth from the poet's bosom, or else the state of the Church and the condition of the Empire induce them to give utterance to anticipations more bitter than sanguine.

Walter von der Vogelweide is the greatest lyrical poet of that age. This Minnesänger was born either on the Danube or on the Maine, about the year 1165. He travelled much, and seems to have known a great number of eminent contemporaries, such as King Philippe Auguste of France, the Emperor Otho IV. of Germany, Landgrave Hermann of Thuringia, and others. He joined Frederick I.'s Crusade in 1226, and died in the following year, at Würzburg. Many of his Lieder or Leiche are excellent verses, even in their modern translations.

Konrad von Würzburg was a burgher of great learning. As he was not a knight, he bore the appellation Meister, a term which subsequently meant an artisan who has finished his apprenticeship. His chief places of residence were Basel and Strasburg, and he died in 1287. In addition to his lyrical poems, he has left also two romances,—one on the Trojan war, and another on the Emperor Otho with the Beard. His verse and diction were very polished, but his poetry abounded in exaggerations; neither does he possess the lofty enthusiasm of the earlier and chivalrous Minnesänger.

There are many minstrels of less note, such as Ulrich von Lichtenstein, Dietmar von Aist, Otto von Botenlaube, Kürenberger, the supposed Austrian composer of the latter half of the Nibelungen, and, lastly, Reinmar von Zweter.

4. *Didactic Poetry, Fables, and Satires.*—Among the poetical traditions which circulated in Germany from the earliest age, and were revived by poets of successive periods, the animal-epopee of Reynard the Fox holds a distinguished rank. The hero of this popular story was a cunning fox, who by constantly cheating the other beasts, especially an awkward but well-meaning bear named Bruin, gets himself incessantly into scrapes. On one occasion he is on the point of hanging for his multifarious offences, when the eloquent pleading of his dying speech once more extricates his neck from the noose. Each animal in this fable had a particular nickname, and bore a distinct character. Moral reflections were not aimed at, as is the case in the ordinary or Æsopian fable, but only a droll and suggestive caricature of human practices under the guise of animals. The antiquity of this epic fable, as well as that of the nicknames connected with it, is demonstrated by an obvious fact. The French names for the fox and the donkey are *renard* and *baudet*, both of which are derived from their old German types in the fable—namely, Reynhart and Baldwin. This clearly proves that the Franks possessed an intimate acquaintance with this story before they left Germany. During the course of the Middle Ages several versions of the pranks of Master Reynard appeared in France, even before any German poet made them the subject of written composition. An Alsatian poet of the middle of the twelfth century was the first German who attempted to versify this theme in High-German. His name was Heinrich der Gleissner or Glichesäre, an assumed epithet, which meant The Shining. He took in only a part of the story, under the title of “Isegrim’s Noth,” or, “The Troubles of Isegrim,” the Wolf. But in 1250 a Low-German poet, Willem of Mattoe, composed a Dutch *Reinaart*, which was remodelled in 1498 by Hermann Barkhusen of Lübeck. This latter book became in 1798 the chief foundation on which Göthe proceeded in his famous hexameter version of the same tale. The drollery and popularity of Reineke’s

story has received additional attractions from the talented illustrations of the painter Kaulbach.

A strictly didactic work is "Freidank's Bescheidenheit," or, "The Wise Saws of Mr. Freidank," a proper noun, which is supposed to stand for the lyrist Walther von der Vogelweide. This work contains a series of prudential counsels, and some good-humoured remarks on the actions of men; its language is simple and sober.

More satirical is "Der Pfaffe Amis," by Stricker. The clergy of the middle ages are ridiculed in this amusing production by recounting the tricks of a roguish friar. Amis, a reverend vagrant of great cunning, insinuates himself into the graces of others, to make good his living; he resides in England, where he sells the relics of long-departed saints, or trades with old books, or deals in pictures. Once he goes to a monastery, and gulls the abbot. By rendering himself eminently useful and agreeable to his superior in all kinds of trifling affairs, he gets an appointment as steward of the household, and turns his supreme command over the larder to a capital account. Another time a farmer's wife becomes the victim of her simplicity. As Amis gives her ocular proof of his ability to do miracles, she mistakes him for a saint; and while he grants her indulgences for all sins, past, present, and future, she testifies her gratitude with the best produce of her garden, her kitchen, and her distaff. Even a bishop gets a lesson from Amis; for when required to teach a donkey to read the Bible, Amis discovers for the bishop this excellent recipe—he puts allowances of provender between the leaves, and lo! Master Baldwin soon begins turning over leaf after leaf, and brays very distinctly whenever he is disappointed in his search.

The last poem requiring mention is Hugo von Trimberg's "Renner," a succession of proverbs, reflections, fables, allegories, and stories of a moral and satirical tendency. It was written, about 1300, by a Bavarian schoolmaster.

CHAPTER V.

CONTINUATION OF SECOND PERIOD—THE MEISTERSÄNGER (1300-1534).

Origin of Meister-Gesang.—The brilliant era of the Minnesingers was but of short duration. Towards the end of the thirteenth century a visible decay overtook knighthood throughout Europe; and the decline of chivalry brought about, as a consequence, the cessation of heroic minstrelsy, as well as the subsidence of all those amorous ditties and martial romances to which the lofty genius of the knights had given birth. We can always observe that the changes in the history of literature are merely the result of antecedent changes in the social condition of the nations; and of this law the present instance affords a striking illustration. Scarcely had the Crusades come to an end, and the impetus which they gave to chivalrous enterprise fairly subsided, when their literary leadership departed from the knights, along with their political influence. When the expeditions to the Holy Land no longer engaged their attention, they employed their time chiefly in lawless feuds and unbridled rapine, so that their contemporaries soon learned to hate and despise them as much as they had once loved and admired them. The subsequent invention of gunpowder rendered the social position of the knights still worse. Their once terrible weapons and armour now proved harmless on the field of battle, and their formerly impregnable castles were battered down with cannon by the emissaries of law and justice. In proportion as the knights had sunk, the cities had risen. Commerce and industry were showering wealth and power on the burghers; nor was it long before poetry also found in their town-halls and club-houses that shelter and care which knightly castles had ceased to afford. Henceforth the patronage of art devolved on the middle and lower classes; and the German Muse, who had formerly been the guest of

the noble and the mighty in the land, now sought the humble dwellings of the artisans, as a welcome, albeit a degraded companion. Even among the townspeople, it was not the rich, but the poor and plebeian part of the population, who had still a heart and leisure for minstrelsy, when poetry was exiled everywhere else. In most cities of Germany, especially those of the south, the industrial portion of the community enjoyed a preponderance of numbers, and also of spirit, over the wealthier votaries of commerce or agriculture. The artisans had formed themselves into large associations, called Guilds, and these became the true nurseries of poetry. The farmer and the merchant were, from the nature of their occupation, less likely to relish verse and song than the more sedentary mechanic. The latter might find room for music during the very progress of his work; and on Sundays, or when holiday time had come, he might lay aside his tools, and repair to the hall or inn of his guild, to display before a crowd of admiring companions his talent for recitation, or his gift as a songster and verse-maker, until his powers were exhausted, or his audience grew tired. As many members, however, were altogether indifferent about poetry, and thought it an irksome importation among the affairs of their professional meetings, it was soon found more convenient to establish separate inns and special associations for the amateur verse-makers of each guild. Here the poetically-disposed among the weavers, barbers, shoemakers, or tailors, might meet kindred spirits, and indulge their favourite pastime to their hearts' content. Thus arose the *Schools of Meister-Sänger*, or associations of poetical artisans, clubs composed of the literary dilettanti among all the guilds of a town, and differing from the professional associations only by their purely ornamental character, and a total absence of any lucrative trade or pursuit. These "schools" were in other respects perfect artisan guilds; they kept their particular statutes, had their privileges, and charters signed by the highest authority in the land; they ac-

quired property, and observed certain ceremonies on stated days. Nobody could become a member of their corporation except after giving some satisfactory evidence of his skill as a verse-maker. They held regular meetings in their club-houses during the week, and on Sunday afternoons they used to assemble in the church. The merits of performers were subjected to the judgment of certain umpires, called *Merker*. These also kept lists or registers of rules on metre, rhyme, and song, and this their code of laws on poetry went by the name of *Tabulatur*. The first institution of an artisan club occurs, before 1300, in the city of Mayence, where Heinrich Frauenlob is said to have founded a school of Meistersänger. His example was soon imitated in Strasburg, Nürnberg, Augsburg, Vienna, and Ulm. In the fifteenth century scarcely any large town of Germany was without an association of this kind, and the reader will probably not be surprised to learn that some of them are still in existence in the southern cities.

Compositions of the Meistersänger.—The preceding exposition can leave little doubt as to the radical difference that must have existed between the Minne-Gesang and the low-bred poetry which succeeded it. The former was addressed to brilliant audiences of knights and noble ladies, with their retinues of squires and pages, assembled in some spacious baronial hall, amidst trophies of war and time-honoured armorial bearings. Chivalrous exploit was its theme, or stirring amorous adventure. On the contrary, the Meistersänger found but humble hearers, and were accordingly compelled to lower both their tone and their subject. There may have been some sage alderman, and here and there an old-fashioned burgher's wife; but the majority of the company would consist of apprentice boys, barmaids, and maidservants. The sort of poetry that such an audience would delight in could not be otherwise than coarse and plebeian; and even if a worthy member of the craft essayed a more dignified strain, it of necessity still took its colouring from the scenes of that life to which he was accus-

tomed. Hence we find that the ordinary events of every day take the place of the heroic themes of the preceding era. Courtships, weddings, christenings, and burials afforded the chief opportunities for the exercise of poetical talent; and as the German artisan is a great traveller and beer-drinker, songs about wandering and conviviality formed another great item among their rhymed effusions. Germany owes to this period the great majority of her Volks-Lieder, or popular songs, a literature more rich and varied than the corresponding productions of any other country, whether new or old. These songs tell in simple and touching language what the poor man in Germany thinks and feels. If they display but little art, they are all the more true to nature. If they have originated among the lower ranks, they have contributed all the more to the delight and happiness of thousands. They mostly refer to parting and meeting, to faithful love and constancy in absence. Some describe scenes of cheerful labour; others dwell on the attractions of wine and beer; others, again, extol the blessings of domestic affection, or the happiness that is diffused by a thrifty and good-tempered German housewife. He must have little music in his soul who is insensible to the homely beauty of these popular songs, or who, on reading the text of many a German Volks-Liederbuch, can help confessing that poetry, so far from being the monopoly of the well-bred, cheers the humble as often as the rich, and reserves some of its sweetest touches for the poor and hard-working among mankind.

In addition to these popular songs, whose authors are invariably unknown, although their origin can be traced to this era, there are one or two other kinds of composition in which the artisans excelled. The first class are the so-called *Possen* or *Schwänke*, i. e. merry anecdotes, jokes, or comical scenes, often dramatically arranged, with which the artisan used to beguile his hours of toil. The tricks of the good-for-nothing locksmith's apprentice, who ate so enormously and filed so slowly, that he was obliged to leave after exchanging his tools

for a sausage;* the troubles of the lean crooked-backed tailor, who lived in terror of his shrew of a wife, and was thrashed by her with his own shears; the feat of the muscular smith,

* We subjoin the entertaining poem which embodies this artisan's story; its author and the date of its composition are unknown.

“Ein Schlosser hat'n Gesellen gehabt,
Der hat so langsam gefeilt;
Doch wenn's zum Essen gegangen ist,
Da hat er gar weislich geeilt.
Der este in der Schüssel drin,
Der letzte wieder d'raus,
Da ist kein Mensch so fleissig gewest,
Wie der im ganzen Haus.

“Da hat einmal der Meister gesagt:
Gesell, das begreif ich net,
S'ist doch so all mein Leb'tag gewest,
So lang noch geht die Red;
So wie man werkt, so frisst man auch,
Bei dir ist's nit alsu,
So langsam hat noch keiner gefeilt,
Und gefressen so wie du.

“Da sagt der Gesell: Das weiss ich schon;
Hat all seinen guten Grund.
Das Essen währ halt gar nicht lang,
Und 's Feilen vierzehn Stund.
Wenn einer müsst den ganzen Tag
In ein' Stück fressen fort,
Es würd wohl am End so langsam gehn
Als wie beim Feilen dort.

“Da sagt der Meister: Scheer dich fort
Es ist gross genug die Welt.
Geh' such dir einen andern Ort,
Und werk' wie 's dir gefällt.
Drauf thät der Gesell sein Bündel schnür'n,
Doch hatt'er noch eine Bitt.
Die Feile behalt er, geb er mir
Nur noch eine Knack-wurst mit.”

who, when asked to hammer right hard, struck at one blow through hoof, anvil, and furnace—such were the topics of the *Possen*. But, in the third place, sacred history and religion contributed each their own share of poetic subjects. In this department the *Fastnachts-Spiele*, or Carnival-plays, and the *Oster-Spiele*, or Easter-plays, are especially remarkable as the first examples of dramatic art. They may in all respects be compared to the corresponding productions in English literature. The events of the Passion, the birth and the temptation of Christ, were represented in scenic action and attire, and the favourite character of the play was the devil. The *Meistersänger* were a very devout race of men; but they used often to mix the sacred and the burlesque in a manner thoroughly characteristic of the Middle Ages, however unpalatable to modern tastes. Many worthy artisans composed sermons and moral discourses, which they read before their families or guilds-men. The greatest *Meistersänger*, Hans Sachs, has left a prodigious number of such sermons, some in prose, others rhymed. They are always on some text of the Bible, and excel by the raciness of their exposition, and the shrewdness of their moral. Still, neither his wisdom nor his poetry can conceal the illiterate character of the author. The writings of Sachs and his predecessors are rather specimens of verse-cobbling or book-manufacture than genuine effusions of poetry. The mechanical spirit of their daily occupation entered largely into their literary handiwork.

Names and Dates of the Principal Meistersänger.—1. Heinrich von Meissen, surnamed *Frauenlob*, or the Praiser of Women, lived from 1250 to 1318, chiefly at Mayence, where, it is said, he founded the first school of his art. He composed many moral and religious poems, some in recommendation of domestic virtues, and to this circumstance he owes his cognomen.

2. Peter Suchenwirt and Heinrich der Teichner were two artisans in Vienna, who composed together innumerable *Schwänke* and moral discourses. Suchenwirt came frequently

into contact with the upper classes, because his trade was to embellish knightly coats of arms, and to adorn pedigrees, for which his skill in versification was often put in requisition. He and his friend express no very high opinion of their noble employers; they lived about 1360.

3. Hans Rosenblüt, surnamed the Chatterer (or Schnepferer) 1430–1460, was engaged in the same profession as Suchenwirt, and indulged in a rather coarse and vulgar kind of poetry. His productions are low carnival-plays and not over-decorous drinking songs.

4. Muscatblüt, or, the Flower of Muscat, his contemporary, celebrated among other topics the accession of Albrecht II., in whose person the Habsburghers reascended the imperial throne in the year 1437.

5. Michael Beheim (1416–1474) was a weaver's son, and left his father's loom to become a soldier. He has left some verses, describing battles and historical events of his age.

6. Hans Folz (about 1480) was a barber in Nürnberg, and composed many carnival-plays.

7. Hans Sachs (1494–1576) is the most renowned of all the artisan poets. He was a contemporary, as well as a zealous partisan of Luther. After wandering about a great deal, he settled, in 1516, in his native town. He was by trade a shoemaker, whence the famous doggrel verse which imitated his style:—

“Hans Sachs, der war ein Schuh—
Macher und Poet dazu.”

He was a very prolific writer. Not fewer than thirty-four volumes of his works have been printed. Most of his compositions are plays and humorous stories; but there are also popular songs, sermons, allegories, fables, and others. Among the rest is found a necrologue of Luther, lamenting the Reformer's death in 1546.

8. Sebastian Brandt, the author of the famous “Narrenschiff,”

may be classed with the Meistersänger in point of time and style, although his birth and station were more aristocratic than theirs. He was born at Strasburg in 1458, and was syndic of that town, where he died in 1521. He had studied jurisprudence in Basel, and bore the title of Doctor of Laws. The Emperor Maximilian bestowed on him letters of nobility and the title of privy councillor. His book, "The Ship of Fools from Narragonia" (Narr means fool), appeared at Basel, 1494, and was often re-edited, as well as translated into foreign languages. In the beginning of his book the author tells us that he selected a ship as the conveyance for his fools, because no other vehicle would have been large enough to hold all who required to be carried off to Narragonia; for on blowing his trumpet for all the simpletons of Germany to come and be transported to the land of their tribe, a motley crowd of madmen come from far and near to hurry on board; there is a perfect rush to cross the gangway; they clamber over the sides of the ship; they push and elbow each other, and struggle to be first on the list. On numbering his passengers, he finds them to be 113—fops, misers, dotards, drunkards, voluptuaries, bigots; each gets his ticket, and is fitted with his cap. To render his satire more excusable, the honest author remembered the captain in his register; he made him a book-fool, and called him Sebastian Brandt. The journey of this crazy assembly is described in short rhymed verse, with but little rhythm and elegance, but all the more point and drollery.

Chronicles of this Age.—Although the poetry of the artisans is the principal feature of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, there were not wanting a few historical and theological writers, who require a short notice from their great importance in the history of mediæval civilization; as always, the least meritorious of them are those chroniclers who have thrown their communications respecting earlier or contemporaneous events into a rhymed form.

1. One of these is a Swiss, called Halbsuter of Lucerne.

He has left a versified account of the battle of Sempach, in which he had taken part. This battle was gained by the Swiss, in 1386, over Leopold, Duke of Austria, who wished to annex several of their cantons to his family possessions.

2. Another is Niklas von Weyl, also a native of Switzerland, but mostly residing in Bavaria and Würtemberg. He employed himself chiefly in German versions of Italian novels, as well as of old Latin chronicles. Very interesting is his account of the Council of Constance in 1416, and of the martyrdom of Jerome of Prague, the disciple of Huss.

3. A very singular production is *Theuerdank*, a partly historical, partly allegorical, chronicle of the end of the fifteenth century. It has for its reputed author no less a personage than the Emperor Maximilian. If genuine, this poem does little credit to the poetic endowments of the Habsburg family. It describes, under fictitious names, how the emperor, or *Theuerdank*, went to woo the wealthy heiress of Burgundy, Mary, daughter of Charles the Rash, here called the Lady *Ehrenreich*. Before his arrival at the Burgundian Court he has to encounter three foes—*Youthful Giddiness*, *Lover's Mishap*, and the *Envy of his Rivals*; but the imperial suitor slays all the three allegorical enemies, and consequently carries off the lady and her dowry. The conception and the verse seldom rise above mediocrity. Some attribute its authorship to the emperor's chaplain and secretary, *Pfinzing*.

Another allegorical and unfinished chronicle, entitled "*Weisskönig*," is said to have come from the pen of the same prince; it relates the events of his and his father's reign, and is rhymed, like the preceding.

4. Two prose chronicles, which originated in Strasburg,—the one about 1360, the other about 1400,—give at least more authentic history. The earlier of the two is the work of *Fritsche Closener*, a vicar and precentor of the cathedral in that city; it contains a history of Strasburg, and dwells especially on the feuds in which the citizens were then engaged

with their bishop. The other is by Jacob Twinger, and was built on Closener's work; it embraces the history of the whole of Alsatia, and relates, among other matters, how the Flagellant friars used then to go about, scourging themselves, and displaying their dreary asceticism, to the disgust of the population.

5. The Limburg chronicle is perhaps the most important of several minor works of a similar description, all referring to local events. It goes down to 1398, and was composed by the town-clerk of Limburg, Tilemann by name.

The Mystics.—Towards the end of the middle ages a widespread party of malecontents existed in the German Church, who wished to reform its abuses, and to revive religion among the people. The writers of this school go usually by the name of *Mystics*, from the alleged obscurity of their style and views. They may be regarded as the direct precursors of the Reformation, and most of them belonged to the Dominican order, which then acted a very different part from that which it played in Luther's time. The Mystics were eminent preachers, as well as pious theologians. The founder of their school was Eckhart, who lived in Cologne, and died in 1329. Pope John XXII. condemned his doctrines as heretical. A second was Suso, a Cologne friar somewhat later than Eckhart; but John Tauler, who died in 1361, and Geiler von Kaisersberg, who died in 1510, are the most distinguished for pulpit eloquence. The latter lived and preached in Strasburg, where he knew the syndic Brandt, and borrowed from his "Ship of Fools" some suggestions for his moral discourses.

CHAPTER VI.

THIRD PERIOD.—THE LEARNED ERA (1534-1760).

Character of this Period.—We now come to the age of the Reformation, the age which fixed the present dialect of Germany, and placed literature in the hands of scholars and professors. It has been shown in the three preceding chapters, that whichever of the three estates at any time took the lead in civilization had also the precedence in poetry. Thus the clergy first gave birth to the monastic literature; then the knights, to chivalrous minstrelsy; and, lastly, the third estate, or the burghers, to the artisan poetry. From this it is evident that at the outbreak of the Reformation the cities and their inhabitants were in possession of the literary supremacy. The sixteenth century effected in this respect no absolute change; only, within the third estate, a subdivision had lately arisen, through the foundation of the universities; and it is to this, that is, to the learned portion of the citizens, that the ascendancy was now transferred. The subsequent poets and prose writers are all men with academic degrees—doctors or professors, divines or scholars, physicians or lawyers. Apart from those foci of the national intellect, the universities, authorship is not to be met with; and in these exclusively resides henceforth the activity of the German mind. The first of the institutions which impart its new character to the following era was that of Prague, founded, in 1348, by Charles IV. Soon Vienna followed; and then, in rapid succession, Heidelberg, Cologne, Erfurt, Leipzig, Würzburg, Rostock, Basel, Tübingen, Mayence, and last, not least, Wittenberg, founded in 1502. Already the first of these, Prague, had shown whither complete freedom of teaching, and total emancipation from clerical and state inspection, was likely to lead these learned bodies. Huss and his disciple Jerome had openly questioned

a part of the doctrinal system of the Church. But the Utraquistic* movement had not spread beyond Bohemia and Moravia. Germany had not caught the contagion of the Slavonians in Austria; because in 1409 all the Teutonic students had left Prague for Leipzig, to avoid further collisions between the two nationalities. But the German academies were certainly not behind Prague in either daring or spirit of inquiry. The storm was gathering for a century, until the clouds burst in Wittenberg. Here a learned disputation—a mere professorial squabble—broke out in 1617, which assumed the huge proportions of an European question, when Dr. Martin Luther, a professor of Wittenberg University, burnt the papal bulls and the canon law, before the gates of the town, amidst a crowd of students and colleagues. In the two following years the temporary vacancy on the imperial throne, and the Diet of Worms, convoked by the new emperor, Charles V., only aggravated the critical nature of the situation; and ere long throughout the north-western and central portions of Europe, wherever Teutonic or semi-Teutonic nations dwelt, the Reformation was hailed with one burst of applause. The progress of this movement concerns us here less than its effects on literature. The consequences by which the Reformation was attended proved most disastrous to Germany, which had to pay very dearly for the honour of having inaugurated this great moral cause. She became the battle-field of Protestantism. Her soil was overrun by foreign invaders, her sons split up in one larger, and one smaller camp; her prosperity was trodden under foot, her population reduced to less than one-half of what it had been. At the end of a war unparalleled in the history of mankind, either in length or in atrocity, Germany found herself in possession of religious liberty, indeed, because the game was drawn after all, but with her towns and univer-

* So called because the Hussites asserted the right of the laity to take the sacrament in both kinds.

sities well nigh deserted, and with education brought down to the level of the barbarous ages.

The circumstances just related not merely impeded, but utterly frustrated the literary efforts of Germany. It becomes, therefore, the duty of the historian of this era to report on an age barren in ideas, broken in spirit, sterile in productions, and gazing abroad for models as encouragements to composition. The glorious example set by Luther, in both poetry and prose, was not followed up. The few succeeding authors showed neither his genius nor his patriotism; the majority totally disregarded the language of the people, and employed Latin as the medium of their erudite communications. Men such as Pufendorf the jurist, and Leibnitz the philosopher, wrote in Latin, or else in French, rather than in German. The silence of this period is interrupted only by the sneers of Fischart, and the hymn-poetry of the Lutheran divines; for in her agony Germany seemed, more than at other times, disposed to pray. Besides these, the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries scarcely exhibit a single publication of any importance. Towards the end of the latter century, however, some faint glimmerings of an approaching dawn become visible, when four schools of criticism proclaim new rules of taste. Germany then slowly recovers from the long exhaustion to which the religious wars had doomed her. Perceiving that meanwhile England and France have amassed literary treasures far surpassing her own, she hesitates for a moment in the choice of her models. Opitz, and subsequently Gottsched, recommend the French school, while Bodmer and his followers victoriously point to England as a more genial ally for German authors. At length Germany takes her choice, and becomes herself again, when the classical era dawns in 1760.

Influence of Luther.—To few men has it been given to influence so powerfully the moral condition of their countrymen, as Luther has influenced that of his compatriots. In him Germany recognises not only the founder of her Protestantism,

but also the father of her literature and her language. It was Luther who made the Upper-Saxon dialect of Meissen, Eisenach, and the neighbourhood the only written and spoken language of the country. Hence, therefore, dates Neu-Hoch-Deutsch, or the modern High-German dialect. This he achieved by translating into that dialect the Old and New Testament, which work he began in the Castle of Wartburg, in 1521, but completed only in the year 1534. As the sacred volume, according to Luther's version, was more commonly read all over the land than any other printed book, it had the effect of popularizing Luther's native dialect, which henceforth superseded every other form of speech existing at the time; but Luther distinguished himself also as a preacher, as a theological pamphleteer, and as a hymn-writer. Among his controversial productions, his tract on "The Babylonian Captivity of the Church," and among his discourses his "Addresses to the Christian Nobles of Germany," attained an extraordinary degree of celebrity. Of his hymns none has been more frequently repeated than the so-called Reformation Hymn, of which Luther composed both text and music. It is difficult to say which deserves the highest admiration, the words or the melody. It begins with the line—"Eine feste Burg ist unser Gott;" and its principal excellence consists in the powerful expression which it gives to the Christian's unshaken confidence in the aid of Providence. Its sublime language sounds like an epilogue on the Reformer's life. We think, on reading it, we see him walking through the streets of Worms, or hear him defying Emperor and Pope, while taking his stand on the goodness of his cause. It is, indeed, a trait of character quite as much as a hymn.

Sacred Poetry.—The labours of the great Reformer were not seconded by others, so that the impulse which he gave to both poetry and prose died away in the political discouragement of his partisans. Neither the pamphlets of the brave knight whom we shall mention shortly, nor the hymns of Luther's

friends, could produce anything even distantly comparable to the effect of his own performances. After Luther, literature simply stands still. We have to go to the end of the Thirty Years' War, about 1648, to meet again some really noteworthy hymn-writers. Those choral odes which have been sung in the Protestant churches of Germany for the last two hundred years owe their origin almost entirely to the period of the religious struggle, or else to the generation immediately following it. At that time, we may suppose, the devotional feelings of the population were excited to a more than usual degree, and to this circumstance alone we must attribute the fact that between 1600 and 1700 so little was written or versified, except what bore directly on religion. Among the hymns of this age there are some most sublime and most finished compositions. None excel in beauty those of the pious Paul Gerhard.

1. Simon Dach (1605–1659) was born at Memel, in East Prussia, and became a Professor at the University of Königsberg. Frederick William, the Great Elector, presented Dach with an estate, in token of his great esteem for his merits. Besides composing a number of Protestant hymns, Dach encouraged younger members of his University to essay moral and religious poetry. The disciples whom he thus collected around himself are sometimes dignified by the title of the Königsberg School. They adopted views and practices resembling in all respects those of Opitz, from whom his contemporary, Dach, borrowed most of his precepts on composition.

2. Paul Flemming (1609–1640) was a Saxon by birth, and educated at Meissen and Leipzig, where he obtained the diploma of M. D. The events of the war compelled him to fly to Holstein, where the reigning duke took him into his service, and sent him abroad on foreign embassies, first to Russia, then to Persia. During these travels Flemming found consolation in composing sacred hymns, some of them of great merit, and

mostly adhering, like those of Dach, to the rules of the critic Opitz. Flemming died in Hamburgh at an early age, having but lately returned from the far East.

