

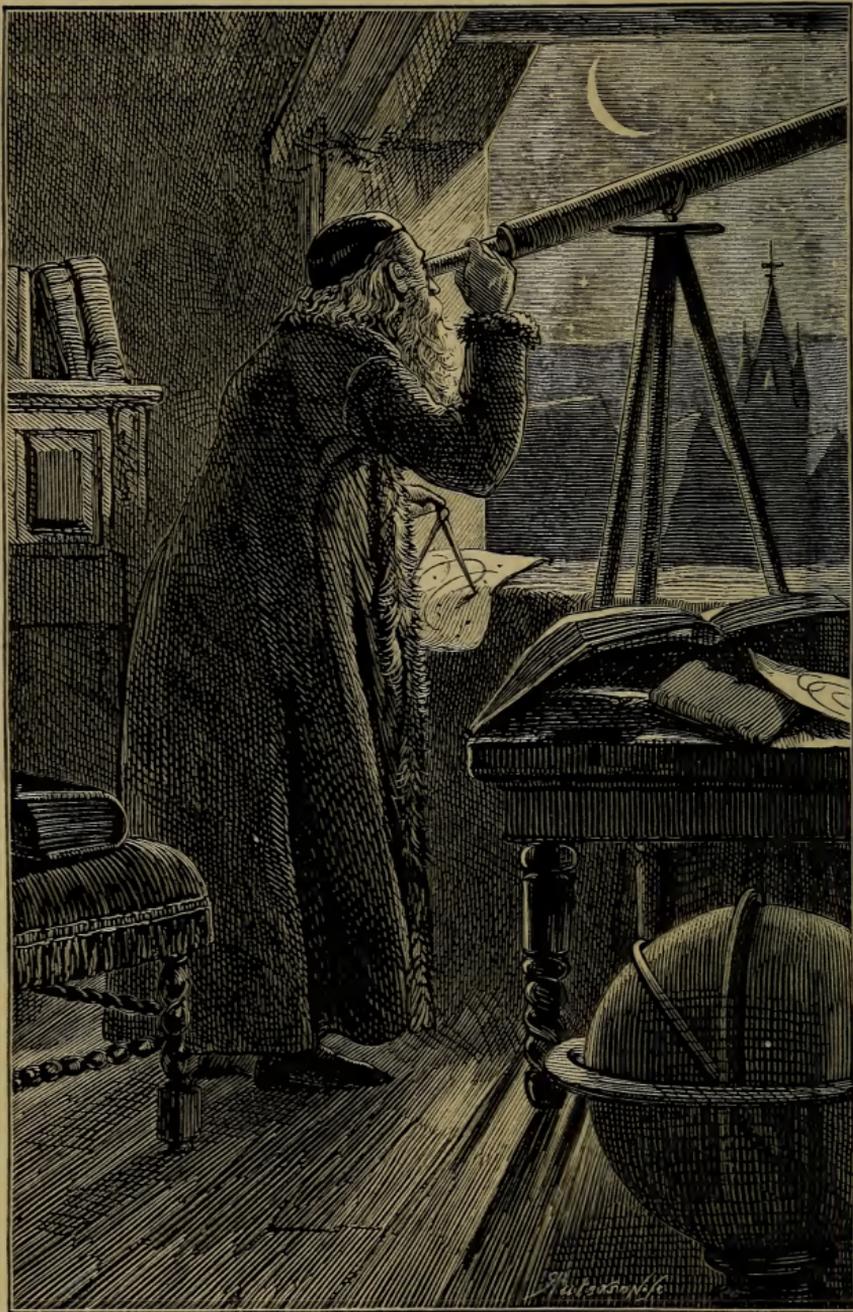


presented

TO

EPOCH MEN.

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“In the azure canopy he saw the stars, no longer stationary, but floating along through immensity”—EPOCH MEN, Page 203.

(Frontispiece.)

EPOCH MEN,
AND THE RESULTS OF THEIR
LIVES.

BY

SAMUEL NEIL,

AUTHOR OF "SHAKESPEARE: A BIOGRAPHY," "THE YOUNG DEBATER," ETC.

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PREFATORY NOTE.

“**H**ISTORY,” says E. Bulwer-Lytton, “is rarely more than the Biography of great men.”

With this idea in view, the author of the following papers has attempted to narrate some of the more striking events of History, through the medium of the lives of the great men of each Epoch. The subjects have been chosen from various periods and countries, and from different ranks and pursuits. They exhibit forcibly, it is hoped, the power of persistent purpose in the world, and prove that there is ample scope in human life for the display of individual effort and energy.



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Charlemagne—Modern Europe.

A.D. 742-814.

“There never ceases in this world of ours
Work for the good and noble. God decides
The issues and the limits of all powers.
O'er history and life *He*, sole, presides ;
He penetrates with organising force
Epochs and institutions ; every change
Receives from Him the order of its course ;
And states derive their sovereignty and range,
Creative conquest built old Empires up
Which could not bear the moral analyst ;
They filled the measure of their granted cup,
Then God's true civiliser rose in Christ.
States vivified by faith in *Him* are strong,
And such a State was built by CHARLEMAGNE.”

—*L. U. Masilene.*

“Charlemagne laid the first solid foundation for a permanent system of Christian government and institutions.”—*Fred. von Schlegel.*

“The name of Charlemagne has come down to us as one of the greatest in history. Though not the founder of his dynasty, he has given his name both to his race and his age.”—*Guizot.*



CHAPTER I.

PROLUSION.

IN the olden ages of the world the various forms of government arose singly—"at sundry times and in divers manners." The patriarchal, the kingly, the sacerdotal, the oligarchic, and the democratic systems of sovereignty may not have manifested themselves in distinct and chronological succession; but they did not develop themselves in parallel order, neither did they attempt to work together in harmony and union. The grand purpose of the period, included in the term, Ancient History, seems to have been to give rise to those differing schemes by which men may be governed, and by a process of "progress by antagonism" to raise each of these to its highest power and noblest individual development. This purpose being fulfilled, the kind and degree of each being so tried, tested, and known, and each in its turn having failed to maintain pre-eminence, and produce the highest and holiest good to the people, a new problem arose—viz., How, by a due admixture of these, to secure the greatest possible amount of stability in government, and the highest possible state of civilisation in all classes of the people? This integration and harmonious union of all the possible varieties of govern-

ment appears to us to have been and to be *the* legislative problem, if, indeed, it is not the life problem, of Modern History. Accordingly, we find that in passing from the records of ancient to those of modern times, the object of contest and dispute is changed. It is no longer the self-existent supremacy of any one form of government which is aimed at, but rather the degrees, the times, the manners, and the circumstances in which each shall be supreme, yet each subordinate in turn. Individual, continuous, and unshared dominion is found to be impolitic, if not impossible, for any; and hence a system of collocation, mutually agreed upon for each, has become a desideratum. We believe that the true era of this change may be safely regarded as beginning with the Carlovingian dynasty, and as finding its articulate and definitive place in modern policy during the reign of Charlemagne.

To make this evident, it will be advisable to throw back our thoughts into the past, and by a comprehensive review of the tendencies exhibited there, prove that his reign constituted a true Epoch, and that he who led the van in its accomplishment imparted a new impulse to human life.

Rome inherited from the great empires of pre-Christian times a knowledge of those forms of government which had influenced, combined, and divided the various political associations or consociations of antiquity—the imperial magnificence of Egypt, Assyria, and Babylon, the theocratic or sacerdotal mysteries of Judea, the municipal and civic independence of Greece, and the military renown of Macedonia. By the conquest of Gaul and Germany a rude and hardy personal independence had been added to the experiences of the past; and now, on this vast stage, the grand drama of civilisation was to reach its *prolusio*, the curtain was to

fall at the close of a contest between the forces of Imperialism and Personality.

The banks of the majestic Rhine were then most singular in the contrast of their inhabitants. Want and barbaric rudeness possessed the one, while wealth and all the discipline and pomp of imperial civilisation occupied the other. The natural result of such a state was war. Disciplined skill for a time held the turbulent forces of barbarism in subjection and fear: at length, however, need gave birth to leagues and combinations, and well-knit confederacies of the Germanic barbarians were arranged, in which chieftainhood speedily passed into kingship. The civil contentions in Rome during the third and fourth centuries afforded ample scope for disciplining those barbaric hordes in the arts and practices of war. The overthrow of the Mistress Empire of the world by Alaric, 405 A.D., gave unbounded licence to experiment and change in all things except such as the Church had managed to acquire the mastery of. Even the memories and traditions of the past were endangered in the inebriety of conquest; but luckily (or shall we not, in preference, assert providentially?) the greed of acquisition overpowered the bonds by which the aggressors had been held in union, and the divisions which ensued made it impossible to effect a thorough overthrow of all that deserved to be cherished in ancient civilisation. It is a singular illustration of the power of strong passions working in the souls of men intent on personal independence, that in all the contests of this period, the least united and the least advanced in the arts of life or the polity of nations were most successful in their efforts. The Goths vanquished the Romans, and in Gaul, the Franks, rude, restless, and loosely held together, eventually subdued the firmly con-

federated Goths and Burgundians. In the early part of the fifth century each Frankish town, territory, or band, had its petty and independent temporary chief. They had no common capital, no universally acknowledged head. The chieftaincy was the prize of the man most skilled in managing other men; he who could most advantageously plan and conduct schemes of plunder or projects for settlements; he who could assemble around him the greatest number of roving bands, and subjugate them most entirely to his controlling will. Such a one was Clovis, the founder of the French monarchy. He was the chief of a small band of Franks settled at Tournay. By guile and perfidy he contrived to entrap and overcome many of the rival chiefs of the Franks, often assassinating whole families in his jealous ambition. The Merovingian kings who succeeded him pursued much the same plan. Gross indulgence of the criminal passions and mutual murder thinned their race, and weakened it. Relationship became a cause of enmity, and seldom did a monarch live to see a son of age to succeed himself. Regencies first became frequent, then perpetual. The possession of a shadowy royalty could not content those who felt themselves intrusted with all the essential duties, responsibilities, and cares of kings. Usurpation transferred the name and title to those who had long worn the dignity and exercised the power. Pepin, the *major-domo* of the palace, threw aside the hypocrite's pretensions, and claimed the kingdom by the tenure of power and possession. Childeric III. was dethroned, and France exchanged a mock for a real monarch.

The Franks, and indeed the Goths, in general, were not fitted for national life. They were accustomed to soldierly, but not to civic and municipal, restraints. It was requisite

that they should be brought under national institutions, led within the scope of the magnificent imperial traditions of the mother-city of nations, and educated to united obedience, action, and finance. To effect such purposes, the Western Empire must renew its youth, resume for a time its former vigour, and weld together, by the strong force of military prowess, the disjunct nationalities, or rather chieftaincies, which abounded in the misrule resulting from the fall of Rome.

It may be observed, as a general law, that in the infancy of civilisation vast imperial organisations are necessary. Luxury riots in courts, and invention is bribed into activity. Each new pleasure, as it palls upon the court, is welcomed to the homes of the class below. The strong, the independent, and the dangerous, are drafted off into the army; the weak are subjected to the mere will of their masters; and the middle classes live on the bounty of the courts, the spoils of the army, or the gains of commerce. For a time these co-operate and co-exist. So long as a sovereign with a clear head and an energetic hand holds the government in his grasp, the latent elements of discord are repressed in their activity: but the vitality of self-interest at length asserts itself. If a weak monarch, a divided or disputed sovereignty succeeds a strong, united, or uncontested one, class after class appears ready to try any change, in the hope that it will lead to betterment. The aspirants to dominion throw baits to each class, or at least to such classes as are powerful and clamorous enough to be annoying, and thus by natural processes of growth and decadence do vast empires advance to the maturity of extended rule, then *dehisce*, for the production of other and younger nations.

To compound, to blend, to amalgamate, all that was good

in the sublime organic governments of olden times with the youthful impetuosity, the hardy independence, the rude effervescence of personal being, and the undeterred experimentalism of modern times ; to suffuse the noble endurance and manly heroism of barbarism with the holy influences of civilisation, and to impregnate an effete civilisation with new life and energy, the Western Empire of modern Europe was essential. The hour came, and the man. The landmarks of civilisation had been swept away ; colossal crime infested Europe ; anarchy, confusion, and ignorance reigned over the territories of the Cæsars. A steadfast and heroic man is wanted. Who is he who accepts the crown and government, resolved to quiet, by resolute and indomitable perseverance, the noisy wranglings of many classes and many kings ? CHARLEMAGNE, the restorer of social order, letters, and rule.





CHAPTER II.

CHARLEMAGNE, HIS EARLY LIFE, TIMES, AND CHARACTER.

HARLEMAGNE, the eldest legitimate son of *Pepin-le-bref*, mayor of the palace under Childeric III., one of the Merovingian nominal kings of the Franks, was born April 2, 742 A.D. There is a considerable discordance among historians regarding the precise place of his birth. Aix-la-Chapelle, Ingelheim, Carlstadt, and Salzburg, have each been named as entitled to that honour. There is no sufficing proof of any of these assertions. All that can be regarded as certain is, that he was born *somewhere* near the banks of the Rhine, whither his mother, Bertha, daughter of Caribert, Count of Laon, had followed her husband, who was at this period in Aquitania, engaged in suppressing a revolt which was headed by the duke of that territory. As the civil contest then waging lasted for some years, Bertha and her young son must have passed a somewhat wandering life. In 744, when his father had gained the victory, they would return to court, and he would doubtlessly be brought up after the manner of the age, in the company of the young people whose parents held office near royalty or under the mayor, in the knowledge and practice of all the military arts, and some of the

elements of civil polity. At this time, however, genius had withered, and learning was at the point of death. The imperial schools in which the scions of the Roman nobility had received that culture which fitted them for the exercise of power, and enabled them to adorn society, were destroyed by the irruptions of the barbarians, and long years of neglect, discouragement, and opposition, had chased learning and literature into obscurity, where it lingered sickly in grief and prostration. To the youth of Charles the chivalric accomplishments and the notes and exercises of war were well and thoroughly explained; but the grace of letters, the refinement of thought, the means, the taste, the power, or the opportunity of reading, were almost wholly denied.

We can form but an imperfect idea of a life from which the schoolmaster is excluded, or of the dense ignorance of the times when the priests of religion themselves, in too many instances, had sunk into deplorable machines, who uttered a round of uncomprehended worship, and had little or no acquaintance with the language of Roman literature and of Church legislation. Yet we can scarcely express regret that Charlemagne was not brought under the mental discipline to which youth is usually subjected, but that he spent his early years in the pursuits of the chase, of war, and of political intrigue. Had he been exposed to the former, his own mind and will would have been somewhat effeminated; he would have lost the resolute, unresting, practical energy of his nature; the breadth of theoretic thought, which would then have stretched before him, would have stayed his hand when the stroke required to be given; and the widening of the horizon would have weakened the intensity and clearness with which he saw and did the one thing that seemed best in any exigency. Had he been deprived

of aught of the latter, he would have lacked the ready skill and the powerful influence which could curb and check, outwit and brave, resist and conquer danger, revolt, or opposition. We do not grieve, then, but rather rejoice, that, in his case, the practical and the real in life were the earliest educative influences amid which he grew up, and that the attractions and pleasures of scholarship were recognised by him as weapons of polity, as well as occasions of true and lasting enjoyment only in the latter part of a life whose first duty was to effect the inauguration of a new empire by the power of the sword, which should be afterwards established by the power of thought—an empire which should unite in itself power and intelligence.

Pepin, Charlemagne's father, was a consummate politician and intrigant, as well as a notable warrior. He inherited the ambitious schemes of Pepin d'Heristal and Charles Martel, his grandfather and father, and doubtlessly educated his son in all the traditions of his house and lineage. They were the parties who introduced the fashion of shadowy and do-nothing royalty, a plan by which, without the nominal honours of regal state, they exerted its real powers, and yet escaped the odium of their own abuses of those powers. This scheme had at length produced its intended results; the regal power had been totally severed from the regal title, and the attentions and regards of aspiring courtiers were turned from the nominal to the virtual dispensers of place, patronage, and pay. Love, affection, and interest, had been diverted from the king to the mayor, and the time seemed ripe for a bold attempt to seize the nominal, as well as retain the real, sovereignty of the Frankish empire. The Church was greedy of power, and was already corrupted by a love of wealth, splendour, and rule. Pepin saw this, and

by a craftily framed question obtained the papal sanction to the *moral* legislation, which enacts that "it is better that he who exercises regal power should also possess the regal title." The sanction of the Pope having been gained to this axiom, Pepin speedily placed himself at the head of the disaffected nobility, and by a cunningly-devised and well-worked revolution, dethroned Childeric III., and "reigned in his stead." This happened in 750, when Charlemagne was about nine years of age. He who was but a courtier's son had now become a crown prince, and his mother and sister were ennobled, *in fact*, by the success of Pepin. Though this was accomplished, however, there is little doubt that great art and care required to be exercised, lest those lately acquired honours should lead to the manufacture of new enemies and new rebellions. Even in childhood, therefore, Charlemagne would be trained to practise a conciliating policy, and to conceal deep-laid and boldly-planned schemes by an artless demeanour and blandness of manner. In March 752, Archbishop Boniface, the apostle of Germany, solemnly, in the name and by the authority of the Pope, consecrated and anointed Pepin King of the Franks, at Soissons, the very place where, two hundred and sixty-six years before, Clovis, the first of the Merovingians, by a victory over Syagrius, the Roman provincial governor, established the Frankish sovereignty. Of this pageant Charlemagne and Carloman, with their sister Gisla, would form no unattractive part, and the prince-made youth would observe, with keen tact and evident relish, the potency of ceremonial pomp. A subsequent lesson would teach this even more impressively. The wise courage of Pepin having subdued opposition and silenced discontent,—having consolidated his power and vanquished his foes,—had time left him to be courteous,

affable, and kingly. The popedom at this period had got enmeshed in great difficulty. Aistulph, King of Lombardy, had invaded and conquered Ravenna, and now sought tribute and submission from the reigning pontiff. Such a humiliation was in nowise compatible with the schemes of the pontificate. Pope Stephen III. bethought him, in this extremity, of the Rome-sanctioned usurper of the dominion of the Franks, and besought his friendly aid. This Pepin granted, on condition that he, the Pope, should re-anoint him king, as well as baptize and consecrate his two sons. Stephen accordingly crossed the Alps in 753, and sojourned at Münster, where, during the winter of that year, Pepin held his court. Here Pepin was re-consecrated; here his children were baptized, and declared to be the only legitimate successors to the throne and dominion of Pepin. On this occasion the Pope lifted the crown prince from the font with his own hands, so specially did he desire to mark his favour to the new dynasty. There can be little doubt that Charlemagne, in the spring of the following year, 754, accompanied his father in his march towards Italy. Pepin, having crossed the Alps with a numerous army, encountered Aistulph, King of Lombardy, near Susa, and overcame him. This done, he compelled him, by treaty, to resign all claim to sovereignty over the see of Rome, to deliver to him the Exarchate of Ravenna, and all the cities he had seized belonging to the Roman dukedom, whose powers the Popes exercised. Aistulph agreed, but, shortly afterwards, infringed the convention; then Pepin returned, severely chastised his duplicity, and made a formal grant of his conquests to the Pope and his successors in the apostolic chair. The Pope having sanctified *his* usurpation by the forms of religion, he sanctified the Pope's domination by the power of the sword. A fair

and goodly exchange, equally advantageous to each of the contracting parties. On Charlemagne, of course, these forms of policy could not be lost. As Pepin intended to convey the empire to his children, he would make a point of sedulously instructing them in all the diplomatic arts of the age, in all the strategies by which power might be gained and retained, and in all the punctilios and observances by which outward homage may be paid, while the realities of dominion are laid hold of and appropriated.

The renown of Pepin speedily rang through the world. As he seemed dangerous, his neighbouring princes sought to propitiate him by gifts, favours, and treaties. Even Constantine, Emperor of the East, observing the rise of a rival, found it politic to send ambassadors, and to open negotiations with him. By this act, Charlemagne was brought into connexion with the magnificent traditional despotism of the East, learned its method, and became acquainted with its practices.

Deprived, as Charlemagne was, by the necessities of his times, of any defined, intentional, mental training, we can only form an idea of what his early life must have been, by considering the circumstances amid which he lived, the history enacted before his eyes, and shedding its influences into his mind. We know little or nothing directly of his "youth's doings," and can only estimate, from what we know was passing around him, the nature of the thoughts and aspirations which were growing up within him, training him for empire, and fitting him for working out, however unwittingly, the purposes of Providence. Hence, though we are relating no definite and well-ascertained *fact* regarding the early years of Charlemagne's life, we are tracing the progress of that practical education which made him what he was, and led him to do what he did.

We have seen that he was well versed and trained in military and chivalric arts, in the manoeuvres of diplomacy, and in the practices of government; that he had seen court, camp, and church life; that he had been specially taught to look upon himself as destined to rule; that he had been introduced to an acquaintance with forms of etiquette and systems of sovereignty of various kinds, despotic, sacerdotal, kingly, and ducal; and that he had been practically instructed to use any or all of these, whichever seemed most likely to suit him at the time, for the elaboration of his own purposes, and the defeat of the intentions of others. More than this, he had enjoyed in the love of his mother Bertha, the affection of his sister Gisla, the fraternal competition of his brother Carloman, and the earnest counsels of his father, a considerable share, such as it was, of that too uncommon blessing—home education. To be sure, some portion of this instruction, and that which belongs to the sacredest elements of human life most of all, was not by any means of the best kind. We may specially instance Charlemagne's low estimate of marital relations. He had espoused, while yet young, a lady of good family, named Huniltrude. But when Pepin saw that the Lombardine king could only be managed by a marriage connexion, he advised, and his mother Bertha joined in the advice, that he should contract a politic marriage with the daughter of Desiderius, who had then become King of Lombardy. Desira did not relish the position in which she was thus placed, and the union was, as might have been expected, unhappy. Pepin died in 768, and Charlemagne became king. A new era began in his life. The hero-king and scholar had a work to perform. We shall follow him, in the next chapter, to empire and greatness.



CHAPTER III.

HIS REIGN AND LABOURS.

 HE empire over which Pepin had borne sway, and to which Charlemagne ultimately succeeded,—for in this place we need say nought of the brief and eventless co-reign of his brother Carloman,—was very extensive. It consisted of three states,—viz., (1.) *Austrasia*, or the Eastern Empire, comprising within itself the north-east of Gaul and the south of Germany, so much, at least, as lies between the Tyrol and the Thuringerwald, the Rhine, and the Inn. (2.) *Neustria*, or the Western Empire, which included the north-west of Gaul, between the Waal and the Loire. (3.) *Burgundy*, or the Southern Empire, in which were comprehended Provence and parts of Aquitania, Switzerland, and Alsace. In other words, it extended from the Pyrenees to the Rhine, and from the English Channel to the Noric Alps. The monarch of such a territory could not but be, in the then unsettled state of the European powers, important as an ally, formidable as an enemy, and worthy of jealous watching as either. Northern Europe was, as yet, only the cradle of valiant emigrant races, unconsolidated under any form of government except that of military

leaders. The south-west peninsula was peopled by a tribe of Visigoths, who zealously held out against the farther progress of the Saracens, whose religious ardour had carried them into Spain. Italy was, as it has too long unfortunately been, a divided country; the Longobards possessed the upper part, the Romans the middle, and the Greeks the lower portion and Sicily. Rome itself was in a state of semi-anarchy, the Pope, the senate, and the people being at variance with each other, at the same time that Charlemagne held the rank of a Roman patrician, wielded the war-legions of France, and was linked by marriage with the Longobards, the fiercest enemies of Rome. In Austria and Hungary the Avari, effeminate through luxury and indolence, had their treasure cities encircled by walls and moats, but undefended by strong arms or stout hearts. Eastern Germany was inhabited by various disunited and often contentious tribes of Slaves and Vandals; in the north of Germany, the Saxons, a free and manly race, dwelt under the government of self-elected chiefs, and worshipped in the primeval forests their fathers' ancient gods; but South Germany was considerably under his dominion, and, with the exception of the Bavarians, seemed inclined to take kindly to the foreign yoke. England was a secluded and uninfluential island, subject to the incursions of the Danes, and not yet harmonised and united into one kingdom, under one king. There was no great empire near him, no formidable power around; for the Greek empire, although it still existed, was, at Charlemagne's accession, great in name only, not in reality; it was no longer the empire of Constantine, but an effete life-simulating State.

Such, in brief terms, was the condition of Europe when Charlemagne, in his twenty-sixth year, succeeded to the

throne of his father, as before stated, in A.D. 768. At Pepin's death, the empire was divided between Charlemagne and Carloman, the former being sovereign of Austrasia and Neustria, the latter of Burgundy. The brothers had married sisters, daughters of Desiderius, king of the Longobards. Charlemagne had, however, repudiated his wife, and her father had immediately resented the rejection of his daughter by exciting and encouraging revolt in his son-in-law's kingdom. Some of the nobles were, of course, anxious to be independent, and this favoured the design of Desiderius. The seeds of sedition are easily sown; and though no rising of importance took place in Charlemagne's allotment, the nobles and people of Aquitania made an attempt to throw off their allegiance to the empire. Carloman besought the aid of his brother, which was readily granted, as it might read a lesson to his own nobility of the power and determination with which he would resent any infringement of the regal dignity, any neglect of a subject's duty. While Charlemagne was in the field his brother fled, and left him to maintain the conflict alone against superior odds. The valour with which he pursued his purpose, and the firmness with which he continued the dubious contest, convinced the nobility of the whole empire that he possessed military skill, energy, and resources sufficient, not only to curb revolt, but to extend conquest. Nor was he slow in perceiving that, on his part, some means should be adopted by which the nobles might be employed in foreign war, rather than in the fomenting of domestic discord.

On Carloman's death, in A.D. 771, he was invited to accept of the sovereignty of that portion of his late father's possessions, of which he would doubtless have made himself master, even though uninvited. Carloman's wife fled, with

her two sons, to her father; and now the court of the Longobards contained two women whose wrongs called for vengeance on the head of Charlemagne. Desiderius set himself to gratify at once their anxious thirst and his own ambition in a somewhat circuitous manner. Pope Stephen IV., who had been opposed to the union of the regal families of Pepin and Desiderius, died in the early part of 772, and was succeeded by Pope Adrian I. Desiderius seized the opportunity of this new accession to demand from the Popedom the anointment of Carloman's two sons as the true and real heirs to their father's kingdom, threatening war as the consequence of a refusal. Adrian did refuse, advised Charlemagne of the course pursued by his father-in-law, and sought help to maintain the papal authority, and to mar the designs of his enemy, whose defeat would, of course, serve Charlemagne's interest as well as his own. Charlemagne promised that as soon as possible he would devote himself to the humiliation of the haughty claimant of his dominion, and the insubordinate enemy of the Pope in Upper Italy.

Meanwhile, however, he had provided full occupation for himself, his nobles, and his armies, by declaring war against the Saxons. This he did at an imperial diet, held at Worms in 772, where he enlarged upon the predatory character of the Saxons, the shamefulness of the heathen worship they practised, and the merit which would be due to the Frankish empire if they could be converted to Christianity. Conversions were then more frequently made by the sword of a temporal king than by "the sword of the Spirit;" as if a religion which could be donned to order might not as easily be doffed by a countermand from a stronger power. Having declared war ostensibly to bring the Saxons under the dominion of "the true and saving

faith," he made his first irruption into their territories about the middle of that same year. It was a short, successful, and briskly conducted campaign. Leaving Worms, he entered Hesse, advanced to the banks of the Weser, took Eresberg, [Statberg,] destroyed the statue of Irmin, an object peculiarly venerable in the eyes of the Saxons, and compelled them to conclude a peace, giving twelve chiefs as their hostage for its fulfilment.

At the very moment of his victory, ominous tidings reached him from Rome. The plot on which Desiderius had resolved had begun to effect its purpose; the Pope being embroiled, had asked Charlemagne for such help as he needed, and as it was easy to see that it was his own quarrel forced upon a third party, he could not refuse. Girding up his loins, therefore, he determined upon graciously aiding the Pope to maintain his supremacy, at the same time that he would settle his own dispute with his father-in-law, and might mayhap extend his own influence, if not his own dominion, in the Italian peninsula.

Desiderius, on hearing of the hostile approach of Charlemagne,—who, having hurried from Germany, had crossed the Alps by the pass of Susa, and entered Italy,—resolved to employ tactics more than valour in the attainment of his end. He accordingly retreated towards Pavia, and fortified himself there, in the hope that sickness, scarcity, and impatience would cause all the evils of a defeat to his enemy. Charlemagne, however, had no notion of being so readily fatigued; so, leaving orders for the preservation of a strict blockade, he set out to attend the Easter festival at Rome, A.D. 774. There he was received by the Pope with the highest honour and the most lavish sycophancy. In return, he confirmed the gift of the Exarchate of Ravenna and the

Pentapolis, which Pepin his father had made to the Pope, and obtained, on his part, the right of confirming the elections to the papal chair. These things having been arranged, Charlemagne returned to Pavia, which soon after capitulated, and Desiderius, being made prisoner, was immured in the monastery of Corvey, in France, where he, not long thereafter, died. The conqueror claimed the Longobardian crown, and annexed its territories to his own dominions.

While Charlemagne was employed in Italy, the Saxons, presuming upon his finding occupation there, invaded his empire. Calling a diet at Duren, near Aix-la-Chapelle, he decided upon proceeding against them at once, made an incursion beyond the Weser, and thoroughly discomfited them for a time. No sooner was this matter somewhat settled, than he required to repair to Lombardy, where his viceroy, Duke Rotgand, had revolted. This insurrection he quelled almost in the hour of its birth—so sudden and energetic were the measures adopted by him—and he immediately set out again to Saxony, driving the inhabitants before him, compelling submission, and demanding promises of adhesion to Christianity. At this time he built a fortress on the Lippe, where many of the Saxons consented to be baptized. So well had he overrun the country, that in 777, the majority of the people had pledged their allegiance, and he was able to hold the meeting of his warriors (*Champ de Mai*) in Paderborn. Here he received as petitioners the governors of the Spanish cities of Saragossa and Huesca, who sought protection from the tyranny of the Saracen King Abderam. He hated, although—perhaps we should say *because*—he imitated, the Islamites, and was much rejoiced at finding a plausible cause of offence. He declared

war against them, and expressed his determination to use their own weapon of conversion—the sword—upon themselves. Many independent Christian chiefs attached themselves to his standard, and having crossed the Pyrenees, he in a short time, 778, subjugated the whole country as far as the Ebro, which he thereafter adopted as the march or boundary of the Frankish empire. It was on his return from this expedition that the ambuscade of Roncesvalles, so famous in legend and song, occurred. While the main army, like a huge serpentine monster, wound its way through the defiles of the Pyrenees, the rear-guard became disjoined from it, and was mercilessly massacred. The hero of Ariosto—Roland—the nephew of Charlemagne, the Warden of Brittany, together with many of the nobles of the empire, fell that day, and have had their names embalmed in the lays of the troubadours and the romances of later times.* It can scarcely be said that this expedition was, on the whole, a decided success, while its fatal termination saddened Charlemagne's heart, and dispirited his nobles.