3. Paul Gerhard (1606-1676) is, without any doubt, the greatest hymn-writer whom Germany has produced. He was a Saxon by birth, and a man of exemplary piety and integrity. He went to Brandenburg, and obtained a living with an extensive parish in Berlin. Unfortunately the disputes of the Calvinistic and Lutheran parties divided his co-religionists into two hostile sections; and as the Great Elector, by an edict, proscribed Lutheranism, and enforced Calvinism among his clergy, Paul Gerhard resigned his living, and quitted the electoral dominions for his native Saxony, where he died as pastor of the village of Lübben. Few men whose lot it has been to direct the devotions of their fellow-men have thrown into their labours greater earnestness and dignity of feeling than this Lutheran pastor. He has created for himself a lasting memorial in some of the best hymns of the Protestant Church in Germany. Among the chants which he has left we will mention the first lines of but three:—"Wach auf, mein Herz, und singe;" "Nun ruhen alle Wälder;" and "Befiehl du deine Wege." His manner is collected, and yet cheerful; plaintive, and yet never desponding; simple, above all, and truly childlike. He has none of Luther's impatient vehemence; but he surpasses him in imagination, as well as in brevity of diction.

4. Friedrich Spee (1592-1635) was the only Roman Catholic who essayed religious or semi-religious poetry. In general we may observe that the Romanist portions of the country have contributed next to nothing to the literature of Germany. This surprising fact cannot entirely be owing to the numerical superiority of the Protestants, which is not decided enough to explain the literary monopoly which they have been allowed to establish. The phenomenon must be chiefly attributed to the

fact that education and general culture remained at a lower ebb in the Romanist districts than they were among the Reformed. F. Spee is, however, one of the few exceptions to the rule. His sacred poetry had not the practical significance of the Protestant hymns, which were one and all composed for the use of the communities within which they had arisen, and served to guide their devotions. On the contrary, Spee's performance, "Trutz-Nachtigall," shows by its title, as well as by its contents, that it was the offspring of poetical dilettantism. The name implies that its author wished to vie with the nightingale in the sweetness of his tones. It owes its religious character merely to the circumstance that the poet belonged to a monastic order, namely, that of the Jesuits, and therefore interspersed his descriptions of nature and his touches of pastoral life with a variety of religious reflections. The latter often exhibit the morbid despair of the monk, who laments his unnatural seclusion from society and nature, and hence there is in them a peculiar admixture of sadness and dissatisfaction. Spee was a truly humane representative of his order. He lived on the Rhine, and used to act as a father confessor to condemned criminals. It was one of his merits to have denounced in open and manly terms the abominable practice of burning women on the charge of witchcraft. He said his hair had grown grey with grief, as he had seen so many unfortunate women making with him their last journey to the stake, and then suffering innocently; for he felt sure that not one of them had ever committed the crimes imputed to her.

5. We will conclude the list of hymn-writers with Andreas Gryphius (1616-1664), a native of Glogau, in Silesia, and a friend of Opitz, founder of the first Silesian School. He travelled much, and graduated at Leyden, in Holland. But returning at length to Glogau, he became a magistrate there, and wrote numerous sacred pieces, as well as some dramas, odes, and epigrams, all of which are now totally forgotten.

With Gryphius hymn-poetry began to decay: though Hage-

dorn and Gellert in the next century tried to revive the sacred ode, they could not find again the earnest and sublime tone which had distinguished a Flemming and a Gerhard.

Satires, Fables, and Moral Stories.—Besides sacred poetry, there are no very noteworthy writings which have come down to us from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. As already stated, this barrenness of the era under discussion is due to the dismal state of politics on one hand, and to the prevalent use of Latin on the other. The University-men, into whose hands literature had fallen, would not condescend to use the vernacular dialect. They handled every public question in a learned manner, and learning could not speak otherwise than in Latin. Except in cases when a pastor was preaching, praying, or chanting before his congregation, there was no occasion for the literati of the age to hold any intercourse with the masses of the unlearned. Not more than two or three descriptions of popular writings were exempt from the scholastic disguise—pamphlets, fables, satires, and popular stories. These required to be told in the vulgar language, to make them intelligible to the people for whom they were intended. Still we may wonder that the conception of even such writings should have arisen in the heads of the doctors and pastors who composed them. These authors themselves were fully aware of this anomaly. They apologized duly in their prefaces for the infraction of the rules of their order, and begged to excuse the plebeian dialect in which they had chosen to descant on a plebeian theme. Some, however, went considerably further. They ridiculed or else lamented the exotic erudition and artificial book-learning that weighed down the language of the people, and sighed for the day when Germans would again dare to write in German, and throw off the unworthy yoke which the scholasticism of an earlier age had imposed on the education and literature of their nation. This latter feeling, however, could not gain strength before the middle of the eighteenth century, when the great critical writers had paved

the way for an independent and national style of writing; and it becomes our first duty to notice those few and isolated attempts at secular poetry and satirical prose, which intervened before that period.

1. Ulrich von Hutten (1488-1523), a brave but unfortunate Franconian knight, deserves mention as an eminent pamphleteer of the Reformation age. He had studied the classical languages at Fulda, Cologne, and Frankfurt, and had at an early age joined the party of Reuchlin, Agricola, and Erasmus of Rotterdam. Hutten was one of the principal authors of the famous party manifesto, "*Epistolæ Obscurorum Virorum*," which defended the study of Latin, Greek, and Hebrew against the bigoted denunciations of Hoogstraten and other Cologne zealots. On the termination of his academic life Hutten served under the Emperor Maximilian, during his campaign in Italy, in the year 1509; but returned, like most of his brethren in arms, owing to the outbreak of a disease which ravaged the German camp. He subsequently took an active part with Sickingen and Götz in opposing a noble brigand, Duke Ulrich of Würtemberg, who had revived the old predatory practices of mediæval knighthood. When the Reformation broke out, Hutten openly and unreservedly declared himself its advocate. In defence of the cause of Luther he composed several pamphlets in German, the principal of which was his "*Klagrede*," or "*Complaint*," against papal power in Germany. The daring displayed in these publications, and also in his speeches, drew upon him the resentment of the ecclesiastical party. Hutten was compelled to fly, and concealed himself at first with his friend Sickingen, on whose subsequent death he sought refuge in Switzerland. Here he stayed some time, on the island in the Lake of Zürich, where he was not further molested by his persecutors. But shortly after, in 1523, he breathed his last, while still in the prime of manhood. His death was mourned by the whole Protestant party. Few men have stood up more perseveringly for truth and justice than

this noble knight, whose character and life have attracted the admiration of succeeding generations. His last biographer was David Strauss.

2. J. F. Fischart (1525-1591), of Mayence, a wit and satirist, continued the Lutheran controversy against the papal party. He was a lawyer by profession; and having resided temporarily at Strasburg, Speyer, and Frankfort, became at last burgomaster in Forbach. His principal work is a German imitation of Rabelais' life of Gargantua and his son Pantagruel, the whimsical princes of Chinon. The work of Rabelais had been published in France about 1535, that of Fischart appeared forty years after. Even the original contains reflections on the depraved state of the Church and the monastic orders; but in the paraphrase of Fischart these received a tinge of increased acrimony. Fischart also became the author of a humorous poem entitled "Flohhatz," or, "The Chase of the Fleas,"—a satire on upstarts, and on the mistaken desire of rising beyond one's proper station. A third story of Fischart's was his "Lucky Ship," which narrated an incident of the famine of 1576, when a party of Zürich riflemen brought in one day a large kettle full of millet down the Rhine to a Strasburg rifle-match, and made such excellent use of oar and sail as to deliver their broth still hot into the hands of the starving inhabitants of the latter city. There are many other pamphlets of Fischart, levelled at Jesuits, Dominicans, prelates, and pontiffs.

4. Burkhard Waldis (1500-1556), and Georg Rollenhagen (1542-1556), are two fabulists of the sixteenth century. Waldis was a Hessian, who at one time had lived in a Livonian monastery; but afterwards he joined the Reformers, and died as a parson in Abterode. He edited an *Æsop*, a collection of about 400 fables, some few of which are of his own invention. His style is merry and droll, partaking more of the anecdote than of severe didactic poetry. Rollenhagen was head-master of a school in Madgeburg, and paraphrased in his "Frosch-

Mäuseler," the "Batracho-myo-machia" of Homer. His mice and frogs are intelligent creatures. They discourse on Church and State, Luther and the Pope, St. Paul and St. Peter. At length they pass on from controversy to blows; and the larger or smaller number of bloody noses decides the strength or weakness of their theological arguments. The author parodied the Germans of his time very felicitously in this satire.

5. Two popular stories here claim our attention, which were probably current at a much earlier period, but first committed to writing at this time. These are the stories of Eulenspiegel and of Faust. What the term Eulenspiegel meant, or the name of Till, usually coupled with it, is not quite certain. In the editions of his story an owl (*eule*) sitting before a mirror (*spiegel*) is usually depicted on the title-page; but this is evidently an invention subsequent to the name itself. The other name, Till, belonged to an individual who is said to have lived about 1350. His tomb is shown at Möllen, in Mecklenburg, where a tree grew over his grave, and where since his time every artisan who passes by is expected to strike a nail into the afore-said tree. The name Eulenspiegel is intimately connected with the notion of roguery, as appears from the fact that this appellation is commonly applied in Germany as an equivalent for a trickster. The French have borrowed the same term, it would appear; for we are probably not mistaken in considering this as the derivation of *espiègle*. The anonymous books referring to this worthy confirm this idea. They date from time immemorial, and arose probably in the Middle Ages. Their subject is the sage speeches, the practical jokes, the experiences, and the pranks of a travelling journeyman. It is a collection of Possen or Schwänke, such as we described in page 56, in speaking of the Meistersänger.

The legend of Dr. Faustus was first printed about 1587; it also arose in the Middle Ages. The hero of this story is an alchemist, or a learned friar, called Faust. A person of that name actually lived at Kundlingen, in Swabia, where he died

in 1540 ; he had the reputation of being a magician, and it was said he kept company with the devil, who visited him in the external shape of a black poodle dog. Thus they appeared once to a number of German students, whose liquor they turned into fire, and whose orgies they diversified on that occasion by other specimens of supernatural art. We need scarcely remind the reader that the English tragedian Marlowe was the first to dramatize this story from a version which had been printed in London, and that recently Göthe appropriated the same tale.

6. J. M. Moscherosch (1601-1669) was a Hessian, whose ancestors had sprung from Spanish settlers, whence also his Spanish name ; he studied law, and became burgomaster in Krichingen. The book which entitles him to a place in literature is his collection of satires, partly rhymed, partly in prose, under the fictitious name of Philander von Sittenwald. They were written during the thirty years' war, and give us an insight into the state of society then prevailing. Moscherosch directed his satire especially against the pedantry of the upper classes, and the mock wisdom which spurned the language of the people to write and speak nothing but Latin, or even French. He does not think the whip too hard a means of chastising the academic jackanapes who held possession of the universities of his day.

7. "Simplicissimus" is the name of a prose novel which appeared in 1669, and describes scenes of the great war, which had then long concluded. The author was formerly unknown, until lately his name was discovered to be Grimmelshausen. He has told his autobiography in an interesting and witty manner, though its principal interest is the light it throws on the history of that fearful age. The hero is the son of a peasant in Spessart Forest, but is dragged from his retreat by the Swedes, who break in upon that lonely spot, to be succeeded by other swarms of plunderers, more brutal and violent than the first. For a time he finds a refuge with a hermit, who

educates him; but soon he is carried off thence again, and compelled to do military service. By cunning and cleverness he is enabled to make a rich marriage, and to push his fortunes in the midst of the universal storm. But soon a reverse blasts his prosperity. His marriage turns out badly; his money is taken from him; disease and despair bring him to the verge of death, and at last he finds himself a prisoner of war among the Swedes again. After many more adventures he becomes a hermit, and lives to see the war end, when a more peaceful generation allows him to ponder in solitude over the frightful scenes of the past.

Critical Writers—Four Schools of Poetic Art.—The resuscitation of German poetry, after the storms of the religious wars, was to a great extent due to the exertions of several critical writers, who made it their object to come with their contemporaries to some agreement on the form as well as on the spirit of poetic composition. As they had each their adherents, either in or near their birth-place, they are usually counted as so many founders of schools. Thus the first Silesian School originated in Liegnitz, a town of Silesia, under the auspices of Opitz, about 1625. The second Silesian School arose in Breslau, the capital of the same province about the year 1660; its heads were Hoffmannswaldau and Lohenstein. The third was the Saxon School of Gottsched, in Leipzig, who flourished about 1730. And the last was the Zürich or the Swiss School of Bodmer, about 1740. We may in general observe that the third resembled in tendency the first, as the fourth resembled the second.

1. Martin Opitz (1597-1639) proposed to do for the literature of Germany the same thing which Malherbe had just then done for that of France—namely, to fix the metrical form of poetry, and to restrict it to the imitation of the antique in its matter. He was a Silesian by birth, and resided principally at Liegnitz. Here he connected himself with several German noblemen, and attained the character of a *bel-esprit* and a critic. Towards

the end of his life he was induced to go to Poland, as a sovereign of that kingdom had offered him the post of private secretary. Shortly after he was infected with the plague by an unfortunate beggar, to whom he had given alms, and died in consequence. In the earlier part of his life Opitz had published some Latin treatises, such as "Aristarchus," and "De Prosodia Germanica," in which he proposed new and better principles of versification than those hitherto in vogue. The earlier poets had been no scholars, and had but loose notions on rhyme and metre. Doggrel verse, faulty rhymes, and want of rhythm had disfigured their productions; and the *Meistersänger* especially, notwithstanding the injunctions of their "Tabulatur," had carried their carelessness to a shocking degree of poetic license. To these irregularities in the composition of verse Opitz endeavoured to put an end, by applying to German some of the metrical principles of Scaliger and Vida, two earlier writers on classical metres. Among other points, Opitz clearly enunciated the law of poetic rhythm in German. It differs from Latin and Greek rhythm, because German permits no definite test of syllabic quantity, and does but insufficiently distinguish between long and short vowels. Accent supplies in German poetry the want of quantity. Opitz, therefore, laid down the principle that every accented or radical syllable should be equivalent to a long one, and that every unaccented or flexional syllable should be considered short. He consequently insisted on a more regular change of accented and unaccented syllables, and forbade putting an iambus in a trochaic rhythm, or a dactyl in an anapaestic one. In short, he proscribed any infraction of the metrical harmony of verse. In addition to his rules on versification, Opitz also enjoined greater discrimination in the choice of expressions and subjects. He laid down that poetry before all should instruct, and that its pleasurable design should be subordinate to its moral purpose. Sentiment and imagination he would not banish altogether; but he bade his countrymen take care that these should never

get the mastery over good sense and sober reason. Finally, he advised his friends to imitate the classical authors of Greece and Rome, and among modern verse-writers the French, with their Alexandrine metre. This latter verse was a favourite with Opitz, and, to add example to rule, he wrote a Lutheran Church hymn in Alexandrines. Others of his poems, such as that on the God of War, and that on Mount Vesuvius, are in shorter iambic verse. He also translated the "Antigone" of Sophocles, and some Italian dramas (the French tragedians only came after his time); and in all these writings he observed the same care and strictness which he enforced by his precepts. The innovations of Opitz were endorsed by the majority of his contemporaries. The Protestant hymn writers, both those of Saxony and those of Königsberg, applauded his maxims, and many others followed in his track.

2. As, however, the sober critic just spoken of sometimes exaggerated his principles, another school of Silesian critics, called the second Silesians, started views directly opposite to those of Opitz. Hoffmann of Hoffmannswaldau, a native of Breslau (1618-1669), Lohenstein (1635-1683), and F. von Logau (1604-1655), also of Breslau, disputed not so much the metrical reforms of Opitz, as his proscription of imagination, and his eulogies on prosaic and common-place poetry. They might have done some good had they gone no further; but, unfortunately, these opposition critics made some wretched attempts at fanciful and sentimental poetry according to their own taste. Being all men of mediocre abilities, they adopted a habit of stringing a great many epithets and metaphors together in their verses, and passing them off for better poetry. Their pathos became perfectly bombastic, their fanciful descriptions tedious, and their epigrammatic mannerism utterly ridiculous. In Nürnberg, on the Pegnitz, a school of pastoral poets, often called the Shepherds of the Pegnitz, adopted a very similar style; but their descriptions of Arcadian life soon

fell into the same contempt as the other writings of the second Silesian School.

3. Under such circumstances it cannot surprise us to find, in the next century, J. G. Gottsched (1700-1766), a native of East Prussia, and Professor of Eloquence in Leipzig, reviving the principles of Opitz, and founding the Saxon School, which is only a more recent edition of the first Silesian. Gottsched's principal treatise is his "Kritische Dichtkunst," or Critical Art of Poetry, published in 1729. He also edited a periodical in Leipzig, which reviewed home and foreign literature according to his views. He first applied the new rules of taste to a novel department, which Opitz had but slightly touched on, namely, the German stage. Gottsched induced the theatres of Leipzig and other towns to suppress the low buffoonery which had been in possession of the boards since the times of Hans Sachs. He expelled the "Hanswurst," or the German harlequin. In lieu thereof he proposed to exhibit the stern tragic Muse, in the manner of Racine. At that time the French poets had attracted universal attention in Europe; and as French manners and the French language had generally become such favourites in better society, Gottsched acknowledged the indubitable superiority which France then possessed, by advising his countrymen to abide by the principles of Boileau, which were also those of Horace. With this view he translated Corneille and Racine into German, and composed a tragedy in the pseudo-classical or the French style, on the death of Cato. Addison's drama, which is but another specimen of the same tendency in dramatic poetry, was Gottsched's model; and it must be admitted that he has all the frigidity of his English original, without any of his invention. The subject itself disqualified his drama for success, as a reasoning philosopher can never be a fit hero for a tragedy. The earlier English dramatists were at that time but little appreciated in either Germany or England, and it remained for the

age of a Lessing and a Schlegel to do more justice to the genius of Shakspeare.

4. A Zürich Professor, Bodmer, was the first to oppose Gottsched, in 1740. He headed the Swiss School of criticism. What offended him and his friends, Breitinger and von Haller, was the amount of dry rule, and the exclusive appeal to the understanding in matters of art. He pleaded once more for the imagination, as the true soul of poetry; he moreover held up the ancient *Minnesänger*, and among moderns Milton, as far better models of composition than the French. The literary war which now broke out between him and Gottsched lasted nearly twenty years, and assumed occasionally a bitter aspect in most of the German journals of the time. It ended in the defeat and unpopularity of Gottsched. One main reason why the latter lost his prestige as a critic was the excessive insolence with which he criticized the labours of junior men, such as Klopstock and Wieland, while Bodmer knew how to enlist on his side all the rising talent of Germany. The latter edited the *Nibelungenlied*, and translated "Paradise Lost." When Bodmer died, in 1783, he had the satisfaction of seeing his principles of taste universally accepted.

Disciples of Gottsched.—Before we take leave of this period, we have to notice a few stray writers, most of them disciples of Gottsched, who preceded the dawn of the classical era. The greatest critic of the eighteenth century had assembled around himself, in Leipzig, a large number of followers, who zealously spread his critical views. They joined, in 1742, in editing a magazine at Bremen, called "*Bremische Beiträge*," which for a time became a leading journal in Germany. The most remarkable among its collaborators were Klopstock and Gellert. Their president was called Gärtner; others, such as Schlegel, father of the two Schlegels in the next era, Hagedorn, Ebert, Gleim, and Rabener, were no contemptible writers. Rabener was a satirist; Gleim, with his friend Uz, imitated Anacreon; the others wrote lyrics of one kind or

another. C. F. Gellert (1715–1769) deserves especial mention, as the principal modern fabulist of Germany. He was the son of a clergyman, and became, like Gottsched, a professor at Leipzig, where he rendered himself universally liked and respected by his gentle, unassuming manner, and by his unblemished integrity. His style as a fabulist resembles rather that of Gay than that of Lafontaine; it is clear and simple almost to excess. He has not the wit and drollery of the French poet; he preserves less felicitously the poetic illusion which disguises the moral of the fable under the garb of the actions of animals; still, he will be read with pleasure by all who appreciate lucid and easy German; in his sacred poetry also Gellert displays the same contemplative wisdom, and the same absence of poetic inspiration, which characterize his fables. Since Gellert's time an author of the name of Lichtwer (1719–1783), and more recently Pfeffel, who died in 1809, have written fables. These, along with Lessing and Göthe, who have also occasionally indulged in this sort of composition, complete the list of the modern fabulists of Germany.

CHAPTER VII.

FOURTH PERIOD—THE CLASSICAL ERA (1760-1805).

Character of this Period.—As the causes which bring the literature of a country to full maturity admit only to a certain extent of elucidation, it would be impossible to adduce convincing proofs that that of Germany could not have attained its culminating point some two or three hundred years earlier than it actually did. We can, nevertheless, point to several circumstances which prepared the dawn of the classical era, and corresponded to the conditions which have usually either preceded or accompanied similar epochs in other countries. First of all, the language had now been fixed, and the most general laws of both poetic and prose composition were either then or shortly after agreed upon. Besides, after 1763, comparative peace and prosperity reigned in the land, the wounds inflicted by the religious wars having gradually healed. Moreover, education was in a flourishing state, and intelligence became at once more enlightened and more patriotic than before. In addition to these causes, a certain amount of lustre was at that time shed on the North Germans, by the rise of the Prussian monarchy and the victories of Frederick the Great. Finally, towards the end of the classical period princely patronage was extended to literary genius, and contributed both to elicit and to encourage its efforts, although at the same time we must confess that this patronage not only came far later than it ought to have done, but also was totally withheld by those very courts whose natural duty it would have been to afford their support.

The brightest period of German literature was not ushered in by any political revulsion, nor by any great social change, similar to those mentioned in the previous periods, and such as we shall mention again in the next. After the seven years' war there was a lull, and a comparative calm, in the affairs of Ger-

many. Hence the classical era introduced no radical change in the spirit of composition; neither did it start a new class of literati. It was still the same portion of society from which the authors all sprung—namely, the middle classes; and the leadership in all matters of taste still belonged to the old universities and their alumni. The only important change was the gradual abandonment of the erudite air of the preceding era. The tendency to learned display disappeared from the language and from the books. Neither the imitation of the antique nor that of foreign and modern authors was continued with the same slavish inferiority as heretofore. This salutary change was entirely due to the judgment of the university professors themselves. Already, about 1745, Wolf, the disciple of Leibnitz, had set in Halle the first example of discarding Latin from manuals and lectures. Since then German gradually became the routine language of academic teaching. Subsequently three great writers,—Lessing, Klopstock, and Wieland,—did a great deal to restore the national dialect to its due rank; they first showed by tangible specimens the possibility of creating a German epic, a German drama, and German novels. But the most decisive movement for emancipating the national mind from every species of artificial prescription occurred in the earlier part of the following decade, or between 1770 and 1780. At that time the antipathy to learned composition, and the enthusiasm for “untrammelled genius,” i. e. for free poetic inspiration, ran higher than at any period before or since; it went almost to excess. One Klinger had published, in 1774, a drama, which bore the significant but high-sounding title: “*Sturm und Drang*,” or, Storm and Pressure. What he exactly meant it was neither then, nor is it now, very easy to tell. But his probable intention in choosing that title was to hint that Parnassus was about to be stormed by men of original genius, such as the author; and that a crowd of similarly disposed invaders was ready to join him in the work of dispossessing savants and pedants of their superannuated occupancy of

the mount of the Muses.* The book which thus contested with the learned their lease of the literary domain was as extraordinary within as without. In a succession of wild and incoherent scenes, and in language remarkable for abruptness, bold imagery, and Ossianic paroxysms of extravagance, it described the deadly feuds of two Scottish clans, and their subsequent and no less wonderful reconciliation by means of intermarriage. This singular production took the German public by surprise, and the name of "Stürmer und Dränger" became a bye-word for the whole school of regenerators of poetry, or those who either supported or were supposed to support the movement of Klinger. His crazy drama, indeed, fell soon into oblivion; but many sober and patriotic men opened their eyes to the just and rational design of his publication. Too long had book-learning and critical rules barred up the spontaneous effusions of native genius, and too long had the universities inculcated the imitation of Latin and Greek, or else of French and English authors, while they never deigned to cultivate that kind of composition which draws its inspiration from within, and not from books, and which clothes natural feeling and poetic fancy in just such words as first suggest themselves. One of the first who took up Klinger's cause was Herder; but two younger men, then just coming into eminence, caught the general enthusiasm. The first drama of Göthe, "Gotz von Berlichingen," as well as the juvenile production of Schiller, "The Robbers," belongs to the period of "Sturm und Drang." Of all the Universities, that of Göttingen, which had but lately been founded, threw itself most eagerly into the movement. Here a society was formed about 1772, called the Göttingen "Dichterbund" or Poets' Club, which made it its professed object to regenerate German poetry, by substituting the popular for the

* "Sturm und Drang" is not well translated by "Storm and Impulse" (Metcalf), or "Storm and Stress" (Lewes). The figure is taken from a siege, and *Drang* refers to the *pressure* exercised on the defendants of the citadel by their besiegers.

erudite style of writing; their members, as well as their performances, will be traced further down.

While the universities thus swarmed with literary reformers, those classes of society which lay beyond the academic pale remained apathetic. Neither the Austrian nor the Prussian, nor any of the minor princely houses, seemed to care the least about the progress of the fine arts among their subjects. Most surprising was the attitude taken by Frederick the Great. This king, who had done more than anybody to raise the prestige of Germany in diplomacy and on the field of battle, was at the same time a stubborn despiser of German poetry. He looked on the exertions of his countrymen for raising themselves to the character of a literary people with the greatest indifference, and even with contempt. When the first editor of the *Nibelungen* ventured to send him a copy, Frederick sent it back with this answer—"You think far too highly of these things. In my opinion, they are not worth a charge of powder. I could not tolerate such a book in my library, and should simply treat it as rubbish." While he thus neglected and spurned German poets, the conqueror of Rosbach and Zorndorf was speaking and writing French with Voltaire in his residence at Potsdam. It is impossible to view Frederick's conduct in this respect otherwise than as a painful dereliction of his duties as a sovereign; and his fault becomes all the more inexcusable, when we remember that a foreign potentate, the King of Denmark, gave, at that time, a pension to Klopstock. Hence Schiller lamented, in 1800, fourteen years after Frederick's death, that the German Muse had to "turn away from his throne all unheeded and scorned."*

* The lines referred to in the text are the first two stanzas of Schiller's poem, "Die Deutsche Muse," written in 1800:—

"Kein Augustisch Alter blühte,
Keines Medicäer's Güte
Lächelte der deutschen Kunst.

But the time was at hand when a better fate should reward merit, even in Deutschland. The reigning family of Saxe-Weimar set a nobler example than Prussia, when, after 1775, the capital of this Grand Duchy became the centre and rendezvous of literary excellence. Four great writers are especially associated with the court of Karl August: Wieland, who educated him and his brother; Göthe, who was his friend, his travelling companion, and his privy councillor; Herder, who acted as his court chaplain; and Schiller, who spent in Weimar the last six years of his life, and received a pension from the same patron, who, on his death, was entombed between Schiller and Göthe, the two master-minds that adorned his reign. We close this period with the death of Schiller, because the French invasion of the year 1806, and generally the effects of the French Revolution, then first felt all over Germany, ushered in another era—the revolutionary period. The writings of Göthe extend, it is true, much beyond the limits of the classical era; but his better works were all written before 1800, which may be considered as the zenith of German literature.

The German Drama.—The most important literary phenomenon of the classical era is the rise of the German drama, on which it will be necessary here to enter into a brief disquisition, for the purpose of elucidating its distinctive features, especially as compared to the English and French styles which

Sie ward nicht gepflegt vom Ruhme,
 Sie entfaltete die Blume
 Nicht am Strahl der Fürstengunst.

“Von dem grössten deutschen Sohne,
 Von des grossen Friedrich's Throne,
 Ging sie schutzlos, ungeehrt.
 Rühmend darf's der Deutsche sagen,
 Höher darf das Herz ihm schlagen,
 Selbst erschuf er sich den Werth.”

preceded and influenced it. Since the first invention of the scenic art by the Greeks, both tragedy and comedy have undergone many changes; and it was therefore not likely, even though it had been desirable, that the German poets should bind themselves scrupulously by the precedents of others, in their views and usages, both in regard to the design and the execution of their dramas. The German conception of tragic poetry is neither the same as the French nor as the English, although its greater similarity to the latter is undeniable. We will endeavour briefly to point out the differences.

The French style may be characterized as the *gallant* and *pseudo-classical*. In France the stage usually borrowed its personages from antiquity; but it represented the ancients shorn of their manners and their religion, and draped them, so to speak, not in antique costumes, but in the chivalrous fashions and gallantry of the court of Louis XIV. "Le théâtre Français," says Victor Hugo, "a forcé les personnages des jours passés à s'enluminer de notre fard, à se frotter de nos vernis."