But "uneasy is the head that wears a crown." Wittekind, the celebrated Saxon leader,—who had fled, dismayed by the prowess and skill of the armies of Charlemagne,—had returned from his refuge in the Danish court, and had re-excited his compatriots to renew their attempts to avoid the yoke of the Frankish King; and several "passages of arms" had taken place between the nobles of France and the chiefs of Saxony, in which the former were seldom victorious. Exasperated at last, when, in 782, the latter had despoiled the whole country as far as Cologne, Charlemagne set out him-

* See Pulci's *Morgante Maggiore*; Boiardo's *Orlando Inamorata*; Ariosto's *Orlando Furioso*; Merivale's *Orlando in Roncesvalles* in "Poems," Vol. ii. &c. &c.

self again, with the design of securing the total extirpation of these stubborn Pagans ; and after several campaigns, so harassed and assailed them, that they again promised submission, and he unwillingly granted peace, taking the precaution, however, of erecting a chain of fortresses along the banks of the Elbe, as points of strength and resort in case of another rebellion.

Indulging the hope of security which these proceedings had a tendency to excite, and desirous of surrounding himself with vassal kings likely to submit to his orders, and protect the outskirts of the empire, he set off to Rome with Louis and Pepin, his two sons by his second wife, to have them consecrated sovereigns of Aquitania and Italy. This was done. But Charlemagne had another son Pepin, by his first wife, who did not relish this supplantment, and so far resented it, as to head a conspiracy against his father ; this was, however, discovered before any overt act had been attempted, and Pepin (the elder) was consigned to the living grave of a monastery, in which he ended his days.

The Saxons had no great reverence for treaties when the power of enforcement seemed to be wanting. While the governors of Saxony were met upon Mount Suntel, near the Weser, to organise an excursion against the Sorbians, who had carried off some booty in a foray, the Saxons fell upon them, and destroyed almost the whole army assembled there. Charlemagne's patience was exhausted ; rage and fury overcame prudence, and he burst into the country, laid it desolate far and wide, and caused 4500 imprisoned Saxons to be massacred near Verden-on-the-Aller. For a time despair paralysed the foe ; but gradually the voice of vengeance was heard screaming its sibillations in the ear, and rage and madness urged them on to make one last great effort for

freedom, revenge, religion, and victory. In 783, the entire strength of the tribes was simultaneously united for this final and desperate affray. An engagement took place at Detmold, which ended doubtfully; but in a second encounter, at Hase in Osnaburg, the gods of battle decided so clearly in favour of Charlemagne, that the leaders, Wittekind and Alboin, accepted the omen, and submitted. They even took an oath that they would appear in France to be baptized; and accordingly, at Attigny, Wittekind and his wife Gera, were introduced to the multitude of the faithful, Charlemagne himself being sponsor. But the lesson he had learned of their infidelity made Charlemagne distrustful, and he deported great bands of Saxons from the neighbourhood of the Elbe to the interior of the Frankish territories, thus securely producing that division which is weakness. At the same time, he displayed his own uprightness and consistency by taking means for the evangelisation of the conquered country, by appointing prelates over certain districts, and developing a scheme of Christian institutions through the whole of Saxony, that the people might learn, not only to serve Charlemagne, but also to worship Christ.

Tassilo, Duke of Bavaria, and brother-in-law to Charlemagne, being married to Luitberga, a daughter of Desiderius, having been guilty of treasonous practices, by coniving at the incursions of the Saxons, and privily exciting the Avari to revolt, Charlemagne invaded the ducal province, defeated the soldiery, captured Tassilo, and brought him, in 787, for trial, before a diet of the great lords of the empire, met at Ingelheim, one of Charlemagne's own court cities. He was condemned to death, but pardoned by Charlemagne, on condition that he and his son Theodore should retire to

a monastery, then the usual retreat of the unsuccessful, for the remainder of their natural lives.

In Lower Italy the Emperor made such an impression, that Arechis, Duke of Benevento, acknowledged him as his superior, and consented to do feudal service to him within, and a league around his own sovereignty; and, as a reward for this voluntary humility, Arechis was graciously permitted to do homage by deputy at Salerno, instead of in Germany.

In a life of continuous bustle, activity, intrigue, and contention, we find Charlemagne bearing himself in all points heroically, and exhibiting personal greatness, both by the prowess of his arm, and by the swift decisiveness of his judgment. Bold, rapid thought, followed by instantaneous and effective action; wise hardihood and bravery, as well as a keen perception of ways and means; a stern potency of will, and a fine relish for honour and courage, seem to distinguish him, and mark him out as one destined to be enduringly great. Now he is almost crowned with success—the effectual working out of the grand creative idea of his epoch, viz., the union and concentration of all the Western nation into one Christianised confederacy. Will the time yet come when national homage shall re-echo the thought of his own soul, and receive him as worthy of the “All hail!” of Christendom?

After twenty years spent in almost uninterrupted warfare, a breathing time of peace was not only much required, but, one might almost say, well worked for. In 790, this was for the first time possible. In this same year he seems first to have seriously reflected on and determined about his future purposes. The grand design of a world empire, which the traditions of ancient Rome, the lives of Constan-

tine, of the Ostrogothic Theodore, and of his own ancestor, Charles Martel, suggested, seems to have entered with persistent and thoroughly considered force into the plans he now laid before himself. At this very period, the sovereignty of the Eastern Empire was held by Irene, a bold, ambitious, unscrupulous woman, possessed of great powers of fascination, of intense energy of mind, wonderful administrative talents, and inspired by a perfect madness for intrigue. About the same time as Charlemagne had been contending for the interests of his empire against the Saracens, she was also employed in repulsing their encroachments. Community of object led to the entertainment of ambassadorial relations. Irene proposed a union of the Eastern and Western Empires by the marriage of her children with those of Charlemagne. Charlemagne felt little disinclined to accede to the proposal. But Irene's ambition increased with her success; she deposed her son, assumed the imperial power, and then, as an empress in her own right, suggested that in their own persons the union should be effected. Negotiations were actually entered into for the accomplishment of this design, when Nicephorus, the head treasurer of the Eastern Empire, originated a revolt, which resulted in Irene's deposition; and neither Charlemagne's policy nor love seems to have incited him to take part in favour of the almost bride-elect of his power. Perhaps he thought that when divided the empire might be acquired by a less inconvenient process.

Perhaps, as an excuse for his ungallant desertion of Irene's cause, he carved out labour for his own armies, by marching against the Avari, to avenge himself on them for the incursions by which they had disturbed the early portion of his reign. He might also reckon, that by having his soldiery

engaged near the rebellious empire, he could take advantage of any circumstance which appeared likely to favour his aspirations after universal dominion. The Franks advanced on the south bank of the Danube, the Saxons and other feudatory tribes on the north, whilst a flotilla on the river itself, bore himself, his generals, his body-guard, and personal retainers. The mere spectacle of the immense masses thus arrayed against them terrified the Avari into flight, and their nine treasure-cities became his, without even the shadow of resistance.

It was in this expedition that Charlemagne conceived, and instantly began to work out, the grand idea of uniting the Baltic and the North Sea with the Black Sea and the Mediterranean, by the construction of a gigantic canal between the Maine and the Danube, a project rich in its promises of utility to Europe; but the difficulty of the work, and the want of skill in his soldier-workmen, as well as unfavourable weather, led to the abandonment of the scheme, and Germany has not yet found a means of completing it, or even of producing a substitute.

The Saxons, disliking the forced labour, the long marches, and the protracted expeditions in which Charlemagne engaged, mutinied and revolted. This disturbed his plans. Leaving the vanquishment of the Avari to his generals, he set out to suppress the risings in Saxony, and to superintend the forcible transplantation of their tribes to other portions of his empire. His generals effected their part, and Charlemagne, by his judicious system of colonization, succeeded in bringing the turbulent Saxons to submission, and even, in some measure, to contentment; for he permitted them still to retain, as far as possible, their old traditionary customs, their laws, and municipal government, ennobled

their own leaders, and attached them to him by distributions of booty as well as assignments of land. These gifts, however, he made personal and not hereditary and thus retained in his own hand the power of ejection, and consequently of punishment, in the event of any cause being given for displeasure.

The reality of western empire was now his, and he longed to bear a name by which that reality might be indicated. But his friend and co-labourer in the extension and consolidation of his empire, Pope Adrian I., died in 795, and a new Pope, Leo III., required to be managed, and humoured, and patronised, into consenting, or at least assenting, to his wish. Luckily for his purpose, a revolt arose in Rome, the holy father was maltreated, and he fled to the court of Charlemagne at Paderborn for protection. Charlemagne not only received him gladly and kindly, but also promised to punish his assailants. This promise he fulfilled in A.D. 800. At the magnificent festival of the church on Christmas of that same year, as Charlemagne knelt at the high altar, the Pontiff brought forth an imperial crown, and much to Charlemagne's apparent surprise, placed it on his head, saying, "Charles Augustus, crowned by the Almighty, the great and peace-bringing Emperor of Rome. All hail and victory!" This greeting the multitude repeated after him, while the Pope knelt before him as the regent of true religion. The height of his ambition was now gratified, and even Nicephorus I. acknowledged him as his co-equal—the Emperor of the West. The Saxon kings of England, and the caliphs of Bagdad, recognised him by embassy, and in the magic of a new name, rights, dignities, precedence, and authority were seized, which did not enter into the logic of the ceremony. Cæsar was re-established in

Charlemagne. So much importance did he attach to the new title—so much did *he* regard as underlying its adoption—that he commanded all his subjects above twelve years of age to renew their oaths of allegiance to his person and dynasty.

The extension of his kingdom towards Bohemia; the consolidation and protection of its eastern boundary; the fortification of the coast-line of his extensive dominions, so as to enable him to repel the invasions of the Normans and Danes; and the establishment of political relationships with other powers, now occupied much of his energy and thought. The general improvement and elevation of his people, the extension of commerce, the establishment of new and more equitable laws, the promotion of education, the furtherance of science, the purification of the church, and the internal regulations of his empire, also received much attention.

In the midst of all his activity, all his planning and scheming, all his exertions in the combined characters of monarch and statesman, the great grief of death broke into his family. In 810, his son Pepin, King of Italy, died, and in 811, his other son Charles, who was his constant confidant and assistant in all his manifold undertakings, and who had thus become the centre of many hopes, died also; leaving of his legitimate sons only Louis, surnamed *Le Debonnaire*, the weakest and least promising, alive: his eldest son being, as we have said, immured within monastic walls.

Charlemagne, in his prime, was of kingly presence. His iron cuirass shielded a capacious chest, and brawny arms swung from his broad shoulders. His stalwart frame was surmounted by a round head, whose iron-grey locks bore the mark of his helmet. His cheerful face was lit up by full bright eyes; and his features, though worn with war and

care, were knit together by a stern will when occasion required; while his shrill voice could employ the whole variety of intonation in which love, friendship, and sovereignty can be expressed. He was capable of intense emotion,—bursts of grief and fits of passion. His temper was readily chafed, but his will was not easily changed by obstacles. Even the habit of empire aided the impression of kingliness which his presence produced. But the inroads of death, the effects of time, the hidden workings of disease, the undermining influences of care, and a growing sense of loneliness, began to disorganise the sinewy body and to weaken the strong mind of Charlemagne. Feeling made him realise the feebleness of flesh, and the untrustworthiness of life. Hence, in 813, feeling the gradual on-creeping of senility, he named Louis his colleague in the Empire, and nominated his grandson Bernard, King of Italy. On the Sabbath in which he called his son Louis to the co-emperorship, he publicly exhorted him, in the cathedral of Aix-la-Chapelle, regarding the duties of a good sovereign, conjured him to love his people, and to labour and pray for their welfare and advancement; at the same time showing his independence of the pontifical power, by commanding Louis to take the crown from the altar, and place it on his own head. Thereafter Charlemagne presented the self-crowned Louis to the Franks as their future Emperor. The act of the venerable old man received the unanimous sanction of the public voice.

After the part he took in the magnificent spectacle of the coronation of his son, Charlemagne retired from the public performance of the duties of sovereignty, fixing his residence at Aix-la-Chapelle. Not long thereafter he was seized with pleurisy. He had never before been subjected to illness,

and had a contemptuous distrust of drugs. He rejected medical aid, and his body, now weakened by age and exertion, succumbed to the power of disease. On the 28th of January 814, he felt the certain premonitions of death. Raising his right hand with characteristic energy and impetuosity, despite of emaciation and exhaustion, he piously crossed himself on the forehead, the chest, and the feet; then stretching himself out, clasping his arms over his breast, and closing his own eyes, he murmured, "Now, Lord, into Thy hands I commit my spirit;" and with this semi-sighed prayer, he yielded himself up to the conqueror of all, even the greatest of men—Death. On that very day, his body being thoroughly cleansed, laid out, and embalmed, he was carried, amid lamentation and tears, to the vault of the church of Aix-la-Chapelle, and there, being dressed in his imperial robes, having a piece of the original (?) cross of Christ placed on his head, an open Bible on his knee, and his sceptre and shield at his feet, he was put in a marble chair. The vault was then completely filled with frankincense, balms, spices, and costly scent-giving herbs and gums, closed, and sealed up. Over this sepulchre an arch was erected, which bore these words as an inscription:—"Here repose the mortal remains of Charles, the great and orthodox Emperor, who gloriously enlarged, and for forty-seven years happily governed, the Empire of the Franks."





CHAPTER IV.

THE CAUSES AND RESULTS OF EVENTS.

 ANCIENT civilisation was wanting in spirituality—religiousness. It attained its *acmé* when the Roman Empire had concentrated under its own dominion the whole culture of the ages, and had developed to their utmost all those principles of government which operate by external pressure on the subject, and derive their authority from *force* rather than *conviction*. Modern civilisation is altogether distinct, especially in its primal element, viz., Christian culture. The former made men fear, reverence, and obey, the might and majesty of law; the latter makes man “a law unto himself.” There is therefore a vigour, dignity, and spontaneity in modern national life, which was completely wanting in earlier states of citizenship. The *one* vital defect of ancient times being supplied, there arose also a necessity for amalgamating and intertexturing the civic life of former ages with the religiousness and conscientiousness of the new culture. Fortunately for humanity, the realm of antique culture was under one sovereignty, so that at once the possibility and the practicability of proselytism was provided for. Apostolic zeal and Christian energy carried the new thought-seed of the gospel widely and freely through

the length and breadth of civilised society. At first, like all new truths, it assumed the destructive form, and entered into contest with the old and the effete. Conservatism rose in arms, resisted, persecuted, and—failed. Antagonism developed the strength of the new principles of action and life, and proselytism was exchanged for predominance. That which had been foreign, even alien, attained mastery, and by an intricate and singular concourse of circumstances, exchanged the prison-houses, persecution, and contempt, of its early years, for might, dominion, and homage. So far the work seemed to speed well, and to promise a favourable issue. But whosoever shall look narrowly into the causes of these eventful phenomena, will not fail to observe that this also became an external and authoritative power, instead of an inward, personally effective, moral influence, and therefore could not then, and so manifested, fulfil all the purposes of God. It was needful that a spiritual empire should arise, not seated in Constantinople or Rome only, but in each human soul. This grand theocratic republic, it seems, could not advisably assert itself until all possible forms of incorporation with, or imitation of, past forms of polity had been attempted. Hence there arose a need-be for the Christian empire of Constantine, and the Gregorian attempt to establish a *ruling* Papacy. And not these only, but, as we believe, the bold and gorgeous monotheistic imposture of Mahomet, whose mission, among other mightier issues, it was, to exhibit the power of the sword to subjugate without subduing, to vanquish without convincing, to compel outward conformity without a reform of the inner life, and yet, by dint of continuous training, to evolve habit and educe faith. All these spiritualising forces being arrayed upon the field of history, what mode of Christian statecraft was possible be-

sides? One only, and that the highest of all, that, namely, in which Christianity should receive into itself, and cultivate, by its holy agencies, all developable forms of nationality, encourage and foster every possible species of citizenship, and graft itself into every kind of polity, until, at last, each should be thoroughly, yet self-cognisantly, embued with the spirit, the life, and the purity which it imparts, "leavened" by "the same mind that was also in Jesus." This, the great work of the civilisation of modern Europe, Charlemagne inaugurated, and in part accomplished; and this forms his grandest and holiest title to a place amongst "Epoch Men."

The peculiar condition of Europe in itself, as well as in its relationships with the Eastern Empire and Islamism, must never be forgotten in forming an estimate of the reign and character of Charlemagne. In itself it was divided between the civilisation of the ancient empire and the barbarism of the northern tribes; and, more disastrously still, a struggle for supremacy was either active or imminent between the State and the Church. In its relationship to the East, it required to maintain rivalry, cope in diplomacy, and out-manceuvre in arms the great empire of which Constantinople was the capital; while, in regard to Islamism, it found itself in the twofold antagonism of interest and faith. To oppose the well-knit organisation of Mohammedanism, without succumbing to the anti-national organisation of the Papacy; to maintain the faith of Christendom, without espousing too thoroughly the cause of its asserted head; to hold together the various states of Europe, in opposition to the blind obedience of the Eastern world, without tyranny, amid continuous intrigue and evasion,—this was Charlemagne's work and mission. Not only did "the dignity of his

person, the length of his reign, the prosperity of his arms, the vigour of his government, and the reverence of distant nations," but also the important purposes he, in God's providence subserved, "distinguish him from the royal crowd ;" and it is chiefly because of these latter that " Europe dates a new era from his restoration of the Western Empire." *

The saying of the illustrious historian, from whom we have extracted some portion of the closing terms of the preceding paragraph, is undoubtedly true, viz., " The appellation of *great* has been often bestowed, and sometimes deserved, but *Charlemagne* is the only prince in whose favour the title has been indissolubly blended with the name;" but we must form a less depreciatory estimate of the life and doings of the Frankish monarch than Gibbon has done, before we can justify the enthusiasm of contemporaries, or the traditions of ages. We do not think it necessary to pare down the grandeur of ancient fact to the prosaic mediocrities of present actualities ; nor do we regard it as advisable to garment in the indefiniteness of *myth* all heroism and greatness. We can accept the concurrent testimony of many witnesses without depreciation, and yet reject the fabulous stories of enthusiastic minstrels, without permitting our admiration of their object to decrease, or adopting the disenchanting solvents of inapplicable criticism to dissipate the renown which ages have hallowed and time has embalmed. We must believe that it has been by more than " a rare felicity" that his name was the object of contemporary esteem and admiration, and even yet " is crowned with the praises of the historians and philosophers of an enlightened age."

Greatness is a quality at no time so superfluously plentiful

* See " Gibbon's Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire," chap. xlix.

in the world as to be easily mistaken ; its characteristics are too well marked and too conspicuously evident to be erroneously attributed, with such singular unanimity and enthusiasm, to any one who had not, in an undeniable manner, "gained his spurs" in the very face of difficulty. We do not now mean that greatness which is measured merely by the *object* accomplished, without regard to the *manner* of its accomplishment. We believe there is no true greatness—no greatness worthy of being perennially remembered—except that which embodies noble thoughts working towards a worthy end, recognising at once the dignity of humanity and the worshipfulness of God, and endeavouring to co-entwine, in the execution of some purpose, both of these elements of contemplation, both of these incentives to action. "Greatness," says the learned and ingenious Arthur Helps, "is not in the circumstances, but in the man ;" and it possesses these as its prime and all-important qualities. He says—"openness of nature to admit the light of love and reason, and courage to pursue it."

Let us proceed now to review the life-doings of Charlemagne, with continual reference to the foregoing ideas, and let us observe wherein he seems to be possessed of the "perfect stature" of true greatness, and appears deserving or undeserving of the adnomen which the ages have bestowed upon him.

As a *ruler*, Charlemagne first introduced into a wide circuit of loose and disorganised tribes a full sense of the utility, the value, the importance, and the need of the monarchical principle, and gave strength and potency to that principle to those who acknowledged its necessity for others, but felt its burden inconvenient to themselves. On "the decline and fall of the Roman Empire" the idea of the state was

greatly altered — antiquity, permanency, and indefensible power were no longer numbered among its attributes. It had become a matter of convenience and convention, and did not seem an eternal and inevitable condition of nationality. Self-hood, developing into feudalism, was uniting families, bands, or tribes, under one lord, but separating them from each other and from the State. Municipality, opposing the fiscal restrictions of government, and the encroachments of feudal chiefs, knit men together by the ties of commercial interest, rather than bound them in unquestioning obedience to law. The Church, claiming dominion over the faith of the soul, yet making that claim the pretext for a universal empire and all-controlling power in matters terrestrial, held believers in bonds more tyrannous than those which statesmanship the most crafty had yet been able to introduce. It was no light weight with which to burden one's soul, the attempt to colligate and condition these several discordant and discord-causing elements, and so to co-ordinate each and all, that the enginry of government might use them all, and be itself subservient to none, though in harmony with the best and truest interests of each. This Charlemagne tried ; this he proved, in some measure, to be possible, and so far may be said to have succeeded.

It was one of the praiseworthy peculiarities of the policy of Charlemagne, that though desirous of maintaining the dignity of the State as the highest tribunal of earthly law, he did not attempt to cramp, coop up, and circumscribe the whole of the subjects of his realm to one uniform, unbending, legislative code, one rigid set of customs, and one mode of speech. He honoured and appreciated the distinctions which nations felt among themselves, marking them off from, and, in their own opinion, setting them above, others. All

those laws, therefore, which were based on ancient and immemorial usage and special modes of life, and were thus intertwined with the affections and inner thoughts of men, he permitted to be regarded as sacred and unalterable, till, in the process of civilisation, and after the acquirement of new habits, the people were ripe for a change and anxious to receive it. Those manners to which, by the continued repetition of ages, the inhabitants of particular places had become accustomed, he allowed, though he did not encourage; and those languages in which the thoughts and emotions of the soul had been wont to find utterance, he did not feel at liberty, even if it had appeared politic, to prohibit. He did not choose to weld into one vast despotism the disjunct and inharmonious masses who submitted to his imperial sceptre; nor did he compel and constrain his subjects to adopt a unity which they could not but hate and despise; but he endeavoured to make them feel, that in the unity of the kingly power each state had its safest protection from the antagonism or encroachment of the other, and all had the surest hope of succour in the hour of need.

It was well for humanity that this noble policy was observed, for from this fact arises the general prevalence of true domesticity. The Saxon nations were ever conspicuous for their venturous daring in war; but far more characteristic of that great section of Europe's ancestral tribes were the exercise and play of the sanctifying influences of *home*. Not in the nomad life of the East, among the city-pent Greeks, or the stately and impassible Romans, were the tenderness and love which tones and tempers modern society originated or developed, but amid the native woods in which the German tribes wandered, yet dwelt. From

them, too, the love of justice, freedom, and individuality has been mainly derived,—feelings which might have been, in a great measure, eliminated from modern society, had Charlemagne enforced, wherever victory crowned him, the adoption of a uniform, rigid, and unbending code of laws, which permitted no deviation, and repressed all individual and social development or progress. He did not seek a unity destructive of the very prime of manhood's characteristics—self-manifestation,—but a unity of aim, progress, personal, social, and national influence—a unity which recognised the sovereign as the embodied will of the people, and, at the same time, revered the *will* in each individual unit of the mass, whensoever consistent with the general-welfare, and in agreement with the higher purposes of national existence. As a ruler, then, Charlemagne deserves the name he bears, because, while he knit the most varied races and tribes together under his sovereignty, he secured to all the freedom of varied and spontaneous development, without limit of direction, extent, or means, except in so far as imperial necessities demanded their abnegation or withdrawal.

As a *warrior*, Charlemagne exhibited at once the highest military genius and the most scrupulous conscientiousness, so far as regards the *manner* of accomplishing his ends. Whether his purposes were in all cases thoroughly defensible, we will not undertake dogmatically to assert; but we may express our conviction, that in all his schemes and aims he was penetrated with an earnest desire to elevate humanity, and to extend civilisation and Christian enlightenment over the earth. It is quite true that now-a-days we believe that the gentle force of persuasion, and the graceful courtesy of expositive conversion, are the only heaven-per-

mitted means of gospel extension. It was otherwise in his age and in his nation. The terror of arms had succeeded in converting the Franks themselves, and they felt equally justified in using the tumult of battle and the excitement of war as the forerunners of "baptismal regeneration." The Saracens, too, had used the same agencies with success. It is Charlemagne's great glory, that though he conquered tribes as a soldier, he governed them as a Christian king; and that though he compelled submission by force, he endeavoured to retain it by instruction. And that he was not altogether in error, the results, under Divine Providence, show; for this self-same Saxon race, who did anything rather than "receive the truth with gladness," became the most zealous for the honour of Christ, the most devoted adherents of the Church, and the most faithful, in the after ages, in maintaining purity of worship and freedom of thought.

When Charlemagne's doings are looked upon in the light of his purposes, we see no reason for surprise "that he so often preferred the poverty of the north to the riches of the south." Let us say, rather, that if there is honour due to the resistance of temptation, he is entitled to it. "The weakness of the Greeks would have ensured an easy victory;" and then the wealth, influence, and renown of a wider empire than had ever been subjected to one sceptre might have been his: but he turned from the enticing thought, to devote himself, in numerous conflicts, amid many difficulties, to the subjugation and civilisation of the Saxon tribes, not only because he was intent on the diffusion of "the light that lighteneth the Gentiles," but perhaps also to secure the safety, integrity, and stability of his empire, by the conquest of the enemies of civil life. The intense, continuous, and

multiform activity of his mind and body during the thirty-three campaigns which he headed in Germany—the marching, counter-marching, and fatigue which he endured—the boldness, vigour, and rapidity of his thoughts, his resolutions, and his actions—the instantaneous decisiveness which his presence gave to a contest—the resistless on-sweep and the breathless energy of all his expeditions—the impetuosity of action preceded and accompanied by coolness and sobriety of thought which he displayed, mark him out as one of nature's warriors. He had the heroism of creative thought, and he exhibited valour in the execution of his designs. It may be true that his thundering legions never encountered “an equal antagonist;” but we must recollect that the Saxons had defied, and succeeded in defying, the mighty armies of Rome, and that Charlemagne overcame where both the sword and the sceptre of the Cæsars were impotent.

As a *legist*, he was far in advance of his age. The irruption of the barbarians had upset the gigantic imperialism of Rome; its magnificent codes—Theodosian and Justinian—had become powerless; its greatness was thoroughly abased. The hesitancy shown to obey the commands of the wearers of the imperial purple manifested itself, in its ultimate results, in the almost universal diffusion of a spirit of antagonism to law. The *individual* had become almost all, the *state* almost nothing. From this condition of affairs there was a natural recoil and revulsion, which became incorporate in feudalism, clanship, chieftaincy, &c., in divers forms, giving consolidation to the landed interest or military leadership; while, in opposition to that again, arose municipalities as securities for commerce, trade, and manufactures, or rather, for industrial pursuits. Monastic institutions may

have had some such politically conservative principle imparted to them too, in the progress of time ; but the Papacy certainly clutched at imperial dominion, more because there was no great imposing force capable of being brought against it, than because of any right—scriptural, hereditary, or traditionary—which it was able to show. The empire of Charlemagne arose amongst such contending influences as these, and it is some renown to have been the earliest to attempt the “correction of abuses,” and “the reformation of manners,” in a time of this sort. The merit of this becomes greater, when we reflect on the cautiousness with which it was tried, and the success with which it was attended. His Capitularies, though sometimes over-minute and finical, are enlightened, liberal, and extensive, calculated, however, rather to soften the hardships and suspend the evils of his own age, than to form enduring enactments, from which the legists of all countries and times might draw the great and overruling principles of equitable legislation and generous government. He called together, so frequently as to give the assurance of formal right to their legislative advice, assemblies of nobles and bishops,—the only estates of the realm then capable of affording counsel in difficulty or help in emergencies,—and may thus be said to have initiated the system which afterwards resulted in representative, popular, legislative councils, in which the permanent estates were recognised as possessed of certain privileges in regard to legal enactments, financial arrangements, and the conduct of wars.

Of Charlemagne as a *scholar* we have not hitherto had occasion to speak ; and yet, even in this character, he appears in a most favourable light. By him, most certainly, knowledge was pursued under difficulties which few have

encountered. There is something truly noble in the assiduity and regularity with which, among all the irregularities of time and place which, during his campaigns, tended to disturb and unsettle both mind and habits, he studied, and read, and conversed with the learned. Late in life, he undertook to acquire the art of the scribe; he toiled most energetically, even in the years of mature manhood, at tables of declensions and paradigms of conjugations, that he might become skilled in the usage of the classic tongues of antiquity. Over the dull mnemonics and formulæ of logic, and upon the synoptic tables of rhetorical treatises, he spent much thought, listening with care and delight to expositions of their hidden meanings, and garnering the sayings of his teachers in his memory. Books were rare, so he collected around him an association of learned and thoughtful men, and from their conversation, as the best and most readily accessible mode of attaining knowledge, he acquired the rudiments of all the sciences of his time. It may be that his "studies were tardy, laborious, and imperfect;" but how few are there who, with the riches, influence, and pleasures of the Western Empire at their feet, would have turned from all the modes of joy they proffered, to seek a higher gratification than they could bestow in the teachings of astronomy grammar, logic, rhetoric, music, &c. ! Nor was it his own improvement alone he looked after: he had books read to his courtiers during the seasons of dining, and in hours of leisure, when haply they were to be found. He attended carefully to the education of his children, insisted on the attainment of their tasks, and taught them not only to love learning, but to honour the learned. He himself took great delight in literary intercourse, and among his learned courtiers he received the flattering *nom de plume* of David, in

allusion to the literary, victorious, and holy king of Israel. On them also playful surnames were bestowed; e.g., Alcuin, his friend, adviser, and preceptor, was called Flaccus Albinus; Riculf, Archbishop of Mayence, Damoetas; Arno, Aquila; and Angilbert, Homerus. This fact gives us a pleasing peep into the kindly character of the intercourse between the Frankish monarch and his literary friends, and shows him in a most amiable light. Neither do his merits under this head end here: he established scholastic institutions throughout his dominions, patronised the arts, and in various other ways laboured for the furtherance of the intellectual welfare of his people, the progress of national instruction, and the promotion of true civilisation.