French tragedy also observed the rules of the three unities, insisting that all the tragic incidents should happen in the space of one day, and within the circuit of one town. Thus it allowed, in the construction of its *dénouement*, but little scope for dramatic invention, since this rule tended to exclude many episodes, or subordinate collateral events, from the range of scenic representation. The artificial stiffness of the whole performance was still increased by the employment of the rhymed Alexandrine verse, in which the most homely dialogue was required to be poeticized, as much as the most elevated discourse.

Far more free was the tone adopted by the English stage. The Shakspearian drama, though long unknown to the rest of Europe, and at one time little appreciated even in England, was prior in date to the French. It totally differed from it in its style, which we will describe as the *historico-moral*. Selecting its subjects either from English history, or from the

tales of Boccaccio, or from antiquity, it took better care than the French to leave to its characters the historical features of their time and nationality. All the actions and manners ascribed to the heroes of the tragedy were so calculated as to carry the theatrical illusion to the highest pitch possible. The most complete resemblance of the actor's part to the character whom he professed to represent was justly considered in England as the life and soul of the scenic art; while in many other respects, especially in the local and temporal circumstances of the drama, great allowances were made to the poet, and the events of years and distant localities were often compressed within the space of one play, the acting of which could not last more than three hours. But the nature of the subjects in Shakspeare's pieces requires a closer attention. The English poet has drawn a great variety of human characters; but the principal part in his plays is always allotted to a person actuated by a selfish and purely private passion. The motives which prompt his heroes are unalloyed with sympathy for kin and fellow-men. Shakspeare is the dramatist of the relations of one individual to another; he is not the tragedian of the relations between man and society. That class of passions which is elicited by our zeal for a public cause which we espouse remains unrepresented in the English drama. Shall Macbeth be king, or Duncan? Shall Shylock be the loser, or Bassanio? Shall Othello possess the fair Desdemona, or his fancied rival? This is the main question, but not the rights or grievances of vassals, blacks, or Jews. All the political and religious, national and social questions are removed into the background, and only made use of as subordinate or collateral circumstances, while ambition or revenge, jealousy or avarice, love or vain-glory, in short, the whole list of vices or passions which aim at self-gratification, principally engross the attention. Those tragedies which are taken from history or politics form no exception to this rule. They represent kings or chiefs as swayed by a desire for self-aggrandizement, or as engaged in schemes of

conquest and usurpation, while it would be difficult to discover in the part of Julius Cæsar or Coriolanus, in Henry IV. or Richard III., any, even the slightest, tinge of patriotic motives. How little Shakspeare thought of dramatizing either popular or religious martyrdom we can see from the brief and almost unfair notice he has taken of Cade and Joan of Arc, while he has said nothing whatever of the noble but unfortunate Lord Cobham, and has avoided referring to the rebellion of Wat Tyler. Resting, then, on the foregoing observations, we venture thus to describe, in a few words, the construction of an English drama:—An individual from the upper classes of society lusts for the throne, the wealth, or the life of another. His passion is grand and lofty, but his motives rest on no public grounds; his schemes, while seeking their own end, are opposed to the instinct of self-preservation on the part of his victim, and this produces the dramatic excitement. At length the aggressor is successful; but his triumph is short, because, in accordance with the law of dramatic justice, he finally falls under the weight of his guilt. This species of drama we may appropriately call the *historico-moral*, taking the latter adjective as the reverse of *civil* or *political*.

Such were the two principal styles existing at the time when Lessing founded the German drama (about 1763), and when subsequently Schiller and Göthe continued to compose tragedies in the manner proposed by Lessing. “Minna” and “Nathan” are the two principal dramas of Lessing; “Götz,” “Egmont,” and “Faust” are the best works of Göthe; and “Don Carlos,” “The Maid of Orleans,” “Wallenstein,” and “William Tell” have made Schiller most famous as a tragic writer. The majority of these, and other plays of the German theatre, take their subjects from history; a few, however, such as “Minna” and “Faust,” from common life. In their external arrangements and versification they resemble English plays; they are either written in prose, or, more usually, in iambic metre, of five feet to each line; they do not fetter themselves in their diction by the adop-

tion of rhymed verse; neither do they adhere to the rule of the three unities, which proved so inconvenient in the French drama. Considerable latitude is claimed and taken in shifting the place, and extending the time of the action; but the most important point of similarity between the dramatists of Germany and those of England is the principle of historic fidelity in drawing tragic character. The rule is laid down, and not violated in any of the better dramas, that each personage should act and talk in the strictest possible conformity with the class of society, the age, and the nationality to which he belongs. Thus, when Lessing draws the character of a Prussian officer, such as Major Tellheim, or that of a French adventurer, the gambler Riccaut, he imitates the actual manners and the language of such individuals, and selects for their conduct and conversation those traits especially which are most likely to give us an accurate idea of the persons moving in their sphere of life. The same remark applies to the historical dramas of Göthe and Schiller; but, along with these points of resemblance, there are also great differences between the German and the English style. The peculiarities of the Teutonic theatre arise principally from the fact that a totally different class of dramatic subjects, with heroes who are swayed by other motives, appear on the stage; and by consequence the *dénouement* is not brought about as in the Shakspearian plays. In general the German drama exhibits civic passions and social conflicts. The principal part in a tragedy of Schiller or Göthe is usually allotted to a generous patriot, who achieves the deliverance of his country, or to a religious martyr, who perishes for his belief, or to some champion or representative of one public cause or another. The events which take place are conspiracies, imprisonings, riots, battles, and discussions; the opposing party is represented by tyrants, or their governors—men such as Duke Alba, Gessler, or Questenberg. According as either the first party or the second gets the victory, the issue of the struggle is either a political revolution or a public execution.

From this rough sketch it will be seen that German dramas are not so much as those of Shakspeare engaged in depicting the evil consequences of private depravity, but are, on the contrary, pictures of the unselfish (whether the political or the religious) passions of mankind. The sympathetic, the generous, and the devotional instincts of man possess a vast preponderance in German tragedy, while all those impulses which spring from calculation of advantage, or from interest and love, act only a secondary part. The triumph, or else the defeat, of heroism, is the theme of Schiller and Göthe, as the wreck of individual desires has been the subject of the English dramatist.

A short survey of the main contents of the classical dramas of Germany will put the preceding observations in a clearer light. Lessing's "Minna" represents a high sense of military honour in conflict with poverty and love; it illustrates the duty of the soldier and the officer. His "Nathan" recommends religious toleration by the example of a sage Jew. Göthe's "Götz" shows the pernicious effects of feudal turbulence in the case of a German knight; his "Egmont" dramatizes the death of a Protestant martyr, or a Dutch patriot; his "Faust" exhibits the restless, ever-fretful Sceptic, overstraining his intellect, and vainly striving for happiness. Schiller's "Robbers" depicts the consequences of outlawry rebelling against the order of society; his "Fiesco" shows the evils of political agitation and republican conspiracies; his "Joan of Arc" dramatizes the heroism of a woman actuated by religious visions and patriotic ardour; his "Wallenstein" is on high treason, and his "William Tell" on popular resistance against tyranny. Each of these dramas treats of some social evil or some social virtue, which is personified in their heroes: Schiller has selected those of the political, Lessing and Göthe those of the socio-moral order.

Life and Writings of Lessing.—Lessing comes immediately after Luther in importance, and may be justly called the

second father of literature. He deserves this title, not only because he founded the drama, both by precept and by practice, but also because he was the first good prose writer after the Reformation; and, thirdly, because he introduced a freer and more critical treatment of theological questions. For each of these reasons his name ranks above that of any other of the earlier German classics, although his merits as a poet, as he himself acknowledged, were not high, and were at all events not superior to those of his contemporaries. Gottfried Ephraim Lessing (1729-1781) was the son of a Lutheran clergyman, in Camenz, near Dresden, and was intended for the Church. He had received his earlier education at home, and subsequently entered at the University of Leipzig as a divinity student. It soon became apparent that his predilections lay in quite another direction. He attached himself to an enterprising stage manager of the name of Neuber, and translated for him a number of French plays into German; others he adapted, jointly with Neuber, to the tastes of a Leipzig public. They met with fair success; and Lessing, who derived from this labour his share of profit, might have continued to do so, had not his father objected to see him keep company with actors, and, when remonstrance failed, ordered him home. Nothing daunted, however, by this paternal interference, the youth once more returned to Leipzig, and resumed his favourite pastime, until he was bidden to exchange his University for that of Wittenberg. Here he abandoned the study of divinity, which had been forced on him, and turned to the medical profession, perhaps only to get a better excuse for continuing his literary labours. Before he had time to obtain a medical degree, Lessing had gone off to Berlin, where he lived for poetry and composition alone. He published a collection of fables which he had written, in addition to some juvenile plays, one of which was entitled "Miss Sarah Sampson." The servile copying of inferior French plays had long disgusted Lessing, and he began to try dramatic performances of his own inven-

tion. His "Minna von Barnhelm," a soldier's play, appeared in 1763, and may be considered the first classical drama of Germany in point of time. The author lived at that time successively in Berlin, Breslau, and Hamburg. In the latter town he edited an important series of newspaper articles, re-edited under the title of "Hamburger Dramaturgie," which may be called the prologue of the German theatre. In these essays Lessing proposed new and definite principles of dramatic art. He reviewed critically the tragedies of Voltaire, and found fault with several of his pieces, especially with his "Mérope," "Zaire," "Semiramis," and "Rodogune," for the delineation of their characters. He asserted that this delineation was inappropriate and unnatural, not so much from the historic, but chiefly from the moral inconsistencies which it involved. He denied that French tragedy deserved the high estimation in which it then stood, while he pleaded for the English drama, as possessing qualities more congenial to the German taste. The rule of the three unities, and the rhymed verse of French tragedy, offered other objects for his attacks, which procured their total disuse and discontinuance in Germany.

At that time the researches of a great artist, Winckelmann, were causing considerable sensation. This devoted admirer of the antique had (so at least it is said) actually changed his religion, in order to be enabled to go to Rome, and live near the Vatican and the remains of Greek and Roman art. In rummaging among the relics and the dust of libraries in Italy, he had, among other specimens of ancient sculpture, met with the famous group of Laöcoon, which represents the Trojan priest and his two sons struggling with the serpents, in accordance with the passage of the *Æneid*, where that event is graphically described. Lessing was full of the ideas of Winckelmann; and as poetry and statuary seemed to touch each other in the beautiful piece of sculpture just described, he composed an excellent prose work on "Laöcoon; or, the Boundaries of

Poetry and Painting," which contains an exposition of Lessing's philosophical views on the abstract principles of sculpture, painting, and architecture, in their relation to poetry.

In 1769 Lessing became librarian in Wolfenbüttel, where he published his tragedy of "Emilia Galotti," and subsequently his "Nathan the Wise." At this time he did not limit his labours to the stage, but became the advocate of more enlarged views on religion and Biblical criticism. A friend of his, Reimarus, a surgeon in Hamburgh, had transmitted to him a manuscript which was said to have been found in the desk of a pastor who had lately died. The posthumous work thus divulged confessed the sincere scruples which that clergyman had entertained on the literal authenticity of several portions of sacred history, more especially of the Pentateuch. Lessing did not hesitate to publish this manuscript, under the title of "Fragments, by an Anonymous Writer of Wolfenbüttel," thinking it, no doubt, more serviceable to the interest of truth and religion that theology should court inquiry, and not shirk it. This publication is by some considered as the first indication of what is usually called Rationalism. As at that time the friends of such views were less numerous than they have become since, Lessing got into serious difficulties with the clerical portion of the public. A Hamburgh pastor, of the name of Götze, raised an outcry against him, denouncing Lessing as a supporter of heterodoxy and disbelief. The quarrel became more and more envenomed, and Lessing closed his apology with the "Antigötze," in 1778—a very vigorous specimen of controversial prose. His last thoughts on this subject he published the year before his death, when he composed a lucid and well-connected treatise on the Education of Mankind. In this essay he expressed his belief that the Christian religion was a Divine revelation, but that it had certainly not been the earliest vouchsafed to men, and might perhaps not be the last. He considered Christianity as a step in the moral development of the human race, however final

in some respects; he also exemplified this theory by the history of the education of the single man, whose period of instruction and preparation closes before he attains manhood, while, nevertheless, his subsequent life teaches him many things which he did not know before, and never ceases to improve the effects of his earlier moral education.

The prose of Lessing is remarkable for vigour and perspicuity; he avoids all wordy circumlocution and unnecessary embellishment. The favourite arrangement of his ideas is in brief paragraphs, sometimes of no more than two lines. Most of his critical and moral essays are written in this form. He advances position on position, and deduces from them his conclusions, without ever admitting a single assertion, except on careful investigation. He has left several comedies, and a few tragedies. The three principal of his dramas shall be briefly analyzed.

Lessing's Drama.—The tragi-comedy of “*Minna von Barnhelm*” dramatizes an incident of military life, supposed to happen in a Prussian village at the close of the great war of Frederick in 1763. A brave officer, Major von Tellheim, who had received several wounds in the war, is compelled to resign his commission, on account of a charge of defalcation which had been brought against him. He might have established his innocence, but not without involving, or seriously inconveniencing, a brother officer, whose daughter, Minna, he loved. He prefers to accept a kind of forced leave, and, breaking off his engagement, retires to a distant part of the country. Years pass on, during which he hears no more of his friends. At last, when his wounds and misfortunes have reduced him to great distress, we find him in the hotel of a village, attended by an old sergeant, who would not leave him, though his master was unable to provide the most necessary comforts. A lady in mourning passes through the village, and stops at the same hotel. This was Minna, whose father had lately died. On hearing of the soldier's circumstances, she generously wishes

to relieve him, and her anxiety to do so becomes still greater when she learns his name. However, the brave officer spurns to receive relief from a supposed stranger, and long refuses Minna's offers, when at last a recognition takes place. Scarcely are the transports of the first meeting over, when Tellheim relapses into his melancholic humour, and wishes to depart once more. When his health is nearly shattered, his reputation gone, his means exhausted, and his prospects ruined, he gives up all idea of marriage, and despairs of a union which seemed so little promising to the lady. Unexpectedly some favourable reports from the king's head quarters arrive in the village. A French gambler, who lounges about the hotel to inveigle the visitors and officers with dice and cards, brings some news which he had accidentally gathered at the gambling-table, to the effect that Tellheim's lawsuit has taken a different turn, and that on the conclusion of the approaching peace important disclosures in his favour are likely to be made. Ere long an orderly arrives from Frederick the Great, who more than corroborates this report. An autograph letter of the Prussian monarch acknowledges Tellheim's innocence, reinstates him in his dignity and income, and holds out good chance of promotion. The marriage of the couple is of course the conclusion of the play, which for style, intrinsic probability, and effectiveness, is quite a masterpiece. It was the first good drama composed in Germany, and possesses great charm, in the noble picture which it gives of the officer's integrity, his sense of honour, and his generosity.

“*Emilia Galotti*” is a tragedy in prose, relating to some probably fictitious event in the history of Guastalla. Prince Gonzaga abuses his power as a petty sovereign for the gratification of his covetousness. He is enamoured of the daughter of one of his subjects, called Emilia Galotti; and although the object of his wishes is the betrothed of another, he cannot master his desires sufficiently to renounce the lady. An officious courtier volunteers his services to procure the removal of the

bridegroom, by assassinating him on the highroad, on the very day when the wedding was to have taken place. The deed is done, and Emilia is seized by the attendants of the prince. In vain her father, who guesses the perpetrator, as well as his motive, demands her immediate restitution. He is put off under various pretences. When all his efforts fail, he obtains an interview with Emilia, when his daughter, who abhors the tyrant, gives her father a dagger, with which the infuriated parent stabs her forthwith, to save her from the passion of the prince. The story is manifestly a modern version of Lucretia's rape and death; but the chief objection to the tragedy is, that its colours are too overwrought for our more civilized manners, and hence will not suit the refinement of the modern stage.

In his last drama, "Nathan the Wise," Lessing, for the first time, used the iambic blank verse, which H. Schlegel had already adopted before him, and which corresponds very much with the metre of the Greek and English theatre. The principal character of this play is a wealthy Jew, who, according to Boccaccio, from whom the story is taken, lived in the time of Saladin, the Arab emir of Jerusalem. Although the Hebrew capital was then a scene of bloodshed and religious warfare, and Nathan himself had suffered severely from the contest of the Christian and the Mussulman, this sage was actuated by more benevolent feelings than many of those around him. He sympathized with the magnanimity of Saladin, his friend, when he lost his wife and eight children in one of those outbreaks of fanaticism which have at all times been common in the East; he determined to relieve the desolation of his household by adopting a Christian orphan girl, whom the tide of war had thrown before his door. Besides this child, a young Templar, a prisoner of Saladin, also becomes an object of his beneficence. In the meantime the Christian patriarch, who by the terms of the capitulation with Saladin resided in the city, seeks to tear the maiden from Nathan, in order to restore her to the faith of his Church; and only with difficulty his efforts are frustrated

by Saladin. The latter often borrows large sums of money from the Jew, and talks freely with him on religion. In one of their conversations the Jewish sage relates the famous parable of the three rings, the moral of which is the necessity of religious toleration. The inculcation of this doctrine is the main object of this didactic drama, which in other respects contains but few salient points, and labours under a certain feebleness of action, although it shows also considerable skill in the connexion of historical circumstances.

Among Lessing's numerous imitators in comedy, two subsequent writers became rather more celebrated than the others. These are *Iffland* (1750–1814) a stage-manager and actor at Hanover; and *Kotzebue* (1761–1819), a native of Weimar. It is said that the latter was jealous of the eminent poets assembled in Weimar, in favour of whom he thought himself slighted. However, his merit was not equal to his pretensions. He emigrated to St. Petersburg, and was sent for a year to Siberia, for having printed unpalatable remarks about the Czar. On the discovery of other performances of Kotzebue, which were more flattering to the vanity of the Russian autocrat, Kotzebue was recalled, and treated with greater respect. He finally left St. Petersburg, and returned to Germany. But as his manners and political opinions gave offence, he lost his life in rather an extraordinary way. A German enthusiast of the name of Sand, who thought him a Russian spy and an inveterate enemy of popular reform, stabbed Kotzebue at Mannheim, and suffered death, without trying to escape or to disguise his motives. Kotzebue has left upwards of 200 plays, mostly dramatizing family incidents from every-day life. Some are sentimental, others more humorous, but few contain marks of poetic talent. Their characters and action seldom rise beyond the level of the ordinary caricatures and minor complications of social life. Kotzebue was severely criticized by the younger Schlegel and his brother, and revenged himself by satirizing them in his comedies.

Klopstock and Herder.—F. G. Klopstock (1724-1803) was born at Quedlinburg, in Saxony, and was educated at the College of Schulpforta, then as now one of the leading public schools of Germany. He early distinguished himself by his proficiency in ancient and modern literature, and entered in 1745 at Jena as a divinity student. There, and subsequently at Leipzig (for many Germans visit two, if not three universities), he composed portions of his "Messiah," the first two cantos of which were published, in 1748, in the "Bremische Beiträge," the journal of the disciples of Gottsched. His friends, with the exception of Gottsched himself, entertained the greatest expectations of Klopstock; while the old critic, who always misnomered him "Klopstock," passed a very severe judgment on his effusion. On the completion of his collegiate course, the poet became a tutor in a family; but as he met with some love disappointment from a cruel fair one, Fanny, the sister of a friend, he quitted that post, and went to Zürich, where Bodmer received him kindly. Not long after, the King of Denmark, Frederick V., gave Klopstock, on the representation of his ambassador, Moltke, an annual pension, to enable him to compose his "Messiah" at leisure. For the remainder of his life he dwelt either at Copenhagen or at Hamburg. He had a large circle of friends, and twice became a widower. As an admirer of popular liberty, he hailed the French Revolution with joy. The warm expression of his sympathies did not escape the notice of the French republicans, who, on the establishment of their commonwealth, made him their citizen, as well as a Monsieur Gillès, which meant Schiller. But before that the excesses of this political faction had disgusted Klopstock, and he retracted his former approbation in an ode.

The principal work of this poet is his "Messiah," a religious epic, in twenty cantos, and in hexameter verse, such as this:—

"Singe, unsterbliche Seele, der sündigen Menschen Erlösung,
Die der Messias auf Erden in seiner Menschheit vollendet."

It describes the life and death of the Saviour; and its chief excellence consists in the sublimity of feeling which pervades it, though, from all the discourses of heavenly beings and evil spirits, from all the descriptions of celestial spheres, and the sentiments of the author no less than his heroes, we get almost bewildered, and miss too often the stirring action required in epic poetry. The performance resembles often rather an oratorio than an epopee. Many, therefore, are of opinion that Klopstock's merit should chiefly be sought in his odes, of which he has left a large number. They are written in blank verse, and Horatian metres. Many are addressed to his friends, Ebert, Ramler, Giseke, Hagedorn, and so on; others celebrated his beloved Fanny, or her less cruel successors. A good many are religious odes, and a few are political. In these lyrical effusions the poet's sincere piety, his exalted patriotism, and his love for his friends, have found a powerful, and often also a happy expression. Klopstock is less successful in the drama. His tragedies, such as that on Arminius, and that on the death of Abel, are disfigured by a kind of lyrical rant, which, if excusable in an ode, becomes perfectly tiresome when put into the mouth of a succession of tragic characters, who never seem to get out of their exaltation.

J. G. Herder (1744–1803) was born in East Prussia, of poor parents. His father was a schoolmaster, and could scarcely afford to give him a good education, had not the self-exertions of his talented son made up for the deficiency of parental aid. At Königsberg, the place of his academic studies, Herder met two great men. The one was the philosopher Kant; the other, the Orientalist and theologian Hamann, "the Magus of the North," as he is usually called. Both had great influence on Herder. From Hamann especially he derived his fondness for Hebrew poetry, and that enigmatical manner which sometimes becomes perceptible in his style. Even during his university career Herder attracted public attention by several essays containing literary critiques; and upon the termination of his col-

legiate life he betook himself to travel. He visited France, formed the acquaintance of the ingenious Diderot in Paris, and thence went to Strasburg, where he met with Göthe, who was then a student there. About this time Herder was one of the chief advocates of "Sturm und Drang," i. e., of the regeneration of poetry in the sense of Klinger. In 1771 he became rector of a large parish in Bückeberg, not far from Minden. Five years later Grand-Duke Karl August of Saxe-Weimar called Herder, on the recommendation of Göthe, to the place of his residence. From that time to his death Herder was the principal clergyman in Weimar, and took a prominent part in all the parties and brilliant soirées of the ducal palace. Like Schiller and Göthe, he was raised to the rank of a nobleman, and died in 1803. His fame as a poet rests chiefly on his "Cid," an epic poem in short trochaic lines without rhyme. It was gathered from Spanish romances, and sang the life, the exploits, and the death of Rodrigo Campeador, surnamed the Cid, a Castilian knight of the twelfth century, who distinguished himself by his valorous combats against the Saracens. The Cid's love for Donna Ximenes, his duel with her father, whom he killed for having insulted his own parent, his marriage with Ximenes, and his death in the midst of a career of victory and renown, are successively related by Herder with the utmost simplicity and grandeur of diction. The first two stanzas of the "Cid" run thus:—

“Trauernd tief sass Don Diego,
 Wohl war keiner je so traurig;
 Gramvoll dacht er Tag und Nächte
 Nur an seines Hanses Schmach;

“An die Schmach des edlen alten
 Tapfern Hauses der von Lainez,
 Das die Inigos an Ruhme
 Die Abarcos übertraf.”

The unaffected pathos of his style has made his "Cid" one of the masterpieces of German literature, though those acquainted

with Spanish assert that Herder did not adhere faithfully either to the text or to the spirit of the romances which he had before him. He also collected the popular songs and ballads of many nations in his "Stimmen der Völker in Liedern," a composition to which the old Meistersänger contributed the greater part of the German specimens; other portions are well rendered from foreign languages. Herder also wrote essays on the spirit of Hebrew poetry, for the purpose of vindicating the Mosaic record and the Old Testament prophets from some shallow criticisms to which they had been exposed. His "Ideas towards the History of Mankind" is a work of much thought and research. Herder's style has peculiarities quite as striking as that of Lessing. It has been said of Herder that he wrote poetry like prose, and prose like poetry. While his metrical versions are done with a brevity and neatness of diction bordering on baldness, or on poverty of ornament, his sermons and essays are rather eccentric, fanciful, and teeming with Oriental imagery. Herder was not a master of argument or reasoning like Lessing. He aimed at impressing his hearers or readers by means of noble pictures and lofty aspirations, but not at gaining them over by sober persuasion, or by appeals to the understanding. His pages read like one continued rhapsody, and occasionally tire by their frequent exclamations and interrogations.

The Göttingen Dichter-Bund.—About 1772 the University of Göttingen became the rendezvous of a number of literary characters, whose object it was to regenerate German poetry by a more thorough abandonment of the erudite, and a return to the popular style. They proposed to abjure all Latinized or Frenchified diction, and to write pure Teutonic. They wished to sing to the people and of the people. The common man was to understand their verses, and to appreciate their art. If hitherto poetry had chosen its models and topics either abroad, or in antiquity, or in the upper ranks of society, it was now to descend to the cottages of the poor, and to sing to the

unlettered of their tale of joy and sorrow. Consequently the main offspring of this school were idyllic and ballad-poetry. The movement of Klinger, and his dramatic bubble, though it did not originate within the club itself, was but a pendant to their tendencies. But Klinger had saved himself from school dust and pedant's rods by capers on the highlands of Scotland, and had taken Macpherson as his guide; while the patriots of Göttingen would hear of nothing but the green lanes and mountain paths of Fatherland. Their proclivities were all for rural scenes and rustic life. Their heroes and heroines were the German Ritter, the villager, the Bauersmann, and his Hausfrau. To speak or write in Low-German was reckoned meritorious; and the favourite name of their poets' club was "The Hain-Bund," or Grove Association. The majority of its members were men of eminent scholarship, and a few of them were noblemen. The principal were Bürger, Voss, Claudius, Hölty, and the two Counts Stolberg, authors of some fine ballads on ancient knights.

G. A. Bürger (1747-1794) was a popular ballad-writer, of the highest order of merit. He led rather an irregular life for a Göttingen professor, was given to joviality and dissipation, married three times, and died at an early age. Few poets have succeeded better than Bürger in writing popularly; and had his steadiness in private life, or his judgment in the selection of his topics, corresponded with his endowments, he might have ranked with the first poets of Germany, and indeed of any country. The best known of his compositions is his "Leonora," a very moving ballad, describing the distress and the vision of a maiden whose lover had not returned from Frederick's war. When, at the close of the campaign, the army had come home, Leonora inquired for her William by waiting at the roadside with her mother, and questioning every troop, as they drew homewards, with banners flying. But she could learn no news of him, and on returning at last with her mother, sank half fainting on a couch. Soon she fancies she hears

a horse galloping down the street, a well-known step before the door, and a knock from the rider. Her William is there, but he cannot stay; he comes to fetch Leonora to the wedding, as he had often sworn he would. He wishes to take her on the saddle, for he has far to ride to his dwelling-place, and the wedding guests are waiting. Leonora obeys the strange injunction. After a long progress through the night, he comes with her to a dreary plain, where his comrades are arrayed in order. They are dumb and ghastly pale; and in the midst of them William shows her his hymeneal resting-place. It is joined rather tightly of "four long boards and two boardlets." Nobody has ever told more simply and more powerfully what wounds the fiend of war inflicts on private happiness. Bürger has written many other ballads of merit, such as "The Emperor and the Abbot," a comic poem, which derides the sloth and the ignorance of the prelacy; "The Wild Huntsman," and "Frau Magdalis." The music of his verse, the force of his traits, and the choice of his words, are quite inimitable, and leave the best specimens of German behind them. Occasionally his homeliness borders on the common and the low, and a few of his poems are wanting in delicacy.