As a *churchman*, Charlemagne was at once sincere and independent. He wished to be, as well as to be regarded, not only the guardian of justice and peace, the protector of civilisation, and the dispenser of culture, but also the regent of religion, the temporal head of the Church, and the patron of the Papacy. He aimed at seeing "the seed of the word" sown in fresh fields, the safe development of true piety among the nations, and the hosts of the Church united under one sovereign sceptre, yet having its own august spiritual administrator, guide, and head. He clearly foresaw the grasping at dominion which then lay latent in the assumptions of the Popedom, and by a wise and vigorous stroke of policy, on the occasion of the coronation of his son, took care to mark, clearly and decidedly, the distinction between the hereditary, temporal right to the crown and privileges of the empire, and the acknowledgment and consecration of that right by the occupant of St Peter's chair. Farther even than this did his cautious policy extend; for he maintained that the act of acknowledgment at least was reciprocal, and

that the Emperor had a just right to be made acquainted with the ground of the claims of any Pope for accession to the powers and honours of the Vatican. On this account it was determined that the election of the Pope should be examined and confirmed by the crowned head of the empire. Thus far we see that he drew a clear line of division between the temporal powers of a *monarch* and the spiritual potency of a *pope*, confessed himself a sincere servant of the Church, yet maintained a thorough independence. He did not arrogate inconsistent privileges to himself, nor did he suffer inconsistent encroachments to be made upon himself, his subjects, his laws, or his dominions.

The honest performance of duty is the noblest heroism, the truest manliness. In "the mighty strife of time," we have each—kings, thinkers, artisans, merchants, &c.—to bear our part. If it be well and bravely done, whatsoever be the form thereof, it is sacred and noble. Charlemagne must be tried by a loftier standard as a *man* than as aught else, for man is, in reality, a holier title than king, which is only a manifestation, in one form, of human energy and thought, and is partial, not complete. Judged as a man, he seems to become amenable to other laws, and to assume a deeper responsibility. To keep one's own soul free from taint of sin is less easy than to sit in the centre of the springs of policy, and work them to the wonder of the world. Charlemagne was passionate, sensual, proud, and we might almost add, dishonest. Most probably his irascibility proceeded from his pride, and gave itself freest vent when anything opposed his wishes or resisted his control, guidance, or government, as in the case of that reprehensible massacre of the Saxons on the banks of the Aller, mentioned in Chapter III. He was certainly somewhat addicted to

gluttony; and though not, in the large sense of the word, intemperate, he drank of the juice of the grape in considerable quantities; he relished the fasts of the Church little, and was more sedulous of having seemed to conform to its requirements on these points, than to give an honest, hearty, and concurrent obedience to its mandates. In his general policy, though it was undoubtedly governed by a great and illustrious idea, there was a considerable degree of self-seeking and hankering after renown, personal and national. In his domestic relations, he was not so pure, refined, and regular as might have been desirable; though we must recollect that it is but a short time since the opinion, that one of the grandest of the royal prerogatives was to dispense with the exercise of the virtues, has been abandoned in countries boasting of a high civilisation. We may attribute, therefore, some, at least, of Charlemagne's moral delinquencies to the accident of his position, and regard them more in the light of the venialities of a king than the transgressions of a man. Not that we mean to assert that greater licence *should be* permitted to the fountain of all law, but that we desire to state and to remember that such licence *has been* most usually granted, and very commonly taken advantage of. In a full estimate of all the difficulties with which his pathway through life was beset, we may conclude that he used his best endeavours to live a life of manly and honourable industry and usefulness; that as a man, he strove to regulate his temper, control his thoughts, and govern his conduct, according to the highest conceptions of the morality of his age in his circumstances; that he, like most men, often failed in the interval of resolve and execution, and had frequent need of patient perseverance, penitence, and prayer, to support, comfort, or re-inspire him.

It is impossible to bring together into the compass of a sentence or two the merits of Charlemagne in all the various points of view in which we should look at his doings and their results. The man who checked with vigour and success the turbulence of an unsettled state, compelled the recognition of national law, inspired a wide circuit of Europe with a common interest and common objects, and led men to pursue these interests and maintain these objects with collective counsel as well as with united resources and efforts—the man who, while using Christianity as the instrument for widening his dominions and strengthening his throne, made it subservient to the quickening of national life, the diffusion of peaceful habits, and the encouragement of civilisation—the man who used the Papacy as a political agent, without lessening its dignity or influence as a religious institution, and restrained its inordinate ambition while he aided its development in all useful modes—the man who controlled the clergy, the nobility, the soldiery, the merchantry, and the mass, while he was popular with all—the man who compelled acknowledgment from the potentates, not only of the Greek, but of the Persian empires, founded the original of all royal societies and academies, and who was the first to combine in one a military monarchy, a feudal nobility, a somewhat free commerce, and a kind of constitutional assembly of states—has many claims to be regarded, not only as the father of the modern policy of Europe, but also to the regard and veneration of the ages which have benefited from his doings and by his life.

It is true, indeed, that his personal reign was only a transitory good, and that in the progress of after events his masterful policy was abandoned, encroached upon, or suf-

ferred to fall into inaction. But great men live more truly in their thoughts than even in their deeds ; for the latter can never be reproduced, the former can. It was not his vast empire, with all its pomp, circumstance, and state, that survived to tell succeeding times of the real grandeur of Charlemagne ; it was his wide schemes of policy, his decided imperial authoritativeness, combined with his popular mode of effecting his designs, and that nameless something which one involuntarily feels when in the presence, actual or ideal, of a strong, true, genuine man. These survived, and do survive him still. Insensibly, it may be, but surely, his spirit pervades the thoughts and politics of all modern nations, teaching them, in the hereafter of time, how best

“To pursue
The gradual paths of an aspiring change.”



Gregory VII—The Papacy.

A.D. 1020—1085.

“ Slow-paced but sure, Soana’s village-lad
Clomb to the loftiest height of human power.
He knew to halt ; but never learn’d to cower—
So firm the faith in his own fate he had.
His was a blanchless cheek, a wily heart,
A soul unhesitant in thought or act.
He mapp’d his life out like an explored tract
Before the passage of its earlier part.
To place Religion on an awful throne,
Whence kings and nations should receive with awe,
Guidance, rebuke, and life’s resistless law—
An earthly semblance of a heavenly one.
Such was the purpose which inspired the hand
And stirr’d the plotful brain of HILDEBRAND.”

—EU. N. LISLE, M. A.

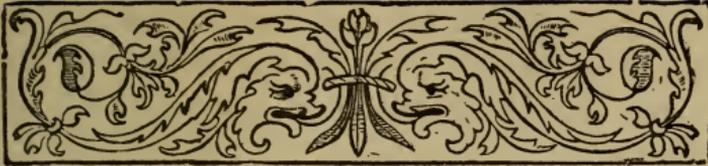
“There was a carpenter of Tuscany,
Whose son, from a cowl’d monk, made himself Pontiff.”

R. H. Horné’s “Gregory VII.”

“Gregory VII. became the founder of papal pretensions, and of spiritual despotism.”—*L. R. de Vericour.*

“In the course of the eleventh century the Church became theoretical and monastical. The creator of this new form assumed by the Church, so far as it belongs to a man to create, was Gregory VII.”
—*Guizot.*

“Under Gregory VII. the ideas, hitherto for the most part undeveloped, of the supremacy of the Pope over the Church, and of the Church over the State, first assumed the form of a perfectly organised system.”—*J. C. L. Gieseler.*



PAPAL SUPREMACY.



HE growth of the Church into a great and durable power, spiritual in its aims and functions, as much as may be, *detached* from earth, *attached* to heaven, is one of the most singular of that series of phenomena which constitutes history. Its story is an exhaustless and perennial source of instruction and interest. Having its origin in heaven, it seeks to rise, and raise again to that resplendent height. And amidst manifold vicissitudes it has, during the eventful ages of the past, held its course right onwards and upwards with unslacking perseverance and undelaying energy. It is, as it was designed to be, the moral educator of the race. It was instituted at the giving of the first promise; it overlived the Deluge; it was enshrined in the Abrahamic covenant; it was manifested in the Sinaitic law; the Jewish people became its conservators; and type and prophecy were given as its handbook and guide. In the evolutions of history "the fulness of time" arrived. The known nations of the earth were brought under one empire, that *it* might have "free course." *The Incarnation* and *the Death* occurred; but Resurrection followed, and the commission of the Church was granted. From the hills of Judea it passed, with prompt diffusiveness, into the chief seats of the

world's idolatries, and subdued them. The tenfold wrath of persecuting Rome was braved and borne. Its adversity was great; and it was great in its adversity. It lurked in the catacombs of Rome, an outcast; it emerged a victor, and avowed itself in the temples of Constantinople. The Empire that failed to awe it, fell before the barbarous hordes of the northern nations; but the Church made the foes of Rome its subjects. Amid the wars and changes of ages it kept its place, and so secured predominance. It held the balance of power in Europe in its hands; and it ultimately seized the helm of the world's progress, that it might steer it whithersoever it determined. Then it issued a claim to an undisputed supremacy over all thoughts, feelings, rights, customs, properties, powers, dominions, material civilisation, and intellectual efforts. With the intense sincerity and absorption of a passion, its hierarchy sought power, privilege, and permanency; and endeavoured to obtain recognition as an absolute and independent moral sovereignty, entitled to influence and guide persons, peoples, and princes; to wield an unopposed dictatorship over minds, lives, actions, and events. It aspired to be regarded as the one single source and fountain of the civilising principle, and to hold in its grasp the spiritual guarantees of moral progress. It professed to garner up in its comprehensive purposes all the elements which co-operate in the determination of the great and permanent interests of humanity, and the final destinies of individuals and nations. Social influences, secular institutions, moral schemes, political life, personal being, the very inner soul of man, conscience itself, were to be subject to its sway, and touched to their issues by its direction. These inordinate powers it claimed for behoof of humanity, as well as arrogated for the successful all-prevailingness of

its own schemes. The world was in those days tossed about and torn with change. The savage syllogisms of war alone decided the fate of peoples, and the reign of blood seemed to be acquiring permanency, and to have become chronic. To bring man out of this bondage to material force, and to make him susceptible of the influences of the spiritual world, was an aim in itself noble and holy; and if the end could ever sanctify the means, a grander cause was never brought within the scope of historic development.

In the course of the evolution of these far-reaching plans, many mighty men co-operated towards their ultimate success. There was one man, however, in whose person the unbounded ascendancy of the Church may be said to have culminated. A man sprung from the workshop, and emerging from the cloister, persistently pursued purposes matured in the monastic cell and under the prior's cowl, until at length he was able to assume the mastery of the Roman Catholic Church, to direct all its affairs, and control all its decisions; to push on its ambitious purposes until kings and emperors became the subjects, almost the serfs, of the occupant of St Peter's chair; a man who made hierarchy and pontiffs alike the tools and instruments of his policy, and who, by inflexible determination, subtle suggestion and conception, unshaken courage, extensive learning, persuasive eloquence, and a long life's devotion, managed the Papacy under many different Popes, until at length—his self-restraint rewarded by success—he was able to take his seat upon a throne to which empires seemed the footstools, and of which kings gladly accepted the ministry,—a spiritual Cæsar, sitting in Rome, yet swaying the world with a potency no Cæsar ever wielded; for he claimed supremacy, not over act only, but also over thought.

Hildebrand, (afterwards Pope Gregory VII.,) was born about A.D. 1020, in Soana, a city of Etruscan origin, situated in that low, marshy tract of land, called La Maremma, which margins the Tuscan coast of the Mediterranean Sea. His father—Bonicius, a carpenter—was a native of the Republic of Orvieto, to which Soana was subject. Hildebrand, though of low birth, was of noble extraction. He was descended from the family of the Aldobrandeschi, and displayed, in his after life, many of the characteristics of his kindred.* Both his father and himself were patronised by the Counts of Tusculum, a family which exercised great power over, if not in, the Church. This patronage, rather than his own desire, seems to have determined his destiny; for in one of his letters to the Romans, he says, "Ye know that, contrary to my inclinations, I was brought up to holy orders." In his early years, he gave signs of great ability and love of learning; he was diligent, patient, capable, and intelligent. In the monastery of Calvello, near Soana, he received his boy-training, and was thereafter removed to the monastery of St Mark, on the Aventine Mount, of which, at that time, his uncle was abbot. Here he underwent ecclesiastical discipline, and was initiated into the order of the Benedictines; here, too, he pored over the laws and the traditions of the ancient ages of the Church. Being diligent and studious, his mind ripened rapidly. He was noted, by his instructors and among his fellows, as a youth of quick and penetrating intellect, of determined character, of religious disposition, and of noble demeanour. He excited at once love and respect. Rome afforded ample opportunities for becoming acquainted with the doctrines, traditions, and customs of the Church, but supplied no facilities for the acqui-

* Dante's "Purgatorio," xi. 58-65.

sition of secular knowledge ; and of this Hildebrand's soul was greedy. With his uncle's leave, at the age of sixteen, he became an inmate of the famous monastery of Clugni, in Burgundy, where he proceeded, with unwearying industry, to study canon law, moral philosophy, rhetoric, the Scriptures, and the political machinery of the Church. The holy leisure of seven years was thus spent, and at the expiry of that period he had acquired that wide range of information, that eloquent and vigorous style, that wise wiliness, that powerful self-command, that determinate resoluteness, and that skill in managing men, which he afterwards displayed. Even then, too, he seems to have been imbued with that zeal for reform, that arrogant energy, that calculating prudence, that craft, sagacity, and foresight, and that bold, persistent, and wide-reaching ambition, which made him, in the after-time, the leading man of his age. These were years of intense and earnest self-formation.

St Odilo, the originator of the "Truce of God," an influential, praiseworthy man, was then abbot of Clugni, and Casimir I., king of Poland, was Hildebrand's companion. Casimir was recalled to his throne in 1041 ; and in the same year Hildebrand was commissioned by St Odilo to reform his old convent, St Mark's, on the Aventine. He forced the monks to discontinue their practice of allowing shepherds to pen their flocks in the churches to save them from midnight thieves ; and dismissed the women who, in nominal servitude but real uncleanness, waited upon and ministered to the monks, to the scandal of their profession. He became a man of mark for austerity, gravity, and learning. He did not cease to increase these in his new position. Under Lorenzo, bishop of Amalfi—with Pope Benedict IX., and Gratian, archbishop of St John, (afterwards

Pope Gregory VI.,) as fellow-pupils—Hildebrand studied science,—which the superstitious then looked on as magic. Benedict IX., whose own name was Theofilatus, was the son of Albericus, Count of Tusculum, and had been nominated and consecrated Pope in 1033, before he was ten years old: he was exceedingly licentious. The Romans revolted, and drove him from his throne in 1044; and a new Pope (Silvester III.) was elected; but his election was speedily set aside. Benedict re-entered Rome by the aid of the swords of his father's retainers. By the negotiation of Hildebrand, however, it was arranged that Benedict should transfer the papal chair to his friend Gratian, for fifteen hundred pounds of gold. This being settled, Gratian, as Gregory VI., donned the purple, and Hildebrand was appointed to the office of his secretary. Gregory, on pretext of clearing the highways near Rome from freebooters, surrounded himself with an army, and thus awed the people into acquiescence in his simoniacal advancement; while the arch-schemer, Hildebrand, who formed the plan, was made subdeacon of the Church, and bishop of his father's native city, Orvieto.

Henry III., emperor of Germany, a man of firm will, good talents, extensive information, and some eloquence, was displeased at the turbulence of the idle and restless Romans, and determined to endeavour as their temporal superior, to purify and pacify the Church. He set out for Italy. Gregory, attended by his secretary, met him on the way. He received them politely; and they retired, flattering themselves upon the success of their policy. On arriving at Sutri, eleven miles from Rome, Henry called a council, at which he deposed, as all irregularly elected, either by intrigue, interest, or simony, the three existent

popes,—Benedict IX., Silvester III., and Gregory VI. Benedict retired to his estate, and Silvester to his bishopric, but Gregory was banished to the convent of Clugni, whither Hildebrand accompanied him. On the death of St Odilo, Hildebrand was chosen prior of Clugni; and here, after having left him heir of all his wealth, and, (by a sort of Hannibal's oath,) bound him to pursue his enemies with unslacking vengeance, Gregory VI. died in Hildebrand's arms.

Henry, at the Council of Sutri, appointed a new Pope—Suidger, bishop of Bamberg, who assumed the title of Clement II. He was immediately enthroned, and on Christmas 1046, he with all due solemnity crowned the Emperor, Henry III. In 1047, Clement, at the instigation of the Emperor, issued a decree, that no future Pope should be acknowledged till he had obtained the imperial sanction. Clement accompanied Henry across the Alps, and on his return, died—it is said by poison—at Ravenna, after an occupancy of the papal chair of nine and a half months. The old Pope, Benedict, the suspected poisoner, then reassumed the pontifical seat. In July 1048, the Emperor raised Poppo, bishop of Brixen (Damasus II.) to the papacy; but he died in Palestrina—by poison, too, it is thought—twenty-three days after his elevation; and so Benedict remained in the chair. No sooner did the news of the demise of Damasus II. reach Clugni, than Hildebrand set off to Germany, with the design of taking part in, and perhaps of influencing, the choice of a new Pope. Henry was, however, too rapid. Bruno, bishop of Toul, a relative of the Emperor's, was, on his nomination, elected at the Diet of Worms. The news reached the hurrying Hildebrand, but he pressed on, and met the Pope on his way Romeward.

He invited Bruno to Clugni, and there unfolded to him a part of the grand scheme for elevating the papacy with which his own soul was filled. He inveighed with sagacious eloquence and urgent earnestness against the subjection of the sacred to the secular power, and maintained that the imperial election was an invasion of the rights and institutions of the Church. The calculating craft of Hildebrand wrought upon the mind of Leo IX. The former undertook to manage everything successfully, if the latter would consent to follow his advice. This was agreed to; and Leo accordingly divesting himself of the externals of dignity, reassumed the poor habiliments of a monk, and refused to be called Pope until the voice of the cardinals and people of Rome should welcome him as such. Barefooted and humbly clad, meek and lowly in seeming, Leo, the shepherd of the Church, walked in modest pilgrimage to the loftiest eminence the world afforded. Hildebrand accompanied him. But his political foresight and intriguing spirit had forerun his own presence, and, by his contrivance, an extraordinary ovation rewarded the obedient Leo for his few weeks' abstinence from glory and applause. Enthusiasm seemed to have run wild, and re-echoing acclamations accompanied Leo from beyond the gates of Rome to the (then humble) church of St Peter's. Leo heaped benefactions upon Hildebrand. He was made Sub-deacon of St Paul's, Cardinal, Abbot, Canon of the Holy Roman Church, and Custodier of the altar of St Peter. Success favoured his daring. On the altar of the founder-apostle of the Roman Church were laid the annual offerings of every count, duke, abbot, prince, and king, to the holy apostle who—through his successors and deputies—held supremacy in the Church militant, and possessed "the power of the



“Barefooted, and humbly clad, Leo, the shepherd of the Church, walked in modest pilgrimage to the loftiest eminence the world afforded. Hildebrand accompanied him.—EPOCH MEN, Page 58.

keys" in heaven and hell. Besides these, the payments of the people, for the maintenance of the state and the services of the Church, were deposited on the same altar, and Hildebrand was the keeper of them all. He speedily became the head and soul, the animating spirit, of the movement party in the Church. Leo's simple, unsuspecting honesty made him a fit tool for working out unpopular purposes. Hildebrand was constantly engaged in prompting him to some new reform, and some stirring change. He kept Leo, however, as much from Rome as possible, that he might retain in his own hand, the real, though not the ostensible, management of that city and its intrigues. Hildebrand, therefore, kept up a continued succession of pilgrimages, processions, synods, and councils, and a constant moving to and fro between Rome, France, Germany, Hungary, &c., in most of which he accompanied and assisted the Pope, at the same time that he held the princes and ecclesiastics under his own curb, by rapid movements and bold measures. Simony, and the immorality of the clergy, were cursed and fulminated against, and those guilty of either were anathematised and excommunicated. At the Council of Rheims, in this Pope's reign, it was first decided that the Church of Rome should be recognised as chief, and paramount over all churches, and that the Pontiff, as primate, should rule and overrule all others. At a council in the church of St Lateran, in Rome, the doctrine of transubstantiation was affirmed, in the act which condemned Berengar—who denied the corporeal presence of Christ in the symbols of the Eucharist—as a heretic. Hildebrand, though admiring the acute and subtle genius and the learning and sanctity of Berengar, opposed him, but urged a compromise of tenets, which was agreed to. Leo also, by

Hildebrand's advice, declared war against the Normans, and even led the fight himself.

Hildebrand, now longing for the downfall of the Pope he had used as his puppet, began to intrigue with the deposed Benedict; and these two, conspiring together, bribed the Italian troops into defection, so that Leo IX. was taken prisoner by the Normans, and confined in Civitella and Beneventum.

“Ingratitude, more strong than traitors' arms,
Quite vanquish'd him;”—

and when released by the pity of his captors, he returned to Rome overcome with sorrow, and died of a broken heart, April 19, 1054.

Hildebrand had taken his measures cunningly. Benedict re-ascended the papal chair, and persecution and revenge occupied all his thoughts. This created a storm of fury and insurrection. Hildebrand fomented the rage, because it formed his best excuse to his former ally for taking part in the choice of a new occupant of the apostolic primacy. He managed to get the appointment of plenipotentiary of the Roman clergy and people, with unlimited authority in this matter. He insinuated himself into the confidence of the Emperor, and, by his singular address, secured the nomination of the very man of his heart's desire. This was Gebhardt, bishop of Eichstadt, the most influential of Henry's counsellors—a man of wealth, prudence, and ambition. Gebhardt hesitated; Hildebrand insisted; and the tiara—glittering temptation—overcame him. He was consecrated—April 13, 1055—as Victor II. Benedict was enraged, and resisted; but the masterly intrigues of the Canon of the Roman Church secured a peaceful

accession—indeed, ex-Pope Benedict IX. died (?) in a convent about the same time.

The choice of Hildebrand displayed great tact. He weakened the imperial council, and yet strengthened his own party: for Gebhardt, who had passed all his lifetime in Germany, and in the imperial court, as he was unacquainted with Italian laws and customs, could not materially interfere with the working-out of the plans of the Cardinal who had helped him into power. His art was that of Antony with Lepidus:—

“And though we lay these honours on this man,
To ease ourselves of divers slanderous loads,
He shall but bear them as the ass bears gold—
To groan and sweat under the business—
Either led or driven as we point the way;

To wind, to stop, to run directly on,
His corporal motion govern'd by my spirit.”

Victor II. was acute enough to see that a strong ambition guided the views of Hildebrand, and he contrived to rid himself of his personal control, by sending him as his legate to France, to outroot simony. Hildebrand went, full of outward obedience and inward wrath. But he was an earnest man, and gave himself to the work, though he did not leave means unarranged to maintain and further his interests at Rome during the politicly-planned exile to which the astute Pontiff had at once promoted and condemned him. On this mission, his fame was magnified by popular ignorance, fanatical adulation, and cunning prelatism. Stern and uncompromising in his Legatine functions, he yet mingled such private suavity with his public arbitrements, that admiration and love waited on his progress. Short as he was in stature, his intrepidity and imperiousness

lent a dignity to his form; and his keen, decisive intellect left nothing unmoved which lay between his intentions and the results he wished. Miraculous powers of spiritual discernment were attributed to him. It was said he had "that curious skill which, comparing looks with words, could pluck out the lie though guarded round about with subtlest phrase—could see and tear a falsehood from the heart, though it lay hidden like the germ of blight within a flower." At a council held in Lyons, he accused the whole assembled bishops of being disciples of Simon Magus, not of Simon Peter. One bishop denied the charge. "Recite the Doxology!" thundered Hildebrand. "Glory be to the Father, the Son, and the——." A sudden alarm seized the prelate as he attempted to name the Holy Spirit, and confessing his guilt, he was deposed then, though afterwards re-installed. Other eighty bishops, believing—or pretending to believe—in his supernatural prescience, confessed, and were forgiven by the crafty legate. "Ceremony is a scarecrow to awe-strike fools."

In this ambassadorial tour, Ferdinand of Castile and Henry III. of Germany agreed to abide by the decision of Hildebrand, as to which of them should bear the exclusive title of Emperor. The legate gave his voice in favour of Henry's claim, and so made the sovereign of Germany the bearer of a designation and supremacy, the right to which was founded on the judicial decree of a Churchman.

Leaving Lyons, Hildebrand repaired to Clugni—now governed by Abbot Hugo—and began the reform of the monks there, by condemning to death many of the most licentious, indolent, and ignorant, asserting that he did so by the inspiring suggestion of Jesus Christ. At Tours he called Berengar before him, and by sheer threats compelled

him to abjure his doctrines. After these displays of zeal, Victor recalled him to Rome. But here his influence was too manifest, and he was sent to Florence, and kept under *surveillance*—an unavailing measure; for he was too well versed in intrigue, and too firmly determined on working out his designs, to abstain either from secret efforts or open acts. The winning card seemed always in his hand.

In 1056, the Emperor, Henry III., died, leaving Agnes, his wife, regent of the kingdom, and the Pope guardian of the person of his son, Henry IV.—a child six years of age. This was a fresh chance for effecting the papal supremacy, and the sleepless mind of Hildebrand foresaw that new moves on the chess-board of European politics were possible. Victor, Henry's guardian, died in 1057. But the master-builder of the Pontificate was not yet prepared to place (and be) the key-stone of his finished work; and though he coveted the Papacy, he employed his influence to put the tiara and the purple on another. He restrained his own ambition, only as huntsmen pull the red-eyed mastiff in, "to let it slip with deadlier certainty" at last. Policy, as usual, dictated the choice, and the manner of expressing it. Frederic of Lorraine was the brother of Godfrey, duke of Tuscany, whose power, as a barrier between the Papal states and the empire, would be advantageous. Though Hildebrand was nominated, to keep his name and position before the Church, Frederic was elected, apparently by a tumult, really by Hildebrand's consummate management. The new Pope was styled Stephen IX. New honours were showered upon his helpmate, and Hildebrand was delegated to represent the Church at the imperial court of Germany. Pursuing the directions of the prime minister and dictator of the apostolic see, Stephen decreed

that ecclesiastics should not be cited before civil tribunals, and that they should not be taxed by the secular power. He also projected bestowing upon his brother Godfrey the imperial crown, and of employing him to expel the Normans from Naples and Sicily. But death, after an eight months' reign, stayed his unaccomplished intent at the very moment of its initiation. Before his death, he caused the assembled clergy and people of Rome to swear that they would delay the election of a successor till Hildebrand's return from the German court. The Romans naturally hated Germanic popes, and, taking advantage of Hildebrand's absence, notwithstanding their oath, they chose John Mincius, bishop of Villetri, nicknamed the Stupid; and, under the title of Benedict X., had him consecrated by the Archbishop of Ostia. Hildebrand posted rapidly to Rome, bearing with him the letters patent of the Empress-Regent, Agnes, for the enthronisation of Gerard, bishop of Florence, a native of Burgundy, related to the duke of Tuscany and the counts of Tusculum, accompanied by whose armies he marched to Rome. Benedict X. resigned through fear, and Gerard (Nicholas II.) was consecrated on 6th January 1059, in the church of St Peter's, Rome. The Romans were riotous, and tumults broke out against the new Pontiff. He retired to Pisenum, and left the control of the revoltful factions to Hildebrand. In this emergency, his courage and cunning did not forsake him. Threats and bribes were freely employed to still or soothe the insurgents, and before Easter the Pope—now rivalless by the death, fraudulent and violent, of Benedict X.—was supreme, in seeming, at Rome.

In 1059, at a council, in the Lateran at Rome, consisting of 113 members of the hierarchy, it was resolved, at Hildebrand's instigation, that no one should be placed in the

Apostolic Chair except by the consent and choice of the College of Cardinals—reserving to the German Emperor the right of assent. Thus the Roman clergy, the Emperor, and the people were at once denuded of their several rights in the election of the Primate of the Church. Hildebrand was now the acting governor of the whole machinery of the Papal Court, and the invariable companion and confidant of the father and shepherd of Christ's flock. By his energetic plots, Robert Guiscard, the leader of the Normans, was made the shield of the Church against the resistant counts and barons, whose rights the new resolves of the hierarchy had infringed; and the services of this adventurer in putting down the refractory aristocracy of Italy, were rewarded by the title of duke, and by an investiture of the lands of Apulia, Calabria, Sicily, &c. He, in return, swore allegiance to the Holy See. The grasp of the Papacy was gradually more and more tightened round the sceptre rather than the crook, and step by step did the ardent and ambitious Hildebrand advance the occupant of St Peter's chair from shepherd-like oversight to sovereign supremacy.

This purpose was fatally pursued, even to extermination, against the partisans of Benedict X. The Norman troops were "let slip" upon the counts and barons in the Campaigna, and with insatiable and sanguinary eagerness they attacked and destroyed them. This temporal overthrow of his enemies did not content the arrogant audacity which Hildebrand had evoked in the soul of Nicholas. He sent an embassy, armed with full powers of excommunication, against the simoniacal, wedlock-loving priests of Milan. Many contumacious bishops were deposed, and the offending and penitent were threatened and warned. So much further was the great scheme evolved; and a new machinery

was requisite to carry on the schemes of the progress party. On the 4th June 1061, Nicholas II. died at Florence, in circumstances not quite free from suspicion.

Hildebrand knew that the sanctity of helplessness was thrown over the interest of Henry IV. during his minority, and that no final struggle could be managed until he was able himself to hold the reins of empire. The time was not yet white for *his* harvest, and hence he determined again to set another in the forehead of his party, while he should move and animate the government. He offered to compromise the difference between the Empire and the Church, by undertaking to secure the election of any ecclesiastic the Empress-Regent would fix upon, provided cardinals alone were, according to the new electoral law, allowed to give their votes. This, on behalf of her son, she refused to agree to; and at a congress of bishops at Basle, Cadolaus was chosen by the Imperialists to fill the papal seat. He took the title of Honorius II. Hildebrand—determined not to be foiled in the mighty achievement on which he had set his heart, and towards the accomplishment of which he had toiled with such eager intensity—called together an opposing council, and, as Cardinal-Archdeacon of Rome, proposed the elevation of Anselmo, bishop of Lucca, to the headship of the Apostolic See. This was agreed to with acclamation, and Alexander II. became the rival of Honorius. Hildebrand intimated to the emperor that he was prepared to maintain the validity of the election made by the cardinalate with the sword, if requisite. Henry decided on appealing to arms against this usurpation, and preparations for war were made by both parties. Meanwhile, Hildebrand hastened the consecration and enthronisation of his nominee. But his fiery temper, roused to desperation at the occurrence of

such a crisis, for once outran discretion, and made him forget his usual tactics—a mingling of audacious daring, forethoughtful caution, and well-veiled cunning.

It happened thus:—In 1061, in that old church which now forms one of the vaults of the Vatican, and is, as fable reports, reared over the spot where the remains of the apostle Peter repose, the magnificent ceremonials usual on the consecration of a new pontiff had, despite the protest by Benzoni, bishop of Alba, against the legitimacy of the inauguration, because it wanted the specially reserved sanction of the emperor, just been completed. Alexander II., Vicar-General of the Church, and the earthly representative of its heavenly head, was preaching in the ordinary humble, “*nolo episcopari*” style, in presence of a conclave of cardinals, ambassadors, and people. In his sermon he lamented the divided state of the Church, and expressed so earnest a desire for the peace of Zion, that he even proffered to suspend the exercise of his holy functions till he had received the assent of the imperial power to his appointment. This, Hildebrand could not brook. It seemed to him yielding up to kingly sway a power of which the Church ought never now to quit its hold. He dashed up to the papal throne, and there struck the Pontiff on the cheek with his closed fist, and ejecting him from the church, locked him up in his chambers to fast and repent. Even to such a height of imperious domineering had this prelate raised himself—even thus did he then lord it over God’s heritage! The Pope, like a flogged cur, was thereafter submissive to his master. Hildebrand ruled and overruled everything. Risking the arbitrement of war, he was, on the plains of Nero, 14th of April 1062, defeated by Cadolaus, who entered Rome in triumph. But it was short. Duke Godfrey of

Tuscany and Hildebrand besieged him there, and he was compelled to fly. Blood, pillage, and horror prevailed everywhere, and the enemies of Alexander II. were fain to lick the dust before the unquailing Chancellor of the Holy See, for to that office Hildebrand had been raised by the insulted Pope. By the aid of Bishop Annone, Hildebrand contrived to kidnap the youthful Emperor Henry. Agnes, his mother, resigned her functions, withdrew her sanction of Cadolaus, was absolved, and ended her days in the city of Rome, an humble devotee of the Holy See.

At a council in Cologne, with the boy-emperor, a prisoner, at its head, Alexander II. was declared legally elected. This decision was re-pronounced at Rome in the Lent of 1062 and Cadolaus was excommunicated. He was not subdued though. He determined to run the gauntlet with his foes, especially with that inexorable prince of plots who had tricked him out of the purple and fine linen of the Papacy, —Hildebrand.

The Lombardese army of Cadolaus met the Tuscan soldiers of Godfrey in the Leonine portion of Rome, and was defeated. Cadolaus fought with the courage of despair, and having, with one Cencius, cut his way through the Hildebrandists, reached the Castle of St Angelo, where he defiantly sustained a siege of two years, and whence he at last escaped. He continued the war during his life, though he was again deposed at Mantua in 1064. At the same council, Alexander II. was solemnly proclaimed to be legally elected, and all his acts were confirmed.

The victorious Pontiff, less mindful of the duties of his dignity than the power of enjoyment, and the pomp and grandeur it conferred, left the management of the temporal and spiritual affairs of the Papacy to the secret begetter of

all those schemes which tended to the overshadowing of the whole world by one gigantic institution, which should pervade and permeate all—should not only rule all princes, but enforce obedience from all people. Hildebrand unhaltingly pursued his course, strong in the invincibility of his cause, and in the inflexibility of his own character, and by the mighty chemistry of his own passionate persistency, regulated the results of the co-operating activities of rivals to the productions of his own ends—the union of the priesthood into one interest-linked phalanx; the attainment of entire supremacy for the Popedom; the organisation of a grand central authority in Rome, whose behests should control the haughtiest monarchs and the most indomitable peoples; the institution of a permanent and invulnerable ecclesiastical State; the aggrandisement of the Church, so that it might be the unopposed tutor of humanity in Christian civilisation.





CÆSARISM IN THE CHURCH.



HE hurry of events continued. Hildebrand pursued his purpose with the swerveless intensity of conviction. The age required an inflexible and energetic spirit, filled brimful with a thought new to the world and history ; and success had hitherto authenticated the mission of that premier of the Church. To erect, amid the ceaseless turmoil of war, a durable power, capable of authoritatively acting as the champion and guardian of civilisation, intelligence, and morality, against military licence and the tyranny of force—to rear, among, and yet above, the thrones of kings and emperors, a supreme Regality, wielding a superintending and controlling sway over all life and all the issues of life, over potentates and people, lawgivers and laws, noble and serf, priest and proselyte—to establish an organisation whose influences were woven into the innermost tissues of society, and whose ruler was armed with the might of a godlike irresistibility—whose foremost man held kings as thralls, and emperors as vassals—whose chief was empowered to direct, advise, reprimand, denounce, and even depose monarch or minister—seemed to him a noble and a holy aim. With the devoted absorption of a

passion, he had given himself up to its accomplishment. The gleam upon the ultimate heights of effort was already becoming visible. The sword and sceptre were waning before the crosier. To halt now in his great life-task would have been traitorous alike to the past and to the future. Hesitance seemed to be a crime—the greatest crime he could commit. If he must tarnish the most fine gold of the papal tiara with intrigues, warfare, craft, and fraud, and mix its divine metal with a human alloy, the statesman's ready plea, necessity, formed an ample justification—

“The cause exacts it, and I may not shrink—
That cause which makes of all this mortal world
But one vast engine for its purposes ;
And still works on, and pauses not, nor spares,
Though every strained and shrieking cable were
Spun out of human fibre.”

To bind together the whole priesthood in one inviolable unity, strong in its indivisibility—to abstract all family and national feeling from the soul—to sacerdotalise the clergy—to keep them a class apart and separate—to knit them together into one specific organisation—to converge all their feelings, desires, ambitions, interests, and efforts towards one object, the permanency of the order to which they belonged—it was requisite that they should be individually brought into an exceptional position. In one way only could this be effectively attained—priests should be marriageless. A life of entire celibacy sunders at once the ties of kindred, those closely-entertwining fibres of the soul which join society into a mass. In becoming a priest, the novice required to unlink himself from the world, and to fasten himself into the ecclesiastical brotherhood ; to relinquish all sonship, except to the Church ; all fatherhood,

except that of spiritual parentage ; all bondage of the heart's vows, save to his order. Every avenue of pleasure, hope, profit, ambition, or success was sealed to the priest but one—unquestioning submission to the Church. Hereditary place and power were thus made to them impossible, and the Church became an oligarchy continually resistive of the overweening domination of kings and nobles—an oligarchy in which, for the most part, talent secured eminence. Hence the ardent pertinacity with which Hildebrand insisted on priestly celibacy, and hence the vigour with which he directed his energy to the accomplishment of this hierarchical necessity.

Simony was scarcely less hurtful to the Church than marriage. The sale and purchase of preferment and power in the Church made its prelates little else than the tools of the sovereign who nominated the holder of office—the instruments by which his purposes were to be worked. There was no anchor of safety for the Church in a priesthood whose place and power depended on Imperial sanction. The cables were sure to slip under any strain. It must be felt by every priest and prelate that he was the servant of the Church alone ; that he was situated where and as he was for its sake ; and that in its danger his own fate was jeoparded. Celibacy and the Papal investiture of the members of the hierarchy were co-ordinate modes of effecting the sacerdotalism of the priesthood ; of maintaining the clergy as a separate caste, having an interest in a vast spiritual organisation and institution, which claimed pre-eminence in power, and held the kingdoms of the world in subserviency to its designs. Claiming to be a divinely substantiated authority, the Church necessarily held that all earthly dignity derived its legitimacy from it, and was

dependent upon and amenable to it. The balance of power Hildebrand held to be the will of the Church.

Purposes such as these, interfering with Imperial domination, social life, civic institutions, state policy, national feelings, family interests, and personal liberty, met indeed with little acceptance in the stormy youth of civilisation, and required an unyielding austerity, a decisive energy, an intense zeal, and an overbearing persistency, to bring them into a workable condition. These qualities Hildebrand possessed; and that he exercised them, the narrative of his acts amply shows. This we now resume:—

Alexander II. deputed Hugo, cardinal of Silva-Candida, to go, as his legate, to Spain, to persuade Sancho, the new King of Arragon and Castile, to adopt the ritual of the Romish Church; while he, accompanied by Hildebrand, went to his native city, Milan, to quell a disturbance between its citizens and their ecclesiastical superiors. Hildebrand had stirred up the whole excitement and revolt, that he might press the Pope to decisive action against simony and the marriage of priests, which he stigmatised as concubinage. Of simony the Milanese clergy proved their guiltlessness; and they defended their right to marry. Archbishop Guido, though himself unwedded, maintained the justice and legality of priestly marriages. Ariold, a tool of Hildebrand's, opposed him. Guido was excommunicated; and Ariold, in revenge, was drowned by the populace in the Lago Maggiore. Hildebrand sent an armed force against Guido, who was compelled to succumb. Henry IV. invested one Godfrey with the vacant dignity. Hildebrand opposed the Imperial nominee, and, by excommunication, procured his retirement, whereupon Guido was re-instated.

Hildebrand's watchful eye was everywhere. The Pope

enjoyed the delights of life at Lucca ; but he, intent on effecting his great scheme, pursued the war against the deposed Pope, Cadolaus ; set Duke Godfrey to keep the Normans in check ; gave the Bohemian King the right to wear a mitre ; sent legates to Norway, Sweden, and Denmark ; kept a continual watch upon the German Emperor ; and fomented or originated quarrel, usurpation, and conquest everywhere. He unsettled all, that in the re-settlement his schemes might have a place.

The Cerdic dynasty, which for five centuries had ruled in England, had at last run its course. Edward the Confessor was childless. Two claimants aimed at the sovereignty ; Harold, the chosen of the English people, and William, (afterwards the Conqueror,) the nominee of Hildebrand, who secured the Pope's sanction to his attempt to acquire the throne of England. Harold was crowned in St Paul's, London, on the day of Edward's death, (5th January 1066,) with general acceptance ; but on the 14th October of the same year he was, after a dauntless fight, slain at Senlac, near Hastings, in a war against the invasion of William. So perished

“The noblest and the last
Of Saxon kings ; save one, the noblest he—
The last of all ;”

and Duke William, under the banner of St Peter, was hailed as conqueror and as king. He presented Harold's battle-flag and a portion of the spoil to his patron the Pope ; and was crowned on Christmas-day, 1066, in Westminster Abbey, by Aldred, archbishop of York. Hildebrand praised the Conqueror enthusiastically ; but politicly endeavoured to subjugate the clergy of England to the Romish Church. To effect this, he sent legates from Rome, who deposed

curates, abbots, bishops, and archbishops, on the plea of illegal ordination ; but really with the intent of substituting clergy devoted to William's cause, and so to preserve by wrong what had been won by war. On the deposition of Stigand, archbishop of Canterbury, 1070, Lanfranc, at the urgent solicitation of Hildebrand, accepted the appointment, and did his best to Romanise the English Church. Hildebrand felt considerable complacency in reflecting on this signal victory of his astutely laid plans, for Lanfranc was one of the most notable controversialists of that age. On going to Rome to receive the pallium,—a short white cloak of lambs' wool, with a red cross over the shoulders and down the back, which was given by the Popes as the outward symbol of ecclesiastical dignity,—Alexander II. and his archdeacon conferred on Lanfranc double honours, and succeeded for a time in procuring homage to the Primate of the Catholic Church from a people who had been more remarkable for resistance than submission to the Pope. By force, fraud, connivance, or intrigue, Hildebrand generally gained his object ; no difficulty could daunt, and no impediment arrest him in his course. His position about this time is indicated in these lines, from a satire by his friend, Petrus Damianus, viz. :—

“ Papam rite colo, sed te prostratus adoro ;
Tu facis hunc dominum, te facit ipse Deum.”*

This Damianus was a man of singular genius, ability, and power ; of great activity of mind and vehemence of thought. He was almost the rival of Hildebrand, who, however, held him in leading-strings. They had sworn to co-operate in making the Papal throne the greatest of all earthly powers.

* I worship the Pope ceremoniously, but I adore thee submissively. Thou makest this man lord : he makes thee God.

They often quarrelled, but always became reconciled. In early life he had, in cloistered monkhood, as Dante says,

“Fed his soul with thoughts contemplative ;”

but in his latter years he stood before kings. He was deputed by the ever-vigilant Hildebrand to preside at the Council of Mayence, and to decide upon the proposed divorce of Henry IV. from his wife Bertha, who, after four years of married life, was childless. Damianus denied the suit, and Hildebrand declared marriage indissoluble from any cause except incestuous intercourse. The Archbishop of Ravenna, who had withstood the papal usurpations, died under the severest excommunications, and his people rose in revolt against this harsh treatment. Damianus was sent to appease the tumult, and to absolve the people from the anathemas under which they were laid. He successfully accomplished his duty, and then died. Hildebrand by this event was rivalless.

Of one tool, Annone, the abductor of Henry, he got rid by relegating him to his office of bishop of Cologne, with such extraordinary powers as made him, in effect, the Pope of Germany. Hildebrand was as unscrupulous, when it suited his own ends, in giving as in taking.

About this time, too, (1071,) Hildebrand inaugurated a great architectural reform at Rome, by repairing, restoring, and decorating the ancient churches, and building new ones. The Pope embraced the same idea, and built the cathedral of Lucca ; and Desiderius, abbot of Monte Cassino, erected there the earliest Gothic church. This the Pope consecrated as soon as completed : and then journeyed, for pleasure, along the borders of the Neapolitan territory, while Hildebrand went off, sword in hand, to oust the usurping Normans

from the Papal dominions. In this object, by the aid of the troops of the Countess Matilda of Tuscany, Hildebrand was entirely successful, and compelled the checkmated invaders to retire from the Holy See. In return for the help Matilda gave him, he nominated Guibert, the Italian chancellor of Henry IV., to the archbishopric of Ravenna, a man at once ambitious and crafty, and therefore dangerous; but Hildebrand could not yet afford to despise the possessor of an army, and a lady devoted to his service. Things were now, however, ripening apace for a change.

Henry IV., released from ecclesiastical tutelage, became rampant against the aggressions of the Church. His despotic tendency developed itself in perverse opposition to the priesthood; and he exercised a haughty tyranny over his subjects. Hildebrand delightedly saw the workings of this alienating and impolitic absolutism, and hinted to his subjects the possibility of gaining redress by an appeal to Rome. The princes of Saxony complained to the Pope about his arrogance. Hildebrand persuaded Alexander to threaten the King. This made him furious. Wrath blinded him to consequences, and he cast aside the yoke of the Church. In actual stubbornness, he compelled the clergy of Saxony and Thuringia to pay him one-half of the tithes; and he repudiated the election of Anselmo, bishop of Lucca, which the Pope had confirmed. These resolves brought on a crisis. The passions which drove Henry blindly on to his purposes, roused the resentment of his Saxon subjects to inveteracy and revolt. The all-subduing schemes of Hildebrand had been successful everywhere. This reckless conduct on the part of Henry alone was wanting to give him cause of quarrel with apparent right upon his side. There was now no object to be gained by further delay. It was the last

act in the drama, whose *dénouement* was to be the elevation of the Papacy to the pinnacle of earthly power, prerogative, and administration. At that hour, no one should occupy the supreme chair except him who possessed the inexorable will by which all things had been so arranged and subdued—the master-soul of the history of that age. The hour for striking the last blow, and of stepping upon a throne to which the world was subject, had now come, and on 21st April 1073, Pope Alexander II. died—the instrument was cast from the hand that had wielded it.

Amid the palpitating of all hearts, intrigue and gold did their work. A shower of largesses fell throughout Rome; a tumult arose among the people; and the cardinals, in terror, chose the favourite of the mob—and their own master—Primate of the Church; and “being assembled in the church of St Peter in Vinculis,” did, “in the year 1073 of the incarnation of our blessed Saviour Jesus Christ, on the 22d of April, the day of the burial of Pope Alexander Second, of blessed memory,” there and then “elect as shepherd and high Pontiff, and true Vicar of Christ, the archdeacon Hildebrand, a man of great learning and true piety; of prudence, justice, and constancy in religion; modest, sober, chaste; master in his own house; hospitable to the poor; and nobly brought up in the bosom of the holy Mother Church, from his tenderest years to his present age; learned; whom we wish, in truth, to preside, with the same power which Peter once exercised, over the Church of God.” So runs the decree. Hildebrand, escorted by the soldiers of Tuscany, and greeted with the acclamations of the populace, accepted the tiara, and (to imply the legitimacy of the Pontiff—his friend and patron, Gregory VI.—whom Henry III. had exiled) he assumed as his pontifical title

Gregory VII. The unflinching, earnest, and crafty labours of a lifetime of politic statesmanship and unscrupulous worldly obstinacy gained their reward; the long coveted purple swathed his form; and, "after having prepared everything to suit his wishes, he stepped into the papal chair the moment he was ready," determined no longer to allow the Church to be regarded as the handmaiden of the empires of the earth, and to claim for her the supreme right of being head over all—the sun in the firmament of potentates—the president in the great theocracy of the universe.

Henry was exceedingly wroth at this unauthorised election, and sent his faithful adherent, Count Eberhard, to protest against any election to which he was not a consenting party. Gregory pleaded that the Papacy had been forced upon him; and that he had delayed his consecration till he had received the approval of the Emperor, to whom he had sent an envoy. Henry, knowing his opponent's energy and power, and being then engaged in attempting to suppress the Saxon revolt, was contented with this acknowledgment of his Imperial claims, and sent a representative to assist at the consecration of Gregory VII., which took place 29th June 1073.

Rome was again the centre of European politics. It had before conquered and reigned; it was now to overrule—to diffuse the animation of its influence throughout the kingdoms of the earth, itself peerless, companionless, and irresistible. The very pulses of policy were in her acts. The theory of a theocracy is sublime; but with earthly agencies it is a visionary impracticality. The power of a universal spiritual supremacy, seconded in its ascendancy by the most eminent secular sovereignty, may be omnipotently but can scarcely be beneficially wielded. For the management of the secular

concerns of his theocratic domination Gregory had sedulously prepared, and he had girt himself up to the height of his great purpose. He had Norman feudatories in the south ; Tuscan auxiliaries in the north ; France was submissive ; England respectful, though resistant ; Spain tacitly subject. He had brought about revoltful complaints from Suabia, Bavaria, and Carinthia against his chief secular antagonist, Henry IV. ; and he had subjugated, by a free bestowal of power and place, many of the Lombardese clergy. So far, intrigue had given his policy hopefulness. He saw his way clearly to the effecting of his life-long aim, and instantly set about it.

In a few weeks subsequent to his consecration, Gregory summoned a council at the Lateran. It was a success. Never, since the palmy days of the old Empire, had so many grandees of Church and State assembled in council. His machinations were effectual. A decree was passed, forbidding marriage to priests, commanding the wedded to put away their wives, and ordaining that no layman should assist at, or regard as sacred, any act of worship performed by a married priest. Rebukes, menaces, excommunications, ruthless persecutions, compelled obedience to this austere edict. Simoniacal traffic in ecclesiastical dignities was also prohibited, under similar disabilities ; and lay investiture was strictly forbidden. Churchmen were to be the lieges only of the papal sovereignty, and the right to benefices was to be valid on receipt of ordination from an ecclesiastical superior ; so that the whole Church was brought under vassalage to the Pontiff.

Against Robert Guiscard, Gregory marched with 10,000 men, and Guiscard retreated in fear. He next projected an attack upon the Saracens, to win Jerusalem in a crusade,

and to unite the Eastern and Western Churches. With this ostensible object, he gathered an army of 50,000 men, and thus flattered his friends and terrified his enemies. The Church was filled with tumults. The Milanese clergy, the Gallic bishops, the Synods of Erfurth and Lucca, resisted the anti-marital enactment—blood flowed, and internal disorder abounded. Groans and curses were heard everywhere, and every combustible material was aggravated into flame. France was threatened, England soothed, Venice flattered, Denmark patronised, Robert Guiscard anathematised, Russia temporised with, Hungary received a sovereign from Gregory, and Spain was taken under the care of the papal hierarch. To humiliate and depress all before the Church was the one constant and unvarying aim of Gregory. In the determination to effect submission, he was inexorable. He was intent on regulating at will the polity of Europe.

The weakness of the Empire was the opportunity of the Church. Otho of Nordheim, the Cromwell of Saxony, had defeated Henry, and his crown had been offered to Rudolph of Suabia. In his anxiety to subdue the revolt of the Saxons, Henry was willing to purchase the neutrality of Gregory at any price;—he paid too dear a one. He submitted, unremonstratingly, to every encroachment. This much was gained for the Popedom, but no countervailing help was vouchsafed. Indeed, Gregory knew that only while the combatants were actually engaged in hostilities to the death could he hope to take his next move in the intricate game of papal diplomacy.

This move was another Lateran Council. There the investiture question was emphatically settled. Henry treated all resistance with contempt. Complaints hurried in to the

Romish Vicar of Christ, regarding the crimes, public and private, of Henry, towards and among the Saxons, and Gregory summoned Henry to appear to answer to these charges. On Christmas Eve, 1075, an attempt was made to assassinate Gregory while he was on his way to worship at the shrine of the Holy Mary. Cencius, the assassin, confessed, and was (magnanimously?) forgiven. It was asserted that Cencius was Henry's tool. It is far more likely that it was a prearranged plot of Gregory's own. It imparted the bitterness of personality to the contest between the Vatican and the Empire. Gregory's citation was disregarded by Henry; but to the indictment of sacrilege, personal uncleanness, and assassination, made against him by the Pope, Henry answered by a countercharge of base birth, murder, simony, demon-worship, profligacy, and profanity, against Gregory; and on these counts carried a decision of the Synod of Worms against the Vicegerent of God. This decision was greedily countersigned by numerous sufferers from Gregory's recent anti-marital imperiousness.

In Lent, 1076, Gregory sat on his throne in the Vatican, among the clerical and lay supporters of his august claims. Before this new senate, Henry had been called to attend as a criminal. Roland, an ambassador from the Synod of Worms, appeared instead, and thus addressed the Pope:—"The sovereign and the prelates of Germany and Italy send through me this command,—Descend, without delay from St Peter's chair, and abandon thine usurpation over the Church. To such honour none can be admitted without imperial sanction." Then, turning to the assembly, he said:—"To you, brethren, it is commanded that, at the Feast of Pentecost, ye appear before the King, and from him receive a Pope and father for the Church,—this same

Gregory being a wolf only." The Prefect of Rome arrested the intruder, but Gregory saved him from the rage of the convention. Henry was thereafter solemnly and unanimously deposed, and his subjects released from their oaths and allegiance. Europe was astonished at the doctrine and its application. Hildebrand was too politic to take a false step. He knew the state of Saxony, Henry's weakness, and the general discontent of the subjects of the Empire, and he had calculated on the awe with which such a decree would be received. Henry was deserted everywhere, and treated as an outcast. His soul was fevered with hate and vengeance. With the audacity of despair, he flung himself on the loyalty of his people, and the burghers and peasantry rallied to his standard. Henry's contumacy excited the ire of the Pope, and he issued a rescript for the election of a new Emperor. In October 1076, a Diet met at Tribur, or Oppenheim, at which it was resolved by the princes of the Empire that if by February 2, 1077, Henry did not present himself submissively before the Pontiff, confess his sins, and gain absolution, the election of a new king should be immediately expedited. The Lombard bishops excommunicated Gregory at the Council of Pavia. Henry resolved on appearing before the Pope in Italy, rather than in Germany—in private, rather than in public. He set out, accompanied by his faithful wife, Bertha, his son Conrad, and a few attendants, in November, and journeyed during winter, in most disastrous weather, from Spire, through by-paths over the summits of the Alps, and into the intricacies of the Apennines, that he might intercept Gregory on his way to the Diet of Augsburg. He found him at Canossa, in Apulia, the favourite residence of the Countess Matilda. Here a number of

German bishops were doing penance in cells, on bread and water, for their insubordination to the Holy See; and hither, unarmed and unattended, came Henry as a suppliant to the spiritual despot. A cold January frost chilled the blood when Henry toiled up the rocky footway to Canossa's walls. As he approached, the outer gates of the fortress opened to him, but the door of the third entrance was moveless. In the bitter cold—less bitter than Gregory's tyranny—stiff, faint, and weary, Henry stood in the court for three days. At length, tamed for a time by hunger, cold, and degradation, on the fourth day he was admitted to the presence of the haughty and dominant Pontiff, to cry for mercy. What a thrill of ecstasy swept along the tense cordage of that old man's frame when at his feet—the feet of *another* carpenter's son—the hereditary lord of the mightiest Empire in Christendom knelt, crushed and awed, before him! It was a lifetime's recompense. Having exposed him to the contempt of men, Gregory restored Henry to the communion of the Church, but meanwhile held him bound to abstain from the exercise or enjoyment of any kingly prerogative. He took the consecrated bread of the Eucharist, and, protesting his own blamelessness, partook of it, saying, "May Almighty God, this very day, strike me with sudden death if I be really guilty!" and then challenged Henry to do likewise. Henry recoiled from the test, but was absolved. The iron had, however, entered Henry's soul; rage, shame, dishonour, stung him to effort, and he determined upon being once again "every inch a king." His illusory awe had departed, and with no enervation of will did he pursue his future designs.

The German princes, at Gregory's instigation, elected Rudolph as Emperor. Henry returned to maintain his

rights, and for three years a devastating war was kept up, with alternating success. Gregory, glad to see Germany humbled, temporised between the parties, pretending mediation, but giving none, until, in 1080, at Mülhausen, the arbitrement of the sword declared for Rudolph; and then he re-excommunicated Henry, and sent his opponent a crown, with the inscription, "Peter gives this crown to Rudolph."

Henry, at a council held in Brixen, again also deposed the Pope, and caused Guibert, archbishop of Ravenna, to be chosen in his stead, with the title of Clement III. Two pontiffs and two emperors now contested for power. On the banks of Elster, Henry, in 1080, encountered Rudolph, whose army was led by the illustrious Otho of Nordheim. Rudolph's cause unambiguously triumphed, but it was a bootless victory. On the field, Tasso's hero, Godfrey of Bouillon, thrust the spear of the imperial banner into Rudolph's side. His right hand was hacked off, and he died exclaiming, "That was the hand with which, uplifted, I swore fidelity to Henry." This was looked on as a judgment of God against him.

The victorious and exultant Henry marched to Rome three times in three successive years, besieged it, and reduced his implacable enemy, Gregory, to such straits, that he was compelled to shut himself up in the castle of St Angelo, and to apply for help to William of England, who, however, excused himself. In these contests, cities were destroyed, lands devastated, churches spoiled, convents ravaged, and all the districts around Rome were subjected to grievous calamities. Though a new king of Germany was crowned and consecrated, Henry, with a bloodhound's pertinacity, remained in Italy, resolved to subdue the Pope.

Pride and pity strove for the mastery in Gregory's heart; but his strong belief that

" 'Tis not the iron arm, 'tis the strong *will*
Gains in that game wherein we mortals
Play life against life,"

made him hold out, even when, on the 30th Nov. 1083, a pontifical synod strove to persuade him to recognise Henry, that there might be peace. He spoke eloquently, humbly, yet boldly, and refused. He dismissed the synod with his benediction, but resolved to bear the "hazard of the die," and "endure unto the end."

Fate did not now delay. On 21st March 1084, Henry entered Rome in triumph. He took possession of the Lateran, the bridges, and the strongholds. Gregory fled to his fastness, St Angelo. Henry was crowned in Rome by Guibert, who was also consecrated Pontiff there. The Cæsar of the Church alone was defiant; in the very crisis of his life foiled and baffled, he was yet unsubdued in spirit. He could not be the craven to supplicate mercy from Henry. A few hours, and St Angelo must yield to inner discord and to outward siege. A shout arose. Robert Guiscard, now reconciled to Gregory, approached. Henry fled—his thirst for vengeance unslaked. Rome was burnt and sacked; but the Pontiff was released, though at the cost of two-thirds of the pontifical city.

Gregory reassumed his sway; called a new council; refulmined against Guibert and Henry, and then left the scene of the late heartrending devastation for Salerno, under the safe conduct of Guiscard. The civil wars having been brought to a truce, a pestilence supervened upon a famine. The ordination, Death, went out against Gregory. He sickened of the plague, and died on 25th May 1085, with

this epigram upon his lips,—“I have loved righteousness, and hated iniquity; and therefore I die in exile.” The cardinals and bishops who stood around his couch had prevailed upon him to pardon all his enemies, except Guibert and Henry. He had given his mitre to Anselm of Lucca, and named him successor to the primacy. Enclosed in a marble urn, after a papal reign of nearly twelve years, and in the sixty-fifth year of his age, he was buried in the cathedral church of St Matthew, at Salerno, and there he lay, memorialless, till John of Procida, the enactor of “The Sicilian Vespers,” two centuries thereafter, built over his urn a magnificent chapel named St Michael. Gregory was canonised in 1584; a statue of him was erected at Salerno, 1610; and his name was razed from the catalogue of saints by Napoleon I. It has since been reinscribed.

Thus passed away a man of singular courage, zeal, and genius; the vanquisher of feudalism and imperialism; the creator of that triple-crowned dominion which claimed power in heaven, on earth, and in hell. A great, world-centralizing spirit, who was quickened with a Divine thought of strange significance, but who, in the sublime yearnings of a mighty purpose, forgot that it is not given to man “to do evil that good may come.” In the very means adopted to attain his great end, the seeds of failure were implanted. In the celibacy of the clergy, and the power of excommunication and indulgence, the Reformation lay like a germ. In the flourishing outgrowth of the Church, and in the supereminent claims over all sovereignties on which Gregory staked the very being of the Church of Christ, there were embedded the causes which, in our own day—eight centuries after—have led to many changes in European life,—the unity of Italy, the fall of the Pope’s

temporal power, the patriotic grandeur of Garibaldi. So true is it that God's purposes underlie and yet control all human action ; that "the lot is cast into the lap, but the whole disposing thereof is of the Lord." Those who comprehend the true philosophy of history have no fear for the future ; they know that

"The hour shall come,
 When they who think to bind the ethereal spirit—
 Who, like the eagle cowering o'er his prey,
 Watch with quick eye, and strike and strike again,
 If but a sinew vibrate—shall confess
 Their wisdom folly. Even *now* the flame
 Bursts forth, where once it burnt so gloriously,
 And, dying, left a splendour like the day ;
 That, like the day, diffused itself, and still
 Blesses the earth :—the light of genius, virtue,
 Greatness in thought, and act, contempt of death,
 Godlike example."