Bürger is also the reputed author of "The Adventures of Baron Münchhausen," which appeared anonymously in 1787. This satirical romance describes a number of improbable, or rather impossible, exploits, achieved by a German baron, who had served in Russia against the Turks. It is particularly laughable from the serio-comic veracity with which these adventures are passed off as so many true stories. Baron Münchhausen ties his horse to what he supposed to be a sign-post, peeping out of the snow, and finds, on awakening the next morning, that his steed is dangling two hundred feet above him, on the top of a village church-steeple, while he is lying at the foot of the church. A thaw had set in, and melted the snow. But with his usual presence of mind, he loads his pistol, shoots through the halter, swings himself on the charger,

who falls at his feet, and rides off the next moment. The origin of this composition dates from the time when Bürger stayed at a German watering-place of the name of Pyrmont. Here he met the immortal baron, who sat at every public coffee-house, in the midst of the admiring visitors of the locality, to whom he related his stories. The bragging Falstaff style of his alleged feats, and the terrifying gesticulations with which he accompanied his boast, struck Bürger so forcibly, that he devised an exaggerated version of his narrative, and thus the famous satire of Baron Münchhausen has been handed down to posterity. The baron resented the service done to him, and evinced no relish for immortality in the shape in which it was bestowed. He went to law, and involved Bürger in troublesome litigation. The poet saw no means of escaping from Münchhausen's ire except by casting doubts on his authorship, and trying to wash his hands of the lampoon.

J. H. Voss (1751-1826) was an able scholar, and an exquisite pastoral poet. He has given metrical translations of Virgil and Homer, the best which Germany can boast of. His version will always rank highly among the many representations of the ancient epic which have been attempted by moderns. The hexameter, the epithets, and the pleonasm of Homer, are preserved in Voss's translation; and this at once distinguishes his performance from those of Pope or Lord Derby. With respect to closeness of rendering, Wolff, the author of the famous Prolegomena, alone has ever said that it might have been done better. A translation, however, cannot possibly be exactly the same as the original, and differences must be admitted even here. The version of Voss, by its too laboured and too learned character, sometimes gives us Homer, *minus* his simplicity. He was also an excellent original poet. His chief work under this head is his pastoral "Louise," a charming idyll in hexameter verse, describing scenes of rural life and domestic peace, and interspersing its homely pictures with a touching love story. Among the many minor poems

which Voss has left, there are also two Low-German pastorals. On leaving Göttingen he was appointed to a professorship at Jena, and subsequently at Heidelberg, where he died.

Apropos of pastoral poetry, two earlier idyllic poets may be mentioned, though they are not otherwise connected with the Göttingen school. Some twenty years before Voss, Kleist, an officer in Frederick's army, had diversified his warlike occupations by songs on shepherds and Arcadian scenes. His principal work is his "Frühling," or "Spring," in hexameters. Kleist fought bravely, and fell, in 1759, on the battle-field of Kunersdorf. A contemporary of Kleist was Gessner, who composed a semi-religious pastoral in prose, on the "Death of Abel." This book has often been translated into English and other languages.

Wieland and Richter.—C. M. Wieland (1733-1813), was the son of a Swabian clergyman, and began life as a strict devotee and composer of religious verses. In 1750 he entered at Tübingen as a student of law. An unrequited attachment which he formed in that town gave his character a rather melancholy cast. In 1752 he went to Zürich, where Bodmer was still professor. The old veteran received him with marked distinction, and he remained nearly ten years in Switzerland, until at last a Count Stadion induced him to return to Biberrach, his native town. Here Wieland obtained an appointment, and became acquainted with a number of noblemen of much literary culture, but also of great laxity of morals and principle. The effect of this society on Wieland was to make him lose a great deal of his earlier earnestness. He assimilated his manners to the ease and polish of the higher classes, and also wished to vie in elegance of style with writers like Voltaire, and even to equal them in gaiety and frivolity. The kind of books he now sent into the world left no doubt as to the tendency of his sentiments. They were humorous novels or comic stories, such as his "Agathon," "Musarion," "The Abderites," and "Aristippus." Greece in the brightest periods of her history, between Pericles and Alexander, is the

scene and subject of his fictions; and the courtezans Aspasia, Thaïs, and others, are among his favourite characters. His novels are free from downright indelicacy, but they inculcate throughout a liberal indulgence for the amorous foibles of both sexes. His style is graceful, humorous, and light; and if he has not always succeeded in drawing accurate pictures of Greek life, he has yet shown no inconsiderable acquaintance with the spirit and history of antiquity. The same thing is amply proved by Wieland's masterly translations of Horace, Lucian, and Cicero's letters. While the text of these versions bears witness to his good taste and command of the language, his notes especially will convince any one who will examine them that Wieland was no mean scholar. In 1769 he was appointed professor at Erfurt; and two years after, the favourite of the nobility was selected by the Grand Duchess of Saxe-Weimar to superintend the education of her two sons, the eldest of whom was her heir, Karl August. This post he filled to the last; and when his services were no longer required for educational purposes, Wieland remained in Weimar at Court. Göthe pronounced his funeral oration in 1813. His most popular poem is his *Oberon*. This work is a romance in twelve cantos, in the style of Tasso or Ariosto. It sings in rhymed stanzas of eight lines the adventures of Huon, a Frankish knight, whom Charlemagne dismissed from his court, leaving him no hope of return unless he achieved certain perilous enterprises at Bagdad. His accomplishment of these apparent impossibilities was assisted by the fairy *Oberon*, whose name and character are borrowed from Shakspeare.

The following is the first stanza of *Oberon*: —

“ Noch einmal sattelt mir den Hippogryphen, ihr Musen,
 Zum Ritt in 's alte romantische Land!
 Wie lieblich um meinen entfesselten Busen
 Der holde Wahnsinn spielt! Wer schlang das magische Band
 Um meine Stirne? Wer treibt von meinen Augen den Nebel,
 Der auf der Vorwelt Wundern liegt?
 Ich seh' in buntem Gewühl, bald siegend, bald besiegt,
 Des Ritters gutes Schwert, der Heiden blinkende Säbel.”

Johann Paul Friedrich Richter (1763-1825) is usually called Jean Paul, and belongs to the class of humorous novel-writers. His father was a poor clergyman in Wunsiedel, and educated him in rural retirement at home, until he was able to visit a school at Hof, and subsequently the University of Leipzig. But before young Richter's education was half finished, his father died, and left his family penniless. Now came a time of hard struggling and bitter privation, especially as he had to support his mother. He completed, however, his college course, and subsisted by tuition and authorship. His first novel was "The Invisible Box in the Theatre;" and his second, "Hesperus." Then came "Quintus Fixlein" and the "Life of Siebenkäs." In 1796 he paid a visit to Weimar, whither he had been invited by a friend. But both Göthe and Schiller failed to appreciate Richter. On the death of his mother he left his birth-place; and after repeatedly changing his residence, he settled in 1804 at Baireuth, in Bavaria, where he lived until his death. His only son lost his reason, and died at college, to the deep affliction of his father. Richter's best novels are his "Titan," which refers to the religious Radicals of the age; and the "Flegeljahre," or Years of Hobbledehoyism, which describes the experiences and conduct of two youths, the one soft-hearted and enthusiastic, the other of more mature intellect, and a cynical observer of mankind. These types represent the two main tendencies of Richter's mind, sentiment and satire. He regards human affairs with a kind of mournful regret, often verging on mockery, because his exalted ideas of friendship, love, virtue, and freedom are so seldom and so imperfectly realized on earth. It were almost better, so thinks Richter, that man should be without the strong impulses of sympathy for his kind, so often are his noblest efforts frustrated, his hopes deceived, and his very prayers chilled into a curse. This supposed contrast between lofty aspirations and bleak, comfortless reality, is the mainspring of Richter's humour. Otherwise his novels afford no very solid

attractions. They have neither a definite plan nor a positive story, but skip irregularly from one humorous topic to another, much like the fictions of Sterne. His best passages are descriptions of landscape scenery and traits of domestic life. Most of his characters are country parsons, alms' collectors, burgo-masters, and village teachers.

CHAPTER VIII.

FOURTH PERIOD.—THE CLASSICAL ERA. §SCHILLER.

Life of Schiller.—Friedrich Schiller (1759–1805) was born at Marbach, in Würtemberg. His father was an officer, and destined him first for the legal, but subsequently for the medical, profession. He received his first education at the Karls-Schule, a Stuttgart College, where he spent six years, and endured very harsh treatment. The military drill established in this school, the punctilious regulations, the close superintendence of the pupils, and the occasional rudeness of the masters, affected the sensitive youth to such a degree as to render him thoroughly dissatisfied with his condition. The gloomy view which he then took of life received an eloquent expression in his juvenile tragedy of “The Robbers,” sketched when he was still at school, but first published in 1781. At this time Schiller was preparing to become an army surgeon, and still lived in or near the College above-mentioned, when he determined to abscond from his post, in order to escape the intolerable tyranny under which he suffered. He went to the neighbourhood of Meiningen, where the mother of a school-fellow, Frau von Wollzogen, afforded him shelter and retreat. While staying here he wrote his “Fiesco,” and his “Kabale und Liebe,” both of which contained exaggerated pictures of vices and virtues. After a temporary connexion with the theatre of Mannheim, for which he arranged stage-plays, Schiller became the principal contributor to a journal called “Thalia,” and published in its columns numerous poems and articles, as well as two acts of his “Don Carlos.” From this period on he gradually turned to history, and began to apply himself especially to the study of the struggles which resulted from the Reformation. The fruits of these labours soon became apparent. He published his best historical work, “The

Revolt of the Netherlands," and subsequently his "History of the Thirty Years' War." He also commenced his fragmentary novel, the "Ghost-seer," which related, in an epistolary form, how a Count O. had been brought over to the Roman Catholic Church by the impostures and stratagems of a jesuitical wizard. In 1789 Schiller, who had some time before been married to a Fräulein Lengenfeld, received an appointment as Professor of History at the University of Jena. Here he retouched and completed his drama of "Don Carlos," part of which had already appeared in the journal just alluded to. The plot of this tragedy underwent a total change, which somewhat marred its unity. From an amorous story it became a political drama; and for the former hero, Don Carlos, another character, Don Posa, became the main character of the piece. In 1794 Schiller first entered into closer relations with Göthe, who had attained celebrity before him, and was Schiller's senior by ten years. The two master poets of Germany edited together two successive journals, first the "Horen," then the "Musen-Almanach." A large number of lyrical compositions of the highest order, as well as some critical essays of great merit, first appeared in the columns of these papers. Schiller's ballads also owe their origin mainly to this period of his life. In 1799 the Grand Duke of Saxe-Weimar, who had long been an admirer of Schiller, induced him to reside permanently near Göthe and himself; and thus for the last six years of his life he took up his abode at Weimar. Now only were his best dramas given to the world. His "Wallenstein" came out in 1800, his "Mary Stuart" in 1801, his "Maid of Orleans" in 1802, the "Bride of Messina" in 1803, and his "William Tell" in 1804. In the following year Schiller died of a pulmonary disease, at the early age of forty-five. He was loved, admired, and bewailed by all who ever knew him. The unpretending modesty of his character, and the purity of his morals, almost as much as his poetry, endeared his memory to his and subsequent ages. He was an excellent husband and fa-

ther, a sincere friend, and a warm-hearted patriot. His intellectual and poetic qualities differed considerably from those of Göthe, although both were of the highest order. Schiller possessed greater talent for the drama and for historical narrative. In clearness of view, in earnestness and resolution, he was far Göthe's superior. His temperament was lofty and generous, and hence he imparted sometimes to his tragic characters a tinge of the enthusiasm of his soul. More prone to admire the good than to search out the bad qualities of mankind, he was instinctively attracted by noble and heroic actions. On the other hand, he did not possess the same talent for observation as his friend. Göthe looked on men more dispassionately than Schiller, and understood much better to dissect their whims and expose their infirmities, even though he might not be able to clothe his observations in such a clear style, nor to invent such exquisite dramatic action as Schiller. T. Carlyle has written Schiller's life in an admirable manner.

Schiller's Drama.—The nature of poetic genius, in its juvenile stage, cannot be better illustrated than by the first tragedy of Schiller. "The Robbers" dates from the time which the poet spent at school, in Stuttgart. As he had then but little experience of the world, it cannot be expected that we should find in this performance any great powers in the delineation of character; but for poetic feeling, for vivid imagination, and occasionally for style, there is a great deal in it that will astound its readers. Here and there the text has been improved by the author at a maturer age, but not enough to deprive it of its original character. Even a cursory perusal of the poems inserted in the drama will convince any one that a youth who could write such lines was predestined by nature to become the bard elect of his countrymen. The banditti depicted in this play are just that kind of characters which most young people like to imagine—a number of reckless desperadoes, each with a grievance and with a plaint against society. They are outlaws by no fault of their own, but by the wrongs of others, because

they scorned to associate any longer with the monstrous knaves and the silly dupes of the civilized world. The captain of these brigands is Karl Moor; he had been driven from home by the persecutions of a hypocritical brother; Franz, the brother, had cruelly maligned him before his father, had drawn on him the curse of the misguided old man, and procured Karl's expulsion from the family. Not yet satisfied, his wicked brother had torn asunder the last tie that endeared his home to Karl; he had estranged and removed from him for ever the lady whom Karl adored. Thus stricken to the soul, Karl Moor had fled into the forests of Bohemia, and warred against society, as society had warred against him. Collecting around him a band of similarly disposed young fellows, he carried far and wide his depredations, and rushed madly from plunder to carousal, and from carousal to plunder. Nothing can exceed the stirring romance with which the brigand's life is depicted by Schiller. Yet the gloomy robber can find no rest; his thoughts often recur to the past, and his mind dwells on the fond scenes of his earlier days. At length he resolves to dispatch a confidant to the hall of his ancestors. By this messenger he learns that his brother is but adding to the score of his misdeeds, and that success has only hardened him in villany. His aged father has been cast into a dungeon; and Amelia, the beloved of his heart, is languishing in a nunnery, because she will not marry Franz. She never loved any other but Karl. The result may be foreseen, and we are prepared for a catastrophe. Binding themselves by a common oath of fidelity, the robbers and their chieftain descend into the neighbourhood of the castle of the Moors. On their sudden approach, Franz Moor barricades himself in a fort, where he is assaulted by a party of the brigands, while Karl and the rest go to look for his father and Amelia. After a desperate fight, the villain Franz, expecting no mercy from his besiegers, falls on his sword, and dies. Meantime the aged parent is drawn from the prison where he had been shut up; blind and

half crazed, he scarcely knows the youth who clasps him in his arms, and expires, after pardoning Karl, and retracting the curse which he had pronounced in a moment of unhappy delusion. Scarcely has the grey old man breathed his last, when the poor and broken frame of Amelia is brought to light. But what use was it to her to see again the friend of former days? She cannot marry the blood-stained brigand. She asks for death as an act of mercy. When Moor sees that his fortune is blasted for ever, he bethinks himself of his own exit, and reflects for a moment on the best mode of destruction. A thousand ducats are the price set on his head, and he thinks he might be useful by his death, as he had not been so by his life. He has noticed a poor labourer, a father of eleven children—his blood-money will feed the drudge and his family; so he goes and surrenders himself as a prisoner to the poor man. Thus ends Schiller's youthful tragedy—a work which, with all its faults, seeks in vain its equal for wild grandeur and sublimity of conception.

The tragedy of "Fiesco" dramatizes the conspiracy of a Genoese noble named Fiesco, who headed a plot for the overthrow of the Dorias, and the deliverance of his native city. His enterprise is brought to a happy issue; but in the hour of his victory Fiesco lusts for the diadem which he had snatched from another. A devoted republican, once his friend, and a member of the same conspiracy, steps between Fiesco and his schemes of usurpation. He first conjures him to desist; and when he fails to extort a promise to that effect, he hurls the ambitious noble one dreary night from a bridge into the waves that ran below.

"Kabale und Liebe," or, Court Intrigue and Love, is a domestic tragedy, and excels in point of feeling anything Schiller ever wrote. It describes the fatal effects of a hopeless passion, and the cruelty of a sordid parent in crossing his son's affection. The event is supposed to take place at a petty court in Germany, and shows what Schiller thought of such places

before he went to Weimar. Ferdinand, the son of a minister of state, has formed an attachment for a person of inferior station, whose name is Louisa Miller. The heroine of the piece, and of the opera founded on it, is the daughter of a musician who had given Ferdinand lessons in playing on the flute. This acquaintance proves highly distasteful to Ferdinand's father, who had destined his son for a very different match. The prince had a lady favourite to dispose of, and it is her hand which is to bless the wayward youth. But the latter indignantly refuses the boon thrust upon him, and nothing can induce him to forsake the chosen of his heart. When everything else has failed to shake his purpose, a diabolical stratagem is set on foot in order to put an end to his obnoxious *liaison*. The honest musician and his wife are arrested; and to get them out of prison, Louisa is persuaded to write and sign a letter in which she represents herself as listening to some discreditable proposals from a court gentleman. When she has put her name under the falsehoods dictated to her, the letter is shown to Ferdinand. He demands in vain an explanation, and is met by Louisa with nothing but evasions,—coupled, however, with her assurance that she is willing to die with him, as she knows their union is hopeless. Her despairing lover attributes these ambiguous answers to a consciousness of her guilt, and in a fit of despondency gives her a dose of poison, while he takes another himself. Too late he learns what base means and what pressure had been employed to extort from her a declaration from which her whole conduct dissented.

We have thought it needless to point out the exaggerations contained in this, no less than in the two preceding tragedies. In their plot, and also in their language, they show a degree of extravagance which is eminently characteristic of a great poet in his younger days. At the same time, the pathos of word and action is sometimes quite overpowering; in fact, it is just the want of sobriety and moderation which makes these tragedies miss the mark of perfection.

The next tragedy, "Don Carlos," was a great improvement on the preceding, although it still contained traces of the old defect. It makes a rapid advance towards the political drama, which was Schiller's true vocation. He took here as his subject the story of the execution of Philip II.'s son, who was accused by his father of two crimes—a secret intrigue with the queen, his step-mother, and siding with the rebellious Dutch. The cruel monarch had taken and wedded the lady who was betrothed to his son, and Don Carlos still retained a lingering affection for his former mistress. He is introduced in Schiller's tragedy as committing repeated indiscretions, in conversations and letters, all of which are duly reported to the king. Besides this offence, he and his friend Don Posa take up the cause of the Dutch against Alba, and Posa becomes imprudently excited in his advocacy of religious toleration and the privileges of the Spanish province. The play ends with the imprisonment of the prince and the death of his friend, who is shot, by order of the king, while he visits the prince in his prison-cell. The fate of the latter is only delayed; and in Philip's last words to the Spanish Grand Inquisitor we are given to understand that his execution was shortly to follow. In this noble drama Schiller has given fine descriptions of the horrors of Philip's reign, the bigotry of his court, the stern cruelty of the monarch, the terrors of the Inquisition, and the savage rigour of Duke Alba. To the prince Don Carlos the poet has given a better character than belonged to him in history, and this was inevitable if he was to be the hero of a tragedy. But the critics are unanimous in finding fault with the invented character of Don Posa; his language, they say, is more like that of a liberal and enthusiastic German, or like the part which Schiller would have taken, had he been there, than like the ideas which one might expect of a Spanish nobleman of the sixteenth century. Probably Schiller found, in the progress of his drama, which was not written all at once, that a personage of a liberal political tendency was required, partly to make a contrast to the rest of Philip's court, partly to bring

the piece to its *dénouement*. Political causes could not be dispensed with to explain the execution of the prince; his intrigue with his stepmother would not itself suffice to justify such a barbarous measure; for as Elizabeth, the queen, remains virtuous, and Don Carlos commits at most but verbal improprieties, which seem all the more excusable when we consider that she had formerly been betrothed to him, the death of the prince for such delinquencies would have been too revolting an exercise of regal or parental authority. The poet was compelled to increase the guilt of his hero by misdemeanors of another kind. To invent these, history showed him the way. In 1568 the prince is reported to have been on the point of escaping to Holland, where he intended to place himself at the head of the insurgents; but his father frustrated his design. Of this incident Schiller made an extensive use, when he remodelled and completed his original sketch of the drama. He let Don Carlos embroil himself in the Dutch rebellion; and to explain his schemes, he gave him a friend who might suggest this policy; this friend was necessarily a Spanish liberal, one of the opponents of Alba, one who sided with the moderate party, and who preferred a more humane *regime* to the atrocities committed by the Duke. Schiller supposed him to have been young and magnanimous, and to have resided two years in Holland, during which time he might well have imbibed some of the notions of religious liberty and political independence which were then so rife among the Dutch. Schiller put, in fact, into his mouth the sentiments which the sight of the struggle then raging in Holland could not but awake in the bosom of any unprejudiced eye-witness. In consideration of all these circumstances, we can excuse a great deal of the enthusiasm of Don Posa; and the error of the dramatist can at most only be that of excess in colouring, but not of totally false delineation of character. In this sense, therefore, we may still claim the tragedy of "Don Carlos" as one of the better and classical dramas of Germany.

When, after a lapse of eleven years, Schiller once more

turned to tragedy, his genius, matured by age, rose at once to the highest degree of excellence and purity. His "Wallenstein" is a masterpiece of dramatic art, both for historical truth and for grandeur of conception. Though of considerable length, the tragedy, or rather the trilogy, preserves throughout great simplicity in its plot, and a happy unity of action, since all the incidents are grouped around one man, whose tragic end was the consequence of his fatal ambition. Led by his mighty aspirations to power, and disgusted with the insane measures and ingratitude of Vienna, the Austrian general is just on the point of forsaking the imperial cause, and taking part with the Swedes, when his treasonable enterprise is thwarted, and his life brought to an untimely close by the daggers of hired assassins. There was in his retinue one Piccolomini, an officer of Italian descent, and formerly a comrade, but afterwards a jealous rival of Wallenstein. In his soul loyalty to the Emperor and hope of promotion had drowned the voice of friendship, and he had long in secret undermined the schemes of his general by a deeply-laid snare for his destruction. At Eger, whither the general had gone with a chosen few, the messengers of Piccolomini surprise Wallenstein just after he has gone to rest. In the dark of night, while all is hushed around the castle, the bloody deed is perpetrated. The details of this scene are brought out with fascinating effect; but the growth of the conspiracy, the characters and motives of the murderers, are also set before us with tragic power. The most attractive personage of the drama is Wallenstein himself. His almost superhuman energy, his sullen, high-souled pride, his unlimited influence over the soldiers, his magnificent generosity, and his credulous faith in astrology, are so many historic, as well as dramatic traits, which since Schiller wrote have been inseparably associated with the name of that general. The army and soldiers of the thirty years' war, and the state of the empire, torn by invasion, religious strife, and private jealousies, are drawn with a masterly

hand. Schiller placed these collateral features of his drama in the two earlier portions of his trilogy, and thus avoided making his tragedy too diffuse. Another episode, and that not the least affecting, is the love of the fiery Max Piccolomini, son to the officer just mentioned, for Thecla, the only daughter of Wallenstein; and although it may surprise at first sight to find love and treachery dwelling closely together under one roof, Schiller has understood how to manage their courtship with equal dignity and probability.

The tragedy of "Mary Stuart" shows that unhappy queen suffering for her Catholic faith, and doing compulsory penance for the sins of her earlier life. The chief charm of this piece is the picture it contains of royalty fallen so low, and bereaved of all hope. Her beauty, her rank, her noble bearing, her resignation, make us forget the levity of Mary's youth; and a powerful emotion of sympathy is the only thought with which we see her, on her last walk, tread the scaffold, and hasten to the termination of her earthly misery.

In his next drama, "The Maid of Orleans," Schiller generously attempted to vindicate the character of Joan of Arc from the scurrilous ridicule of Voltaire. The author of "La Pucelle" had defiled the name of his heroic countrywoman by a satire in which Joan figured as a low courtesan, just as stupidly fanatical and morally debased as a female camp follower and a puppet of rustic superstition ought to be. Neither had Shakspeare done justice to Joan. In his "Henry VI.," Part I., she is represented as a female charlatan, without any high motive, guilty of imposture as well as immorality, and richly deserving her fate, which made her the scoff of the English soldier, as once she had been his terror. The genius of poetry had appeared to Schiller in a loftier guise. He could discern heroism wherever he found it. Whatever national or religious bias he might feel, neither of these was such as to interfere with a just appreciation of the shepherdess of Vaucouleurs. He therefore determined to make Joan of Arc the he-

roine of a tragedy, and to draw her character as that of a woman actuated by a religious patriotism, and firmly persuaded of the divine origin of her mission. This view is at once the most poetical and the most historically true which he could have taken of the Maid of Orleans; and Schiller must stand acquitted of having in any main point falsified the page of history by a picture of fictitious grandeur.

Let us, for a moment, reflect on the achievements of Joan. She roused her king and countrymen from their lethargy; she marched in the front of armies against a foreign foe; she crowned her sovereign at Rheims, and spread dismay among the English before Orleans. Such deeds could not have been accomplished without a corresponding degree of nerve and resolution. There must have been in Joan some moral force which raised her above the vulgar; unless we assume that the law of cause and effect was violated in her case, we must believe that she was stimulated by a powerful and inspired patriotism, which made her rise from her humble station, and enabled her to restore the fortunes as well as the spirit of an utterly disheartened people. That her religious ideas were coloured by the superstitions of her age, is probable enough; that her career was not unchequered by trials and humiliations, is equally probable; it is no less natural that her fortitude should not always preserve its masculine character, but be alloyed with a remnant of softer inclinations. If heroism in a woman is a historical reality, it must be liable to each of these exceptions. Schiller fully discerned all such accessories in the part of the Maid, and gave to each their due weight. His "Johanna" is no savage amazon, or Indian goddess, weltering in blood, and trampling on humanity; she is a meek, a gentle, and devoted virgin, to whom the Queen of Heaven, in whom she believed, had often appeared in her dreams, bidding her to gird on her armour, and bear her banner before the hosts of France, until the foe be expelled. This she thought her heavenly mission, and this mission she accom-

plished. Once, indeed, she seems to falter. The work of blood disgusts the maiden, when an English prisoner, the youthful Lionel, should have died by her hands, as many had done before. A womanly sympathy steals over her heart, and for a moment the touch of mortal affection seems to enter her martial breast; it is but for a moment. After a brief struggle of conflicting emotions, Joan returns to her self-imposed task. Yet she is conscious that her doom is near; the cruel imputations of some of her own friends contribute to damp her spirits. Her father, Thibaut, had come into the camp, and accused her of witchcraft. Johanna hears the charge in dumb silence, and determines to seek her death in battle. With this last event Schiller's tragedy ends, though he lets his heroine die under circumstances different from those found in history. The ignominious execution of the Maid did not suit the laws of tragic justice, and would have given too violent a shock to the feelings of a theatrical audience. The poet, therefore, determined to let his Johanna die from wounds received in battle, after a feat of superhuman valour, as she suddenly breaks her prison-chains in the English camp, and rescues her king from imminent danger.

The "Bride of Messina" was an attempt to introduce the Greek chorus on the German stage. This tragedy is simple in conception, and, like most of Schiller's latter compositions, distinguished by the gorgeous beauty of its diction. The choral odes inserted in it rather depart from their ancient type, especially as there are two choruses; but though so far the attempt was unsuccessful, the piece is replete with beauties of a high order. The story is that of the two Sicilian brothers, who are actuated by implacable hatred of each other, and who fall in love with the same maiden, without knowing that she was their sister. She had been removed from the royal palace by her mother, and was educated in a retired place, because it had been prophesied that she would prove a cause of discord and destruction to the princes of Messina; but no sooner is

she discovered by the two brothers, than she excites in each a similar flame, and their old jealousy breaks out with redoubled fury. One is killed; the other flees from Messina, never to return.

“William Tell” is not only the latest, but the best production of Schiller, though others prefer his “Wallenstein.” The subject of this drama is the struggle of the Swiss against their Austrian oppressors, and their final deliverance from a foreign yoke. Few tragedies can show a more happy blending of history with poetic invention. The sources from which Schiller drew his information were the chronicle of Tschudi, and the history of J. Müller. The majority of the traits and incidents of the drama can be traced back to either or both of these authors. We are from the outset transferred to the scenery of the Alps—to the lakes, the chamois, the shepherds, and the huntsmen of Switzerland; and this topographical fidelity, clad in such charming colours, is the more wonderful, as Schiller was a perfect stranger to the scenes which he describes. We are delighted also with true pictures of old Swiss manners—of the piety, simplicity, and heroism of this sturdy race, of their indomitable courage in defence of freedom, and their bold self-devotion in resisting the injustice of their tyrants. The daring exploits of Tell, the erection as well as the final demolition of the state prison in Uri, the blinding of old Baumgarten, the conspiracy on the Rütli, the encounter of Tell with Gessler, the deaths of the three governors, and the appearance of the parricide who slew the Emperor, are all grand and masterly scenes. We should not like to miss any one of them, nor can we pronounce a single one irrelevant to the plot of the tragedy. Some critics, indeed, have held the contrary opinion, and would strike out one half of these scenes, as extraneous to the story of William Tell. But we have no hesitation in asserting that Schiller understood the principles of his dramatic art much better than these critics. It is a fatal mistake to measure Schiller’s political drama by the standard

of the Shakspearian stage-art, and to overlook that the German theatre, from its radical difference in kind and design, cannot possibly accommodate itself to the restrictions of those tragedies which merely dramatize individual achievement. The struggle of a people against its oppressors is an eminently dramatic event; but to represent it well on the theatre, a wider range and a more extensive economy must be allowed to the poet who undertakes its delineation than is allotted to scenic exhibitions of mere private exploits. Let us for a moment suppose Schiller had acted upon the suggestion of these critics, and had introduced his "William Tell" in the more isolated attitude of a Shakspearian hero. The result would have been alike fatal to the poetic effect, and repugnant to the historic truth of his story. His tragedy would have dwindled down to the proportions of a bloody fray between a huntsman and his magistrate. The grand spectacle of the popular rising would have been lost sight of. The triumph of the national cause would have been obliterated by a secondary private squabble; and, to crown the absurdity of such a performance, Schiller would have either suppressed the political significance of Tell's heroism, or else misrepresented him as the accidental deliverer of an indifferent and apathetic population.