Dante, Wycliffe, Luther, Loyola, Calvin, Pascal, Wolsey, Philip II., and even Garibaldi, are, in a great measure, inexplicable enigmas of life, unless we know and recognise the life-work of the first wearer of the triune diadem of a Supreme Papacy, Gregory VII., and acknowledge his place in history as an *Epoch Man*.



Roger Bacon—Experimental
Science.

A.D. 1214-1294.

“ I had a vision.—In an antique dome
A holy man I saw, with cap and gown ;
Around the walls were many a ponderous tome
With hasp and hinge—all schoolmen of renown.
Alembics, crucibles, metallic ores,
And wondrous things from air, and earth, and sea,
Were hung on high, or strewn upon the floors ;
As if he wished combined with him to be
All miracles of matter and of mind ;
And he did study wisdom till behind
His fellow-men were left ; and then they knew
That he had leagued with demons—knew it well ;
And, fearing him, condemn’d ; then, reckless, threw
His aged limbs to wither in a cell.”—D. M. MOIR.

“ BACON. Men call me Bacon.

“ VANDERMAST. Lordly thou look’st, as if that thou wert learn’d ;
Thy countenance, as if science held her seat
Between the circled arches of thy brow.”

Robert Greene’s “ Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay,” 1591.

“ That proto-martyr of science in Christendom—Roger Bacon.”

Samuel Brown.

“ Roger Bacon, by far the truest philosopher of the middle ages.”

Hallam.

“ The Franciscan—Roger Bacon—stood alone in the thirteenth century, on account of his taste and genius for physics, optics, and astronomy.”—*Cousin.*

“ Look at the history of the lives of our great philosophers, and you will find that their progress has usually been a struggle against the prejudices of those by whom they were surrounded.”—*Robert Hunt.*



EXPERIMENTAL SCIENCE.

EXPERIMENTALISM is the name of the act and art of *testing* thought that it may become knowledge. Its first step is observation. Things, on being noticed, excite the activity of the mind, and call into working the inner necessity of the soul—inquiry. The way at first is “dim and perilous.” The apparent and accidental mingle so constantly with the real and the inherent—the enveloping and concomitant so frequently cause us to pass unheeded the essential and the central, that cognition is puzzled, and knowledge becomes difficult of attainment. To see what *is* rather than what *seems*, is the highest and noblest exercise of the intellectual faculties. It may be—ay, it is—possible to construct fine systems of nature out of pure thought, excited by experience, but they will rarely bear the test of methodical investigation; *i.e.*, gradual, successive, and forethoughtful induction—the only true means by which transient external experiences can be seen, and known, and submitted to the understanding. Thus only can the restless, shifting, changeful, and phenomenal be steadied before the gaze of the soul, and brought to reveal their secrets. The union of thought and action is the highest life; it yields also the most exalting and exalted truth. When the logic of pure thought harmonises with and

explains the phenomena of nature or mind, and the oft and properly-tested phenomena of nature sustain and bear witness to the decisions of logic, then there is a certainty of truth ; wherever there is an absence of either there is a probability of error. *Facts*, even when rightly observed, are not truths ; they only yield them ; they are the words of a sentence which thought translates and embodies. Truth is shaped, moulded, evolved by the conjoint working of reason and fact. Phenomena project a flowing stream of sensations into the mind ;

“ And when the stream
Which overflow'd the mind has pass'd away,
A *consciousness* remains that it has left
Deposited upon the silent shore
Of memory images and precious *thoughts*.”

The true meaning of facts is ascertained by experiment—by trying whether the thoughts supposed to represent them really do so in the very sense in which the mind conceives them. The systematised facts of experience and reason are science.

Science, like theology, has had its martyrs. Nor have they been the less truly sufferers for God and truth because they have striven to read the *first* volume of the Divine revelation, while others have pursued the study of the *second*. All truth is of God, and leads to Him. To know nature in her causes and her ends is to know God in one of His manifestations, and needs neither preclude nor supersede Scripture, in which the soul must trust. Nature is no surly-step-sister to the soul ; she rather encourages and entices man to give full play to those

“ Few traces
Of a diviner nature which look out
Through his corporeal baseness.”

And as she feels "the need of linking some delight to knowledge," she makes all true cognition impart "a sense, a feeling that he loses not"—the bliss of learning.

"Nature ne'er deserts the wise and pure ;
No plot so narrow, be but nature there,
No waste so vacant, but may well employ
Each faculty of sense, and keep the heart
Awake."

To such "fine issues" did she work in Roger Bacon to incline him to a course of learning and ingenious studies.

Man's greatest hindrance to the acquisition of true knowledge has been man. The unswerving pursuit of truth, though it is his highest calling, has seldom been man's favourite employment. Nor have those who devoted themselves to the thorough investigation of the true been often made the subjects of the world's homage or its love. The plight of humanity would have been woeful indeed had the sages of the olden time "ne'er eyed the fruit nor clomb the tree" of knowledge, that they might pluck thereof and give to their co-mates in life. To be the first who systematically taught and practised the active, watchful, and careful examination of nature by keen-eyed, curious, and determinate observation, or well-planned, accurately-adjusted experiment and precise and definite registration, is an honour of no mean kind. To this place Roger Bacon, though long misrepresented and uncared for, has now been found worthy of elevation; and it is the purpose of the following biography to show the processes by which time and circumstance formed this man to become one of the marvels of his own age, and a worthy inheritor of the world's fame.

In the year 1214, Roger Bacon was born near Ilchester, an ancient town in Somersetshire, known as the *Ischalis* of

the Romans. Of his boyhood we know, and can now learn, nothing. Most probably he was "set apart" for the Church from his infant years, as he seems to have been early so well educated as to receive admission to Oxford in his youth. His family was of yeomanry degree. Oxford was at this time, according to Hallam, "a school of great resort," "second only to Paris in the multitude of its students and the celebrity of its scholastic disputations." Anthony-à-Wood enthusiastically exclaims, regarding *these* "good old times" of his *Alma Mater*, "What university, I pray, can produce an invincible Hales [died 1245], an admirable Bacon, an excellent, well-grounded Middleton [died 1304], a subtle Scotus [1265-1308], an approved Burley, a resolute Baconthorpe [died 1346], a singular Ockham [died 1347], a solid and industrious Holcot, and a profound Bradwardin [died 1349], all which persons flourished within the compass of one century."* The chief teachers in Oxford were Franciscans (*i. e.*, followers of Francis of Assisi [1182-1226], founder of a mendicant order of friars 1209,) whose vows required poverty, submission, manual labour, study, and self-mortification. These orders of friars added greatly to the number of the Church, and to the intensity with which the scholastic philosophy was studied. The Franciscans did not lay so much stress, at their origin, upon their learning and philosophy, as on their sanctity, spirituality, and humility; but when the competition of orders became keener, they were fain to elaborate a *form* of speculation too,† and were desirous of enlisting in their brotherhood as

* Vol. i., p. 159, A.D. 1168. See Hallam's "Literature of the Middle Ages," vol. i., p. 16.

† Read on this point Maclean's "Monks and Monasteries." London: Hall, Virtue, & Co.

many of the rising thinkers of the day as they could. Bacon seems to have been early regarded as a person likely to bring renown to the order; and on his departure from Oxford to Paris—whose university, as we have stated before, was highly famed—he was recommended to a Franciscan convent as a residence. In Paris he applied himself diligently to the acquisition of all the attainable knowledge of his time, and distinguished himself so much as to have gained a doctor's degree at Paris before the completion of his twenty-sixth year—an honour which Oxford willingly and at once confirmed.

On his return, the consideration of the future would naturally suggest itself, and he would seek the best advice upon the subject. The Bishop of Lincoln, Robert Grosstête (Greathead), a learned man, and author of a poem entitled "The Handlyng of Sinne," was his friend. As the University of Oxford was ecclesiastically subject to him, he counselled his entrance into the brotherhood of St Francis, of which Grosstête was himself a member. To this Bacon agreed, and was accordingly admitted on taking the requisite vows. Just about this period (1244) the earliest known statute or charter of privileges granted to the University of Oxford as a corporate body was passed—usually quoted as "28 Hen. III. *Libertates concessæ Chancellario Universitatis Oxon.*" The chancellor or rector of the schools at that time derived his authority to teach from the Bishop of Lincoln, and we may suppose that through Grosstête's influence Bacon received his appointment as a lecturer at Oxford.

To the duties of this lectureship he devoted himself most assiduously. His zeal at first procured him friends, celebrity, and honour. Belonging to that body, "whose [to quote their own words, used in 1362] profession it is to pos-

sess no wealth," he was obliged to depend upon the liberality of friends for the means of carrying out his course of instruction ; but the aristocracy of that time were, according to the testimony of Anthony-à-Wood,—

“ Moribus egregii, verbo vultuque venusti,
Ingenio pollent, consilioque vigent : ”

Distinguished in manners, winning in speech and mien. They were powerful in intellect, and they increased in wisdom ; and the enthusiasm for war engendered by the era of the Crusades had transferred itself to the encouragement of study. Hence deserving persons found patrons able and willing to assist, not only in founding and endowing “ colleges ” and “ halls,” but in granting aid to scholars to gain books or acquire instruments. Bacon’s genius inclined to truly *realistic* studies more than to the *nominalism* of mere syllogistics, and for the sake of pursuing these he required money as well as learning and leisure. He looked upon the appearances presented to the senses by nature as “ *parables* ” intended to have their inner meaning read by the soul and transmuted into truth. To know when the mind had attained the right and true interpretation of any phenomenon or set of phenomena, the mind must have a test—that test must be constructed by the *intellect*, capable of being operated on by *nature*, and yet give intimations to the *senses*—be, in fact, *experiment*. “ There are,” says he, “ *four* principal stumblingblocks in the way of knowledge—1, authority ; 2, habit ; 3, appearances as they present themselves to the vulgar eye ; and 4, concealment of ignorance, combined with ostentation of learning.” He set about overcoming these by refraining from ostentation himself ; by asking no belief in his dogmas without proof, by pro-

ducing such proof as he could, he altered the vulgar conceptions of nature, changed the habits of thinkers, and repudiated authority. That the labours of this great man were not unappreciated we learn from the fact that by the kindness of friends, despite of his Franciscan vow of poverty, he had been enabled, in twenty years, to expend in books, experiments, and instruments, no less than 2000 French livres, a sum equivalent to £6000 of our present money, but in effective value in purchases worth many times that amount. Such a contribution to the success of experimental philosophy, in such an age, deserves, indeed demands, special remark, and leads one to reflect how powerfully Bacon must have influenced his contemporaries to receive so significant a mark of their confidence, and such a tribute to his ability, as is implied in the placing of such a sum at his disposal.

During these twenty years of teaching and experiment, gaining not applause and fame only, but substantial evidences of favour, Bacon must have seemed to his fellow-Franciscans a living testimony to their worthlessness. He had made himself intimately acquainted with the Hebrew, Arabic, and Greek languages. Indeed, he wrote a grammar of the latter tongue, which yet exists in MS. among his works, and he was a most accomplished mathematician at a time when most students of that science never crossed the *pons asinorum*. Logic, metaphysics, ethics, and theology he had minutely investigated, and had treated on many matters pertaining to these branches of thought with ability, acumen, and originality. Chronology and geography had met with an ardent student in him, and he wrote Latin, though not with high classicality, yet with an ease, grace, and perspicuity uncommon in his age. It was in the depart-

ment of scientific research, however, that he specially vindicated his right to a name and place among the heirs of memory. Astronomy, astrology, medicine, alchemy, optics, magic, and physical science generally, received attention, augmentation, and illustration from the copious resources of the Ilchester friar. "So passionate an instinct had he for what is positive in science, that in the department of nature he actually claimed an equal rank for *observation* with *reason*; a claim which was advanced again and achieved nearly four hundred years after by his more illustrious, but not more sagacious namesake, Francis Bacon, the liberator of the sciences."* "Roger Bacon distinctly and loudly proclaimed the rights of observation; and in truth, his whole school of experimentalists were the accredited and natural enemies of the scholastic wranglers."†

How, indeed, could it be otherwise? Monks, in too many cases, had canonised sloth; he had glorified industry. Spinning, spider-like, the meshes of disputation out of their own being, they could never advance beyond the circle of repetitive dogmatisms, while Bacon toiled, and sweated, and dug into the deep quarries of fact, and with most revolutionary submission to the swart genius of labour, first watched, with meditative deference, the processes of nature, and then endeavoured to compel from her an articulate and trustworthy authentication of the conceptions which his soul had formed from the suggestions which phenomena excited in him. Honest, painstaking, and determined, he legislated *in thought* upon results, and thereafter set to work to bring forth from nature that obedience which he sought. Continued resistance did not daunt or intimidate him; it only

* "Lectures and Essays," by Samuel Brown, vol. i., p. 161.

† *Ibid.*, p. 117

made him doubtful of the accuracy of his own views, and caused him to reinvestigate the determinations of his theoretic faculty concerning phenomena, their causes, operations, and effects. To the compiling, annotating, commenting, authority-worshipping crowd who filled the cloisters of Franciscan convents, or waved their gray gowns within the precincts of collegiate halls, this devotion to high pursuits, this toilsome career, this unresting activity in the *search* after truth, and this self-denial of those enticing pleasures which interest other men, could scarcely fail to be distasteful, not to say detestable. Their blank idleness, or dull stagnation, or interminable labour after trivialities; their painful ponderosity of thriftless thought; their careless scorn of solemn aims and aspirations; and their distrustful or perplexed interpretations of nature, its phenomena, significance, and author, were put to shame, and virtually rebuked by the fierce energy and persevering striving with which he grappled with the mysteries and difficulties of investigation, and held to his purpose of informing himself, if possible, of the secrets, and processes, and ongoings of the universe. His supernatural consciousness of strength tacitly convicted them of cowardice or treachery—cowardice in failing bravely to dare all labour to gain truth, or treachery in surrendering the choicest and most gratifying right of humanity for the enjoyments of sloth, ease, pride, pomp, power, or momentary glory. Hence it happens, as he says, that “both in science and in common life we see a thousand falsehoods for one truth.” Men have hitherto neglected “to search, discover, and dissect, and prove,” and hence they do not and cannot learn or know the spirit’s rapt communion with the verities of science, the joy of moral being, or the blest delight of holy feeling and religious thought.

The continuous sarcasm of a well-spent life excited hate and envy. Besides, he was the friend of Robert Grostête, the superior prelate of the diocese, a man not only learned himself, but the liberal patron of a studious life in others. But though a brother of the order of St Francis, bound by oath to ecclesiastical submission, Grostête had hardily and stoutly opposed the aggressions, secret or open, of the Pope upon the rights and liberties of the British Church, and had made himself conspicuous as a terrible resistant of the undue exertion of the fatherly power of him who held the headship of Christendom. This strong-nerved prelate would not suffer the installation of the boy-nephew of Pope Innocent IV. as a prebend of the diocese of Lincoln, and endured the wrath of his Holiness in the shape of excommunication. Yet for all this, Bacon's friendship did not halt, nor did his gratitude stop short at the command of his papal Holiness. Did he not, then, more than sympathise with him in his antagonism to the Pope? nay, did he not, in all probability, coincide in heart and soul with Grostête in his abominable hostility to the Father of the Church? Room for suspicion there certainly was; but Bacon soon gave more, for he bore testimony to the vileness of life and character of many of his confreres, and accused them, in plainly-spoken terms, of practices excessively alien to the purposes of their order, and the vows they had taken.

In 1253, when Bacon was verging on his fortieth year, Grostête, his protector, patron, friend, and fellow-witness against the crimes and follies of his order, died. The hate entertained for his late friend was added to the envy which they felt towards himself; the brethren of his order became Bacon's chief foes. Another superior arose, who knew not Bacon, except as the exposé of the vices of his order, and

as the object of malignity on account of his strange studies, singular learning, gigantic laboriousness, free speech, pecuniary gainings and spendings, wonderful reputation, admirable skill, and voluminous writings on all subjects, sacred, secular, and profane, if not, as it now began to be whispered, absolutely suggested by that wicked one who spell-binds the soul by jugglery, cheats the senses, mocks the resolves, and wraps up men's thoughts in the impervious veil of sorcery. What could such an official do, as an honest man bent on upholding the *reputation* of his order, except interdict the lectures of Bacon, prohibit the circulation of his writings, and zealously guard against the publicity of his inventions or discoveries? The austerities of the order were then put in force, and fetters bound the body of this man of chainless mind. In his prison he was denied intercourse with any of his friends, and was frequently exposed to such privations as with difficulty to have escaped death from the combined effects of hunger and cold. He endured patiently, yet not hopelessly, the priestly persecution to which his love of science and of truth had made him captive, and continued to "bide his time" in trust and calmness.

Nor was it much to be wondered at that, in the thirteenth century, the person who could assert, in the face of the highest authority in Christendom, that "we must not stick to what we hear and read, but must examine most strictly the opinions of our ancestors, that we may add what is lacking, and correct what is wrong, but with all modesty and consideration," should be regarded as a dangerous person; but when he added to this the grievous accusation of his age contained in these and other similar expressions—viz., "Men presume to teach before they have learnt." . . . "Appearances alone rule them, and they care not what they

know, but what they *are thought* to know by a senseless multitude,"—what howling and gnashing of teeth and exhaustless rage was too little for the apprehension of the hardy man, who suffered from no glut of friendship? And so they gave him the first fruits and fair sample of the scorn which the saintly churchmen of the middle ages felt for truth, and all truth's worshippers. But he walked valiantly along under the guardianship of Captivity, keeping Meditation as his solitary friend, and being enriched by ripe and rich reflections on the observations he had made, and the experiences he had garnered in his soul during the days of his activity and freedom. Thus was he ready, when a better day dawned upon his fortune, to pour forth profusely the ideas, suggestions, and details which fill so marvellous a page in the literary and scientific annals of the century in which he lived, and could offer to a friendly Pope, on brief notice, the *Opus Majus*—at once his defence and highest glory.

The ostensible charge preferred against Bacon was the study of magic, probably coupled with a vague assertion of a violation of his vow of poverty, borne evidence to by his apparently extravagant expenditure in pursuing his experimental studies. In reply to the first, he issued his tractates, "Concerning the Wonderful Power of Art and Nature," and "Concerning the Secret Operations of Art and Nature, and the Absurdity of Magic." Regarding the second, St Bonaventura, the seraphic doctor, who was then general of the Franciscans, having published an expository treatise on that portion of a friar's vow, intended, most probably, as an *indirect* condemnation of Bacon, we are informed by Vossius that he wrote a book, in which the reasonings of St Bonaventura were controverted, thus *indirectly* also maintaining the rightfulness of his conduct in this matter, and justifying

himself before the jury of the learned of his time. The general ignorance of the clergy then was so great, that any rumour of devil-doings received instant credence, and Bacon shared the odium of a charge of magic with William of Auvergne and Albert the Great of his own era—an era in which Anthony-à-Wood characterises the clergy as “men who knew no property of the circle except that of keeping out the devil, and imagined that the angles of a triangle would wound religion.” It is scarcely credible, however, that the acute minds who governed these Orders and the Church could have failed to perceive that Experimentalism, by its appeal to reason as the ultimate judge of truth, was likely to undermine the entire fabric they had so painstakingly raised; and they but accepted of the popular rumour as the foundation of their charge, and as a cloak for their deeper cause of detestation. He who gave it as his opinion that we must with all our strength, *prefer* reason to custom, and the *opinions* of the wise and good to the perceptions of the common herd, while he admonished his pupils and readers to hear freely “opinions contrary to established usage,” could not but be a perilous friend or a terrible enemy. And the mere fruits of Experimentalism would seem, or could be made to appear, as the very snares of Satan to allure the soul from her repose in the bosom of the Church to self-thought and natural investigations. Strong cause, therefore, was there for crushing, if possible, the first who ventured to step out of the harmless circle of scholasticism into the wider, freer region of phenomena and nature; seeking by reason, helped as best it might be, to unfold to the gaze of triumphant thought the true secrets which underlie the appearances around man, and quieting the tumult and anxiety of thought by calling nature herself to bear witness

to the accuracy of the deductions of reason. With such apprehensions as these, it is scarcely matter for wonder that even works bearing such titles as "Some Contributions to the Art of Chemistry," "The Mirror of Alchemy," "The Mathematical Mirror," &c., when written by a person of dubious orthodoxy, like Roger Bacon, were looked on with suspicion, and restrained from circulation. Had he not aided and abetted the resistance to the Pope by Robert Grosstête, defamed his order, controverted the opinions of his general? and did he not elevate reason above all other powers, and assert its supremacy in all investigations, while by his example, labours, and life he brought discredit on others, by aiming at becoming more than they were willing to *work* to become? Let the Church set its heel at once on the atrocious offender who ranks independence among the virtues, free thought among human duties, and reasoned experiment among the pleasures of life. So, during part of the pontificate of Innocent IV., the whole of that of Alexander IV., and Urban IV., he was held "in durance vile," thinking, but in silence; reasoning, but constrained to keep to his own counsel; and building up a system of thought, but without the probability of being able to bring it before his compeers, or bequeath it to posterity.

Such things could not remain unknown, nor could thinking minds avoid feeling interested in the man who was bearing the brunt of papal wrath, and the jealous guardianship of his order, that his thoughts might not be breathed upon the still, stagnant atmosphere of learning. An excellent and accomplished man, Cardinal Fulcodi, bishop of Sabina, and papal legate in England, had heard of his life, thoughts, doings, sayings, and sufferings, and had expressed an earnest wish to see his inventions and to become acquainted

with his opinions. The prohibition, however, was imperative and unexceptional, and he was denied permission to hold intercourse with Bacon at all. Times changed, the papal chair became vacant, and Fulcodi was chosen to don the triple crown as Clement IV., in the very year of Dante's birth, 1265. Here was Bacon's opportunity; and though he had now crossed the middle arch of life, he set himself industriously to the production of a work in which he might concisely recite and explain his views, his theories, his experiments, and their results. In less than two years he had completed his *Opus Majus*, and it was conveyed direct to Clement IV., most probably by John Peckham, a metropolitan Franciscan, who afterwards became archbishop of Canterbury. Clement knew well the circumstances of Bacon, and had commanded him to send this exposition of his system to him, notwithstanding any restrictions of his superiors; and in the year 1267 it was in his hands. Such a fact could scarcely fail to quicken the pulse of the active authorities of his order; so we find that, knowing well its real groundlessness, the charge of magical consorting with Satan was now exchanged for the ever ready one of heresy. A man who knew Bacon could not entertain such a charge for a moment, but it would surely go hard with the professors of sophistries if they could not, out of the hastily-written production of their pope-favoured brother, squeeze so much as, if plausibly argued, might be construed into proof of heterodoxy in thought or expression. But things never came to this issue, for Clement IV. was called to the higher tribunal of God in the November of 1268. For nearly three years the contest for the occupancy of the chair distracted attention, and prevented a settlement of the question, though it did not diminish the

rigorous exactness of the friars. But Bacon retained his integrity, and went on with his studies and his writings, revising his *Opus Majus*, and no doubt preparing his defence for the time when trial should at last arrive. During ten years he received no open molestation, but immediately thereafter events took a turn adverse to Bacon, and the rancour of his brethren flamed out anew.

Though it was chiefly as a wonder-worker that the fame of Roger Bacon spread and lingered in the minds of men, it is as a *thinker* that we feel most concern for him—as a helpful searcher for the right way of attaining truth, and so enabling us

“To fertilise our earthly root,
And make our branches lift a golden fruit
Into the bloom of heaven.”

To prove that he was such, we shall endeavour to lay before our readers a succinct *résumé* of his *Opus Majus*. This will show better, we opine, than aught else, “what manner of man he was.” This work—which, after remaining in manuscript in the Oxford library for nearly five centuries, was published in London so recently as 1733, under the editorial care of Dr Samuel Jebb, a non-juring physician—is written in the form of a letter to Pope Clement IV., and consists of a series of discourses on the different topics to which the friar had directed his attention, and consequently repeats in many parts the same facts, reasonings, and expressions as we find in other works of his; thus proving that it is the most complete, authoritative, and authentic account of his philosophical studies, inventions, and system we can rely upon in seeking to cast into a few paragraphs such an abridgment of his ideas as may serve to make his position as an epoch man clear and indubitable, and by so

doing, fortify our own estimate by the best witness in the case—*himself*. In doing so, we shall follow, as nearly as we can, the course of thought and the method of treatment pursued in the work.

The *Opus Majus* begins with a few remarks upon the need of advancement in knowledge, the right of human reason to exert a strict regulating power over all thoughts submitted to it for belief, or as motives to activity. Perfection is rare ; to none has the capacity of knowing the true without admixture of error been given ; it is the extreme of folly, therefore, to believe on the witnessing of one only ; still more is it foolishness thrice-essenced to accept as verities the judgments of the passionate, ignorant, and hasty mob. *Commonness* of acceptation is no infallible sign of any opinion's being true and right ; neither is antiquity. Science is the pyramid the ages build. The early thinkers have given currency to grave errors, which it is the duty of their after-comers to revise and correct. No thought should be banished beyond the control of reason, or set itself apart as superior and unique. Though the fathers of the Church withdrew some subjects from investigation, they were incompetent, so far as jurisdiction went, to do any such thing rightly. They were men. Ill-will and false knowledge, as well as false reasoning, betrayed or deceived them. Science and religion are allies ; units of one whole—wisdom. Both should be studied ; one ought not to overmaster the other, neither ought one to succumb or enslave itself. Authority and reason are shown to coincide in the *possibility* of orthodox knowledge—the co-existence in one soul of “the true faith of a Christian” with the scientific acquirements of a sage.

These theoretical views being propounded and enforced, the details next receive his attention. The grammatical

and mathematical sciences, as they were then understood, being those in which the chief deficiencies of his age were manifested, receive his special attention. The sacred books being written in Hebrew and Greek, their expounders require an extensive and accurate acquaintance with the genius, the vocables, and the phraseology of these languages; Latin, being the official language of the Church, demands careful culture and sedulous regard. Scholastic philosophy—based, as it is, on the writings of Aristotle and the commentators of Arabia—can only nourish itself by feeding on the true and genuine fruits of the indigenous trees which they have respectively planted. He was himself a good and skilful linguist, and his work here, often unwittingly, reveals the sad state of scholarship in the Church of the thirteenth century; as, for instance, where he, gravely, and in all seriousness, proposes that each bishop in consecrating a church should inscribe on its floor, as a proof of his learning, the letters of the Greek *alphabet*, or at least, the three first letters, giving their value in notation at the same time. Bacon wrote a grammar of the Greek tongue, and his Latin style is easier, simpler, and more graphic than any other writer of his time. If we are not much mistaken, Roger Bacon is, more than any other author, the man to whom we can trace the enrichment of the Saxon language by the introduction of Latin vocables. In his works, at least, most of our Latinisms appear in the significations which they retain in modern English. This can be asserted, so far as we know, of no one more certainly than of the Oxonian friar; and if our judgment is right, it would prove that a mighty agency had been set in operation by Bacon in his remote age, which permeates human thought even now, and influences the world in all its

tenderest interests. If to him we ascribe the initial influence by which Latino-Saxon passed into English, we shall say little less than is his due—and yet how much is that! About a twentieth of the *Opus Majus* consists of the grammatical sections. In these grammatical books, too, ethics, logic, rhetoric, metaphysics, &c, receive notice, and sometimes discussion. Besides this, however, they receive admirable exemplification in his own writing. Of his style we have already spoken; of his reasoning we may remark, that it is almost always strictly and fairly syllogistic in the best sense; *i.e.*, in its formal exactitude of dependence of conclusions on premises. Of his opinions on the Art of Reasoning, the following is a fair specimen:—There are two modes of investigation; *viz.*, argument and experiment. Argument closes and makes us close any doubtful matter, but does not assure—nor remove the doubt, so that the soul may rest in the beholding of the truth, unless it should get at that by the pathway of experience, since there are many who have arguments about knowable things, but because they have not experience, neglect those, and do not avoid the hurtful—nor follow after the beneficial. If, indeed, any man who had never seen fire has proven by sufficient arguments what things fire burns, injures, and destroys, never, on account of this, can the mind of the hearer rest, nor would he avoid the fire before that he had laid his hand or some combustible article on the fire, in order that by experience he might prove what argument had taught; but experience being assumed, the mind is assured of the combustion, and rests in the shining of the truth which not argument satisfies, but experience. (*Opus Majus*, p. 446.)

These well-expressed opinions prove him to have been no mere quibbler, but a genuine and honest thinker—a de-

spiser of mere authority, custom, prejudice, or art—a defender of the sovereignty of reason as the single judge of true and false, though not of *right* and *wrong*—a partisan of forethoughtful experience against the random mill-working of theoretic methods and artificial systems of logical thought. It is true that with all his might of mind, he did not remain exempt from errors in thought and practice. Who else has? Without these clearly-entertained notions on reasoning, could he have been the father of experimentalism—as he was?

So far, then, we see that in his writings Bacon approves himself to be one—

“Not the utter fool of show—
Not absolutely form'd to be the dupe
Of shallow plausibilities alone,”—

but wise and bold enough to take the foreseen perilous path of giving himself up to painful study and the patient search for lore—hidden in nature, though unfound in books.

In his remarks on mathematics, however, Bacon is greater and grander, more persistently original and brave, than anywhere. This was the department in which there was the greatest danger, and this is the subject on which he displays the utmost daring. Here he gives full vent to his love of realism, and exhibits the fullest independence of thought. The utility and grandeur of mathematical science are proven by the fact that it is the postulate and prime principle of almost every department of knowledge, without the acceptance of which fruitful study is impossible; that it renders the solution of many questions in natural philosophy easy; and that it is highly advantageous to the theologian when he wishes to employ the principles of chronology in the explanation of Holy Writ. Some of the queries which ma-

thematics is said by Bacon to be useful in solving may here be mentioned, as indicating the grasp of thought he took, and the width of vision he displayed; *e.g.*, Is matter infinite? Do bodies touch each other at one or many points? What is the form of the earth? Are there one earth, sun, and moon, or many? What is the cause of heat? &c. Mathematical science is the basis of astrology, medicine, geography, optics, &c. A treatise on perspective and on the multiplication of figures or appearances gives indication of his acquaintance with spectacles, the principles of the microscope and the telescope, &c. In other portions of his work we find specific illustrations of the vast range of his investigations, the indefatigable persistency of his mind, and his far-stretching knowledge of the science, art, and literature of his era; but in the closing book of his *Opus Majus* he rises to the dignity of a true philosopher, and discourses with fluent ease and accurate logic upon the conditions of sciences, the principles of scientific investigation, and of the correlation of reasoning and experiment. The domain of theoretic thought and practical induction he clearly bounded off from each other. He added example to precept, and exercised, in presence of his contemporaries, the methods he propounded. He discerned with true philosophic prescience the dim splendour of a future for which humanity was scarcely prepared, and with unswerving and unfaltering step walked on himself, and called upon his fellows to follow the method which lay before him in the unchronicled history of human aspiration, as full of success, glory, and good. In an age of mental torpor, he, in the might and energy of will, struggled to escape the endless multiplicity of mazes into which scholasticism had enticed all human inquiry, and attempted to look beyond the prescribed circles of thought

in which the soul was imprisoned. In the midst of men unlearned and heedless of learning, he burned as a lamp, lustrous in a fog, and cast upon the dark surroundings of his age a light unpleasing, because revealing the oilless vessels of the foolish, who bore no light, and exclaimed that light was needless, if not absolutely injurious. Custom, authority, prejudice, and envy rained their heaviest upon his head, and persecution shot her venomous fang into his soul. Yet did he stand dauntless and unfearing in the grasp of captivity, before the judgment-seat of the earthly vicegerent of Omnipotence, and plead his cause and that of science and truth in opposition to the cavils of slander and the haughty virulence of bigotry. For a time the upstored thunderbolts of prejudice were unlaunched, but they were only all the more effectively arranged in the quiver of the Franciscan monks, for being used when the hour and the opportunity came, in which vindictive craft and cunning meanness might again freely wield the instruments for defending "things as they are." What better,

"After tempestuous hours, than deep repose?"

What more certain to succeed a calm than storm and danger?

So it was with Bacon. Gregory X. had too much in hand in the correction of discipline, the patching up of an alliance with the Greek Church, the convoking and management of the Council of Lyons, the attempt to stir up a new crusade, and in the settlement of the mode of electing popes, to be, in his brief rule, able to note and control the innovations of the scientific Franciscan. Pope Innocent V. had scarcely time to feel the tiara on his brow; still less had Adrian V.; and John, his successor, was little favoured by fate or fortune either. One year saw all these men chosen, crowned, and dead, as if some strange disease had lurked within the

emblematic circlet that placed all things—save death—under the government of the inheritors of Peter. These successive brief glimpses of authority—scarcely exerted before laid down—weakened the papacy, and enabled the generals of the several orders to wax strong. Hence, in 1278, Jerome of Ascoli in the Marches, a bigoted and austere theologian, being vicar-general of the Franciscans, and papal legate to the court of France, the members of the order deemed it a well-fitting time “to whip the offending Adam out” of their misguided brother. Informations having been duly lodged, a council of the brethren of St Francis was called at Paris. To this council Bacon was cited. He appeared. There seem to have been two accusations; or rather, an alternative indictment appears to have been prepared—1st, Innovation in thought, form, doctrine, and spirit; 2d, The theoretical maintenance of astrological opinions and the practice of magic and incantations. Jerome sat at the head of the council board. Bacon, now sixty-four years old, bent with much study, yet resolute and untired in spirit, pleaded at the lower end. Those writings which he had issued in despite of the vow of obedience to his official superiors in the order—though at the request of a Pope—were condemned; he was declared to be not only heterodox, but contumacious, and was sentenced to close incarceration. A confirmation of the proceedings of the council of Paris was speedily gained—for now the order could overawe its lord—from Pope Martin III., and Bacon’s doom was sealed.

That the real object of the trial was to restrain and silence Bacon, not to give fair and free judgment upon the evidence adduced, we infer from the significant fact that the whole adjudication was completed without the then usual opportunity of retractation and repentance being given to the accused, a

proceeding never omitted by the clement Church, unless when acting on a foregone conclusion for the attainment of a predetermined end, which an offer of pardon on such conditions might disappoint or render futile. It had been decided upon that Bacon's free speech, free thought, and advocacy of the rights of reason and the legitimacy of experiment as a proof of truth or falsehood, made him dangerous; and with a show, without the reality of a trial, they endeavoured, by the old and time-honoured expedient of imprisonment, to convince him of the policy of conformity. Bacon believed that he had been unjustly used; he exhausted every possible means of gaining his freedom; but the jealousy and galled pride of his order were too active and powerful; all his efforts were unavailing. Nicholas III. required, as Dante makes him confess, "to enrich his whelps," to simonise and nepotise, and must not interfere with the enjoyments and wishes of those who wrapped him with "the mighty mantle," or waste his labour upon nicely-balanced questions about the good of the Church and the personal inconvenience to *another*, occasioned by imprisonment for the good cause of its internal peace, security, and permanence. Martin IV. was too far sunk in the sensual gratifications of gluttony, too much occupied by the Sicilian vespers and their results, too hotly interested in hunting from his throne Michael of Byzantium, to disquiet his soul about the discomforts of prison diet, discipline, and restrictions on free thought, or to interest himself in the distribution or exaction of just and honest dealing between the members of an order bound by laws of their own choosing, and approved of by former popes. Honorius IV. had the nepotising vices of Nicholas III., and the excitement of an attempt to get up a crusade against the Arragoneses in Sicily,

as occupation during his three years' reign. On his death, the intrigues of Bacon's judge, Jerome of Ascoli, resulted in his being invested with the purple. Looking upon self-defence as honest and right, Bacon, who, in his attempts to be heard amid the din of the sensuality, avarice, contention, and hierarchical pride of former popes, found no ear inclined to listen, did not fail in energy or hope, even in these his latter hours, when seventy-four years had waved their changeful magic over his life, but appealed to Jerome, his former judge, for remission of the unjust sentence he had passed on him while Franciscan general at Paris. He, now Nicholas IV., felt not the beatings of a generous heart agitate his bosom. On the contrary, his former hate was increased at the haughty insolence which could demand as a right that he, the Pope, should convict himself of partiality or incapacity, and claim as due from him what he had sued for from his predecessors. He added to the severities of his fate, increased the rigours of his confinement, and caused his bonds to be more scrupulously tightened round him. The spite of the monk overcame the clement spirit which should reign in the soul of the chief magistrate of God's earthly Church.

Private solicitation and interest at length effected what the papal sense of justice could not yield to bestow. Some of the noblest peers of England, in this act truly noble, combined to beg for Bacon what he could not stoop to supplicate for on his own account. Politic adulation of the men in power and station led to a remission of the punishment of Bacon; he was released from his Parisian conventual prison-house, and permitted to return to Oxford, and, amid his old associates and associations, in the scene of his former labours, lecturings, and sufferings, to drag on an old

age which anxiety, confinement, disappointment, and the superhuman industry which work, theorised and experimented on even in the grasp of persecution, had rendered no smooth-laid passage to the inevitable resting-place of man. He had written for Pope Nicholas IV. a book upon the means of retarding the infirmities of old age, in the belief that such a proof of his sanity and the efficacy of his discoveries might work in his favour, and win him a little of that gratitude which might be felt by one on whom a much-desired benefit had been conferred. The Pope died in April 1292, and Bacon survived him nearly two years. The natural strength of his mind seems to have been little abated, for during the latter years of his residence at Oxford he wrote a compendium of theology, an indirect protest against the alleged heterodoxy of his opinions, doings, and discoveries. On his death, which took place in 1294, the monks of his fraternity, fearing some magic-working revenge for their brotherly attentions to his spiritual state and concerns, placed his writings, &c., under lock and key, that no opportunity might be given for any exertion of their powers of injury. For many years they lay undisturbed, save by the insects, who found them pleasant food; and the parchments on which the grand revelations of a God-sent mind were written suffered as much injury from their close confinement as did the writer from his personal trials.

That Bacon's fame was not evanescent, we have good proof in the numerous MS. copies of his works, or parts of them, which occupy places in the various university and national libraries at home and abroad, and from the careful way in which his correspondence with Pope Clement, and the holy Father's replies, are preserved in the Vatican library. The monks, to conceal the true nature and char-

acter of his opinions, circulated numerous strange and marvellous tales among the people, which became embodied in legends, and gave him a notoriety among the commonalty resembling that of Michael Scott in Caledonia, Faust in Germany, and Albertus Magnus in France. Yet there was always a feeling "akin to love" prevalent in the popular mind, and hence when, in the days of Queen Elizabeth, "The Famous Historie of Fryer Bacon" was written, we find that, unlike other magicians, he is not represented as in league with, but as a constant foil to, the works of the prince of the powers of darkness, and at the close is allowed to repent, become an anchorite and a true divine; and in Greene's highly popular play of "Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay" he is represented as saying,—

"It repents me sore
That Bacon ever meddled with this art.

* * * *

Sins have their salves; repentance can do much.
Think! Mercy sits where Justice holds her seat,
And from those wounds the bloody Jews did pierce,
Which by thy magic oft did bleed afresh,—
From thence, for thee, the dew of mercy drops,
To wash the wrath of high Jehovah's ire,
And make thee free as new-born babe from sin.
Bungay, I'll spend the remnant of my life
In pure devotion, praying to my God
That he would save what Bacon vainly lost."

These things show that the kindly feeling of English hearts could not be turned even by the "sweet deceiving tongues" of "the monks of old" from doing such justice as they could to the memory of the deserving; and prove how incapable even ill-natured, though "pious frauds," are to serve the ends of their originators when opposed to plain, sturdy honesty of thought and the instinct of true hearts, even

when they are rude and unlettered, not much given to the sifting of evidence, or the logical determination of true and false.

One or two observations regarding matters which did not seem capable of being wrought into our narrative without making it too digressional may now be offered to the reader, viz.—

Bacon is the reputed discoverer of gunpowder, and inventor of the telescope, spectacles, &c. That he discovered a sort of detonating mixture resembling, if not really, gunpowder, is certain; for he describes not only its effects but its ingredients, though, after the manner of his time, he conceals the special point of his own discovery in an anagram which, strange to say, baffled ingenuity for some centuries. "This substance is composed," says he, "of *luru mope can ubre*—i.e., *pulvere carbonum*, or powder of charcoal, of saltpetre, and of sulphur." It is one of those strange things which he mentions that "strike terror on the sight, so that the flashings of the clouds are beyond comparison less disturbing," which gives us an "imitation of thunder and lightning," and constitutes "a fire which will burn to any distance." That he had *thought out* the whole theory of a telescope is also quite true, though whether he *constructed* one may be doubted; unless we accept as evidence the tradition of his "glass prospective," "wherein he could see anything that was done within fifty miles about him," coupled with his assertion that "we can so shape transparent substances, . . . that objects may be seen far off or near, and thus, from an incredible distance, we may read the smallest letters, and number the grains of dust and sand." Leonard Digges, writing of his father in 1590, says, "He was able by perspective glasses . . . to discover

every particular of the country round about, wheresoever the sunne's beames might pearse, which partly grew by the aid he had of one old-written book of the same Bacon's *experiments*." Though Bossuet says the invention of spectacles belongs to the close of the thirteenth century, and that we are indebted for them to a Jacobin friar, and Smith in his "Optics" asserts that incontestable proofs exist that the first glasses of this kind were constructed by Alexander de Spina, a Jacobin friar, who died at Pisa in 1313, we know that Bacon, in his *Opus Majus*, 1267, describes and explains them, remarking, as if they were already in use, "hence this instrument is useful to old persons and those who have weak eyes."

With geography and chronology Bacon was so conversant that he gives a lengthy and learned account of the inhabited world, the chief portions of which are drawn from the writings of preceding and contemporary travellers, including Marco Polo; and he suggested to Clement, his patron, that very reform in the Calendar which Pope Gregory XIII., 300 years afterwards, did himself honour by adopting.

Bacon's acquaintance with optics enabled him to explain, in some degree approximating to the canons of modern science, the phenomena of the rainbow, while his mechanical knowledge was such, that Dr Freind calls him "the miracle of his age, and possessed, perhaps, of the greatest genius for mechanical science that has been known since the days of Archimedes."

All these facts prove that Bacon was a man freed from the enthralling despotism of traditionalism in thinking, one who, though he stood in the shadow of superstitious reverence for, and submissiveness to, authority, yet looked beyond the shadow, and caught glimpses, at least, of truths

and facts which lay beyond the borderland of then permitted thought or speech: a man who would not, like a bruised snail, shrink himself to endure and suffer, and remain a memorial of the blasting weight of the oppressor's foot, or lower his life's aims and efforts by prescription; or for the pleasure of being patted, like a pet of the kennel, now and then, fawn, and cringe, and crouch, and flatter, only to gain a more distinct application of the whip when he should fail in any point implied in the monkish lesson of subserviency. He had a praiseworthy stubborn uprightness, a rightful confidence in his own powers of thought and action, a knowing acquaintance with the fallacies of the soul as well as the sophistries of his sect, and a firm-set faith in the truth of God, when read aright either in word or work. How sad to think that such a one as he should feel necessitated to complain that he was held back from pursuing his researches into nature by "the rumours of the vulgar!" How refreshing it is to find him, even when beset by his enemies, asserting, regarding one of his new discoveries, that it is "of more satisfaction to a discreet mind than a king's crown." There is a depth of feeling in the phrase as uttered by him, which gives it emphasis. These are the words of a simple, single-minded, benevolent, philosophically-inclined man, whose heart was grieved that aught else should be preferred to "divine philosophy." Like an early ripe fruit in a surly spring, he was used frostily, and the flavour of his life was somewhat lost; enough, however, remains to make us feel that he was one of Time's favourite children—a foreshadower of the future. He did not give actual being to experimental philosophy, but he did, more than any other man of his own or any other single age, compared with his surroundings, to establish the principle

that experiment is the test of theory, and the touchstone of thought, the handmaiden of truth, and the chief foe to self-deception in investigation. He is the earliest consistent theoretical and practical inquirer into the realities of natural phenomena; the noblest advocate in his own age of the right of private judgment on matters of science, of the need of reform in study, teaching, and thinking. The sorrows he bore for his beloved's sake—Truth—endear him to our heart, and warm up our sympathies to the highest. We know not if we have so thought and expressed ourselves as to make this plain to others, as it seems to be to us. We sincerely hope that this, at least, has been made palpable—that even amid the greatest difficulties of the saddest times in the world's history, the truly gifted man can work the work given him to do, and leave his memory green in the hearts of the people, in spite of ignorance, misunderstanding, misrepresentation, and malice, and that truth is stronger than persecution, neglect, contumely, and death.

The remarkable monk of whose life we have presented a summary so brief, did not fail in the great work to which he devoted himself through any deficiency of will or worth. The times were not ripe for the great step forward he proposed. Life was too unsettled; thought was too torpid; the ignorance, even of thinking men, was too profound; reason too submissive, and custom too strong. In his great mind the germ was planted which *another Bacon* cultured till it bore fruit—fruit for the blessing of all nations. To pursue the path of true philosophy in an age of ignorance and error; to incur, endure, and brave the displeasures of his co-friars and the Church; to persevere in the speculations, experiments, and endeavours which occupied his soul in opposition to Custom, Authority, Prejudice, and Perse-

cution, indicate a nobleness superior to that of his illustrious namesake and successor, even though we free his memory from many of the reproaches that have been cast upon it. That in an age when any attempt to promote the expansion of the human intellect alarmed the Church with thoughts of heresy, Bacon maintained the right of man to free thought in science, forms a claim to the respect of all ages which is undeniable: for as the late Professor John Playfair said, "It is but fair to consider persecution, inflicted by the ignorant and bigoted, as equivalent to praise bestowed by the liberal and enlightened."



Dante—Nationality.

A.D. 1265-1321.

“ Tuscan, that wanderest through the realms of gloom,
With thoughtful pace, and sad, majestic eyes,
Stern thoughts and awful from thy soul arise,
Like Farinata from his fiery tomb.
Thy sacred song is like the trump of doom ;
Yet in thy heart what human sympathies,
What soft compassion glows, as in the skies
The tender stars their clouded lamps relume !
Methinks I see thee stand, with pallid cheeks,
By Fra Hilario in his diocese,
As up the convent walls, in golden streaks,
The ascending sunbeams mark the day's decrease ;
And, as he asks what there the stranger seeks,
Thy voice along the cloister whispers, ‘ Peace ! ’ ”

—*Longfellow.*

“ Dante's great poem is at once a tomb and a cradle : the splendid tomb of a world passing away—the cradle of a dawning brighter world to come.”—*Abbé Lamennais.*

“ Both as a man and a poet, Dante stands first of that race of mighty subjectives who may be said, in token of their conquests, to stamp the impress of their own individuality both upon the actual world and upon that which they create ; that is to say, they derive all from within themselves or from the future, of which they are the prophets.”—*Giuseppe Mazzini.*

“ Weep not for the dead, but weep ye sore for him who goeth forth from his place, and returns no more.”—*Jeremiah.*



DANTE—NATIONALITY.

TIME is not a unity only, but a continuity. No part of it can be cut off or sectionalised—it is a whole. The Past interpenetrates and pervades the Present, which again contains the secret of the Future. A link of mutual responsibility joins in one the whole human race; a perfect chain of causation unites all change. History is not only a tell-tale, but a prophet; it has a two-fold life—in memory and in hope. The past is not *dead*—it is immortal. History contains the elements of evolution as well as of revolution. The pith and marrow of its interest lies in its record of the tireless labour of those from whom the Present takes its form. Great men are the essences of their epochs—men who give as well as receive impulses—men who are not responsive only to the influences which surround them, but who, by touching the mainsprings of events, work their being into other ages. They are not mysterious, incomprehensible exotics among men; they are at once the incarnated results of all that has preceded them, and the centres of newer manifestations. Strange, wayward, fateful, many-coloured, and motley as their several lives may seem, there is that within them which effloresces through the centuries, and seeks unrestingly for some development—a

super-vitality, if we may so speak, which, defying even death, oozes forth, with subtle vigour, to diffuse in after ages life, improvement, and hope. Such a man was Dante, the mighty Florentine, Italy's master-mind, the first-born singer of the modern world. The chief thought which fermented in his mind is one which even now leavens almost the whole of Italian thought. Amid all the miseries, struggles, martyrdoms, and dismemberments of his native land, the sublime aspirations of "the banished Ghibelline" with glorious incorruptibility have floated, ever-living seeds, in the atmosphere of Italian thought, descending ever and anon into some quickening soul, which takes the seed but to give back the plant, and have at length ripened into the magnificent idea of "nationality"—the nationality of that land to which even yet Europe denies a name, an organisation, and a life. The time shall yet come when "the prophecy of Dante" will be fulfilled; and his idea of the unity of Italy shall be evolved into a fact. When the moral character of her people has been improved, her misfortunes and degradations—needful and purifying educational processes—shall cease, and in *la bella Italia*, the destiny of which her noblest poet dreamed, shall dawn and redden, until day-bright in its glory. To the life of this epoch man, in so many ways a type of his country's fate, let us devote a portion of such thought and sympathy as is his due. Not that the true life of such a one lies hid in the mere facts of time and space which we can colligate about him, but because of the human interest we take in knowing the environments of such a man, and estimating their effects upon the inner thoughts which constitute and are his veritable life.

It is not, indeed, our purpose, in these concise sketches, to present elaborate and "long-drawn-out" details regarding

the *minutiæ* of history. We strive to gaze rather upon *the* thought which, like the centre-light in a room, imparts its radiance to the whole. This thought must indeed be localised and circumstanced, for all life is conditioned ; but *to us* thought seems matter of greater moment than its conditions. Therefore, in so far only as the outward forms of being affect the immortal love, the strenuous indignation, the lofty patriotism, the misery-shadowed poetry, the severe destiny, and the sublime hopes, which Dante represents to us, shall we gather up historic facts, and, like the drapery of a statue, wrap them round him.

DURANTE or DANTE ALIGHIERI, the son of Aldighiero Alighieri, was born at Florence, May, A.D. 1265. His family was noble. His great-grandfather, Cacciaguida Elisei, a Florentine knight, who had married a Ferrarese lady named Alighieri, followed Conrad III., King of Italy and Emperor of Germany, in the second crusade, was knighted in the Holy Land, and died in battle in Syria, 1147.* Dante's father died while he was yet a child, and of his mother we know nothing, except that she took the greatest care of and in his upbringing and his education. By her he was placed under the tutelage of Brunetto Latini, by whom he was initiated into all the branches of classical learning, politics, and philosophy. It has been asserted that he perfected his studies at the universities, of which Padua, Bologna, Paris, and Oxford have been specially mentioned ; but of this we are not aware that there is any positive evidence. It is certain, however, that he was widely read and deeply learned, and that he was an adept in music, horsemanship, falconry, and drawing, besides being—a rare accomplishment in those days—remarkable for the delicacy

* See "Il Paradiso," c. 15-17.

and beauty of his penmanship. He was therefore fitted on all points—birth, education, accomplishments, and habits—to take his place among either the men of the world, the scholars, or the soldiers of his time; and Beatrice speaks truth of him when, in the “*Il Purgatorio*,” she says—

“This man was such, that he
Might in himself have wondrously display’d
All noble virtues in supreme degree.”—C. 30.

It is quite evident that in his youth he moved in genteel circles, and was respected as a man of birth, honour, and accomplishments. He was the companion of Guido Cavalcanti, a learned, inquisitive, and thinking youth, somewhat skilled in verse-making; his family was on terms of neighbourly intimacy with that of Folco Portinari; we have a right to presume, from his sonnets, that he was the friend of Cino da Pistoia, the most famous doctor and teacher of civil law in his day, and a much-esteemed poet; as well as an acquaintance, at least, of his “*ladie love*,” Ricciarda del Selvaggi; and he was admitted to the parties given by the noblest families in Florence. From these premises we infer that there was no barrier in the state, condition, prospect, appearance, or character of Dante, to prevent his aspiring to the blessedness of marriage with any lady in Florence.

It was at a festival in “*the merry month of May*,” that month which is “*the mother of love*,” that Dante, in his ninth year,

“*Ere boyhood yet had wholly pass’d away,*”

first *observantly* made the acquaintance of Beatrice Portinari. On his active boyish mind she made a wondrous impression; but it is ante-dating passion altogether to call this outburst of admiration for the beautiful, this instinctive apprehension of the poet’s creed—“*all that is good is beauti-*

ful and fair,"—by the name of Love. Let us rather say that this admiration, growing in intenseness as the lady blossomed into womanhood and showed

"A perfect body and a mind as fair,"*

transformed itself, about his eighteenth year, into that strangest and strongest passion of man's nature, which gave birth to the first sonnet of the "Vita Nuova." She appears to have received his advances with maidenly reserve and tender delicacy; but this to an ardent, haughty, and somewhat melancholy mind, like his, whose whole being seemed to centre in this passion, so thoroughly did it entrance him, could not but look like coldness, and be the cause of "bitter sweet" complaints. The extreme sensitiveness of his nature made him quiver at the slightest tinge of change in her. There can be little doubt but that Beatrice saw in his full black eyes the evidences of such intense feeling as no other Florentine could show; but whether he ever ventured to address her in such terms as could justify her in considering herself pledged, is doubtful. He himself has not withdrawn the veil of curious mystery that hangs around his early and long-during love. That she married another than he, we know. That she *jilted* him, we cannot believe. On no possible hypothesis involving *her* unfaithfulness can we account for the haughty Dante's retaining his full, free, glowing fervour to the last. Morbid and imbecile sentimentality did not lie in Dante's line; and had she been *willingly* false, nothing could have rescued his after conduct from contempt. Why should the "worst construction" be placed on all the obscure portions of a human life? *Must* we convict Beatrice of disreputable coquettishness, Dante of moping and stupid romanticism, or Folco Portinari of miserliness,

* See Canzone xxiv. for a full description of Beatrice.

meanness, and domestic tyranny, to knit into historic unity known facts? We think not. This rather let us suppose, that, though burning with a fervent fever of soul, Dante, with tremulous doubt of his own worthiness to claim the fearful happiness of calling her his own, pent up within the throbbing prison of his heart that anxious question which might have secured for *him* the utterances of hope, for *us* some happier history, perhaps, but not that poem at which the world yet marvels. At last her father sickens, and with a parent's natural zeal presses upon Beatrice—that he may die happy in knowing that in the day of Italy's troubles she will enjoy a husband's protection—the suit of Simon del Bardi, a gentleman of fortune and position, who had sought her hand. With true self-sacrificing, daughterly love, she may have consented, and casting from her grief-fraught soul the memory of Dante in this crisis of her fate, may have uttered an unrecalable promise by the bed of death on which, in 1289, her father, Folco Portinari, lay. Among those who paid the visits of condolence, customary on such a bereaval, there was one who showed, by downcast eyes, an inward grief, as he heard her speak amidst her tears, and saw the cureless woe which her pale countenance expressed; his sincere avowal of an exquisite sorrow for her loss may have wrenched from her the thrice woeful secret, and then he may have felt—

“The whole of love at once, and utter'd it,
Then bade ‘adieu’ for ever.”

This, at any rate, we do know, that in that same year we find him marching, with his fellow-citizens, in arms against the inhabitants of Arezzo, a town thirty-four miles south-east of Florence, from which the Ghibellines had expelled the Guelphs; and in the battle of Campandilo there fought,

we have the testimony of Leonardo Aretino that he was a leader. At the close of the same year, too, Beatrice was married; but some secret unascertained yet soul-corroding grief must surely have found a lodgment in the recently vivacious heart of her on whom Dante had showered his young life's love; for in a few months after, June 9, 1290, "the messengers of peace" came and carried her "beyond the gates of life." At the request of her brother, Dante wrote a lament for her. This, however it might gratify her brother, could not solace his sorrow; he became as Boccaccio says, "a savage thing to the eye;" he was, by his own confession, "grief-stung to madness." The anniversary of that sad day which had made his life "solitary" with the solitariness of bereavement he kept as a day of sacred reflection, and on one of these days,

"Calender'd only in his aching heart,"

the resolve to celebrate his Beatrice as no woman had ever yet been, seized on his thoughts, and the seed which ripened into the "Divina Commedia" was sown. In him the true mission of woman and of love was fulfilled; it purified, ennobled, and sanctified his life; it shed unwonted energy into his aspiring soul; it transformed desire into worship; and when Death came, he glorified the real into the ideal, and as it were infused a double being into Dante. Hereafter there was given to him a grander sense of duty; a holier significance was imparted to life, and a nobler and more exalted fervour animated every act and thought. These heaven-sent agonies were not without their use in enabling him more worthily to wage the perennial fight between the soul and sense to which mankind is, in this earth-existence, called. Let us lower the earth

gently upon her, and say, *Requiescat!* as we depart from her tomb to rejoin the work-world once more.