Schiller's Minor Poems.—Of the lyrical compositions of the German master, none is more renowned than "The Song of the Bell," which alone would have sufficed to immortalize his name. This poem sings of the great drama of life, and the thoughts are suggested by the founding of a bell. As church bells are conventionally connected with every scene and stage of human existence, so they have ever proved a fruitful theme for lyrical poetry. They herald the birth of man, they peal in joyous tones at his wedding, and, when the last scene of life concludes, they toll his epilogue. They also call the congregation, they give warning of a fire, they sound in times of war, and they are pulled by the hands of an insurgent mob. These ideas have been expressed by Schiller with an art and a talent

which will make his song for ever a favourite piece with all who relish the poetical aspects of life. A similarly philosophical poem is "The Walk," which expresses in elegiacs the meditations of the poet while strolling on a country highroad. Here the progress of the human race is his theme, as in the preceding poem it was the lot and history of the single man. The rural cottage, the turreted town, the churchyard epitaph, the busy factory, and the thronged port, awaken in the poet a series of reflections on the pursuits of mankind and the stages of their social progress. Schiller's "Pilgrim" expresses beautifully the longings of his soul for happiness and virtue, and tells in mournful accents his regret that both are so imperfectly realized on earth. His "Three Words of Faith" give us some insight into the poet's religious opinions, which, if not strictly orthodox, were yet those of a devout and earnest mind. Nor must we forget to mention his stirring ballads, the true household poetry of the German nation. It almost exceeds belief what a degree of popularity these ballads have attained among the countrymen of Schiller. The punster and the gazetteer, the schoolboy and the orator, the actor and the drawing-room critic, all know by heart and quote their immortal lines. Dramatic and truly heroic action, vivid descriptions, fervid feeling, and glowing passion, are their distinguishing traits. The most remarkable are "The Diver," "The Combat with the Dragon," "The Glove," "Knight Toggenburg," "Hero and Leander," "The Cranes of Ibycus," and "The Walk to the Forges." With various subjects taken from history or ancient traditions, they describe the power of friendship and love, or the eternal compensations of the moral law, which ever avenges the wrong, and saves the innocent.

CHAPTER IX.

FOURTH PERIOD—THE CLASSICAL ERA. GÖTTE.

Life of Göthe.—Johann Wolfgang Göthe (1749-1832) was a native of Frankfurt-on-the-Maine, and son of an imperial councillor in easy circumstances. From the earliest infancy he gave many indications of a keen and precocious intellect, and entered at seventeen on his collegiate studies at Leipzig, where Gottsched, Ernesti, and Gellert were then still in the apogee of their glory. Young Göthe soon wearied of logic and jurisprudence, and turned his attention chiefly to the fine arts, chemistry, and botany. But even such favourite pursuits could not equal in attractions the charms of certain lady friends of his acquaintance; and, to tell briefly the story of his life, Göthe—peace be with his ashes—was from eighteen to eighty a fickle admirer of the fair; and, “O mutatam fidem!” is the irresistible reflection suggested to the biographer who glances at each successive period of his earthly being. The first on the list was a Fräulein Schönkopf. She parted with the poet, after but little heart-breaking, to marry a physician. Our young Adonis, taking it very much to heart, left Leipzig, idled, became ill, lingered at home, and then resumed his studies in another university. He went to Strasburg, which was then a French town, inhabited by Germans. Here he met Herder, who was detained in the city by an attack of ophthalmia. One or two more passing attachments soon effaced every recollection of the first. The last was formed with Frederika, the daughter of a pastor in Sesenheim, a village close by Strasburg. Fortunately these flirtations did not interfere with the progress of his studies; for in 1771 he took his degree as Doctor of Laws, and returned home to his parents. During the next four years, which coincided with the “Sturm und Drang” period of German literature, Göthe established his reputation

as an author. He wrote and published a drama, entitled "Götz von Berlichingen, surnamed Iron-hand," in which he delineated, with broad outline and historic colouring, the turbulent conduct of an old German baron, who carried his knightly malpractices to such an extent, that his emperor and his more powerful neighbours were compelled to imprison him, after a desperate struggle, and would have executed him for his turbulence, had not the timely death of Götz anticipated their sentence. This drama appeared in 1773, and thus was later than Lessing's "Minna" by ten years, while it preceded Schiller's first tragedy by eight. The extraordinary applause with which it was greeted by the public is not so much due to the high merits of the production itself as to the circumstance that it was the first attempt at dramatizing incidents and characters of German history. In the person of Götz the ancient Ritter seemed to rise from their grave; and the gorgeous display of mock heroism and mediæval pageantry with which he was surrounded reminded the Germans of their brilliant ancestry. Hence the play was followed by numerous imitations; chivalrous novels and dramas flooded the market for several years. In the mean time Göthe, who had accepted a temporary engagement at a tribunal in Wetzlar, came out with a new book of a totally different character. This was his sentimental novel, "The Sorrows of Werther." It told, under the fictitious name of Werther, the misfortunes of a young man whose real name was Jerusalem, and whose suicide, in consequence of an unsuccessful passion for a young lady, who became the wife of another, caused at that time considerable sensation. Charlotte, or Lottchen, the cruel fair one of the story, was the daughter of the burgomaster of Wetzlar, and had by the advice of her parents married a Mr. Kestner, while she merely treated her less fortunate adorer with a kind and friendly regard. But Jerusalem, if we may call him by his true name, thought this too hard to be borne; and as disappointed ambition lent additional bitterness to the sting of un-

requited affection, he coolly determined to destroy himself, and carried out this resolution with the utmost composure, after writing several letters, in which he exculpated every other party concerned in his love adventure. Göthe was personally acquainted with the Kestners, and knew also Jerusalem. He was thus enabled to complete, from their letters and what else he had heard, the tale of Werther—an epistolary novel, which contained the story and the confessions of Jerusalem before he ended his life from despair at the ill success of his love addresses. It happened that at that time sentimental novels were quite the fashion, and consequently the “Sorrows of Werther” became the rage of the day to an unprecedented degree. The ladies pitied his fate, and shed tears over his story. The lovers sighed à la Werther, and contemplated blowing out their brains so soon as their affections should be crossed. The book was also translated into French and English. Meanwhile the author of this literary excitement professed to smile at the sensation he had produced. He stated what was a fact, that he had written the novel in three days, and treated it as a mere *jeu d’esprit*, which none but fools could mistake for a serious commendation of the *radical cure system*. He also thought it his duty to apologize to Mrs. Kestner for having given so much publicity to a painful episode of her life; and after some comments from her husband on the indiscretion he had committed, he found no difficulty in obtaining both his and her pardon. The sensation about Werther had not yet subsided, when Göthe appeared with a new production. He discovered a new style just as easily as he discovered a new mistress. The species of composition he now lighted upon was common life tragedy. “Clavigo,” and shortly after “Stella,” belong to this period of his life. The former was founded on an event of contemporary history, and gathered from a French *mémoire*. Clavigo, or rather Clavijo, was a young Spanish author in Madrid. He had courted and subsequently deserted a French lady living there, who was sister to the comic poet, Beaumarchais.

The latter had expostulated with Clavijo on his faithlessness; and, hurrying from Paris to the Spanish capital, had fought a duel with the traitor, and wounded him. Not satisfied with this revenge, Beaumarchais had disgraced Clavijo publicly at court, and procured his dismissal from a lucrative post. On these facts Göthe founds his tragedy of "Clavijo." But, to render the *dénouement* more tragic, he lets Marie die of a broken heart; Clavijo comes in accidentally at her funeral, and Beaumarchais kills him over her coffin. The play thus describes a funeral turning into a duelling scene, and an Ophelia with a Hamlet killed by a Laertes. The tragedy of "Stella" is another disappointed love story, in which a most amiable husband suddenly turns out to be but a cold-hearted bigamist, and a cruel deceiver of his loving wife. It was fortunate that Göthe abandoned this style of writing, as neither its theme nor its execution can command any high admiration. But we must pursue the thread of his own story, in which there comes now a change to a different kind of life. The author of "Werther" resided at that time chiefly at Frankfurt, with his parents. Here he paid marked attention to the daughter of a wealthy banker, whose name was Schönemann. Although the courtship between him and Lili (for that was her pet name) went on for several years, the result was as unsatisfactory as it had been in all the preceding instances. The poet was then a young man of twenty-six, and possessed of extraordinary beauty; perhaps the very circumstance that he found himself so universally acknowledged as the favourite of the fair, as well as the pride of his parents, and the beau of the city, contributed to make him more supercilious in his admiration for others. It happened that just in that year the young Grand-Duke of Saxe-Weimar came through Frankfurt, on his way home from a wedding tour. He had just been married at Karlsruhe. This prince had previously seen Göthe, and entertained a high opinion of his talents as an author. As he felt the want of intellectual society at his petty court, and

was captivated with Göthe's manners, personal appearance, and literary frame, he proposed to the young poet to accompany him to Weimar; and after a temporary visit, he invited him to stay with him altogether. This proposal was accepted, and thus, from 1775 down to his death, in 1832, Göthe resided in the vicinity of the ducal palace, either in the garden-house of the Weimar park, or in his villa at Ilmenau, or in a private mansion in the Frauenplan, a street of Weimar. He stood to his patron in the relation of a friend, rather than a dependant; for Göthe drew from the ducal coffers only a salary of between 1200 and 1400 thalers, in compensation for his services as a councillor or minister of state, while he possessed a much larger income from his private resources. As his duties were not arduous, we might have expected that Göthe would now have devoted increased attention to his literary labours; but quite the reverse was the case. For the space of nearly eleven years he published nothing; he either travelled with the duke or discharged his official duties, or he amused himself in the company of Frau von Stein, the divorced wife of a gentleman of the Weimar court, who fascinated the poet by her elegant manners, her beauty, and her accomplishments. It was not until after his Italian travels, between 1786 and 1788, that Göthe was roused from his lethargy by the triumphs and rising fame of Schiller, who in the mean time bade fair to obscure Göthe's reputation, by his newly-published dramas and other poems. During and after this journey he wrote his best works, the sketches of which had long been lying in his desk. The tragedies of "Iphigenia," "Egmont," and "Tasso," were now either retouched, or the wanting portions of their text completed. After having spent two years in Italy, chiefly in Rome and in Naples, he also gave to the world, in 1790, his greatest work—the first part of "Faust." Subsequently his genius employed itself also in novels, which are, on the whole, his least happy productions. The most noteworthy is "The Apprenticeship of Wilhelm Meister," continued afterwards in

“Meister’s Years of Travel.” The interest of these novels does not consist in their narrative, since the stories contained in them are but very subordinate. What they really do contain is Göthe’s views on a variety of topics, such as the theatre, education, the female character, and the functions and destinies of man and woman; all these are considered from an artistic and intellectual, rather than a moral point of view. The stage-player Meister is usually the vehicle of the author’s own opinions on these subjects. He is an enthusiastic actor, but at last abjures the histrionic profession as below his dignity. Still he cannot make up his mind to any other vocation, and vacillates in the choice of an occupation, just as he wavers in his choice of a partner for life. Among the female characters of the novel, the most interesting is Mignon, a devoted, earnest, and ethereal virgin, born in Italy, and ever longing for the country of her birth. It is she who sings the famous lines: “Kennst du das Land, wo die Citronen blühen?” which Lord Byron imitated, and Beethoven set to music. Mignon knew not who were her parents, and an unexplained mystery shrouds her descent in darkness. When she is dead, the veil is lifted, and her friends discover, to their horror, that she was the offspring of an unnatural marriage.

In the year 1792 Göthe made a military campaign. The Austrians and Prussians were invading France, in order to assist or restore the dethroned Louis XVI. As the troops of Weimar joined those of Prussia, Göthe accompanied the Grand Duke in the rear of the allied army. The expedition procured him neither amusement nor glory, and he was glad to go back, in order to finish his witty fable of “Reineke the Fox.” Soon after commenced his intimacy with Schiller. The two poets often consulted each other on the plan and probable effect of their literary works, and also contributed to the two journals which they jointly edited. Their correspondence ceased in 1799, when Schiller settled altogether in Weimar.

The last great production of Göthe’s mind was his charming

pastoral, "Hermann und Dorothea," written about 1797. Whatever was written by him subsequently to this was not equal to his earlier productions. Neither his contributions to optics and botany, nor his frigid novel, "Elective Affinities," nor his Autobiography, nor the second part of "Faust," are at all comparable with his earlier writings. The author's mind was much harassed in this period by both domestic and political calamities. Schiller had died in 1805; and Göthe, nearly a sexagenarian, was much distressed at seeing himself without genial society at home, as well as without a recognised sharer of his household. Frau von Stein still smiled on him, but she could never be more to him than a friend, and was now more than seventy. Great then was the surprise of the public when, in the midst of the turmoil of the Prusso-French campaign, while the battle of Jena was raging at a distance of but fifteen miles, and as the roar of cannon announced to the Weimarese one of the most disastrous days of their fatherland, Göthe, the ducal councillor and the poet courtier, suddenly abjured celibacy, and married his house-keeper, Christiana Vulpius. The circumstances which led to this act need not be detailed here. They must have been of a nature to make Göthe regret his fastidiousness, which prevented him from entering on the matrimonial tie in an earlier stage of his life. Only a few days after this event the French broke into the city. The duke had fled, and the soldiery plundered the castle, as well as portions of the town; even Göthe's house was visited by a few French soldiers, who helped themselves politely to his wine and other commodities. Not long after, the peace of Tilsit restored tranquillity; and in 1808 Napoleon held at Erfurt a great meeting with the Czar, and several German princes. Among others the Grand Duke, and subsequently Göthe, were introduced to the Emperor of the French. Napoleon conversed with Göthe for fully an hour, and during their conversation questioned him about a passage in his "Werther." A few days after he even paid a visit to

Weimar, when a ball was given in the ducal palace, and both Göthe and Wieland received some French decorations. This time was one of particular gloom for the social circle of Weimar no less than for the rest of Germany. Göthe had resigned his functions as a councillor, probably because he saw his patron's treasury too exhausted to pay for any but the most necessary services. It was not until some time after the battle of Leipzig, when the French were totally expelled from Germany, that Göthe resumed his former post. In 1816 he became Prime Minister of Saxe Weimar, and retained that office till his death. For the last sixteen years of his life he enjoyed unclouded happiness. Praise and compliments were showered on him by both high and low. The excessive admiration paid to Göthe may to some extent excuse the occasional assumption which became observable in his conduct. His wife had died in 1816; and though he was now a septuagenarian, he had not done with the fair sex. He captivated, perhaps unintentionally, several young ladies, such as Fräulein Lewezow and others, who would not be satisfied until they had chatted familiarly with the great man, and were on the watch for every opportunity for getting from him, first a kind look, then some friendly word, next some verses for their album, and at last perhaps some caresses. Although the Geheimrath von Göthe now wore silvery hair, he still walked erect, and preserved his personal beauty as well as his mental vigour up to within a very short period before his death. In 1828 the Grand Duke went to his rest, and four years after the illustrious author followed him.

It is no easy task to appreciate duly either the character or the writings of a man like Göthe; and the brevity of the present sketch only increases the danger of saying either too much or too little on this head. All are agreed that Göthe was a gentleman of the most polished manners, a thinker of the highest order, and a profound critic of works of art. Notwithstanding the faults with which he has been taxed — such as an undue

self-complacency in social intercourse, too much indifference to public questions and politics, and fickleness or irresolution in his dealings with women—one fact is quite undeniable, that he produced an extraordinary impression wherever he appeared. The veneration with which he was treated, not only by Germans but also by strangers, can only be explained on the supposition that, in addition to his literary endowments, he was a person of highly prepossessing and truly dazzling qualifications both of mind and body. At present, when the generation of those who knew him personally is dying out, Göthe's fame must rest exclusively on his merits as a writer. These merits are high enough to secure him a lasting place in the memory of future ages, even after the impression of his person has faded away. The distinguishing feature of his writings is their great originality, and the amount of true and profound observations which they contain. His intellect was peculiarly impressionable, and combined with its receptive capacity a great talent for rendering and communicating any impressions which he had received. To say that his mind was like a mirror to nature and society would be but partly true, and would require an important qualification. In both the physical and the moral world Göthe selected for his observation certain favourite phenomena, namely, those of a simple embryonic or elementary character; while he seldom entered into the more compound, the practical, or fully developed features of either. Just as his scientific labours were engaged in analyzing vegetation, colours, or chemical substances, whereas they left the real and complex machinery of life and nature quite untouched; so in his novels, lyrics, and dramas, he traced the effect of instinct in the actions of mankind, to the exclusion of the effects of matured will and reason. Göthe's writings offer profound remarks on all that is most *naïve*, most original, and most unaffected in the amorous, the religious, the speculative, and the artistic propensities of man. He aimed not so much at improving his contemporaries by stern lessons

of morality, but rather at refining them by cultivating their tastes, and raising them to a better appreciation of the beautiful. Beauty with Göthe meant nature, undisguised, unvarnished, and pure. Hence he applied himself especially to decipher our spontaneous likings and dislikes; he often drew pictures of uncontrolled inclinations, as in his "Werther" and in his "Faust;" and he noted with predilection those hidden and unsophisticated traits which spring with native force from the innermost recesses of the soul, before yet fashion and interest, calculation or social prescription, have exerted their influence. As Göthe pre-eminently observed the force of instinct, he touched less than Schiller on the public spheres of life. The manlier and maturer passions are, on the whole, less his forte. The same poet who described the scruples of the Sceptic, or the ravings of a love-sick youth,—who told the disappointments of the idealizing artist, or the simplicity of an innocent maiden,—could not also describe the natural history of the coarser passions, relate the strife of public factions, or the toils of ambition, descant on the collision of duty and private advantage, or follow up the success or failure of any of the more practical aspirations of man. This has had the effect of depriving Göthe's novels and dramas of much of the stirring action which they might otherwise have possessed, and has caused that prevalence of the lyrical and pathetic over the purely dramatic or strictly narratory which is observable in almost all his works. Still they offer a sufficient harvest of beauty and originality to place his name in the front rank of the master minds of all nations and ages. In Mr. G. H. Lewes Göthe has found a biographer who dealt lightly with his faults as a man, but severely with his faults as an author.

Göthe's Drama.—The first tragedy of Göthe, composed in his twenty-fourth year, was written at a time when the German stage was quite in its infancy, and when, with the exception of "Minna von Barnhelm," not a single play of any merit had yet appeared before the public. The new rules on

dramatic art had, however, just been propounded by Lessing in his "Dramaturgie," and the first performance of Göthe illustrated, in many respects, the laws laid down by that great critic. Among other excellent observations, Lessing had asserted that a dramatic poet was likely to succeed best when he chose his heroes among the ancestors of his own nation; and Göthe was probably acting on this advice when he determined to select a Franconian knight of the beginning of the sixteenth century as the subject of his historico-political drama of "Götz." The tragedy was intended to set before the spectator the evil consequences of feudal turbulence, as exemplified in the conduct and fate of this knight. There is a memoir of Götz, or Gottfried von Berlichingen, written by himself; and from what we can gather from this and other sources, he must have been a true specimen of a quarrelsome, fighting baron, in the Robin Hood style. His contemporaries gave him the surname of Iron-hand, because he had lost his right hand in battle, and wore in the place of it a metal glove, which he could use almost as though it had been a hand of flesh and bone. Götz was constantly at variance with his neighbours; either he besieged them, or else they besieged him. He seldom left the saddle, only sleeping when he was beleaguered, and then only in full armour. With his impulsive vehemence and pugnacious propensities he combined many excellent qualities, such as uprightness and veracity, affection for his family, devotion to his friends, kindness to his inferiors, and a certain degree of loyalty to his emperor. But wo to the traveller who crossed his path at the wrong hour, or to the imprudent one who had incensed his anger! No town, no road, no private demesne was secure from his invasions. The tragedy opens with preparations for waylaying, in Haslach forest, a knight of the neighbourhood—Weislingen by name. This knight had personally done Götz no harm; he was even an old acquaintance of his; but Götz had lately begun to hate him, as a retainer to the bishop of Bamberg, a mighty prelate

in the vicinity. This bishop had seized a squire of Götz, on some pretence or other, and Götz now retaliated by seizing his retainer. His ambuscade is perfectly successful; he has five men, the other has but three; he is prepared for action, the other is not; and so poor Weislingen is carried off to Jaxthausen, the castle, or rather the den, of the knightly robber. In the progress of the tragedy Götz commits another atrocious outrage. Thirty Nürnberg merchants, subjects of another prelate—the bishop of Mayence—come home from Leipzig fair. Götz had a feud with this bishop also, and so he waylays the merchants; and as they offer a stout resistance to save their lives and their property, he maims two of them in a frightful manner. This act, however, was more than, even in those lawless times, the people could brook. The two mutilated merchants carry their complaint before the Emperor Maximilian, who feels himself compelled to outlaw the baron, and pronounces over him the ban of the empire. A troop of soldiers is sent against him, but Götz meets them in a pitched battle, defeats the messengers of justice, and only surrenders, after a desperate siege, to a three times larger number of assailants. Next, Götz is tried at Heilbronn by the imperial town-councillors; but with characteristic impetuosity he first defies, then threatens, and at last actually assaults his judges. He would have paid dearly for his conduct had not, just in that moment, a brother knight and friend of Götz broken into the town-hall, and once more set free his boisterous comrade; but this respite could only be of short duration. Though Götz throws himself into the arms of the insurgent gypsies and peasants, he is finally seized, and once more lodged in Heilbronn gaol; his faithful wife and sister attend him there, and console him in his last days. While the sentence of death was hanging over his head, Götz died in the tower, lamenting in his last words the downfall of knighthood and the suppression of the practices, which he had thought the best sport of a free baron. Such are the principal inci-

dents of this composition, which Mr. Lewes has rather severely called, "not a drama, but a dramatic chronicle," because it represented a "whole epoch," and not a passion; and a succession of episodes, rather than a single, connected action. It is quite true that the tragedy is overcrowded with incidents, and contains too many local and scenic changes. It shares this peculiarity with many Shakspearian dramas, which are not for that reason condemned, though, like Göthe's "Götz," they are not suited for scenic representation. Still, it should be admitted that the picture of the turbulent knight is beautifully drawn; and that all the episodes lead to the same result—the imprisonment and death of the quarrelsome baron. A few scenes only seem extraneous to the main object of the play, and others are too roughly sketched, or only narrated.

The next drama of Göthe was written about thirteen years after the first, and differs so entirely from it, that one should hardly believe them to be the work of the same author. "Iphigenia in Tauris" is an imitation of Greek tragedy, and proposes to revive, in form, plot, and language, the drama of Sophocles, or Euripides. The subject is the well-known story of Iphigenia, the daughter of Agamemnon, who, during her residence among the Scythians of the Tauric Chersonese, was accidentally visited by Orestes and Pylades, and disobeyed the order she had received of offering them as a sacrifice to Diana; thereby she got into difficulties with the king of the country, but yet finally succeeded in escaping with her friends from the land of the strangers. In this attempted revival of the Grecian style, Göthe made it his principal care to give a dignified picture of the noble self-devotion of Iphigenia. As she had done before at the sacrifice in Aulis, the young priestess exposes again her life and future, for the sake of her family ties and her religious duties. She declines the marriage proposals of the Scythian chieftain, braves his anger when commanded to slaughter her brother, and finally obtains from the king, by her prayers, both Orestes and her own delive-

rance. The opinions of the critics are divided as to the success of the experiment of reviving the antique. Schlegel pronounced the imitation a good one, and sustained his criticism by pointing to the simplicity of the plot, to the dignified tone of the dialogue, and to the preservation of the Greek religion, as well as to the many other traits of ancient manners occurring in the tragedy. His judgment was first called into question by Monsieur Patin, a French writer on the Greek drama, who compared Göthe's "Iphigenia" with that of Euripides, and impugned the antique character of the German tragedy. The same side was latterly taken by Mr. Lewes, who stigmatized the work of Göthe as a failure so far as it professed to imitate the antique, but had no objection to call it a thoroughly German drama of a tolerable degree of merit. That "Iphigenia" was even in Göthe's opinion no *complete* imitation of classical tragedy, the absence of the Greek chorus would be sufficient to prove; but Mr. Lewes extends his remarks much further; he finds fault with the work of Göthe for the deficiency of stirring incidents, the want of action and conflicting passions, the too moralizing tone of the discourse, and the too humane and Christian-like motives put into the mouths, not only of the Greek priestess, but the ferocious Scythian. Some of these reproaches are just, while others are exaggerated. Among the rest, Mr. Lewes asserts that Iphigenia's compassion for human victims is a non-antique trait, and constitutes actually a "rebellion against a religious rite." But, to say no more of the divine prevention of the sacrifice in Aulis, Mr. Lewes might have remembered that in Greek tragedy this practice is distinctly denounced, or at all events represented as cruel. In Euripides' "Hecuba" (v. 260) a part of the captive queen's appeal is based upon the same aversion to human victims.

Göthe's "Egmont" is a tragedy conceived in the style of Schiller, but distinguished chiefly, not by pictures of public virtue, but by more homely scenes of a deep and moving

pathos. The subject is the martyrdom of the Dutch Count, who was executed by Duke Alba for having countenanced Protestantism and popular agitation. The hero is, however, principally brought forward in his private, and not so much in his political capacity. In order the more strongly to excite our compassion for the victim of Spanish tyranny, the poet represents Egmont in the full enjoyment of every pleasure and blessing which can lend life a charm. He is the idol of the populace; he is possessed of wealth, rank, and beauty; his heart is swelled by an overweening confidence in his own security; he is in the prime of manhood, and the object of an enthusiastic love on the part of Clara, or Clärchen, a burgher's daughter, who rejected the addresses of another suitor, in favour of Egmont. But all these earthly possessions serve only to give greater poignancy to the bitterness of his fall; the storm gathers imperceptibly, while the victim does not heed it. The mild government of Marguerite of Parma is superseded by the cruel administration of Alba, and yet Egmont makes no preparation for quitting Brussels. The prudent Orange warns him of his danger, and conjures him to fly; but the infatuated man still lingers on the brink of the abyss. At last comes the scene of his arrest. The Spanish governor treacherously decoys him into his palace, and converses with him in a tone of deep dissimulation, while the antechamber is filling with his armed satellites. When the moment arrives, he provokes the resentment of the Dutch Count. The other becomes impatient, and rises to take his leave, when, on a sudden, the soldiers bar his passage, and, with a sigh for Orange and his counsels, the patriot surrenders his sword, and is hurried off to his dungeon. At the news of this disaster consternation reigns throughout the city. A black scaffold is seen being erected on the market-place, and the report gains ground that it presages the execution of the public favourite. At the sight of such horrors, the agonizing soul of Clärchen rouses itself to deeds of heroism. Accom-

panied by Brackenburg, her old suitor, who would not leave her, she rushes through the town, and calls the people to arms. But the bayonets of Alba's soldiery awe the populace, and in a fit of utter despair, she commits self-destruction. The last scene shows Egmont lying in a trance. He beholds Clara, his departed friend, raised to heaven as the genius of liberty, when he awakens, and is led off to the scaffold. Such is an outline of this tragedy, which combines extraordinary pathos in several of its scenes with a feeble *dénouement* and defective technical and scenic arrangements.