In the year 1290, so woe-black to Dante, he again sought in the hot activities of war a refuge from corrosive sorrow; he joined the Florentines in their attack upon Pisa, where he gathered that incident of the hunger-death of Count Ugolino and his sons, which is so appallingly described in "The Inferno," and has been so grimly, yet grandly depicted by Sir Joshua Reynolds. At this time the towers of the Porte Pisano were destroyed, and the Castle of Caprona was taken. Returned from this useless attempt by physical exertion "to pluck from the memory a rooted sorrow," Dante threw himself into the excitement of political life, and, though a Ghibelline himself, wedded, 1291, a lady of the opposite faction, Gemma Donati; perhaps this was, as Leigh Hunt pleasingly suggests, the lady to whom, in thankfulness for her pity, he addressed sonnets 18—21 of the "Vita Nuova." We all know that "pity is akin to love," and the truthfulness to nature of Othello's "round, unvarnished tale"—

"She loved me for the dangers I had pass'd,
And I loved her that she did pity them"—

has never been gainsaid. And why may not the elder bard have been a case in point of what the younger says? Be this as it may, we know that, regarding some "pitying spirit," there did arise in Dante's mind a contest between inclination and reason; that he did marry, and that he had a numerous family, five sons and a daughter; that he was, with perhaps, two slight and brief derelictions, faithful to his marital duties; that he loved his children; and that, with becoming delicacy, he has in the "Divina Commedia" described only the purely psychological development of his

early love, and has abstained from mentioning, what, indeed, would have destroyed the artistic unity of the whole, either his or Beatrice's marriage. We are prone to accept that interpretation, as justifiable as any other, which accords with a noble though troubled life, even although it discountenance the prurient fancies of those who support the thesis that the wedded life of genius is and must be always unhappy. Of two suppositions, equally probable in themselves, we incline to that which most honours the wife, and least dishonours the husband; which makes love possible, but duty true and real. It is a sad evidence of the depravity of the heart, how much more ready we are to deem that "romantic" which gleams in the lurid brilliancy of vice, than shines with the sober lustre of virtue. We believe that Dante loved—not indeed with the impulsive earnestness of his earlier passion, but calmly, coldly, and honestly—the Lady Gemma, and that she was the "new and gentle spirit of love" to whom he pays court thus:—

"Lady, the gentle thought which speaks of you
Comes frequently to bear me company,
And then so sweetly reasons upon love,
It makes the heart consent to all it says."*

We have mentioned in our preceding paragraphs, the names of two parties which, in Dante's age, divided Italy, and we shall now make our transition from his private to his public life, by proceeding to explain the nature of the differences which then so often divided a house against itself. In 1215, a young man of the family of Buondelmonte, though betrothed to an Uberti, married a Donati. The faithless lover was stabbed in the street by the relatives of the lady. The frantic mode of seeking justice by appeals

* "Vita Nuova," sonnet xxi.

to arms was then in vogue, and the citizens took part in the quarrel. The Uberti were adherents of the party who favoured the temporal sovereignty of the emperors of Germany, rather than that of the Popes. The secularists were called Ghibellines; the ecclesiasts, Guelphs. The private feud just mentioned merging itself into the elder and wider quarrel awoke these parties to active hostilities, and a series of distressing civil contests, in which "twenty republics made savage war upon each other within the bosom of the Peninsula," continued to bear witness to the intensity of the hatred and jealousy of the Guelphs and Ghibellines, of which Florence became, in consequence, the head-quarters. In this strife of the factions we have seen that Dante engaged. Not, however, as a partisan, as this marriage of his and many of his subsequent acts prove, did he adopt the insignia and the shibboleths of Ghibellinism. His genius was too lofty to warp itself up in the littleness of sectional thought, and he pursued his honest convictions wherever they led—no matter to which party, for the time being, they attached him. He acted upon the id ea expressed in those words, so often desecrated,—“measures, not men,”—and rose superior to the fractional egotisms of time-serving partisanship. It could not but be gratifying to him, therefore, to find that under the leadership of Giano della Bella some enactment likely to restrain the violence of faction was about to be introduced, and he must have been delighted at the appointment, in 1293, of a new officer, called *il gonfaloniere di giustizia*, the standard-bearer of justice. No office was more needful. Hitherto the citizens of Florence had been divided into three classes—1, *Grandi*—feudal nobles; 2, *Popolani Grassi*—wealthy citizens; 3, *Piccioli*—“the lower orders.” The two latter classes found that in the contests of the factions they

chiefly suffered, and hence they claimed a new "constitution." This was gained, in 1282, by a law which classed the citizens according to their occupations. The members of the higher occupations elected six *priori*, or councillors, who were renewable every two months. They were the executive of the republic. No one could hold this honour unless he was an enrolled member of one of the "*arti maggiori*," or "higher trades;" and Dante, when he decided on pursuing politics, inscribed his name on the register of the apothecaries. Even this safeguard failed in keeping peace in Florence, and hence the new reform movement consummated in 1293. Soon after the appointment of the administrator of justice, an unprincipled coalition of the nobles expelled the reforming party, and secured to themselves the right to destroy their neighbours' quiet and prosperity. The Donati and the Cherchi took different parts in this issue of events, and frequent affrays between their partisans disturbed the streets. The Pope, of course, favoured the Donati. About the same time, a family enmity arose in Pistoia between two branches of the Cancellieri, called respectively Bianchi and Neri. Florence was asked to arbitrate. It ruled that the chiefs of the faction should be expelled from Pistoia. This opinion being adopted, the exiles came to Florence. There they naturally allied themselves to those who most befriended them. The Neri attached themselves to the Donati, the Bianchi to the Cherchi, and thus it happened that the factions of Florence received their designations from the Pistoians whom they patronised. The state was embarrassed by this complication of quarrel within quarrel, and some man, whose sterling qualities were indisputable by either party, was wanted to calm the storm of anarchy, and be a pilot in the hour of need. Dante was

chosen. Like a strong-souled, honest man, he set himself to do the duty of the hour. This he did, not by the flickering and unsteady lamp of the expedient, but by the ever-beaming light of justice. He could not stoop to be the tool of party; he saw the merits and demerits of faction, and decided accordingly. Hence, in June 1300, he proposed a law, by which the leaders of both parties were, for a time, exiled beyond the territories of the republic, in the hope that by separation their hate might be appeased, and that in their absence the people might enjoy prosperity. This law, calculated to intensify the rage of his enemies, and to turn even his own friends against him, he had the daring hardihood and the patriotism to pass. In every age the magnanimous man has been made the prey of meaner, though more politic, spirits; and it was now as it has ever been, the slimy crawlers into place and power are too masterful in their guile for the simple honesty of the true patriot. The banished Neri, by their agents, whispered into the ear of Pope Boniface VIII., a worldly-minded diplomatist, that the Bianchi had gone over to the Ghibellines, and were preparing, if they attained predominance in Florence, to join themselves to the Colonna, his personal foes. The Pope decided on supporting the Neri, and sent Charles of Valois, brother of Philip IV. of France, under the title of "Peacemaker," to Florence. Dante was commissioned to protest against this denationalization at the court of Rome, and to endeavour to get justice and fair play; thus placing himself, in the interests of righteousness, in seeming opposition to his family party. During his absence, Charles the Peacemaker, aided by 1200 soldiers, entered the city, admitted the Neri to their former state and stations, called in

an armed peasantry, caused Nerian *Priori* to be appointed, and otherwise exhibited the favour he pretended not to feel. Horrible instances of pillage, slaughter, and torture occurred; murders were frequent, extortion abounded, and all the licence of brutality was exercised. Dante's house was attacked and plundered; he hastened from Rome, met the fugitive Bianchi at Arezzo, and for the present threw in his lot with them. This soon became known; as a traitor to his party he deserved, it was thought, no mercy. There are no enemies like old friends. In January 1302, a sentence was passed, condemning him to exile for two years, at the end of which period, on payment of a fine of 8000 florins, he might return; but failing that, his property was declared "forfeit to the state." Such a sentence did not daunt him; he would not kneel, and fawn, and pray, and cry "*peccavi*" to any men in Christendom, when he was conscious of the rectitude of his own soul. But the recusant must be brought to terms or humbled; so he, along with others, on the evidence of "public scandal," was found guilty of malversation of the public trust-money, of usury and peculation, and sentenced to perpetual exile; or, if it should so happen that his longings should take him back to Florence, he was to be burnt to death. Then began for Dante the Inferno of Exile, differenced only by one immense item from the spirits of Malebolge; for "these have not *the hope of death.*" Death had already taken to *his* treasure-house the divine Beatrice; Charles Martel, his friend; Forese Donati, his well-beloved kinsman; and Guido Cavalcanti, his soul's brother, in this the year of his exile, had also departed. "What sorrow is like unto my sorrow?" he might well exclaim. Bereft at once of wife, children and friends, good

name, and property,—all that man values, except a proud sense of his own innocence, and the consciousness of powers yet undeveloped, at whose utterances even the hardest shall wince and writhe. Too truly, O Dante, is thy life one of the most tragical which our world hath witnessed! Yet there is strength in thee to endure it all; let us together thank God for that. The slow, bitter, lingering, self-consuming, sorrow-haloed death in life to which thou art doomed worketh in thee a newer and a nobler soul; and though now thou art cast into the Inferno, thou shalt yet pass upward to Il Paradiso, and be blest. Yes! the decree is uttered; it is decided that you must

“Bid ‘adieu’ to everything
Most dearly loved—this is the first shaft
Shot from the bow of exile. Thou shalt learn
How salt the savour is of others’ bread,
Shalt feel how weary to the homeless ’tis
To mount or to descend a stranger’s stairs;
But what to thee shall be most bitter gall,
Thou in those straits shalt be contacted with
Most dastard, vile, and worthless company.”

—*Il Paradiso*, c. xvii.

Harsh reward this, too often given for patriot honesty! In the inner life, however, there is some recompense even for those who stand unyieldingly, although successlessly, before the threatening storms of circumstance, and with the unfurled banner of principle strive to gather into one the nobler children of a land, to aim at or maintain a nation’s freedom. There is more true pleasure in nursing, if only in one’s thoughts, a high ideal, than in the very whirlwind of local passions to be driven from our moorings with regard to the Eternal. Yea, verily! Hence, even of thee, O Dante, in this thine hour of dark trial, we may hear Hope saying—

“ To suffer woes darker than death or night,
To love and bear, till hope creates
From its own wreck the thing it contemplates—
This is thy glory!”

Dante had reached Sienna on his way from Rome when the news of his exile, and the pillage and confiscation of his property, reached him. The Ghibelline exiles who had been driven from Florence met for consultation in a small castle at Gorgonza, near Arezzo. Dante joined them there. At this assembly it was resolved to retire, for a time, to the neighbouring city of Arezzo, and—

“ Wait securely
For the atoning hour to *come.*”

Here they elected Count Alessandro da Romena for their leader, and appointed a council of twelve—of which Dante was made a member—to suggest, consider, and conduct such plans as might lead to their restoration. Dante strove to animate the souls of his co-exiles with the great thought which occupied his heart's core—a united, regenerated, nationalised Italy. *They* thought only of their lost possessions; *he* of his country's lost glory, and her true good; so he was unsuccessful.

Pope Boniface VIII., one of the most strenuous and unscrupulous assertors of the temporal supremacy of the occupants of St Peter's chair, died in September 1303, and Benedict XI. “reigned in his stead.” This Pope was of a milder and more conciliating temper than his predecessor. He felt anxious to restore tranquillity to Tuscany; for this purpose he commissioned Cardinal de Prato to attempt the reconciliation of the parties, and the adjustment of their differences. The effort was unavailing. The ruling faction, under the leadership of Corso Donati, expelled the Pope's

agent, and inexorably resisted restitution and pacification. Elated by their success, the Florentines gave themselves up to the wildest excesses. In May 1304 they prepared a magnificent spectacle, entitled, the "Masquerade of Damned Souls," in which hell and its torments were vividly represented. So vast were the crowds that flocked to see this exhibition, that a wooden bridge over the Arno, which had been overladen by the multitude, gave way, and many persons were drowned. In the following month a dreadful fire, which destroyed 1900 buildings of various descriptions, broke out, and a great number of people perished. The Bianchi and the Ghibellines, having sought and obtained help from Arezzo, Bologna, and Pistoia, resolved on making a joint attack upon their native city, thus weakened by excess and death, with the intention of re-establishing themselves, if possible, therein. In this attempt, through the jealousy and disunion of the leaders,* they failed, and Dante despairingly began that sad series of wanderings which make up the hereafter of his life.

It is impossible to give any distinct and reliable account of his journeys. Nor is this needful, to enable us to know how severely his powers of endurance were tasked, or the heroic honesty with which he followed, to their direst consequences, the opinions he had formed. So much, however, as is known, or is fairly deducible from what is known, may be with brevity outlined, that it may be seen how truly "he learned in suffering what he taught in song."

From "Il Paradiso," xvii., it seems he found his earliest place of rest in Lombardy, having been invited by Bartolommeo della Scala to spend a portion of his exile there. Here he *probably* acted as tutor to his son, Can Grande della

* "Il Purgatorio," xvii., 110-120.



“Dante, going about like a mendicant, bowed down by want and fatigue, when he knocked at the gate of the monastery of Santa Croce del Corvo, presented in his lineaments a whole history of woe.”—EPOCH MEN, Page 141.

Scala. In 1306 he was at Padua, *perhaps* assisting Can Grande with his studies at the University. In the following year he was one of the members of a convention held in the sacristy of a church belonging to the abbey of St Gaudenzio, in Mugello, between the Ghibellines and the Bianchi, to determine upon the measures to be adopted to attain the success of their party. Selfish jealousy seems to have overpowered all patriotism. Their own wounds irked them more than the wounds their country suffered, and it does not appear that any unanimous resolution was come to. This failure affected Dante much; he saw the hopelessness of Italy's redemption, so long as internecine wars were waged by city against city, nay, by factions of the same city against each other; he saw that the divisions, the selfishness, the faithlessness, of his countrymen, rendered them powerless, and that so long as its inhabitants were swayed and regulated only, or even mainly, by their egotistical passions, and by considerations regarding their local well-being, no greatness was possible for Italy. Hence the lonely wanderer, now homeless and breadless, going about like a mendicant, showing, against his will, the wounds with which fortune had smitten him, bowed down by want, fatigue, and the contestings of faith and doubt, when he knocked at the wicket of the monastery of Santa Croce del Corvo, amid the mountains of Lunigiana, presented in his lineaments, haggard, pale, yet resolute, a whole history of woe. To the monk Hilario's query, "What seek ye here?" Dante answered, "Peace." That was a want most hard to be supplied to him. Nor does the convent's quietude seem to have yielded it; for we find that, in 1307, he had found another resting-place for a season in the house of the Marchese Morello Malespina, a Guelph, by whom he seems to have

been honourably entertained. In 1308 Corso Donati, Dante's greatest political enemy and marriage relation, being accused of aiming at the sovereignty of Florence, fled, but was pursued, dragged from his horse, and slain. Albert I., Emperor of Germany, was murdered on the 1st of May in the same year. These circumstances seem to have put Dante on the move again. We find him wandering through the valleys of Casentino, and in the mountainous regions round Arezzo, but settling, towards the close of 1308, at the court of the Signori della Scala at Verona. Alboino della Scala at this time held the chief government here, although he had associated Can Grande—whom we have *supposed* to be a pupil of Dante's—in the rulership with him. These Signori were the mightiest of the Ghibelline chiefs, and there can be little doubt but that Dante went thither to aid in the consultations which must have been entered into in consequence of the changed position of parties after the demise of Corso Donati, and the accession of Henry VII. of Luxemburg. It was at the court of Verona that Dante wrote, in the Latin language, his great prose work, "Concerning Monarchy," an abstract of his theory of political principles, and a defence of national government.

Of this work we present our readers with the following abstract, that they may be able to form a judgment regarding the politics of Dante, and the correctness of our estimate of his influence on the *national* movement:—God is *one*. The universe is an idea of God's, and is therefore *one*. God is the source of all; all, therefore, partakes of His nature. Man is the most excellent product of creation. As such he must *tend* continually to a state of perfectness, and strive, by holiness and knowledge, to attain a likeness to, if not a union with, God. Individual man is too short lived

to accomplish this; but man has an historic and collective being, as well as an individual life. Humanity, aggregate man, is long-lived and indefinitely progressive. Humanity, like God, is one. Harmony and, as a consequence, association are the conditions of co-working unity. Unity must be embodied and represented. To give embodiment to human unity, there must be an outer form—government, and an inner spirit—law. A people aggregated into an organic whole, by a general agreement under the same laws and government, constitutes a *nation*. Law and government, however, must have means of enforcement, and hence arises the need of an imperial or other head; not as a superior to, but as an agent of, the law; as the agent of the people, the chief administrator of the law, and the representative to other nationalities of the will of the incorporated citizens of the state over which he bears rule. Here the *sovereign* is clearly differentiated from the *Pope*, and the essential greatness of individual man is not lost sight of in the blaze of the grandeur of imperialism.

Such is the leading thought of Dante's book. Looking at the distracted condition of Italy in his time, how much difficulty seemed in the way of realising this vast conception! In the midst of Italian anarchy, where was the unifier, the consolidator? The popes had deserted the people so soon as their power was established, and the petty princes of his country bore the imprint of the holy father's heel in the hollow of their necks. The German emperors struggled against absorption into the pontificate, and fought for the possession of temporal power, free from the papal yoke. So far as the people were concerned, all virtue had departed from the Papacy; no trust could be reposed in it for the upraising of an Italian nationality. Henry VII. alone

appeared capable of effecting these great ends. Having finished his work, Dante addressed a circular letter "to the kings, dukes, marquises, counts, the senators of Rome, and the people of Italy," in which he strove to show that in the temporal sovereignty of Henry VII. lay the only hope of a peaceful, flourishing, and truly national Italy. This letter, coupled with his exposition of the principles of monarchy, seem to have had some effect, because in 1310, Henry VII. having entered Italy, was crowned King of Lombardy. At this time, Can Grande attended him with a body of troops, and gave him efficient aid in overcoming his enemies at Cremona, Brescia, &c. For this the Emperor conferred upon him the Imperial Vicariate of Lombardy. Henry seems to have hesitated in his course, and Dante, burning with impatience to re-enter his native city, addressed a letter to him, dated Tuscia, April 1311, requesting him to tarry no longer by the "wandering Po," but passing the Apennines, to approach in hostile array against the Guelphs on "Arno's shelvy sides," and shatter the pride of the Florentines. Henry did enter Tuscany, and threatened Florence, but took no active measures to fulfil his menaces. After being crowned at Rome, he seems to have attempted a reconciliation between the different parties. From this effort he was soon obliged to desist, because Robert, King of Sicily and Naples, opposed Henry's attainment of the royal honours of Rome. In an expedition against him, Henry, having reached Buonconventi, near Sienna, suddenly died, it is suspected, of poison. This was a fearful blow to Ghibellinism; but to Dante, who had so enthusiastically advocated the claims of Henry, it was especially disastrous. He took refuge again in Verona, but disappointment had somewhat soured his temper, and broken the

elasticity of his spirits. The services he had rendered to the Ghibelline cause, though great, had now, from no fault of his however, produced a reaction in favour of the Guelphs, and he himself was ungenerously exposed to the sneers of the courtiers of Verona. Dante's was not a spirit that could brook such treatment; when, therefore, in a merry moment, shortly after the court fools had been amusing a company, Alboino, Prince of Verona, and elder brother of Can Grande, turning full upon Dante, musing in moody silence on his many woes, asked him why fools were so much more popular at princes' courts than philosophers, Dante curtly answered, "Like loves like," rose from the table, and not long thereafter bade farewell to Verona.

After this we have traces of his having visited Conte Guido Salvatico, at Casentino; the Signori della Faggiola, in Urbino, and of his having been courteously entertained in the castle of Colmollaro, by Busone da Gubbio, a poet and patriot, whom he had met at Arezzo in the first year of his exile. Besides these places of sojourn, we may mention Udine, Trento, and Friuli. In the latter place he dwelt with Pagano della Torre, the patriarch of Aquileia. It is probable that in the castle of Lanteri Paratico, near Brescia, he composed portions of his immortal poem. Many other places have been named—*e.g.*, Oxford, Paris, and several places in Germany. Of these, however, little is known with certainty. We believe that Dante's love of country was too great to allow of his leaving the land which refused to acknowledge him as one of her diviner sons. In these wanderings his distress must have been great; for we find him, with importunate persistency, petitioning for a recall of his sentence, and permission to return to the sweet bosom of Florence, "wherein," he says, "I had my birth and nourish-

ment, even to the ripeness of my age, and in which, with her good-will, I desire, with all my heart, to rest this wearied spirit of mine, and to terminate the time allotted to me on earth." How grievously must his hopes have been crushed, and all their blossoms have faded, when his strong soul, bowed by the unblest weight of exile, could stoop to entreaty!

But though willing to sue for release from an unjust sentence, and to beg permission to lay his sorrow-tryed dust within St John the Baptist's Church in Florence, he was yet unwilling to utter the cowardly lie by which alone he could receive a revocation of the judgment which his victorious fellow-citizens had passed on him. He would not confess guilt when he felt none, or plead for pardon on such terms as would imply the justice of the award from which he suffered. Therefore when a friend, in 1316, had so far succeeded as to gain a provisional rescindment of his sentence on some such unholy conditions, he rejected the proffer in these heroic terms:—"Is *such* an invitation to return to his country glorious for Dante, after suffering in exile almost fifteen years? Is it *thus*, then, they would recompense *innocence which all the world knows*, and the labour and fatigue of unremitting study? . . . Far from the man who cries aloud for *justice* be this compromise, by his money, with his persecutors. No, my father! this is not the way that shall lead me back to my country. But I shall return with hasty steps, if you or any other can open to me a way which shall not derogate from the fame and honour of Dante; but if by no such way Florence can be entered, then Florence I shall never enter. What! shall I not everywhere enjoy the light of the sun and stars? and may I not seek and contemplate, in every corner of the earth under the canopy of heaven,

consoling and delightful Truth, without first rendering myself inglorious, nay, infamous, to the people and republic of Florence? Bread, I hope, will not fail me." He rejected those "sold and lying privileges," and went forth to front his fate again,

"As one
That makes no pause, but presses on his road,
Whate'er betide him."

The two succeeding years seem to have been given up to wandering, "lean abstinence," the composition of that "sacred poem" which had made

"Both heaven and earth copartners of its toil,"

and the indulgence of the visionary hopes that his growing fame would yet prevail with Florence to recall him, and enable him to "claim," even at the Baptistery,—where, in his younger years, he had saved a child's life,—"the wreath *due* to the poet's temples." It has been conjectured, and not without probability, from many passages in the "Commedia," that at this period he entered a Franciscan monastery in the mountains of Umbria, and that having passed his novitiate, he found himself unwilling to draw "the shuttle to the point," and forsook the brotherhood, convinced "it is not the habit of St Benedict, St Augustine, St Francis, or St Domenic that constitutes a religious life, but that God demands the worship of the soul." After this, he gained a fitter refuge, where

"Polenta's eagle broods,
And in his broad circumference of plume
O'ershadows Cervia."

Here, in the mansion of Guido Novello da Polenta, a munificent patron of literature, and himself somewhat distinguished as a poet, Dante found an ungrudged home,

congenial companionship, and honourable patronage. To Guido's service Dante enthusiastically devoted all his energies and much of his affection. Guido, on his part, estimated rightly the talents and the trustworthiness of his guest; for on a quarrel arising between the Ravennese and the Venetians, he commissioned Dante as his ambassador to conduct such negotiations as seemed necessary. The Venetians obstinately refused to listen to any terms, and Dante returned to Ravenna disheartened and unsuccessful. At this he fairly gave way; nothing could abate or restrain his grief. This deep and serious soul, so sadly tried in the very furnace of affliction, thought so intensely and felt so keenly his powerlessness to effect the wishes of his benefactor, that the over-bent bow snapped, and his spirit quitted its tenement of clay, September 1321, aged fifty-six. Guido Novello had him sumptuously interred, and ordered a monument to be erected over his resting-place; but this he did not live to see accomplished; in a few months thereafter he followed Dante to the tomb. Florence repented when it was *too late*.

At the time of Dante's exile, his family consisted of five sons and a daughter. The daughter, named Beatrice, in memory of her who had created in him a *new life*, became a nun in Ravenna, the city where her father found a tomb. Two of his sons survived him: one, Pietro, became a lawyer in Verona, and rejected reinstatement in his father's possessions with as much haughtiness as he could have wished. Both sons inherited a portion of their father's genius, and unitedly composed a commentary on the "Divina Commedia." It is a sufficient rebutment of the charges brought against the character of Gemma Donati, that she trained her children to revere their father's name and value his honour;

that she educated them well upon the scanty savings she could glean from the wreck of fortune in which she was involved ; and that even from Corso Donati, her kinsman and her husband's foe, she would receive nothing that could taint her name or Dante's with dishonour. There is a truer romance in such honest endeavour and suffering than in the prevalent whinings made upon the unpropitious nature of the married life of genius.

Such is an outline of the life of Dante. A sad and tragical life, yet a true one. Faith, hope, labour, suffering, all these have stamped their seal upon his fate ; but, triumphant over all, his life and his life's thought still work their influences through the world. The grand problem of Italian organic nationality is not yet solved ; but many labourers are engaged in striving to realise the ideal of the poet. Dante is the utterer of the initial thought of modern politics—the nation. In the ancient world we had the Patriarchate manifested in Chaldea, the Empire developed in Egypt, Persia, Macedon, and Rome, and the City partially organised in Greece. In mediæval times, Germany and France attempted to revive the Empire, while Italy endeavoured to re-establish the City. But over all these the Hierarchy reared its throne, and claimed supremacy ; the Church overstrode home, city, and empire, as infinitely less than itself. Dante saw that social and imperial life were equally imperilled, and introduced that modification of imperialism and citizenship which we now denominate a Nationality. This nationality he asserted to be altogether independent of the Papal rule, and established for other purposes than the Popedom could accomplish. Surely there is a moral sublimity in this life ! A breadless exile, consumed by the gnawing tortures of unjustly imposed woes,

the adviser of kings, the denouncer of Papal dishonesty, the censor of morals, the advocate of orthodoxy, the avenger of successful crime, the political teacher of Italy, the creator of the language and the poetry of Tuscany, the prophet of his nation,—when were so many seeming incompatibilities ever before conjoined in one man?

Such a sketch as we have now given, brief as it is, may suffice to show that a man may work out a noble purpose, even though the environments of his life are not such as he would choose; that amid difficulties and privations knowledge may be acquired and applied; and that an unflagging zeal for one's country may co-exist with expressed and recorded dissatisfaction with the present state and doings of that country. Who can fail to admire the stern decision, the calm strength, the resolute heroism, the constant self-sustainment, the grand inflexible honesty Dante always exhibited? Like Milton's angel,

“Unmoved,
Unshaken, unseduced, untterrified,
His loyalty he kept, his love, his zeal;
Nor numbers nor example with him wrought,
To swerve from truth, or change his constant mind.”



Chaucer—English Literature.

A.D. 1328—1400.

“CHAUCER ! our Helicon’s first fountain-stream,
Our morning star of song, that led the way
To welcome the long-after coming beam
Of Spenser’s lights and Shakespeare’s perfect day.
Old England’s fathers live in Chaucer’s lay,
As if they ne’er had died : he group’d and drew
Their likeness with a spirit of life so gay,
That still they live and breathe in fancy’s view,
Fresh beings fraught with truths imperishable true.”—*Campbell*.

“The first finder of our language.”—*Occleve*.

“Of our language he was the lode-star.”—*Lydgate*.

“Dan Chaucer *well* of English undefyled.”—*Spenser*.

‘Chaucer, five hundred years ago, first set our English life to English music.’—*Brimley*.

“Chaucer, the Homer of our poetry, and the true father of English literature.”—*G. L. Craik*.



THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE.

IN the south aisle of Westminster Abbey, one fine old Gothic piece of ornamental sculpture stands out, distinguishably from all others for its look of hoar antiquity, though little more than three centuries have elapsed since, as a labour of love, "one Nicholas Brigham," erected it. *That* marks the burial-place of Chaucer, the first distinctively English poet. Though "black oblivion's rust" has played "fantastic tricks" with the singer's effigy, it has little dimmed his fame; for the preservative magic of genius has thrown around it undecaying spells, so that "near it there may never come suspect or danger." This, however, was not the earliest memorial of

"The noble rhetor poet of Britain,
That made first to distil and rain
The gold dewdrops of speech and eloquence
Into our tongue;"

for Caxton (who collected, edited, and printed an issue of the "Canterbury Tales") placed above his grave a slab with this inscription, written by a learned Milanese:—

"Gulfredus Chaucer vates, et fama poesis
Maternæ, hac sacra sum tumulatus humo."

Of one to whom such unwonted honours had been paid, it would be fair to conclude that there was warrant in his life,

works, and influence for them all, and that those dear "remembrances of the dead" were but indications of the worth of the living. Nor would the inference be uncorroborated by the fact. Chaucer's life was eventful; his works have even yet a living interest for living men, and his influences pulsate even now in the heart of modern civilisation. In the morning of our English life this keenly nationalised poet became not only the exponent of the buxom age of Edward III., but also a marked leader in that party whose genius insinuates the principles of development into their own generation, and who thus become the progenitors of the progress of after-times. He is a great, healthy, vigorous soul, whose Norman nature had been thoroughly impressed in the Saxon mint, and who issued the "coinage of his brain" in the despised vernacular of actual life; broke the Latin moulds and the French dies in which language was then cast or pressed; and touched with everlasting nationality the form and substance of our English speech.

To those who rightly comprehend the immense importance of a pure and noble language in bringing about and sustaining a healthy and generous nationality of thought and feeling; who look upon literature not only as one of the issues, but also as one of the communicators of life; who trace the influence of words upon the natural and spiritual energies of man;—it will appear at once an invaluable service done to our race, to suffuse and vivify the expressions which men most use with the dyes of poesy and the formative activity of genius. The testimony of centuries unanimously accords to Chaucer the glory of having been the masculine factor in the begetting of our present English speech; and he merits acknowledgment as the creator of an epoch from which men date the birth and uprise of an English language

and an English nationality; for then, indeed, did the antagonistic forces which, since the invasion of the Norman conqueror, had kept the races which peopled England asunder, coalesce and co-operate, till they became a new unity, and attained individuality and being—a being which is one and indivisible with the rich traditions of our past history, and the freshest facts in our present literature. To the life and times of this “our morning star of song,” a little attention may be devoted, if we have hearts alive to the admiration and emulation of the great forefathers of our country’s glory.

The name—Chaucer—is decidedly Norman in *form*, and it occurs in Battel Abbey Roll,—a list of men of note who accompanied William the Conqueror to England, 1066. We read also of one Joannes Chaucer, civis Londinensis, in 1299; and we know on the best authority—his own statement—that Geoffrey Chaucer was born in “the citeye of London,” which, he says, “is to me so dere and swete, in which I was *forth growen*; and more kindly love have I to that place than to any other in yearth,—as every kindly creature has to that place of his kindly engendure—and to virtue, rest, and peace in that stede to abide.” The date of his birth, 1328, has been usually *construed* from the inscription, said to have been placed on his earliest monument, which asserted that he “died in 1400, aged 72;” and though an attempt has been made to upset, or at least invalidate this chronology by reference to a document in the Heralds’ College, bearing date 1386, wherein Chaucer, upon oath, *inter alia*, deposes that he was then “of the age of forty years *and upwards*, armed for twenty-seven years,” we see no good ground for unsettling the concurrent belief of centuries. The poet does not here seem to be attesting his

precise age, but to be merely and formally asserting that he is *above* that age, *below* which testimony regarding points in heraldry would be possessed of little reliability. If this were his exact age, he must have borne arms when little more than thirteen, and been then engaged in the French wars, which is rather improbable. We accept, therefore, the current chronology, that Chaucer was born seven years after the death of Dante, and that he was the junior by four years of the reformer Wycliffe, (1324-1384.)