Göthe's "Tasso" represents the author of "Gerusalemme Liberata," while engaged in an unsuccessful love-affair with the sister of his patron and duke. At the court of Alphonso of Ferrara, where he lived, Torquato Tasso is made to feel that, notwithstanding the high distinctions heaped on him, an insuperable barrier separates him from the family of his sovereign. A prudent minister of state intimates to the court-poet that he ought not to overlook the distance of rank and dignity which lies between him and the Princess Leonora. Stung by his remarks, Tasso challenges the councillor; but the interference of the duke compels him to sheathe his sword. After considerable displays of eloquence and feeling, on the part of all concerned, it is agreed that Tasso shall leave Ferrara, and sigh abroad for the princely prize he coveted. He yields with the proud conviction that the poet's laurel which graces his brow will conceal and overshadow the traces of his unrequited affection. This drama, if so we can call a succession of smoothly versified dialogues, is peculiarly wanting in action; it was probably intended as a poetical compliment to the Weimar court, as all the characters in the play are represented in the brightest colours, and their frigid declamation dwells exclusively on the decorum of court-life and the worth of poetry. The Grand Duke had a sister, but there is no evidence that Göthe ever stood to her in the same relation as Tasso to Leonora.

The greatest monument of Göthe's genius is his "Faust," which was sketched as early as 1774, published in part in 1790, and completed in 1831. This tragedy is founded on the old legend, according to which Dr. Faust, desirous to penetrate the mysteries of the supernatural world, gave up his soul to the devil, who visited him in the shape of a black dog (see page 74). Out of this popular tradition Göthe has made a tragedy full of meaning and interest, although it does not keep within the ordinary functions and limits of a drama. He modernized the friar of the legend into a Professor of the University of Leipzig, and ascribed to him thoughts and motives which are likely to be met with in a modern *savant* of Germany. The part of the Tempter he personified in the cynical satirist Mephistopheles, whom he surrounded with a retinue of witches, spirits, and demons, from the ancient German mythology. The play opens with a prelude, of which the scene is in heaven, and where, in the usual manner of the old Easter plays, the temptation of "Faust" is resolved upon. The devil obtains leave from the Almighty to pervert that mortal from the path of virtue. Next we are introduced to the studio of the doctor, who presents the image of a very learned, but a very unhappy man. From his soliloquies the several causes of his discontentment gradually transpire. Faust is leading a lonely bachelor's life in the prison walls of his college cell; besides, he is dissatisfied with his vocation, because it forces him to teach things which he does not understand—to proclaim as the truth a shallow counterfeit, a mere mockery of knowledge, intended only to hide its own emptiness, and distasteful to the teacher himself; but harder than social isolation, harder than ungratified thirst for knowledge, presses on him the consciousness of his religious unbelief; he has broken with the faith of his youth; Theology, though he studied it hard and manfully, has only increased his doubts; the consolations of popular religion are lost on him, the hardened Sceptic; and yet, with all his contempt for established creeds, he feels a

deep, an irresistible craving for the supernatural. He spurns the miraculous in the guise of ecclesiastic injunction, but he yearns for it in the shape of individual revelation. Thus he supplied, by the pursuit of magic, the gap which religion had left; he pores over the books of the ancient magicians, and indoctrinates himself with the witchcraft of a Nostradamus.

Such is the state of his mind, when one Easter morning Faust takes a walk with Wagner, a college friend. While exhibiting to his companion the doubts which were then harassing his mind, he notices a black poodle dog approaching. The animal wheels around them, and continues to approach in closer and yet closer orbits. Sparks of fire are seen to mark his footsteps; and when at last he has come near to the astonished pair, he crouches at the feet of Faust, whines, extends his paws, and thus fawningly acknowledges him for his master. Faust's dull companion can see in him nothing but a common dog, "as other dogs there be;" but he himself, being deeply versed in magic, detects, under the poodle's shaggy coat, something supernatural. He takes the animal home, shuts him in his study, and tries on him all the arts which the ancient sorcerer Nostradamus recommends in such cases. Soon the dog changes his form; he assumes several portentous shapes, till at length, from behind the stove, with a gracious bow, out steps Mephistopheles. "Wherefore this fuss?—what do you, Sir, command?" says he to Faust, who, with curiosity, examines his skeleton form and cloven foot. Thus commences Faust's acquaintance with the devil; the bond is sealed, and in his own blood he signs away his soul, on condition that Mephistopheles shall procure him every earthly gratification, and all the joys of body or soul which he may wish for. Accordingly, Faust is made young again by a magic draught; and, bidding a long farewell to books and crucibles, he starts upon his adventures, attended by his new companion. Neither moral scruple, nor a wish for repose, can stay his onward progress; he longs for the recreations which he had so long abjured;

and as the former overstraining of his intellectual faculties had failed to give him happiness, he is prepared to seek it elsewhere, even though it be in the pursuit of sensual gratification.

First they fall among a band of gay, young, reckless students, whom the poet has depicted with somewhat stronger colouring than really belongs to the German academicians. They sit together in Auerbach's cellar, at Leipzig, and think of nothing but drinking, quizzing, rioting, duelling, and dissipation. Tiring of their boisterous merriment, Faust is led to encounter the witches, who compound for him a love-filter, by drinking which he becomes enamoured with a beauteous maid, whose image rises before his eye. The fair form thus represented then meets him in person; this is Marguerite, or Gretchen, the heroine of the most affecting episode of the tragedy. We shall not enter into the details of their love adventure, especially as they are so commonly known. The passion of Faust is vehement and brief; and even before it has quite subsided, he craves again for other enjoyments. At one time he visits with Mephistopheles the Blocksberg, the fabulous resort of the denizens of Fairyland; at another he resumes his botanical studies. There are moments when he rues his bargain with the devil, and vents his deep despair on his sneering companion. The death of Gretchen concludes the first part of the tragedy.

The second part is but a feeble composition; it contains Faust's adventures in the domain of science, art, court life, and politics. The story is obscured by the introduction of allegorical and symbolical characters; written when Göthe was eighty-two years old, it shows throughout that the clearness of view which the author possessed in his younger years had totally abandoned him in his old age, as but seldom a passable scene, or even a rational dramatic dialogue, is offered to the reader who has patience enough to look for them. Attempts have, however, been made by commentators to find their way

through the labyrinth, but with doubtful success. At the end Faust expires, while engaged in drying up marshes and digging a harbour. Mephistopheles seizes his prey, and wishes to enforce the contract on which he had lent his services; but the angelic hosts appear, and carry off Faust to heaven, where he meets Gretchen, and is absorbed in supernatural beatitude.

Thus ends the greatest composition of Göthe, a succession of dramatic or semi-dramatic scenes of the most opposite degrees of merit. The palpable weakness, not to say the absurdity, of the more visionary portions of the tragedy, seems to indicate that Göthe's imagination got bewildered by the supernatural element of his subject; and his inability to master the miraculous part of the Faust-story, was increased by the effect of age. This, however, must not blind our eyes to the fact that in the earlier portions of this work are to be found some of the highest flights of poetry and genius which the German mind has attained. The main interest of the drama centres in the character of the philosophic Sceptic, with his fretful hankering for happiness, and his never-satisfied longing for a state of life in which his moral and spiritual wants may be satisfied as well as his physical desires. The scoffing Mephistopheles, the representative of unscrupulous force and cunning, and on the other hand the sweetheart of Faust, in her simplicity and innocence, are suitable accompaniments to the main personage. Among the most remarkable scenes of the drama we may mention the Easter morning in Leipzig, the garden scene where Faust and the Devil make love side by side, the catechizing of the Doctor by Gretchen, the murder of Valentine, and the prison scene which ends with the death of the heroine. Several of these passages are unsurpassed in beauty and dramatic effect; and although the barrel-organ and the fiddle-bow have begun to assert their privilege of appropriating Göthe's conception, the lover of literature will, it is hoped, not rest content without turning to the pages of the German master, and feeling the touch of his inspired thought, which can never be more

than guessed at from any operatic or other theatrical representation.

Other Poems of Göthe.—Among Göthe's non-dramatic compositions the pastoral of "Hermann and Dorothea" is the most distinguished. It relates in hexameter verse, and in nine short cantos, an incident of domestic life on the Rhine, and is connected with a contemporary event—the expulsion of some hundred Alsatian families from the soil of Republican France, about the year 1795. Hermann, the son of an inn-keeper in a village near the Rhine, observes the Alsatian emigrants proceeding in a long train from their former homes in France into the interior of Germany, to look for shelter and other habitations. While distributing presents and charities to his unfortunate countrymen, his attention is attracted by a tall and beautiful maiden, who walks in front of the cart which contained her less active friends and their chattels. Love with him sprang up, where they say it seldom arises—in compassion. After several inquiries about Dorothea's friends and another meeting with her by the side of a cool streamlet on the road, Hermann feels his former impressions confirmed, and selects her for his bride. He takes her home to his parents, whom he had previously persuaded to consent to his choice. The timid maiden is well received; but as she is so poor, she fancies she is destined to become a maid-servant in her future home. Her generous admirer and his parents soon convince Dorothea that they consider her virtue and beauty superior to every other dowry, and the marriage of the happy pair concludes the poem. About the merits of the work it is enough to say that it is universally admired, and never found fault with.

"Reineke Fuchs" is a free version of the old Low-German fable of the misdemeanors, the trial, the judgment, and the escape of Reynard the Fox, who constantly cheated and ill-used the other beasts. It contains twelve cantos in hexameter verse, the fourth is the wittiest and the best. Here the fox

makes his dying speech from the top of a ladder, while the rope is all but drawn round his neck. The rogue promises King Noble to show him some treasures which are hidden at a distance, and appeals so feelingly to the compassion of the Queen, that he is allowed to live. No sooner is he at liberty than, by insinuating himself at court, he recovers his standing and his influence, and finds means to take cruel revenge on his accusers.

In his minor poems, ballads, and lyrics, Göthe is a formidable rival of Schiller, and in one species, philosophical short lines,* he has excelled that master. His best known ballads are "The Treasure-Digger," "Prometheus," "Faithful Eckart," "The God and the Bayadere," "The Bride of Corinth," and "The Erl-King." The last-mentioned poem describes the ride of a father whose child is threatened with being kidnapped by a fairy king, and who on the end of his journey finds the boy dead in his arms. F. Schubert has set this poem to music.

* As a specimen of this kind of composition, we will but adduce the few lines from his "Wilhelm Meister":—

“ Wer nie sein Brot mit Thränen ass,
 Wer nie die kummervollen Nächte
 Auf seinem Bette weinend sass,
 Der kennt euch nicht, ihr himmlischen Mächte.

Ihr führt in's Leben uns hinein,
 Ihr lasst den Armen schuldig werden,
 Dann überlasst ihr ihn der Pein,
 Denn alle Schuld rächt sich auf Erden.”

CHAPTER X.

FIFTH PERIOD—RECENT WRITERS (1805–1865).

Character of this Period.—With the beginning of the nineteenth century the literature of Germany entered into a new phase, characterized by the introduction of polemic and political tendencies—a change which was mainly due to the effects of the French Revolution. The comparative calm of the preceding era came to a close, when this social convulsion, after terrific outbursts of popular fury, subsided into a military despotism. The ascendancy which Napoleon I. exercised on the Continent had the effect of breaking down in Germany a large portion, though not the whole, of the feudal institutions which had so long existed in that country. In 1802, between two and three hundred petty princes and small republics were induced to resign their independence in favour of some forty larger states which remained standing; and four years after the Germanic Empire came to an end, after an existence of about one thousand years—the then Emperor, Francis II., having abdicated his title and imperial functions for the name of Emperor of Austria. Though the wars of 1813 and 1815 put an end to French power, and Germany came forth from the struggle without the loss of any territory, the collapse of feudalism was an accomplished fact; and on the conclusion of the treaties of Vienna, Deutschland found itself reconstituted as a confederacy of thirty-nine states, with a senate of seventeen delegates at its head. But this political compromise seemed to give no lasting satisfaction; and the German sovereigns, both great and small, soon became painfully aware that the enjoyment of their dynastic privileges was likely to be again seriously jeopardized. An opposition party formed itself from one end of the country to the other, and the desire for liberal institutions, national union, and abolition of petty governments became all but uni-

versal. What the chances of this movement may be—whether the union of the Germans under a single government will be achieved, or territorial division as well as despotism retain their ancient hold on the people—it is not for us here to decide. But the literature of the last sixty years has been so powerfully influenced by the political struggles, that the modern epoch of both poetry and prose writing can only be considered from a semi-political point of view. Since the death of Schiller there was, perhaps, not a single writer who did not take one part or another in public questions; and thus the modern authors of Germany present features very analogous to those of English literature in the reigns of the latter Stuarts, when the conflicting interests of Whigs and Tories divided the British nation. The recent writers may, then, be arranged into two large groups, with distinct party designs, defined predilections, and unmistakeable antipathies.

On one side stand the advocates of Conservatism. As such we may consider the coryphees of the Romantic School—the two Schlegels, Novalis, Fouqué, Tieck, and their friends—authors who proposed a return to the spirit of feudalism as the true means of improving literature, and who cultivated especially the legendary style with success. To the same party belong the Ultra-Conservatives and the Ultramontane poets, such as Redwitz, Schenkendorf, and Pyrker.

On the opposite side are arrayed the friends of liberty and progress; some who pursued their principles with more calmness—poets of a truly patriotic and national type, such as Körner, Uhland, Rückert, and Count Platen; others, of more republican tendencies, Radicals in politics, and usually also in religion, such as Herwegh, Freiligrath, Prutz, Kinkel, and Hoffmann. Among these, often the martyrs as well as the champions of reform, none approaches in talent the reckless H. Heine, who is at the same time the most violent and the most ingenious impersonification of the revolutionary party, often called “Young Germany.” This survey comprises only

the *poets* of modern times. We reserve the recent historians and philosophers for a separate chapter.

1. *The Romantics*.—Few terms in the history of literature are used with a greater latitude of meaning than that of “Romanticism” or “the Romantic School.” In Germany it has of late especially been applied to the school of the Schlegels, to Tieck, Novalis, Chamisso, and others, who cultivated poetry and composition for the sake of its fictions, and not for that of the truths it may contain. These writers valued fancy and invention above all other qualities of style, and therefore indulged especially in tales and legendary writing, while they seldom produced anything of a more practical character. They were Conservatives in all questions bearing on religion and politics, either because mediæval society was their *beau-ideal*, and feudalism their favourite system, or else because they carried their unpractical tendency to a total abstention from all interference with political matters. The Romantics had many enemies, and were often attacked with ridicule and scorn. It was not only their excessive Conservatism which invited the comments of their contemporaries, but also their mode of writing; especially their sentimentalism, their dreamy style, their fondness of the supernatural and the unmanly lullaby tone of their Arabian Nights’ tales. Their most declared enemies were Uhland, Count Platen, and Ruge. H. Heine, also, though once their admirer, attacked them.

Augustus W. Schlegel (1767–1845), the greatest critic of Germany since the days of Lessing, is sometimes considered the originator of Romanticism; while others look upon his younger brother, Frederick, or on Novalis, as the real author of this school. The Schlegels were sons of an eminent Lutheran clergyman in Hanover, and lived chiefly at Jena, where they contributed to the journals of Schiller, his “Horen” and his “Musen-Almanach.” The principal work of Augustus is his “Lectures on Dramatic Art.” In 1805 Madame de Staël availed herself of his assistance in her studies of the literature

of Germany, and hence the famous book of that French authoress, “*De l’Allemagne*,” embodies many ideas which can be traced back to Schlegel. She often travelled with him, confided to him for a time the education of her children, and often received him as a visitor on her estate of Coppet. Shortly after the death of Madame de Staël, Schlegel was appointed to a professorship in Bonn. About that time the conversion of his brother to the Roman Catholic Church created considerable surprise; and it was rumoured that Augustus leaned to the same side: that he sometimes decried Protestantism as unpoetical, there can be no doubt; but towards the end of his life, in 1828, he publicly disclaimed any such pro-Catholic sympathies. He translated Calderon and the greater part of Shakspeare into German, and spread new and improved views on the drama. Admiration for the great English poet became a perfect mania with him and others, although they chiefly founded their high estimate of Shakspeare on the imaginative and theatrical elements in his drama, while they failed to appreciate the moral character of his tragedies in its true light. A. Schlegel has left several excellent ballads and lyrics; but his drama of “*Ion*” is a failure. He also drew attention to Sanskrit language and literature.

Frederick Schlegel (1772–1829) laboured for a long time with his elder brother in Jena; but subsequently retired to Vienna, where he changed his religion, and became a zealous Catholic. The love of the marvellous, founded on its attractions to the imagination, seems to have been his ruling sentiment. He lamented that the Reformation had proved fatal to the worship of the Virgin, of angels, of saints, and similar objects of popular adoration. Altogether his pleas for his favourite religion were not so much based on any positive historical convictions, whether concerning the origin of Christianity or the subsequent history of the Church, such as have usually guided converts in their decisions of such questions, as upon conclusions concerning matters of taste. His most remarkable

production is his series of lectures on the "Philosophy of History," in which he pleaded for the unity of the Church; his novel of "Lucinda" is full of mysticism and sickly sentimentality; his work on the "Language and Wisdom of the Indians" contained many original views on the affinity of languages.

Baron von Hardenberg, surnamed Novalis (1772-1801), is another coryphæe of the Romantic School; he was a man of original genius, and, but for his premature death, might have produced a more lasting impression than he did. The main object of his life and writings seems to have been to combat the Rationalism of his contemporaries. He wished to make religion once more the pivot of life and society; and to this end recommended the institution of an independent and irresponsible hierarchy, as the fittest means of regenerating the morals of his age. He used to invite the two Schlegels to his estate, and was untiring in promoting their schemes of literary and theological reform. A great deal of his mysticism must be attributed to his physical constitution, which was unsound; he succumbed to consumption before he was thirty. His literary remains are unimportant; they consist of some aphorisms, a hymn on night, and a poetical romance treating of the mediæval bard, Heinrich von Ofterdingen.

Ludwig Tieck (1773-1853) was the most prolific writer of the Romantic School. The late King of Prussia, Frederick William IV., who shared the tastes and opinions of Tieck, called him to Berlin, and selected him for his special court poet; besides executing with the elder Schlegel a translation of Shakspeare, he composed a large number of Oriental fairy tales and legendary stories; his fanciful fictions about goblins, dwarfs, sprites, and dervishes, exercise a wonderful spell on the reader; and the nursery, as well as the pantomime, are under the deepest obligations to the royal favourite. His stories—"Puss in Boots," "Abdallah with the Miraculous Eyesalve," "Bluebeard," who killed his wives, and "Fortu-

natus with the Magic Wand"—have alternately delighted and terrified the juveniles both in and out of Germany. His "Phantasmus," his "Prince Zerbino," and his "Life of Saint Geneviève," are all of the same description. Tieck also attempted the drama and the novel; but his fondness of the fabulous and supernatural disqualified him for success in other departments.

Count Arnim and *Brentano* are two other writers of tales. "The Boy's Magic Horn" is their joint work; it contains a collection of old German songs; Brentano also composed many legends separately. Another Romantic writer, *Chamisso*, of a family of French extraction, is the author of "Peter Schlemihl," or the tale of the Shadowless Man, which has been translated into most foreign languages. A young emigrant to the Cape of Good Hope sells his shadow to the devil for an unlimited supply of money. But subsequent mishaps, arising from the absence of that needful appendage, make him rue his bargain, and he vainly endeavours to recover his shadow from its Satanic possessor. The most noteworthy fiction of Baron *Fouqué* is his "Undine," a dreamy mediæval love story. *Amadeus Hoffman* is a particularly gloomy and horrifying goblin tale-writer. His "Elixire des Teufels" and his "Nachtstücke," are those most spoken of among his stories. *Musæus* and *Bettina von Arnim*, the sister of Brentano, are other contributors to this effeminate species of composition. Bettina caused great sensation by her "Correspondence of Göthe with a child" (1835), a fictitious account of her acquaintance with that poet.

2. *Ultramontane Writers, and Ultra-Conservatives.*—The claims of the Papacy and the divine right of princes have found in Germany a few eager votaries, more especially in the higher ranks of society. Opinions of this tendency were at first advanced with greater moderation; but in proportion as their victory became less likely, the zeal of their advocates seemed to increase, and often to run into excess. One of the earliest

poets who evinced a bias in favour of the Church and the emperors of the Middle Ages was *Max Schenkendorf* (1783–1819), a patriotic poet who had fought in the liberation war of 1813 and 1814, and who combined with very conservative views in politics religious views of a corresponding character. These he expressed in his “Christian Poems,” and other lyrics, published in 1815. But the staunchest champion of Absolutism combined with Ultramontaniam is the Bavarian poet, *Oscar Redwitz*, born in 1823. This author essayed various dramatic and other performances, such as “*Sigelinde*” and “*The Doge of Venice* ;” but the greatest sensation was caused by his romance entitled, “*Amaranth*,” and written in rhymed short iambics. This poem, which appeared shortly after the disturbances of 1848, threw down the gauntlet to the whole Liberal and Radical party, stigmatizing their endeavours as so many impious innovations, suggested by the spirit of evil, and tending to the subversion of virtue and order. The salvation of mankind seems to Redwitz staked on the increase of kingly and sacerdotal power—a view which he inculcates under the guise of a mediæval romance, of which the greater part consists of discourses between the heroine and her lover, and declamations against modern impiety. A tone of greater moderation prevails in the compositions of the Hungarian bishop, *Pyrker* (1772–1842), who has written two epic poems in hexameter verse. The one is called *Rudolfias*, and refers to the founder of the Hapsburg dynasty, while the other celebrates Charles the Fifth’s expedition against the pirates of Tunis, and bears the name of *Tunisiás*. Two noble ladies have lately enlisted their talents on the same side—the Baroness *Droste-Hülshoff*, a Westphalian of noble family, of strong religious feeling, and considerable poetic endowments ; and the Countess *Hahn-Hahn*, who recently sought a refuge from the disappointments of a brief, but unhappy married life, in the seclusion of a Catholic nunnery, and has published many novels and travels, not to mention some versified effu-

sions, all of which are strongly tinged with Ultra-Conservative views, and with a maudlin womanish despondency.

3. *Patriotic and Liberal Poets*.—One of the most manly characters whom Germany has seen in modern times was the heroic *Theodor Körner* (1791–1813), a poet soldier, who sealed with his blood the patriotic cause for which he fought. He belonged to a wealthy family in Saxony, and had as a boy known Schiller, who was a friend of his father. When the Russian campaign terminated in 1812, and Germany rose like one man for the expulsion of the French, Körner had nearly grown up to manhood, and did not hesitate to enlist at Breslau in the Prussian army, although his own sovereign, the King of Saxony, at that time sided with Napoleon. He joined the volunteer band of Colonel Lützow, a corps of hussars, who wore a black uniform, and a cap on which a skull was depicted, and who on enlisting took an oath not to give or receive any quarter from the enemy. In this regiment, which consisted almost entirely of noblemen's sons, Körner behaved with signal bravery, and rose to the rank of an adjutant. He made numerous war songs, which inspired his comrades to deeds of valour, and resounded nightly at the bivouacs of the German army. His spirited lines on "Lützow's Wild Chase" and his "Song of the Sword," containing a dialogue between a free soldier and his sword, are known to most lovers of German music, and well express by their martial notes the patriotic enthusiasm of the period in which they originated. The latter poem possesses a peculiar interest from the fact that it was written but a few minutes before its author met his death. About three weeks before the final struggle on the battle-field of Leipzig, Körner was staying with Lützow's band, near Grabow, in Mecklenburg, when some French soldiers galloped down the road leading to that town, and pierced him by a stray shot fired at hazard into the thicket. His mourning companions buried him at the foot of an oak tree, which is still standing on the spot where he fell. Seldom

has the grave closed over a youth more heroic and more earnest. His poetry was afterwards collected by his father, and published under the name of "Lyre and Sword." There is also a tragedy among Körner's relics entitled, "Zriny." It refers to the siege of a Hungarian town, which was saved from the Turks by the devotion of its commander.

Ludwig Uhland (1787-1862) is, next to Heine, the most renowned poet of the post-classical era. He was a Swabian by birth, and prepared himself for the bar in Tübingen. In 1819 Uhland became a member of the Würtemberg House of Deputies, and in 1848 he joined the National Parliament of Frankfurt. His voice was never heard except in behalf of freedom and progress, and he enjoyed up to his death the universal respect of all parties. As a poet he has written some exquisite ballads, some of which are inferior to none of Schiller's or Göthe's. His "Minstrel Curse," "Young Rowland the Shield-Bearer," his poetic biography of Eberhard, surnamed Rustlebeard from his bushy hair, an old Count of Würtemberg, are brief but finished compositions. It is to be regretted that this able poet did not try his hand at some more lengthy performance.

Arndt (1769-1860) is another very successful author of patriotic songs, such as the popular hymn of the Germans—"Was ist des Deutschen Vaterland?" and his spirited lines—"Der Gott der Eisen wachsen liess, der wollte keine Knechte." This poet's life was in harmony with his writings. During the short time of French ascendancy Arndt fled to Sweden from the persecution of the French police. But, though in exile, he found means to assist Minister Von Stein in organizing the popular rising against Napoleon. The Prussian Government repaid him with ingratitude. In 1819 Arndt was dismissed from his professorship in Bonn, for having written in too liberal strains, and reminded the Prussian dynasty that it owed its preservation to the exertions and the good-will of the German people. He recovered his dignity in 1840.

Friedrich Rückert, born in 1789, and still alive, is remarkable for patriotic songs, and for labours in Oriental literature. Under the former category the most important of his productions are the martial odes entitled “*Geharnischte Sonnette*,” written before 1814. Subsequently he turned to Sanskrit, Hindustanee, and Arabic poetry. He translated into German verse a portion of the “*Mahabharata*,” namely, the story of Nal and Damajanti. The “*Metamorphoses of Abu Seid*” are taken from the Persian. Rückert also attempted more independent imitations of the wisdom of the Brahmins, which are characterized by the same excellencies and defects as the Indian poetry generally, contemplative elevation of style, interspersed with word-quibbling, and spoiled by lengthiness. His dramatic performances have met with but little favour.

Count Platen (1796–1825) is the Aristophanes of Germany. If not always equal in merit to that Greek poet, he is still his follower as far as he can. Platen transferred into his German imitations the style, the wit, the spirit, and the very metre of the Greek comedian; and as Aristophanes ridiculed Socrates and Cleon, so he chastised the follies of the school of Schlegel and Tieck. In his “*Ominous Dinner-Fork*” and in his “*Romantic Œdipus*” he has very happily exposed the affectation and unmanliness of Romanticism. Platen has also exhibited his talents in smaller poems, both lyric and epic. On the whole, however, his poetry is more eulogised than read. This is either owing to the too learned and artificial style and aim of his compositions, or else to the circumstance that he spent the greater part of his life abroad. Platen’s favourite resort was Sicily. Here, in Syracuse, he lived and died; and his Italian host inscribed his tombstone with the following curious piece of Latin:—“*Ingenio Germanus, forma Græcus. Novissimum posteritatis exemplum.*”

We shall fitly class with these poets two Austrian bards, who, though unequal in merit and popularity to any of the writers before mentioned, are no mean masters of poetic song,

and deserve to be noticed all the more, as they lived in a country which for centuries past had become almost an utter stranger to literary composition. The first of these is *Baron Lenau*, an elegiac and epic poet of a rather melancholy disposition, which resulted in fits of insanity in 1844. He has written some dramas on Savonarola and on Faust. The other is *Anastasius Grün*, whose real name is Count Auersperg, a writer of political poems, in which he expresses his sympathies for Poland, and his anxiety for the progress of liberty. Grün's chief works are—"The Walk of a Poet of Vienna;" "The Ruins," in which he descants on the destruction of Pompeii and other cities; and an epic on "The Last Knight," which means the chivalrous Maximilian I. These two poets have the same defect—excess of imagery, and too flowery language; but their Liberalism is all the more surprising when we consider their rank and their birthplace.

4. *Advanced Liberals and Republicans*.—As Germany is at present passing through a period of revolutionary agitation, it is but natural that a large portion of her recent literature should display revolutionary tendencies. Both in their writings and their lives the German republicans of this age exhibit symptoms of the convulsed state of her society. The majority of them began as champions of liberty, and ended as refugees—compelled to exhale their native ardour afar from the country which they for a time had lightened up with the blaze of their patriotism.

George Herwegh, born in 1817, is a poet of this description, and a representative of the party of Young Germany. He was a native of Stuttgardt, and educated at Tübingen, but has lived for the last twenty-five years either in Switzerland or Paris. About the close of the reign of Frederick William III. this author published a volume of political poems, under the significant title of "Poems addressed to the Dead by One of the Living." As the reader will easily guess, it was "king-deluded" Germany and her inhabitants who were to be roused

from the sleep of the defunct. The poetic enthusiast did not much disguise his appeal to the people, but exhorted them to resist the oppression of their princes, and to follow in the wake of popular freedom and national unity as their future guiding-stars. The book contains many good verses, and the feeling of the public was in full accord with the tone which it adopted. At that time Germany was all on tiptoe with the anticipation of sweeping reforms. The late King Frederick William IV., on ascending the throne, in 1840, had induced the people by his brilliant promises to hope for an immediate fulfilment of their political expectations. For the space of nearly two years this delusion lasted. Meanwhile Herwegh's poems went through seven successive editions; and in 1842, when he made a tour through the country, he was received in every town with public ovations on a magnificent scale. As, however, the desired reforms were not forthcoming, the people became more and more impatient, and one among the dissatisfied was Herwegh himself. In this state of mind he requested an audience from the Prussian sovereign, who had repeatedly expressed his delight at his poems, hoping he might, by a personal interview with the King, obtain some promise of a more liberal policy. He was well received, and quietly permitted to urge the views which he entertained on his royal interlocutor. Leaving Berlin, he addressed, from Königsberg, a letter to the King, reiterating in still stronger terms his former appeals and admonitions in behalf of more enlarged principles of government. But great was Herwegh's surprise, when a few days after he received from the police an official notice to quit the territories of Prussia, and never to return. He went to Paris, where a marriage with a wealthy lady improved his condition. In 1849 he made an armed invasion on the soil of Germany, during the Baden insurrection, but met with no success. His literary performances since 1840 have been insignificant.

F. Freiligrath, born in 1810, was a merchant in Rhenish Prussia, and wrote some political poems of a liberal tendency, which procured for him a pension of a very small amount from the King. However, Herwegh and other political partizans of Freiligrath remonstrated with him on the impropriety of accepting such a gift, and denounced the spirit of servility which it implied, and he thought fit to decline the continuance of the favour bestowed upon him. This brought him into disrepute with the court party, and he became still more obnoxious to the Government on the outbreak of the disturbances of 1848. The result was that Freiligrath left Prussia, and took up his residence in London, where he had previously entertained commercial relations with several German firms. His poetry is remarkable for the richness of its rhymes and the beauty of its imagery.

Hoffmann von Fallersleben, born in 1798, was long a professor of literature in Breslau, and has great merits as a discoverer of ancient German literary remains. He is also the composer of many exquisite popular songs and political verses. Unfortunately his Liberalism was too advanced for the Prussian Government, and in 1842 he was ignominiously deprived of his post and salary as a university teacher. He wandered long about the country without any fixed occupation. At last he became a journalist at Weimar, and subsequently obtained an appointment as librarian in Corvey.

Professor *G. Kinkel*, born in 1815, is the author of "Otto Der Schütz," a chivalrous romance, as well as of other poems. He embraced republican views; and not being very guarded in his public conduct, especially while he was a member of the first Prussian Assembly of Deputies in 1848, he was found guilty of political misdemeanors, and imprisoned at Spandau. After a captivity of some years he effected his escape from the fortress in an almost miraculous manner. He has since lived in London.

Among the other adherents of advanced Liberalism, *R. Prutz*, born in 1818, and *K. Gutzkow*, born in 1811, deserve mention. The former satirized the philosopher Schelling in his witty comedy, "Die politische Wochenstube." *W. Menzel*, the historian, formerly belonged to the same party, but has changed his views for Conservatism.

CHAPTER XI.

CONTINUATION OF FIFTH PERIOD—H. HEINE.

THE most gifted poet of Germany since the days of Schiller and Göthe is H. Heine, whose fame bids fair to obscure the names of all his literary contemporaries.

Heinrich Heine (1799–1856), was born in Düsseldorf, on the Rhine, and used to call himself the first man of his century, because his birthday had been near to the first of January, 1800. His father was a Jew; his mother a Christian, and the daughter of a physician of the name of Geldern. As his father lived but few years after Heine's birth, the widowed mother sent her elder boy—for she had a younger son, called Gustavus—to the gymnasium of the town, and let him subsequently engage in mercantile occupations, either in Düsseldorf or in Hamburg, where Heine had a very rich uncle, the banker Solomon Heine. Probably the latter was not at first so niggardly to his nephew as he afterwards became. At any rate, as the stripling showed great talent for literary occupation, he was provided with ample means to procure an academic education. He visited in succession the Universities of Bonn, Berlin, and Göttingen. In both the latter places he made himself notorious by his riotous behaviour in the lecture hall. Here he introduced the license of the theatre in expressing his disapprobation whenever his professors uttered anything unpalatable to his opinions on politics and religion; for at an early age Heine had embraced views of the most advanced kind on each of these subjects. At Göttingen he knew Menzel and Massmann, both of whom he cruelly satirized in his subsequent writings. Massmann, odious to Heine for his Conservatism, challenged him once to a duel, but Heine showed no inclination to back his opinions with his rapier. If he had some enemies, he also had many friends among the more

liberal portion of his collegiate acquaintances, and these were Heine's warm admirers, on account of the extraordinary talent displayed in his juvenile compositions, some of which appeared as early as 1823. In Berlin, he heard Hegel, and knew Varnhagen von Ense, a Prussian liberal of rank and station, who had married a highly-cultivated Jewess, of the name of Rahel. To Varnhagen, Heine dedicated his first volume of verses. Two years later he finished his law lectures, and returned to Düsseldorf. For some time past Heine had professed himself a Protestant, and he even thought fit to make a public renunciation of Judaism when he was about twenty-one. This step has been criticized as an act of senseless hypocrisy. No doubt Heine would have made just as good a Jew as a Protestant, with the sort of religion or irreligion which he believed in. His habits of self-derision, and his humorous jokes about this as on every other step of his life, fully deprived him of the last shadow of credit for sincerity or earnestness in adopting his new creed. He used to say that his circumstances did not permit him to abide by the religion of the Rothschilds, because he possessed neither their purse nor their credit. But we should not attach too much importance to such *bon-mots*; the sardonic smile was at all times inseparable from Heine's countenance. We may also suppose his Israelitish brethren would insist on his attendance at the synagogue, and would visit any lukewarmness on his part with threats of excommunication and other modes of public exposure, while the German Protestant Church leaves to its members a considerable latitude of action and belief, and makes Christians responsible to nobody except their own consciences.

Be this as it may, Heine, now a Christian in name, began to travel on the completion of his academic course. He visited especially the North of Italy and England, and on his return embodied his impressions of these two countries in his "Reisebilder" (1826). This book produced the greatest sen-

sation, not only by its sketches and criticisms, and by its audacious remarks on eminent men—as, for instance, on Count Platen—but more especially by its daring mode of dealing with politics and theology; but the prose style which it employed was not the least novelty in the work. Heine's manner as a prosaist may be described as a mixture of humour, audacity, and coquetry. Fanciful and pathetic passages are succeeded by volleys of irony and sarcasm. Sometimes his jests are merely the effervescence of youthful gaiety and mirth; at other times they proceed from extreme Radicalism in matters of State and Church, and they often betray a deep-rooted cynicism of moral sentiment. His turns are always forcible, and come upon the reader with a certain explosive suddenness; they never tire, and usually surprise; he is gentle and sympathetic, and again wanton and impertinent. In short, Heine combines Shelley's impassioned enthusiasm and glow of feeling with Lord Byron's ribald joke and contemptuous sneer,—while he is more playful than either. One of the most objectionable traits in Heine's writings, which was also attended with serious consequences to the author, was the unmeasured abuse which he dared to bestow on friend and foe. It is painful to observe how often and how unnecessarily Heine descends into the arena of personalities. As one flagrant instance we will but mention his conduct to his uncle. "The august relative," as Heine styled him, had begun to withhold his cheques from his poetical *protégé*; he probably observed in him a lamentable tendency to dissipation and prodigality. Heine resented this measure, and, with his characteristic blindness to both personal interest and public propriety, lampooned the worthy banker in a German journal. The reason which he assigned for his uncle's backwardness in forwarding remittances was, that Solomon Heine despised poetry as a low and unprofitable occupation, and that he thought literary merit the very last road to competency and position. Tirades such as these were not likely to improve his uncle's good-will

towards him; and thus for years to come the ill-advised young man found himself abandoned by a relative who, with all his surliness and love of economy, might so easily have shielded him from want, and saved his genius from the dreary prostitution to which it often became a victim. On his return from his travels Heine received another blow, which affected him in a far more sensitive quarter than his purse. A young lady, whose parents resided either in Düsseldorf or in the neighbourhood of the Rhine, declined the continuance of his addresses for those of a more favoured suitor; and Heine found himself jilted, nay, almost ignominiously discarded, to make room for a rival who had none of his own brilliant talents, however much he might be Heine's superior in other respects. His disappointment has left a broad track in the earlier part of his writings, where she is alluded to under the name of Mary, though her real name was Evelina von Gueldern; she was a relation of Heine by his mother's side. There is no reason to discredit his sincerity when he asserts that his flame continued to glow on like a smouldering fire, beneath layers of irony, libertinage, and dissimulation. The earnestness of his attachment forms quite a redeeming feature in his character as well as his poetry. Unfortunately, it became almost a caricature in a man like Heine. When he had laughed and sneered enough about it, he pleaded it as an excuse for his irregular conduct; still, at the age of fifty, and later, when he lay on his sick bed, as an emaciated old man, and agonized by the paroxysms of fever, he used to refer to this first love with the same serio-comic solemnity which was his second nature. He dated from it the beginning of his disasters.

In 1827 Heine published his "Buch der Lieder," a volume of poetry which may safely challenge comparison with the greatest performances of the lyric Muse in any country and in any age. After his juvenile productions, some of which are of considerable merit, there comes a cycle of love ditties, inscribed "Die Heimkehr," which are quite inimitable in their

glow of feeling and *naïve* simplicity. We cannot criticize them better than by inserting a few lines, which we select nearly at random, and which are perhaps none of the best:—

“Mädchen mit dem rothen Mündchen,
Mit den Aeuglein süß und klar,
Du mein liebes, kleines Mädchen,
Deiner denk ich immerdar.

“Lang ist heut der Winterabend,
Und ich möchte bei dir sein,
Bei dir sitzen, mit dir schwatzen,
Im vertrauten Kämmerlein.”

The choicest odours of poetry are those which exhale from the blossoms of affection that never ripened into fruit. Though the unfortunate author of these Lieder succumbed to the diseases of the flesh, and to the more baneful diseases of the soul—to religious and moral despondency—his passion for his Maria lives—“*spirat adhuc amor, vivuntque calores commissi fidibus*”—and remains inscribed in grand and indelible characters on the page of literature, delighting the readers of future ages by their warming and genuine touches.

The cycle of dithyrambic odes, “Die Nordsee,” is if possible superior to the preceding. Heine had profited by his sojourn in Hamburg, and turned his acquaintance with the sea to a wonderful account. His descriptions of the shore and the shingle, the sailor’s life and the mermaids, the storm and the harbour, baffle every encomium, and can appropriately be compared only to the graphic lines of Homer, whom Heine had evidently read very carefully. The poetic describers of the ocean, since Heine’s times, whether in England, France, or Germany, are either his imitators, or greatly his inferiors. But there are in this collection of odes other gems of equal value. There are grand touches of ancient mythology, along with glances at Norse sagas; there is a poetic conception of the religion of love, joined with allusions to his unhappy passion; besides pictures of German towns, and scenes of the life and

customs which prevail at German hearths. Here and there a slur on established religion comes to cast in its defiant tones, though the "Buch der Lieder" preserves poetic decorum better than other works of the same author. One brief quotation will give the best idea of Heine's manner and exuberant imagination. It will also be instructive, as throwing some light on the kind of philosophy which he professed. The dithyramb is inscribed "Questions," and stands near the end of the volume:—

“ By the sea, the desert, nightly sea,
 There stands a youth,
 His heart all sorrowing, his head all doubting;
 And with moody lips, he asks the billows—
 ‘ O solve me the riddle of life,
 That old, tormenting riddle
 O'er which full many a pate hath pondered—
 Heads in hieroglyphic bonnets,
 Heads in turbans and tasselled caps,
 Periwig heads, and a thousand others,
 Poor, distracted heads of men !
 Tell me : What meaneth man ?
 Whence did he come ? Whither doth he go ?
 Who dwelleth yonder on radiant stars ? ”

“ The waves roll on their ancient murmur,
 The winds their blasts, the clouds their chase ;
 The stars look on, unheeding and cold,
 And a fool waits for an answer.”

It was very fortunate for Heine that he found in Hoffmann and Campe, booksellers in Hamburg, some publishers who were beyond the reach of an Austrian or Prussian police ; otherwise the publication of many of his works would have been an impossibility. The citizens of a German republic are not so summarily dealt with as the subjects of monarchical states ; and as any passages which might have offended even a Hamburg censorship were removed by Hoffmann's scissors, the sale and circulation of Heine's works went on for years without any inter-

ference. However, his audacity seemed only to increase with the impunity which it enjoyed, and from attacks on private individuals he proceeded to sallies on German princes. Heine felt that his stay in Germany was becoming more precarious from day to day. Already representations had been made to the Senate of Hamburg, when at last that effete and tardy political machine, the Frankfort Bund, gathered all its strength to launch a sentence of outlawry against the unceremonious derider of its crowned members. Long before this ban reached him, Heine had bid for ever farewell to the soil of his fatherland; and Paris, where the revolution of July had just opened the floodgates of social reform—the city of fashion, pleasure, and frivolity—was from 1831 till his death the refuge of the German exile. The picture of his life darkens from that day. His better genius seems to leave the poet, and the spirit of evil to clutch his soul more firmly. Among other papers, for which he at that time became a correspondent, the Augsburg “Allgemeine Zeitung” received from his pen a series of spirited articles on French politics and French art. These he afterwards collected, and accompanied by essays on Germany and German writers, in his “Salon.” The vigour and elegance of his style, indeed, did not seem to have suffered, but passion and free-thinking blinded his eyes more and more as he grew older. His treatise on the Romantic School contains a witty account of that class of writers and their tendencies, although the two Schlegels are rather roughly handled. Heine represents Augustus as a literary fop, and Frederick as a bigot. He likewise attempted to delineate the philosophy of Germany, which essay he also published in French. According to him, such men as Kant, Fichte, Schelling, and Hegel, were erudite mystics, good for nothing but to trample on the religion of their countrymen. He makes them appear anxious above all to subvert the established beliefs, and talks of their learning or their obscurity as a veil for disguising their heresies. No doubt these philosophers were incidentally unorthodox, and

groped in the dark, like many others before and after them; but it required the partiality of a Heine to construe their researches into so many speculative manifestoes against Christianity. In the mean time he did not neglect poetical composition. His "Neue Lieder," though not equal to the "Buch der Lieder," still contain some masterly lines. Unfortunately the cynical and irreligious tendencies of the author are laid bare with greater effrontery than in his previous book of songs. Republican opinions and sarcastic remarks on German potentates abound in this volume. The life of a refugee has, as a matter of necessity, many elements in it which sour his temper and provoke his bile, even though he be less satirical by nature than a Heine. But the frequency and virulence with which he indulged in such diatribes on Germany in general provoked at last an old friend of his to administer to him a stern rebuke. Ludwig Börne, a German republican, a refugee residing in Paris, and a converted Jew, like Heine, denounced his verses and articles as indicating a painful want of patriotism, and as evidences of very bad taste on the part of their author; all the more so as they were published in the midst of a city and among a people where many were but too glad to get hold of any scandal or piece of irony which might serve to the defamation of their trans-Rhenane neighbours. Heine resented this reproof with his wonted acrimony. Regardless alike of the ties of friendship and the considerations of generosity, he overwhelmed Börne, a poor penny-a-liner, and a dying invalid, with such unmeasured abuse as to cause the disgust of the Parisian no less than the German public. For nearly a year this warfare lasted with unabated fury, when Börne sank on his deathbed, worn out by dejection and privation. Heine had the satisfaction of seeing his adversary silenced; but his heartless conduct towards his former friend left on his reputation a stain so dark and deep as to alienate from him the last of his admirers. The press of Germany had all along taken part with Börne, and now joined in one common outcry against

Heine. It was rumoured, and actually found true, that he drew a pension from the French Government. The sum of money which he received from the exchequer of Louis Philippe is stated to have amounted to nearly £100 per annum, and to have ceased only with the Orleans dynasty. One Taschereau revealed these circumstances in 1848. Speculation is at a loss how to account for the motives of this donation. Was it simply an act of munificence, by which the King of the French wished to honour merit even in a foreigner? or was it a bait for the coveted Rhenish provinces, which Heine represented as a native of Düsseldorf, and as a political exile of philo-Gallic sentiments? The question has not yet been answered.

During all this time Heine was leading a life not in any way calculated to increase the respect which his poetical gifts ought to have secured. In 1843 he married a French *grisette* with whom he had been living for some time. It is said that the union was the result of an accident. Heine had to fight a duel, and wished to secure to his female companion the little property which he possessed on starting for the rendezvous. In the following year he made a stealthy tour to Hamburg, where he met the only person who remained attached to him throughout his life, his aged mother. Of this journey, of his interview with his mother, and the state of Germany in 1844, he gave a scurrilous and satirical account in his "Deutschland, ein Wintermärchen," a series of twenty-seven poems, full of the most biting irony, and spirited though not always refined attacks on the most eminent persons in Germany, both in the literary and the political world. It was probably not without difficulty that Heine twice crossed the frontier, and managed to elude the vigilance of the Prussian police. Soon after his return to Paris he was attacked by a disease in his spine, the forebodings of which had harassed him long before. He resorted to the mineral waters of Cauterets, in Spain, to restore his shattered health. While staying in the Pyrenees, he completed his satirical poem of "Atta Troll," which had been

sketched as early as 1841. The hero of this satire is a Spanish bear, who is forced to bow and dance before mankind in order to get his living; he manages to escape from his keeper, and is killed by Lascaro, the guide and travelling companion of Heine. On Atta Troll's death a place is promised to him in Walhalla, the Ratisbon collection of statues of eminent persons; and the famous epitaph which King Ludwig of Bavaria is supposed to put on his tomb is given by Heine in the exact style of that illustrious personage. For the last five or six years of his life the poet never left his bed. His last collection of satirical ballads, "Romancero," contains the wittiest references to contemporaneous events and characters, and is quite equal to his earlier satirical writings. After enduring excruciating bodily pain, he died, at Paris, in 1856. Few friends attended his burial.

Great as were the faults of this writer, his misfortunes and his talents were still greater. A large part of his trouble was no doubt due to his conduct, but much must be set down to the peculiar circumstances under which he was born and educated, as well as to the generation in which he lived. It was the misfortune of Heine that all the social ties which rivet man to his fellow-creatures, and fix his energies in a given direction, were in his case early severed by an evil fatality. He was unsuccessful in his attachment; he had to leave his co-religionists; he quarrelled with an opulent relative; he was exiled from his country; he was disavowed by his political partisans; he had little hope or faith to comfort his soul; he found no genial friend to cheer his home. Why need we dwell on his failings, when we reflect how heavily they were atoned for? Rather let us remember that the sorrows of this poet have resulted in the profit of literature. Without his mishaps, Heine would have given us none of the bad, but also none of the good, which he has left behind him; for the one could not exist except in conjunction with the other. An apostate and an exile, he was fitted before others to denounce crown-bearing

arrogance, to expose ecclesiastical imposture, to scourge privileged folly, and to break every compact with cant and fawning. That in so doing he often overshot his mark, and allowed private passion to blind his judgment, is common to Heine with all other satirists, and can detract only a portion, but not the whole, of his merits. Let those, then, condemn his writings who imagine social regeneration could be brought about without ferment or agitation, or who can fancy the literature of a revolutionary age unleavened by bitter satire. It is in Germany herself, and in her moral and political condition, that we must seek the clue to the failings of the latest and greatest of her stepsons.

CHAPTER XII.

CONCLUSION.

PHILOSOPHERS AND HISTORIANS OF THIS AND PRECEDING PERIOD.

Philosophy.—As the literary fame of Germany is in a high degree due to her philosophical productions, a brief notice of these seems indispensable in an outline such as the present. The German school of philosophy has frequently attracted the notice of Englishmen, especially its earlier stage, up to Kant and Fichte. This is sufficiently attested by the labours of Coleridge, Southey, Carlyle, and in recent times by those of Lewes and Professor Mansel. Less favourable was the attention bestowed on its subsequent phases. The doctrines of the Hegelian School and its followers were but little appreciated in England, and have met with more obloquy than praise from the few whom they seemed to interest. Not only the difficulties that were met with in comprehending their meaning, and the intricacy of style and thought, but also the novelty and the startling character of many of their views, deterred people from a fuller investigation of the post-Kantian movement. On the whole, it would be vain to deny that the German conception of the aim as well as the method of philosophy differs entirely from that adopted in England. Indeed, one might more appropriately compare the German School to the philosophers of ancient Greece than put them on a level with a Bacon or a Locke, a Hobbes or a Stewart. If in England ethical philosophy forms the chief point, in Germany it is metaphysics or ontology. Again, if English philosophy is empirical, that of Germany is speculative. The former proceeds by generalizations of observation and experience, while the latter essays progression by guessing at ultimate truths. Hence, the two Schools are at war from the outset. The Ger-

man sages reproach the English with being too practical and utilitarian, and in general with remaining *below* the mark in their solutions of philosophic problems, while the English inquirers, with equal consistency, tax the German school with too daring, and therefore fruitless, attempts in their intuitions, and accuse them of *overshooting* the mark in their speculations. To essay theosophy, or to speak of real existence; to describe the soul of man, or to tell his destiny; to venture an opinion on the creation or the end of things, no matter if well or if ill, is held wisdom in Germany, and folly in England. The fear of failure is the bane of English philosophy, just as the hope of success flushes the pages of German speculators.

The theosophic tendency of Teutonic philosophy was illustrated as early as the beginning of the seventeenth century, by the illiterate *Jacob Böhme* (1575–1624), a mystical shoemaker of Görlitz, in Saxony. This meditative artisan composed a book, entitled “*Aurora*,” in which he thought he had afforded a new insight into the interior workings of nature, and had descried better than divines had done the attributes of the Supreme Being. The poor cobbler was a devout reader of the Bible, and used to found part of his theorems on the page of inspiration. The most remarkable feature of his speculations is his putting Emanation in the place of Creation, and an evolutionary principle in lieu of the free personal agent of the Christian religion. There is no doubt that he was actuated by very good intentions, and delivered his doctrines in perfect good faith; he believed in Christianity as firmly as he believed in his speculations, and thought the one the true explanation of the other. But the pastor of Görlitz took offence at his teaching; he repeatedly admonished Böhme to abjure his heresies, and, above all, to write no more. When this had not the desired effect, he urged the burgomaster to interfere. To avert the wrath of Heaven, the mystical shoemaker was bidden to depart from his native town. Poor Böhme shook the dust off his feet at the gates of Görlitz, and retired to con-

cealment in Dresden ; but his retreat was still haunted by his former visions ; and as friends were not wanting, not only to encourage him in his apparently pious labours, but to support him with funds and means for printing new books, he added to his former work another on “ True Penitence,” and, lastly, one on “ True Composure of Mind.”

Learned philosophy commenced in Germany with *Leibnitz* (1646–1716), a Hanoverian, who is not less famous as a mathematician, and even as a divine, than he is by his speculations. He disputed Newton’s claims to priority in the invention of the calculus ; he also exerted himself very strenuously for the reconciliation of the Protestant and Roman Catholic Churches ; his philosophical treatises were written in Latin and in French ; the principal is his “*Théodicée*.” Two peculiar views are to be found among the theories of this book ; the one is the author’s theory on matter, or the atomic doctrine, according to which all things are compounds of monads or elemental atoms, which preserve union by a certain “pre-established harmony,” or chemical disposition, which inheres in the atoms ; the other is the optimistic doctrine, or the assumption that God did create this world in the most perfect state when things came into existence, or that, to speak with Pope, “Whatever is, is right.” To combine this principle with the existence of moral and physical evil, is the object of his “*Théodicée*.” The principal disciple of Leibnitz was *C. Wolf* (1679–1754) a Professor of Halle, who first adopted German as the language of his manuals and lectures ; he was a very systematic logician on the principles of Leibnitz, and has latterly been eulogized by Professor Mansel and other learned Oxonians, who have not hesitated to borrow some of his antiquated terms and canons, and adopt them in their own logical disquisitions.

Then came the immortal *Immanuel Kant* (1724–1804), the greatest philosopher of Germany, the son of a saddler, and a native as well as a professor of Königsberg, which town he

never left all his life. Sir W. Hamilton has brought forward reasons to show that Kant's ancestors had been of Scottish descent, and there is a document in Kant's handwriting which seems to confirm that supposition. The greatest production of this author is his "Kritik der reinen Vernunft," or Critique of Pure Reason, although the two other Critiques—the one on Art (for Urtheilskraft may be freely translated by *Æsthetics*, or by Art), the other on Ethics ("Praktische Vernunft"), are also remarkable compositions. His logic was edited from his lectures by Jäsche, in 1800. The style of Kant is clear and connected; and although in his metaphysical dissertations a certain amount of obscurity is almost inseparable from their subject, there are always good sense and sound information enough in his expositions to repay the trouble of any student who will give him his attention. The design of Kant's philosophy was to criticize the limits of the human intellect. All previous philosophers pursued, according to him, too dogmatical a mode of speculating. They discussed, adopted, or rejected tenets, without stopping to inquire whether and how we can come to know anything at all. To determine this, that is to say, how we attain knowledge on any subject, is the task which Kant's Critique sets for itself. The result he arrived at is, that man can only discover the appearances of things, and only so far is entitled to collect his ideas of nature as well as of God into a system. He in fact denied the possibility of a science of real being, and asserted that in straining our intellect to discover the essence of the world or the soul or the Divinity, we trespass totally beyond the province of our intellectual faculties. Kant came to this conclusion by analyzing the business of the understanding. The work of the human mind, he said, is to arrange, to digest, or comprehend the mysterious rough materials suggested to us by the senses; our reason orders our sensations. But while arranging the impressions received, we employ all kinds of formal or leading principles, which have nothing to do with things themselves, but are entirely of

our own invention. Such are time and space, two of reason's self-made rubrics, under which it chooses to comprise external objects, as locally and temporally distinct. They are necessary, universal, *à priori* principles in our mind, undervived from experience, and previous to all sensible information. But, however indispensable and original they may be, it is man alone who introduces time and space into things, or rather into his perception of things; but there is no evidence that nature herself has any time or space at all. Further, in our judgments we make use of four fundamental categories—quantity, quality, mode, and relation. These constitute, with time and space, the innate *à priori* scheme in the human mind; they are necessary and axiomatic points of view, imported by us into our register of observations. From all this Kant concluded that, as our knowledge is self-invented in such important elements, we cannot positively assert that it is “objectively true.” The world is a book with seven seals upon it: we read our own version, but not the true text. We know the semblance, but not the substance of nature. For this reason, human conclusions on the supernatural world cannot be binding. The philosophy of Kant is but a few steps removed from a complete disbelief in the veracity of our cognitions. The argument, however, on which his theory is founded differs from those of Pyrrho, Hume, Berkeley, or any other so-called Idealists. Kant's argument is the alleged *à priori* nature of the intellect, or the assertion that the recognition of existing things proceeds from laws which lie in the thinking subject itself.

With the semi-sceptical view of metaphysics, Kant combined a severe rigourism in moral philosophy. He disliked meddling with divinity, and had all the less inducement to meddle with it as he was not a clergyman or a theologian, any more than the other German philosophers who preceded and followed him. This, however, did not prevent him from expressing his convictions on natural religion. He thought

that a belief in a personal God, in free will, and in immortality, were the three essential points of any sober system of religion. These he pronounced practically useful and morally indispensable doctrines, although he declined, in accordance with the theory already detailed, to assign any metaphysical reasons for believing in their accuracy.

Johann G. Fichte (1762–1814), rose after Kant, and deduced the last consequences of his master's system in eloquent and vigorous language. His principal work is the "Wissenschafts-Lehre," which exaggerates the semi-scepticism of Kant. The last-mentioned philosopher had not questioned the authenticity of the impressions made on our senses, although he had represented the understanding as their complete arbiter and controller. But Fichte went further in scepticism, and denied the certainty of our sensual perceptions. He said the only thing we could be sure of was the Ego, or the conscious self; and he declared the whole world besides ourselves, or the Non-Ego, to be no more than the result of the self-persuasions of the reflecting mind. Thus, the real existence of all other things but ourselves became to Fichte, just as to Bishop Berkeley, a doubtful question. Even our idea of the Deity should form no exception to this problematical character of our knowledge. Fichte explained our notion of a divinity as arising from the conviction we feel that there is a law of moral compensation in the world, and this law he believed to be personified in the idea of God.

The author of the "Wissenschafts-Lehre" was professor at Jena, the old Saxon academy, which had taken the place which once Wittenberg, and more recently Göttingen, had held as the leading university of Germany. At Jena he published a philosophical journal, in which from time to time some anti-orthodox articles appeared, in language too unguarded not to give offence to the Weimar court, or rather to the clerical party of the petty Saxon states. It appears that neither Herder nor Göthe, nor any other of the celebrities of Weimar, interposed

in behalf of Fichte. Thus, the Grand Duke Karl August, the disciple of Wieland, and the friend of Göthe, thought fit to make Fichte a martyr to the animosity of the Lutheran Church. The philosopher was involved in a legal prosecution for irreligion, and threatened with expulsion from his university. Fichte defended himself from the charge of Atheism, and in rebutting it had public opinion entirely on his side. Though he showed that he was wronged, he threw up his professorship, and retired to Erlangen, and thence to Berlin, where a new university was soon after founded, which obscured all similar institutions in Germany. Fichte subsequently became one of the first professors of Berlin University. But before this event, he pleaded in several pamphlets for freedom of religious belief, and defended the right of philosophical inquiry. He openly denied that a German prince had any right to interfere with liberty of conscience among his subjects. When, in 1806, the outbreak of the war with France diverted the attention of the Prussians to more pressing questions, Fichte again stepped forward in a manly and patriotic attitude. His "Reden an die Deutsche Nation," or Addresses to the German Nation, roused his countrymen to united action, and encouraged them to a firm resistance against the foreign invaders. He was one of the foremost, as well as the boldest, to agitate against the ascendancy of Napoleon. But Fichte knew well that words are idle, and liable to contempt, when the hour of action arrives. Thus Germany witnessed a grand and moving spectacle, when, at the general rising of the population, in 1813, she beheld a feeble and care-worn professor marching among the youth of the land, shouldering his musket, and silently performing his duties as a soldier of the liberation army. This man was Fichte, who had left his home to give his life for his country. He saw his cause issue triumphant from the struggle, and was for several years one of the most admired professors of Berlin. He died in 1814.

Meanwhile the philosophical scepticism of Fichte could not

long remain unanswered. To question the reality of the world is an idea so startling, that the human mind naturally recoils from such a doctrine; and philosophy, with all its ingenuity, will never succeed in upholding for a time a theory so repugnant to common sense. The first who opposed Fichte was *Jacobi*; but soon *Schelling* (1775-1854), an old disciple of the former, proclaimed a new doctrine, which at all events secured the belief in the reality of the outer world. That Fichte had exaggerated the views of Kant seemed generally agreed upon; but how was he to be answered? To extricate philosophy from this dilemma, Schelling proposed the so-called Identity Doctrine. We will try briefly to explain what it was. In order to get over the antagonism of Understanding and Sensations, of Ego and Non-Ego, of the real world and the ideal, Schelling denied that there was any radical opposition between the one and the other. He asserted that Existence and Thinking are coincident in all their most important aspects. As things exist to us only so far as we can think of them, and as that which we never think of is as good as non-existent, at least for us, Being and Thinking are practically the same. The macrocosm of the world is mirrored by the microcosm of the soul—just as the landscape is reflected in the water, or as the scenes of life appear on the pupil of the eye. Whether there be other phases of Existence, or other parts of the world which we may know nothing about, can make no difference, because they do not affect our Understanding. Thus Schelling held that there was a complete philosophical “identity” between the world of matter and the world of our ideas; and he pronounced the self-revealings of the one parallel to the manifestations of the other. This singular theory was advocated in several of Schelling’s essays, especially in his “Method of Academic Studies,” the principal work of this philosopher in his earlier years. On leaving Jena, where he had heard Fichte, he became a professor at Munich. Subsequently he was invited by King Frederick William IV. to come to Berlin. At that time Schelling

had abjured his old inclination to Spinozism, or the deification of nature, and he now endeavoured with increased zeal to reconcile his philosophy with Revelation. His "Disquisitions on Free Will" gave particular evidence of this desire. Unfortunately Germany proved singularly incredulous on the conversion of a philosopher who was so largely remunerated for the new insight he had got. Schelling became a mark for the satire of the Berliners, the butt of the attacks of the Hegelians, and the laughing-stock of the poets of Young Germany. His frequent but always unfulfilled promises of a new philosophy which shortly should appear before the public, and surpass in depth anything yet heard of, merely contributed to damage his reputation; and long before he died he found himself universally decried as a mystic and a dotard.

Georg Hegel (1770-1831) was, like Schelling, a native of Swabia, and lived with him on intimate terms as long as they were both residing at Jena and near Fichte. Subsequently they each philosophized independently, and Hegel gradually acquired the ambiguous reputation of being the most abstruse thinker whom Germany ever had seen. On leaving Jena he had gone to Heidelberg, whence he was called to Berlin. This was more than twenty years before Schelling came. Hegel resided at Berlin, since 1818, under the reign of King Frederick William III., and during the ministry of the liberal Baron von Altenstein, a personal friend of Hegel. For the space of about twelve years, during which this philosopher taught in the Prussian capital, he exercised an almost incredible fascination over the learned public. His speculative ardour, his novel phraseology, his daring paradoxes, and, above all, his great profundity, dazzled both young and old. Hegel flinched from no mystery, however hallowed; he stopped short before no difficulty, however arduous. The same man who in his old age demonstrated the dogma of the Trinity, is said in his younger years to have proved seven to be necessarily the number of the planets, when but seven were known; but to have proved

that there ought to be eleven planets when the four asteroids had been discovered. Perhaps, were he still alive, he would prove now that they must be sixty or seventy. Hegel passed, nevertheless, for a kind of oracle in his time. Divines, scholars, and statesmen crowded his lecture room, and among his very colleagues he was regarded with a kind of awe by all but the jealous Schleiermacher. It was fortunate for Hegel's fame that he died before the spell had passed. In 1831 he was attacked by the cholera, and succumbed after a very short illness. His principal works are his "Phänomenologie" and his "Logik." But he has left works on the metaphysical principles of almost every scientific department—on Laws, Theology, History, Ethics, and Art.

It is not easy to give a succinct account of Hegel's philosophy. A tinge of Pantheism is perceptible in his doctrines, although Hegel himself denied every imputation of the kind; his theories he declared to be in accordance with Christianity, while his political doctrines certainly exhibit an anti-revolutionary and conservative turn. One of the most striking features of his system is his method. Hegel had formed the conviction that the universal process of all creation obeyed the laws of contrast and unison. Believing, like Schelling, in the correspondence of Being and Thinking, and therefore assimilating the method of Reasoning to the fundamental process of all Nature, he concluded that the perfection of philosophy consisted in tracing contrast and unison everywhere. He declared not only polar, chemical, and magnetic action, liable to the supreme law of harmony caused by opposition, but he traced a similar flux and reflux of contrary tendencies in the phenomena of organized nature; he even subjected mental and moral action to the same law; for the same reason, he arranged his doctrines in a succession of antitheses, each being succeeded by its resolution. Contrast and Unison, or, as they are logically expressed, Negation and Identity, are the two pillars of Hegel's system of philosophy. By means of these

two fundamental principles, Hegel methodically proceeds from the lowest point of Existence to the highest. He begins with pure Being, or the perfect Void, and rises up to God, in whom all Being centres, and all contrasts meet.

The design of Hegel's Logic is very peculiar. In accordance with the axiom started by Schelling, viz., the close junction of Existence and Thought, Logic was combined by Hegel with Ontology. This combination produced very singular consequences; for thus the science of the laws of thought was compelled to teach Cosmogony as well. In order to do so, Hegel had to imagine the human intellect as perfect, or as in possession of the secrets of Creation. His Logic attempted nothing less than to unfold, at one blow, the ultimate causes of creative Power, and the ultimate laws of the human Intellect, just as if the mind of man were equal to the Divine. Thus, in Hegel's sense, Logic became a science of the Absolute, or the Deity, delineating the innermost principles of both Matter and Mind. The palpable difficulties of such a plan did not deter him from trying it, although in the very way in which it was executed it often stumbled on paradoxes too strong not to afford a warning. Thus, for instance, the identification of modes of Thought with modes of Existence led Hegel to assert that life, the planetary system, and the world were kinds of syllogism; and, again, that notions, propositions, and syllogisms were material parts of nature!

Another point which may require elucidation is Hegel's relation to Divinity. As already observed, this philosopher had nothing of the judicious reserve which Kant had shown; he was fond of meddling with speculative Theology, and stepped out of his province in order to render to orthodoxy some officious services, which soon after his death were denounced as mere snares and rank heresies. As if ours was the age of an Origen, or a St. Augustine, he offered philosophical explanations of the mysteries of Christianity. Thus he demonstrated the dogma of the Trinity, the Incarnation, and so on; but by

far the most disputed point was the nature of the Divine Essence itself. Hegel was not precise as to whether he thought the Absolute a personal Being or not; his usual phraseology was to call the Absolute both "Substance and Subject," *i. e.*, both a Thing and a conscious Agent. But, as differences of interpretation were inevitable on so vital a question, the extensive school of his adherents split into two portions shortly after his death. Some said Hegel meant by the Deity the God of the Christian religion—the *Schemer*, not the *Scheme*, of the Universe. Others, on the contrary, dispersonified the Divinity, and described their philosophical God as a dumb and unconscious Intelligence, which attained knowledge of itself only in the brains of thinking men. The former section of Hegelians assumed, therefore, a divine Understanding apart from the human; while the latter would acknowledge no difference between the two, and assigned to the heads of earth-born mortals the functions of the *sensorium Dei*. Among the orthodox philosophers of Hegel's School we may mention the late Professor Gabler of Berlin, Erdmann of Halle, and Rosenkranz of Königsberg. The chief coryphees of the Rationalistic section are the well-known David Strauss—who started, in 1835, the mythical theory of sacred history, in his "Life of Jesus"—and Feuerbach, the author of the "Essence of Christianity." It lies beyond the purposes of this Outline to enter at large into the controversies and history of German Divinity.

The merit of having critically dispersed many of the philosophical illusions of Hegel and his disciples belongs principally to Professor *A. Trendelenburg*, who is decidedly one of the leading thinkers of Germany in the present day. This philosopher became first known as a profound Aristotelian scholar; but his merits as an independent logician rest chiefly on his "Logische Untersuchungen," first published in 1840, a book still imperfectly appreciated in England. Trendelenburg holds fast by the correspondence of Thought and Existence, and therefore still unites logic with ontology, but without en-

dorsing the exaggerations of Hegel, or claiming an exact acquaintance with the nature of the Deity and the ultimate laws of the universe. He also pleads for final causes, or marks of design, especially in the organized part of nature, and generally makes it his object to consult and utilize the discoveries of modern science for the advantage and improvement of logical inquiry.

Historiographers.—The historians of Germany are, on the whole, less remarkable for lively diction, graphic narrative, or elegance of style, than many who have written on the events of the past in either France or England. Nor are they distinguished by political experience, or by any high discrimination of measures and actions which were either conducive or prejudicial to public welfare. In searching the records of former ages, they were chiefly led by a desire for knowledge, or by the wish to supply information to others. The effect of this circumstance was, on the one hand, to deprive the pages of German historiographers of much of the keen interest which either beauty of style or political sagacity can impart to the page of history. But, on the other hand, it preserved their writings more pure from the influences of party spirit or national vanity. The historical literature of Germany is thoroughly imbued with the studious disposition of its composers. If it has excellencies, they chiefly consist in fidelity, accuracy, and impartiality. One kind of historiography is especially of German growth, the style which Niebuhr invented, and which we may call the *investigative* or *critical*. It is only applicable to the doubtful or mythical periods of history, or to those which call rather for a rigid examination of the facts and authorities than for a plain and easy transcription of existing records. In addition to this style, a sort of *philosophical* historiography has been successfully cultivated by Heeren, Schlosser, and Ranke, if we may thus designate their manner. It consists in a scrutinizing survey of the moral, literary, and religious features, as well as of the commercial industry, of the ages or

peoples which these historians severally undertook to describe ; and it proceeds on the rational supposition that an analysis of these is quite as instructive as an account of the political events of a period, inasmuch as they throw great light on the state and progress of civilization among the races which successively have inhabited the earth.

Since the beginning of the sixteenth century, when A. Tschudi (1505-1572), and Etterlin (about 1507), had composed their chronicles on the history of Switzerland, no good historical work of any importance was published in Germany until about 1760. About that time a Hanoverian, *Justus Möser* (1720-1794), composed an excellent history of Osnabrück, a town not very distant from Münster or Minden. The author, who was patronized by George III., his prince, was a man of strong good sense, and gave evidence of his clear insight into some difficult problems of political economy in the monography just mentioned, as well as in other essays which he left. About thirty years later, Herder wrote his *Ideas on the History of Mankind*, and Schiller composed his masterly works on the Dutch Rebellion and the Thirty Years' War. A Prussian officer of the name of *Archenholtz* also composed an account of the Seven Years' War, in which he had taken part under Frederick the Great.

The first German writer on Universal History, and one of the best historians in general, was *Johannes von Müller* (1752-1809). He was a Swiss, born in Schaffhausen, but spent the greater part of his life in Berlin, as well as in other German towns, where he was befriended by prelates and princes. This did not deter Müller from soliciting and obtaining the patronage of the French when they invaded Prussia in 1806. During the short-lived reign of Jerome, King of Westphalia, he accepted the post of cabinet minister at the court of Cassel, an act of desertion which was afterwards made the subject of the bitterest reproach against him. It seems that Müller, who was a very honourable man, and quite as

patriotic as many of his revilers, despaired of the immediate restoration of German independence, and perhaps he hoped in the important position which he held to mitigate the evil of a foreign dominion in the conquered provinces. There is good reason to assert that Müller prevented numerous measures which would have injured the welfare of those provinces, and promoted others, which were highly conducive to their prosperity. He died, however, before the total expulsion of the French. Two great works were left by him—a history of Switzerland, built on Tschudi, and a Universal History, the first extensive publication which contains a connected account of the Germanic empire. Müller has been called a German Thucydides. He merits this appellation for the quiet impartiality and unbroken coldness for which that ancient historian has often been admired. He never allows his own opinions and feelings to interfere with his delineations, and some think that he carried this peculiarity to excess. As to his language, it is very good German, but has a rather periodic and oratorical complexion.

Barthold Georg Niebuhr (1776–1831), has acquired European fame as the historian of ancient Rome, and as the inventor of the investigative style of historiography. His work, first published in 1826, produced an immense impression on the commonwealth of letters, and overturned all the received notions of the earlier periods of Roman history. He showed that Livy, and those other authors from whom our notions on this subject are derived, had themselves been misled by ignorance and prejudice. Legends, family traditions, and opinions of later ages had greatly infected their traditions; and Niebuhr attempted to draw the line between the historical and the fictitious part. His object is never to leave every thing uncertain and make the reader distrustful and suspicious, but to remove old myths and trumpery stories for reasonable and well-supported theories of his own. He is constructive, and from hints and chance confessions, frequently detects truth

under the disguise of absurd traditions and national vanity. It is only to be regretted that the shrewdness of investigation and historical acumen which this great man displayed should not have been accompanied with proportionate elegance of style. Germany owes to Niebuhr not only improved notions on early Roman history, but also a school of Natural Law, called "Die historische Juristenschule." His views were conservative, as might be expected of one who had long been the tutor of the late King of Prussia. Hence he looked on the French Revolution as a most pernicious event, and accounted for the principal incidents in the history of mankind by supernatural guidance.

Heeren (1760-1842), a professor of Göttingen, has ably discussed ancient times, with especial reference to their institutions, commerce, religion, and progress in civilization. His principal book is, "Ideen über Politik, Verkehr und Handel der alten Welt."

F. Schlosser (1776-1861), late professor of Heidelberg, was a masterly writer on universal history. The chief merit of his "Welt-Geschichte" is, besides its good style and sound information, the excellent use to which he turns literature and the other relics of ancient and modern times in drawing the character of past ages, and describing the genius of departed or existing nations.

Leopold Ranke, born in 1795, is one of the best living historians of Germany. He resides in Berlin, and has chiefly become famous by his History of the Popes. This work embraces not only the biographies of the occupants of the Papal chair, but the history of the whole of Europe during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. He writes universal history, and his forte consists in characterizing the age of the Reformation by means of a connected and comprehensive view of all the contemporaneous events in politics, as well as in the history of art, science, and literature. The struggles and counter-efforts of Protestantism and Popery, which are the real theme

of the book, required a pen such as that of Ranke, since they fought with spiritual weapons quite as much as with diplomatic and military arms. His book contains also excellent delineations of individual character, as, for example, that of Leo X., Paul III., and Sixtus V. His style is simple, unostentatious, and impartial. Even Roman Catholic critics have admitted the fairness and justice of his representations. It may be observed that Ranke had the best materials before him, since the recommendations of the Prussian court had procured him access to the secret papers of Vienna and the Vatican.

The two principal living historians of the Middle Ages are Leo and Raumer. *Heinrich Leo*, born in 1789, professor of history at the University of Halle, combines consummate ability and learning with many principles which are becoming obsolete in our century. He has such a profound admiration for the heroic and devotional spirit of the Middle Ages, that he disparages all modern institutions, with their ideas of personal liberty. His fancy is filled with knights, guilds, corporations, and feudalism. He hates alike the wild licentiousness of anarchy and the sober liberty of a constitution. It cannot, however, be denied that he has happily seized the temper of those times, and thrown a charm and peculiar grandness on the chivalry of the Mediæval Ages. *F. Raumer*, born in 1781, a diplomatist in the Prussian service, has held many places at foreign legations, besides a professorship of history in Berlin. He has written an admirable history of the Hohenstaufen emperors, that glorious line of princes who ruled over Germany in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries.

Dahlmann (1785-1861) was a historian and political doctrinaire, who selected as his topic the Revolutions of France and England. He lectured at Bonn, and took a prominent part in the Frankfort Parliament of 1848; but the constitution which he drew up with Gagern and others remained a mere paper sketch, which future combinations may yet render available.

Gervinus is the author of a voluminous and excellent work on the Literature of Germany ; he has also written a work on Shakespeare, and lately commenced a history of the nineteenth century. His opinions are liberal ; in fact, he was in his earlier years the martyr of his Liberalism, or rather of his sense of justice, when the eccentric Duke of Cumberland, on his accession to the throne of Hanover, in 1838, withdrew the constitution, and forced him, with six other professors of Göttingen, to resign their chairs, because they would not sign the required oath on the new laws which had been promulgated.

Neander has written the history of the Christian Church, Mommsen that of Rome, Duncker and Droysen portions of Greek history, in works of the highest talent and erudition.

The history of Germany has been narrated by Wolfgang Menzel, a zealous Conservative, but formerly a Radical. His style is elegant and simple, but at the same time characterized by critical assumption. His namesake (Adolph) Menzel, and Luden, and Heinrich, have also composed histories of Germany. F. Kohlrausch has written an excellent elementary book on the same subject.

CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE.

FIRST PERIOD. 350-1150. THE MONASTIC AGE. OLD-HIGH-GERMAN PROSE AND POETRY.

350. ULFILAS—Moesogothic translation of the Bible.
750. Beowulf, an Anglo-Saxon Legend.
800. Hildebrandslied, a ballad describing a combat between a father and his son.
830. Muspilli, poem on the Day of Judgment.
840. Heliand, Low-German poem on the life of the Saviour.
881. Ludwigslied, song on the Victory of Louis III. over the Normans.
890. Otfried, a Franconian monk, author of the "Krist."
960-1022. Notker Labeo, a monk of St. Gall, translator of the Psalms.
1025-1085. Williram, a Franconian monk, translator of the Song of Solomon.
1120. Ava, a nun, writer of several religious poems.

SECOND PERIOD. 1150-1534. MIDDLE-HIGH-GERMAN POETRY OF THE MINNESÄNGER (A) AND THE MEISTERSÄNGER (B).

A. 1. *Versified Chronicles.*

1160. Hannolied, a poem on Bishop Hanno of Cologne.
1165. Kaiserchronik, a poem on the Emperors of Germany.
1175. Rolandslied, song on Rowland the Brave, by Konrad.
1180. Alexanderlied, by Lamprecht.
1186. Æneid, by H. von Veldeke, "the father of minstrelsy."

2. *Epic Poems on German heroes, by unknown Minnesänger.*

1210. The Lay of the Nibelungen.
1210. Gudrun, poem on the rescue of a Frisian maid.

3. *British Legends, by three principal Minnesänger.*

1170-1220. Hartmann von der Aue (Iwein. Erech. Der arme Heinrich).

1215. Wolfram von Eschenbach (Parcival, Titurel).

1220. Gottfried von Strasburg (Tristan and Isolde).

Lohengrin, a tale of the next century, on the Schwanen-Ritter Lohengrin, son of Parcival; author not known.

4. *Lyrical Poetry of the Minnesänger.*

1207. Contest of the Minstrels on the castle of Wartburg.

1168-1227. Walther von der Vogelweide, author of Leiche or Lieder. Other Lyrists are: Kürenberger; Ulrich von Lichtenstein; Reinmar von Zweter; Dietmar von Aist, etc.

5. *Didactic Poetry of the Minnesänger.*

1229. Freidank's Bescheidenheit, probably by Walther.

1230. Der Pfaffe Amis, by Stricker, a satire on the clergy.

1300. Der Renner, by Hugo von Trimberg.

1330. Der Edelstein, a collection of fables, by Boner.

1150-1500. Reineke Fuchs, fable of the Reynard—several versions—by Willem, in 1150; Heinrich der Gleissner, in 1170; and by Baumann, or else by Barkhusen of Lübeck, in 1498.

PERIOD OF THE MEISTERSÄNGER. 1300-1534.

B. 1. *Meistersänger.*

1340. Heinrich von Meissen, surnamed Frauenlob, of Mayence.

1380. Heinrich der Teichner, and Peter Suchenwirt, both of Vienna.

1400. Muscatblüt; Veit Weber.

1450. Rosenblüt; Hans Folz.

1460. Michael Beheim, a weaver's son, and soldier of Vienna.

1494-1576. Hans Sachs, a shoemaker of Nürnberg, author of Possen, fables, allegories, Easter plays, etc.

2. *Chroniclers.*

1386. Halbsuter's poem on the battle of Sempach.

1370. Fritsche Closener's Chronicle of Strasburg.

1414. Jacob Twinger's Chronicle of Alsacia.

1500. Emperor Maximilian I., author of "Theuerdank."

3. *Satirists.*

1458-1521. Sebastian Brandt, of Strasburg, "Narrenschiff."

1545-1589. Johann Fischart—Das glückhafte Schiff. Flohhatz; German Rabelais.

4. *Preachers.*

1300. Master Eckhart, a Dominican friar.

1320. Johann Tauler.

1350. Heinrich Suso, a Dominican friar.

1500. Geiler von Kaisersberg.

THIRD PERIOD. 1534-1760. THE LEARNED ERA.

1483-1546. Martin Luther—Translation of the Bible, Kirchen-lieder, Sermons, Pamphlets.

1488-1523. Ulrich von Hutten, Pamphleteer.

1605-1659. Simon Dach, Hymn writer.

1609-1640. Paul Fleming, Hymn writer.

1606-1676. Paul Gerhard, Hymn writer.

1592-1635. Friedrich Spee, author of Trutznachtigall.

1616-1654. Andreas Gryphius, Hymn writer.

1500-1556. Burkhard Waldis, Fabulist.

1542-1556. G. Rollenhagen, Fabulist.

1601-1669. Moscherosch, Satirist.

1669. "Simplicissimus," a novel of the Thirty Years' War.

Critical Writers.

1597-1639. Martin Opitz, founder of the first Silesian School.

1618-1669. Hoffmannswaldau, with Lohenstein and Logau, founders of the second Silesian School.

1700-1766. Gottsched, founder of the Saxon School.

1725-1783. Bodmer, founder of the Swiss School.

1715-1769. Gellert, fabulist, disciple of Gottsched.

1719-1783. Lichtwer, fabulist; Pfeffel, fabulist.

FOURTH PERIOD. 1760-1805. THE CLASSICAL ERA.

1729-1781. G. E. Lessing—"Hamburger Dramaturgie, Laocoon, Antigötze, Erziehung des Menschen-Geschlechts; Minna, Emilia Galotti, Nathan."

1724-1803. Klopstock—"Messias," Odes, Dramas.

1744-1803. Herder—"Cid, Stimmen der Völker in Liedern, Ideas towards the History of Mankind."

1772. Foundation of the Göttingen Dichterbund; Klinger's "Sturm und Drang," a drama.

1747-1794. Bürger—Ballads, Baron Münchhausen.

- 1757–1826. Voss—Louise, a pastoral; translation of Homer.
 1783–1813. Wieland—Agathon, Musarion, Abderites, Aristippus, Oberon.
 1763–1825. Richter—Quintus Fixlein, Flegeljahre, Siebenkäs.
 1759–1805. F. Schiller—Robbers, Fiesco, Kabale, Don Carlos, Ballads,
 Lyrics, Thirty Years' War, Revolt of the Dutch, Wallenstein,
 Mary Stuart, Maid of Orleans, William Tell.
 1750–1814. Iffland, writer of comedies.
 1761–1819. Kotzebue, writer of comedies.
 1749–1832. J. W. Göthe—Götz, Werther, Clavigo, Stella, Iphigenia,
 Faust, Egmont, Tasso, Wilhelm Meister, Hermann und
 Dorothea, Reineke, Ballads.

FIFTH PERIOD. 1805–1865. RECENT WRITERS.

1. *Romantics.*

- 1767–1845. Augustus W. Schlegel—Lectures on Dramatic Art, Ion, translations of Calderon and of Shakespeare.
 1772–1829. Frederick Schlegel—Philosophy of History, Lucinda, Language and Wisdom of the Indians.
 1772–1801. Hardenberg, or Novalis—Aphorisms, Hymn on Night.
 1773–1853. Ludwig Tieck—Tales and Legends.
 Count Arnim, Brentano, Bettina, Fouqué, A. Hoffmann, Chamisso, writers of tales.

2. *Ultra-Conservatives.*

- 1783–1819. Max Schenkendorf—Lyrics.
 1823—. . . . Oscar Redwitz—Dramas, Amaranth.
 1772–1842. Bishop Pyrker—Tunisia, Rudolfias, two epics.
 Countess Hahn-Hahn; Baroness Droste.

3. *Patriotic and Liberal Poets.*

- 1791–1813. Theodor Körner—Lyre and Sword.
 1787–1862. Ludwig Uhland—Ballads.
 1769–1860. Arndt—Patriotic songs.
 1789—. . . . Fr. Rückert—Geharnischte Sonnette, Oriental poetry.
 1796–1825. Count Platen—Comedies, Lyrics.
 Baron Lenau and Anastasius Grün, two Austrian Poets.

4. *Advanced Liberals.*

- 1817—. . . . G. Herwegh—Gedichte eines Lebendigen an die Todten.
 1810—. . . . F. Freiligrath—Lyrics.
 1798—. . . . Hoffmann von Fallersleben—Patriotic songs.
 Kinkel, Gutzkow, and Prutz, political writers.

1799–1856. H. Heine—Reisebilder, Buch der Lieder, Neue Lieder, Salon, Atta Troll, Romancero.

Modern Philosophers.

1575–1624. Jacob Böhme—Aurora, Mysterium Magnum.

1646–1716. Leibnitz—Théodicée.

1724–1804. Immanuel Kant—Kritik der reinen Vernunft, Kritik der praktischen Vernunft, der Urtheilskraft.

1762–1814. Fichte—Wissenschaftslehre.

1775–1854. Schelling—Method of Academic Study.

1770–1831. Hegel—Phænomenologie, Logik.

1806-. . . . Trendelenburg—Logische Untersuchungen.

Modern Historians.

1505–1572. Tschudi—Chronicle of the History of Switzerland.

1720–1794. Justus Möser—History of Osnabrück.

1752–1809. Johannes von Müller—Weltgeschichte, Schweizer Geschichte.

1781-. . . . Raumer—History of the Hohenstaufen Emperors.

1795-. . . . Ranke—History of the Popes.

1776–1831. B. G. Niebuhr—History of Rome.

1776–1861. Schlosser—Universal History.

1760–1842. Heeren—Ideas on Politics, Commerce, etc., of the ancient world.

1785–1861. Dahlmann—History of the French Revolution, and History of the English Revolution.

1805-. . . . Gervinus—History of the Nineteenth Century, History of German Literature.

Droysen on Alexander of Macedon, and History of Prussia.

Mommsen, History of Rome.

Duncker, History of Antiquity.

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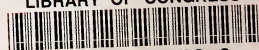
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