It has been matter of dispute whether Chaucer's father was a knight, a merchant, or a vintner—a matter of no great importance to us. The balance of probabilities inclines to the conclusion that his parents were in easy circumstances, within the then pretty wide limits of the court circle, and that he was educated with a view to diplomatic, or at least civil service life—as if, indeed, his education was to be his outfit for the world. We never hear of his having any patrimonial inheritance, or other resources than those conferred on him by state grant, or derived from government appointments. That his education was carefully conducted, assiduously forwarded, and well taken advantage of, we have the best of proofs—in the erudition which his works display. He was early fitted for commencing a university career, where “he might leren gentillesse aright,” which he began, it has been generally believed, at Cambridge. This appears highly probable; for in his poems he is minute in his Cambridge localisation; and he speaks of himself in “The Court of Love,”—his earliest poem, written in his eighteenth year,—as “Philogenet of *Cambridge*, Clerk;” but we do not know whether at the

“Gret college

Men clepe the Soler Hall at Cantebreg,”

or elsewhere. The universities were not in those days frequented by the sons of the nobility, nor had they that air of wealthy luxury which they now have and aspire after. They were then the resorts rather of the middle classes, as is manifest from the fact that in the youth of Chaucer—we have the statement on the authority of Fitz-Ralph, Archbishop of Armagh, before Pope Innocent VI., in 1357, at Avignon—the University of Oxford had about 30,000 students. The proverbial adjective of *poor*, so often and so truly predicable of scholars, was then an almost unexceptionable connotative term. Chaucer's own maxim, "Sondrie scoles maken subtil clerkes," may be one of those unconscious autobiographic strokes which few writers have been able altogether to avoid giving; for Wood records a tradition that he was a pupil of Wycliffe's; and Leland—who is, however, not over-trustworthy—talks of his being, on leaving Oxford, "an acute, logical, and pleasant speaker, a poet, a grave philosopher, an ingenious mathematician, and lastly, a sound theologian." It is even stated that his studies were finished at Paris, whence, after travelling through France and Holland, he returned about 1355, and commenced, as is supposed, a course of reading in the law. While spending so many years in the pursuit and acquirement of knowledge, in a seemingly omnivorous gluttony of books, and in the attainment of a manifold experience of men and their ways, besides employing himself in the making,

"In the flowre of his youthe,
In sondrie waies as he well couthe,
Of dytyes and of songés glad;"

we cannot but suppose the poet, either consciously or unconsciously, to have been engaged in suitable preparation

for the great tasks which lay before him in life. In his power and inclination to work his own experience into verse, Chaucer is quite Goethean, and the myriad phases of existence which he paints are our chief key to the peculiarities of his age. He was implicated, complicated, and entwined with much of the thought and action of his century, and he touched and impressed it with a vigour and energy which made a distinct and lasting mark on the future of the nation. It was an age of rare vitality and variety of event. There was a hearty, healthy, home-felt, emphatic enthusiasm in it. The differing streams of race were now confluent and neighbourly. The stripling king,—Edward III.,—who but a year before the birth of Chaucer had set his step on the throne of his murdered father, as his years increased, displayed a self-willed ambition, a chivalry and gallantry, which endeared him to his subjects, while it added to the glory of their country. The stout, stubborn, politic course of his grandfather fired him to emulation, while the vanity and luxuriousness of his nature led him to indulge in costly pageantries and dainty banquets, in emblematic jousts and well-consorted shows. In his court, therefore, there was a sort of spring-tide life,—young, lusty, free, showy, though unripe. Before Chaucer had reached his thirtieth year, the king's crown was encircled with the laurels of Halidon Hill, (1333,) Sluys, (1340,) Crecy, (1346,) Calais, (1347,) and Poitiers, (1356.) His queen Philippa had shown the heroism of her disposition at Nevil's Cross, (1346,) and the kindness of her heart at Calais. At this particular time, wherever the British forces

“Do tread the measures of their tragic march,”

victory smiles upon their “painful traffic,” and bestows

upon them the bloody glory of success. Though the fetid vapours and putrific malaria of the Black Death had swept with mysterious and relentless destructiveness through the land, prosperity seemed to favour the sovereign who had so encouraged industrial pursuits as to welcome and befriend those skilled in the processes of textile manufactures. "The Order of the Garter (1344) had been instituted within the castle of Windsor, which, under the careful eye of William Wykeham, had lately been built as a fit residence for an English sovereign, with a pageant of unparalleled grandeur, and a liberality and gorgeousness such as had never before been seen in the memory of man. The Commons of England were gaining a voice in public affairs, and, acting on the maxim that "the sovereign's exigencies are the subjects' chances," were striving after a constitutional form of government, and the realisation of a distinct and self-contained nationality.

Would we be far wrong, remembering the tradition of *the occasion* of its origin, to suppose that "The Court of Love" was suggested to the young poet by the grand ongoings of the institution of the Order of the Garter, and that it was intended as a delicate allusion to, and celebration of, the splendid ceremony with which it was inaugurated? We know that the court was not entirely insensible to literary merit; for Queen Philippa was the patroness of Froissart, (whose "Chronicles," extending from 1326-1400, rather more than cover the entire era of Chaucer's life,) and that he held an office in the household of Edward III.; we have besides good reason to believe that Chaucer, though mainly valued on account of his excellent and rare business capacity, was somewhat favoured, too, in consideration of his poetical abilities. But of this more anon.

Perhaps the next occupation of our author was the translation of the "De Consolatione Philosophiæ" of Boethius, —a work previously translated into Saxon by Alfred the Great, and subsequently into modern English by Elizabeth, —the favourite classic of that age, and a favourable specimen of the prose style of this "garnisher of Englishe rude." To this period, also, is generally ascribed the production of "Troilus and Creseide," a work of singular excellence, the rhythm and rhyme of which were imitated by Shakespeare in "The Rape of Lucrece," and its subject in 1609 made the foundation of one of his favourite plays. Chaucer at this time diligently and purposely engaged in the polishing and modulation of the English tongue. This is particularly evident from the anxiety which the poet exhibits towards the conclusion of that poem, regarding his work, and how it might be transcribed or recited, saying,

"And, for ; there is so great diversitie
 In English and in writing of our tong,
 So pray I God that none miswrite thee,
 Ne thee mis-metre for defaut of tong.
 And redde whereso thou be, or else song,
 That thou be understood, God I beseech,
 But yet to purpose of my rather [early] spech."

This poem is still further interesting, because it gives us a glimpse of the companions of Chaucer, and shows what sort of men he valued in his youth. This we learn from the following dedicatory lines:—

"O *moral* Gower, this booké I direct
 To thee and to the *philosophical* Strood,
 To vouchésauf there need is to correct
 Of your benignities and zealés good."

The friends here referred to were men of condition and repute. The former is a famed contemporary poet, and

the latter a "most excellent philosopher," whom, in after days, Chaucer entrusted with the upbringing of his favourite son. We may further infer, from the double and distinctly specific ascription, that its author was pretty equally divided between philosophy and poetry, at the same time that we learn most expressly that a larger ambition animated his breast; for the following are the terms in which he dismisses his literary labour:—

“Go, litel booke! Go, litel tragedie,
There God my Maker yet ere that I die,
So send me might to make some Commedie.
But, litel booke, make thou thee none envie,
But subject ben unto all poesie;
And kiss the steps whereon thou seest pace,
Of Virgil, Ovid, Homer, Lucan, Stace.”

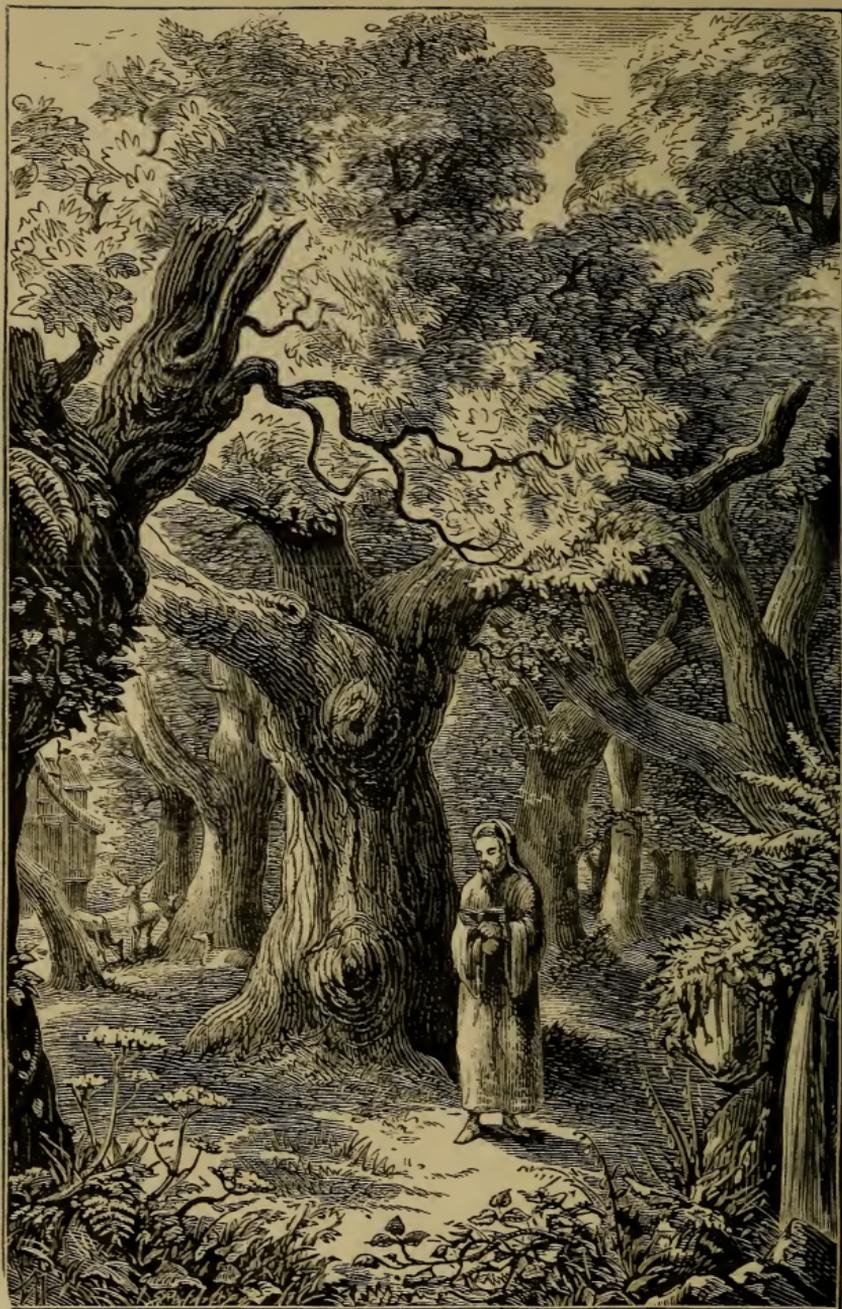
Chaucer was acquainted with the best classics procurable in his day; conversant with the works of many of the Latin Fathers, the Schoolmen, and the mediæval Romantists. The plot of "Troilus and Creseide" is, he informs us, taken from Lollius, (an author of whom nothing is *now* known.) It is similar in outline to the "Filistrato" of Boccaccio, who mentions the story as having its original in Greek. Translation is almost invariably the form in which art influences a language; and imitativeness, no less than originality, belong to the true poet. Dante, addressing Virgil, says,—

“It is from thee alone that I derive
The graceful style which gains me such applause.”

Dante, (1265-1321,) Petrarch, (1304-1374,) and Boccaccio, (1312-1375,) undoubtedly influenced Chaucer and his contemporaries; the Elizabethan writers were touched by the music of Tasso (1544-1575) and Ariosto, (1474-1533.) Cor-

neille, Racine, and Molière affected the age of the Restoration ; the writers who flourished till the time “when George the Third was king,” stimulated the German school, which, beginning with Klopstock, culminated in Goethe ; and these again wrought upon Scott, Wordsworth, and Byron ; and in all these ages translation preluded actual originality, and transplanting preceded propagation. Chaucer was not, therefore, singular in the mode he took for working out an acceptable national speech, by reproducing reputed and reputable poems from the Latin, French, or Italian, rather than by throwing the whole energy of his thought into new poems of his own. By the former method he asked acceptance for the *language* only, yet prepared the way for the introduction, in good time, of a fresh and home-grown literature, such as the age required, national in thought, feeling, allusiveness, and speech.

It was a far-thoughted and patriotic purpose to detach his native country from intellectual dependence upon France ; to supply an instrument for the interchange of opinion, the promulgation of knowledge, and the business wants of society, which should be the nation’s own, one not borrowed from aliens and enemies ; and to provide a vesture for thought in which the bounding and abounding life, energy, and intellect of his age might dress itself, and be known as distinct and different from that country with whom England was waging war. It was courtierly, too, thus to second the desire of the king’s heart, by a move of so resistless a nature, and by an agency so effectual. It was a wise and diplomatic scheme, furthering at once the best interests of the nation, his own fame, and the policy of his sovereign. So, for the promotion of his design, he translated into “numbers touched with harmony,” some of the more popular



“ Within a lodge out of the way,
Beside a well in a forest.”—EPOCH MEN, Page 163

classic tales, that the language might be purified and individualised ; and that the disjunction of the nations might be facilitated, he took one of the most popular of French poems, "The Romaunt of the Rose," and transferred its wondrous allegories into the form of speech current in his days. He thus not only complied with, but led and directed the spirit of the time, gratified his own taste, and extended his own fame, while he cultivated, by assiduous labour, the power of expression, and the polish of diction.

It is probable that Chaucer kept always within the range of court, and had a due diplomatic acquaintanceship with its modes, fashions, and ongoings ; for about this time he was the recognised friend and associate of King Edward's third son, John of Gaunt, then Earl of Richmond, though subsequently Duke of Lancaster, who married (Blanche, afterwards mother of Henry IV.,) 19th May 1359. In celebration of the courtship of this pair, Chaucer had produced a poem, entitled "The Parliament of Birds," a fanciful allegory. "The Complaint of the Black Knight," a defence of Gaunt from some aspersions thrown on his character ; and "The Dream of the Dutchesse," an epithalamium on the union of John and Blanche, are also referable to this period. The minuteness with which Chaucer describes the localities of Woodstock has given rise to the supposition that he resided there,—

" Within a *lodge* out of the way,
Beside a well in a forest,"

and was a retainer of the happy bridegroom, whom he accompanied to France in the autumn of 1359, in a military capacity, along with the army of Edward III., one of the greatest and best which had then left the English coasts.

A hundred thousand men, in a thousand ships, left England,—in the capital of which the King of France was then a prisoner,—and landing at Calais, marched with triumphant, though hardily resisted tread, as far as Rheims, in which Edward III. hoped to place upon his brow the sovereign circlet of France. The place was well fortified, and defended bravely. Edward beleaguered it awhile, but ultimately raised the siege and retired—losing *prestige*, however, by the act—to try his success on Paris. Here the fates were equally unpropitious, and he fell back towards Brittany. Hunger, fatigue, superstition, and storm fought against him. As he became depressed, the French got elated, and though unable to venture into the open field, they endeavoured by harassments in flank and rear to secure the chance of victory their new allies had given them. In one of these forays, near the town of Retiers, in Brittany, Chaucer had the sad hap to be taken prisoner. This, in addition to his own share of the former hardships, was a sufficiently bitter taste of war's woes. How long his fortitude and powers of endurance were tried by captivity we cannot tell; but we hope that the peace of Bretigny, signed in 1360, would, among other things, secure his freedom.

In "The Dream of the Dutchesse," Chaucer indicated that a lady had charmed his heart; and we learn that on 12th September 1366, a pension of ten marks (£120) was granted to Philippa Chaucer, one of the ladies of Queen Philippa's household; so that we must suppose he was married prior to this date, and was now leaving, or had already left, her Majesty's service. The wife of Chaucer was, according to the best authorities, Philippa Pyckard, daughter of Sir Payne Pyckard de Rouet, Guienne king-at-arms, sister of Katherine Swyneford *née* Pyckard of Rouet,

and subsequently wife of John of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster, and Regent of Guienne; and of that Henry Pyckard; Lord Mayor of London, who had welcomed the Black Prince with the captive King John, on their arrival from France after the battle of Poitiers. The duties he performed meanwhile may be guessed at from the next notice we have of him, as receiving—June 20th, 1367—from the king, for former and future service, under the designation of “our well-beloved yeoman,” (*dilectus valettus noster*), an annuity of twenty marks (£240.) On Christmas 1368, his wife received a robe in gift from the queen. In 1369 both Queen Philippa and the Lady Blanche of Lancaster died, and Chaucer wrote a lament for the latter, entitled “The Death of Blanche the Dutchesse.” On the 20th June 1370, he received letters of protection from the king, that he might go abroad, though for what purpose we know not, in his service. In 1372, a more important commission for him [and for us] was entrusted to him, viz., to form, along with John de Mari and James Pronam, a committee of investigation in Genoa, regarding the English port, which might be most advantageously used by the Genoese in furtherance of their commercial pursuits. While occupied with this mission, it is said that Chaucer had the good fortune to be introduced to

“Frauncis Petrark, the laureat poet,
Highte this clerk, whose rhetorik sweete
Enlumined all Itaille of poetrie;”

and there to have heard from “the lover of Laura” the tale of the patient “Griselda.” This is neither impossible nor improbable,—indeed quite the opposite. Petrarch was then (1370-4) residing, an industrious invalid, at Padua, and had completed his version of Boccaccio’s famous story from

Italian into Latin—published under the title, “A Myth on Wifely Obedience and Fidelity,”—in June 1373. Nothing could be more natural than that the chief poet of England should endeavour to see “the first real restorer of polite letters,—him who gave purity, elegance, and stability to the Italian language.” Now, as Chaucer was seemingly not well versed in Italian, is it at all unlikely that their conversation would be holden in Latin, of his proficiency in which Petrarch prided himself, and Chaucer had no need to be ashamed? In the currency of such talk, what more probable than that Dante and Boccaccio should become the subjects of mutual criticism, and that Petrarch should reckon it a privilege to rehearse his version of his friend yet rival’s beautiful and unexceptionable story, and that thus “he learned at Padowe” the tale he has embalmed in ever-living verse, in his favourite metre, and with the utmost elegance of style, regarding the patience and fidelity of “Griselda?” The thought is too sweet to be lightly given up, and we cling to the belief most fondly, though we trust not irrationally. Chaucer returned to home and country in February 1374, and on the 19th of July Petrarch was found in his library, with a book before him, dead, “his wordes and his work” done, and remembrance of him only left for the world. There is surely some trait of personal grief in the kindly way Chaucer speaks of him, and in the attachment—to his notice of the interview—of the *morale*, which reads like an involuntary and self-referring sigh:—

“But Dethe, that wol not suffre us dwellen here,
 But as it were the twinkling of an eye,
 Him *now* hath slaine, and *alle we shal die.*”

From the era of the Conquest (1066) till the days of Chaucer the literature of England consisted almost entirely

of translations or imitations of Norman chronicles and romances.

The Normano-Franks—the haughty aristocracy of conquest—insisted on the general use of the Norman tongue by the vanquished. The steady undercurrents of common daily life, however, gave the Anglo-Saxons sufficient opportunity for keeping in living usage the speech of their forefathers. Ceasing, by the gradual force of circumstances, to be embodied in writing, or employed in popular public converse, the strict grammatical forms of inflection and syntax were neglected or forgotten: language became simpler and looser in texture by becoming wholly oral. In this stage of transition it is *now* called semi-Saxon. For a time the exotic tongue appeared likely to get acclimatised; and great care was taken to aid its dissemination and growth. Children were taught *in* French, that they might know French, and that, by this early training, their vernacular might be supplanted, not only in favour, but in use.

As a general summary of the history of language, it may be affirmed that [1st] from the Conquest till the demise of Stephen, (1154,) the French language was forcefully maintained as that of the court, the law, and the ordinary intercourse of the conquerors with their vassals; [2d] from the accession of Henry II. till the close of the long reign of Henry III., (1272,) the native Anglo-Saxon existed in revolt against, and in spite of, the Norman influence used for its suppression; and [3d] during the reigns of the three Edwards, (1272-1377,) the “Dames’ tongue” of England regained its olden power. The French became thereafter only a graff into, not the root-stock of, the speech of Englishmen; and a free field was left for the careful culture of the native language of England.

Chaucer was a far-seeing man, who kept his eye upon causes, and was quick and sure at tracing their effects. His contemporary, Gower, in the uncertainties of the time, gave hostages to fame, and made appeal to posterity in the three prevalent languages of the period, viz.—of the church and learning, Latin; of the court and fashion, French; of the people and progress, English;—but Chaucer had no such hesitancy. Though skilled in the learned tongues, he placed himself unreservedly at the head of the minstrels of his native land, with his earliest poem, and he continued to aim at and to seek popularity and influence throughout a long life by distinctively English

“Bokes, songis, and dities,”

by giving the colloquial forms of his own land's language permanency, consistency, and literary existence; by applying the conserving magic of genius to the speech of the people, and by saturating and colouring the words of the common vocabulary of his time with the imperishable hues of thought, sympathy, life. Thus he became the ancestor of that long line of descendants who have planted “the seeds and pregnant forms” of thought in the fields of English literature, and cause them to be fertile with “a life beyond life.”

Not long after that defeat which Edward III. endured in France, the hostility of England took the form of an Act of Parliament (1362) for the discontinuance of the use of the French language in the pleadings and impleadings of the courts of law. There can be little doubt that Chaucer—if not as a courtier, at least as a poet, who had proven the scope, sufficiency, and capability of English for the utterance of the whole spirit of life—had considerable influence

in effecting this enactment of that recently-instituted but essentially English body, the House of Commons.

English was no more to be the *patois* of serfs, but the speech of freemen. Conquerors and conquered had now grown into one people. The sturdy Saxon had risen from the crush and pressure of foreign domination, and took with him, into the spheres of his activity everywhere, that rude mother-tongue, inflexible and rudely welded together as it was, in his ascent. The fine, quickening impulses of patriotism, the animation of martial enthusiasm, the far-forecast shadows of a Reformation, the pomp of chivalry, the grandeur of a mighty court, the intense activities of commerce, the thronging might of a fresh and active lifehood, played in and upon the poet's heart with their mystic influences, and stirred its depths of thoughtfulness to effort and success.

Chaucer rung out the great thoughts of his intellect in brave, bold, homely, hearty, vivid, vigorous words,—

“And as much as then
The English language could express for men,
He made it do,”—

by following his own common-sense maxim, “Let us show our fantasies in such wordes as we learneden of our dames' tongue.”

Chaucer's practice agreed with the policy of the king and the wishes of the people. He fused into one composite mass the courtier's French, the scholar's Latin, and the people's Saxon, and cast them into grace, beauty, and life-like reality, in his ingenious, y conceptive mind. If the result is not unstainedly white and flawless, the gray lines and the spotty graining of the amalgam only serve to heighten our ideas of the genius which wrought into such

harmoniousness elements so diverse and inaffinite. In his hands English ceased to be a dialect, and became a speech. It was right that a mandate should go forth from Britain's highest councils, that the laws of England should cease to be appealed to or enforced in a tongue which had "become much unknown in the realm." We can fancy the delight with which he,

"Who first enriched our English with his rhymes,"

would listen to the compliments of Petrarch upon this point of comparison between Dante, "the great poet of Itaille," and himself, viz.,—his being the creator of the literary language of his country.

Chaucer's Genoese mission must have been managed to the king's satisfaction; for almost immediately after his return, he received a grant—23d April 1374—from his regal employer, of a pitcher of wine (about a gallon) daily; and in June of the same year he was appointed, by royal patent, comptroller of the customs on wool, hides, &c., in the port of London. And that it might be expressly seen that this was not a "job" invented to provide a sinecure office for a needy, greedy hanger-on of courts, but a *bonâ fide* transaction, acknowledging and requiring business integrity, punctuality, and capacities, it is ordained "That the said Geoffrey Chaucer write *with his own hand* his rolls touching the said office, and continually reside there, and do and execute all things pertaining to the said office, in his own proper person, and not by his substitute." Here we find it *implied* that there was some known quality in Chaucer which rendered this injunction needful—not for his discouragement, but for the maintenance of honest conduct in the public service. This very prohibition is an

attestation of the court's knowledge of Chaucer's literary labours, and the popularity of his writings. In 1375 Edward III. conferred on him the wardenship of the heir of Sir Edmond Staplegate, with a salary (£104) equivalent to £1872 *per annum*. The Duke of Lancaster endowed him with an annuity of (£10) £180; and in 1376 he got a grant of forfeited wool to the amount of £1262 of the present currency (£71, 4s. 6d.) Of his "manner of life" at this period we get the following autobiographic glimpse from the "Book of Fame," (which dates about this time,) Book II., in which the living golden eagle says:—

"Thou wilt make
O' nights full oft thine head to acke;
In thy study so thou y-writest
.
.
.
That no tidings comen to thee,
Not of thy very neighebores
That dwellen almost at thy doors.
.
.
.
For when thy labour all done is,
And t'hast made all thy reckonings,
Instead of rest and of new things,
Thou goest home to thine house anon,
And all so dumb as any stone,
Thou sittest at another book,
Till fully dazed is thy look."*

* To this extract may be added the following, from the prologue to "The Legende of Gode Women," viz. :—

"On bookes for to read I me delight,
And to them give I faith and full credence;
And in mine heart have them in reverence
So heartily, that there is game none,
That from my bookes maketh me to gone."

In the "Dutchesse," he says that reading is

"Better play
Than either at chess or tubbes."

Chaucer and Froissart were fellow-yeomen of the court prior to 1368, when the latter quitted England. From the French poet and chroniclist, the author of "The Flower and the Leaf" *may* have received the ground-thought of that poem in a description of the floral games instituted in 1324 by Clementina Isaure, Countess of Toulouse. Chaucer, at any rate, alludes to a song of that quaint, garrulous old fellow's, in that poem, which was probably written about this time of learned and leisurely competence, when daily duty only gave zest to creative fancy. It is possible, however, that Chaucer, in his continental embassies, may have been not merely a spectator of, but a sharer in, these affected and at that time fashionable sports.

The diplomatic services of Chaucer were twice called into requisition in the early part of 1377, on secret affairs for his Majesty. We have it, on the authority of Froissart, that one of these missions—for which letters of protection were granted—was the negotiation of a treaty of marriage between Richard, Prince of Wales, and Mary, daughter of Charles V., King of France, (1364–1380.) The persons employed in this important embassy were Sir Guichard D'Angle, afterwards Earl of Huntingdon, Sir Richard Sturry, and Geoffrey Chaucer. The former were evidently the show ambassadors, and the untitled gentleman was as plainly the worker—the managing partner of the firm. During these absences, he appointed his fellow-poet, Gower, and one Richard Forrester, his legal representatives in matters of business.

In this same year, (1377,) Edward III. died at Richmond, June 21st, and, though only in his eleventh year, Richard II., his grandchild, son of the Black Prince, who had died in the preceding year, succeeded him. A council of nine was

appointed to manage the affairs of the nation, but his uncles, the Dukes of Lancaster, York, and Gloucester, had the real direction of affairs in their hands. Chaucer's annuities and offices were confirmed to him by the new sovereign, and his services were again employed as a diplomatist in Lombardy in 1378. How long he was absent we cannot learn; but we do know that, during the three following years, England was in a strange religious and political ferment. By Wycliffe's advice, the Commons had refused to pay the papal toll called "Peter's pence." Five bulls had been fulminated against the reformer; and he had successfully resisted, by aid of Lancaster, Percy, and the Earl Marischal, one attempt to subdue him at an episcopal tribunal. Another attempt at coercive jurisdiction was quashed by the queen-mother in 1378. In 1379 he was stricken by paralysis, but he continued to toil on in the good work, and in 1381 published twelve theses against the doctrines of the Church of Rome. Chaucer's patron, Lancaster, was Wycliffe's chief protector, and there can be no doubt that the poet ardently sympathised with the reformer.* We know that he used

* Of this point the following may be regarded as the chief proofs, viz. :—(1.) The general anti-Papal tendency and tone of Chaucer's poems. (2.) The story of his flogging a Franciscan friar in Fleet Street. (3.) The keen Wycliffism of his patron. (4.) Cardinal Wolsey (1471-1530) interdicted the publication of "The Pilgrim's Tale," and objected to "The Ploughman's Tale." (5.) Fox, the martyrologist, (1517-1587,) says, "I marvel to consider this, how that the bishops, condemning and abolishing all manner of English books and treatises which might bring the people to any light of knowledge, did yet authorise the works of Chaucer to remain. So it pleased God to blind then the eyes of them for the more commodity of the people." (6.) The prevalence of the opinion that the monks foisted a retraction of his "Enditings of Worldly Vanities" into the concluding paragraphs of "The Canterbury Tales"

his brilliantest weapon, ridicule, against the errors of the Church and its officials; and his noblest verses have been given to the description of a "Poore Parson"*—of which there was then only one illustrious living exemplar—Wycliffe himself, although the "poore priests," whose views accorded with his, were even then well and numerous scattered through the country.

In the same year, 1381, the Saxons thought the time to "strike for freedom" had arrived, and under the leadership of Wat Tyler, John Ball, and Jack Straw, an agitation for the abolition of serfdom and villenage, of imposts and tolls obstructive to commerce, and for the maintenance of the power of taxation among the Commons, was begun. Unfortunately, the mob was turbulent, and the leaders were incapable of organising the insurgents effectually, or of restraining their excesses, so that the movement, justifiable in itself, was suppressed. It did, however, procure some ameliorations, and it indicated the power and energy of the peasant population.

It is quite possible that Chaucer, as Comptroller of the Customs, and therefore personally, as well as officially, interested in the matter, may have been present at the conference in which the treacherous and lean-witted Walworth, with the argument of a sword's point, answered the complaints of Tyler, and left the mob leaderless, until the young king, emitting one spark of fellow-feeling, exclaimed, "Tyler was a traitor!—I myself will be your leader!"—a noble sentiment, the spirit of which was ignominiously evaded.

"Old John of Gaunt, time-honoured Lancaster," had

* To this portrait, Dryden, Goldsmith, Cowper, Crabbe, &c., have each been indebted.

married, in 1372, Constance, eldest daughter of Peter the Cruel, King of Castile and Leon, and had led an army into Spain to assert his right, through his wife, to the sovereignty of Castile; during his absence a contest arose between the court party and the commissioners of regency; and wary steps were required to keep free from danger and loss. Chaucer did not pass through the ordeal scathelessly.

Richard II. had married, 1382, the daughter of the Emperor Charles IV., Anne of Bohemia. She, it has been conjectured, is complimented in the character of Alceste, the Queen of Love, the emblem of truth of womanhood, in "The Legende of Gode Women;" and it has hence been inferred that this poem was written at the suggestion of her Majesty; and in the Prologue the poet is commanded to present his composition to the Queen "at Eltham or at Shene." At any rate, we know that, four months after the royal marriage, Chaucer was made Comptroller of the minor Customs of London, in addition to his former offices, and with the further privilege of performing his duties by deputy. He appointed a permanent substitute in 1383.

Thus high went the flow of the tide; the ebb began at last, however. In 1384 two candidates for the mayoralty of London were proposed, one by the officials of the court, headed by De la Pole and De Vere, another by the popular or Lancastrian party. John of Northampton was a Wycliffite, a man of integrity and ability, and under the patronage of the Duke of Lancaster. Chaucer took his patron's side, and Lancaster's enemies included all his supporters in their list of malcontents. By the use of a military force, and after a city riot, Sir Nicholas Brember, the court candidate, was elected, and Northampton was imprisoned, tried, and (in August 1384) sentenced to perpetual imprisonment.

Chaucer fled first to Hainault, then to Zealand, taking his wife and children with him. Here "berafte out of dignity of office," in which he "made a gathering of worldly good," he spent some time in difficulties, and "with dangers compassed round." On his return he was for a short time exposed to persecution; and he complains, "For richesse have I povertie; for dignitie now am I enprisoned; instede of power, wretchednesse I suffre; and for glory of renown, I am now despised and foullie hated." In his durance he wrote that imitation of Boethius, entitled, "The Testament of Love."

His humiliation, however, did not last long, for in 1386 the men of Kent chose him as their representative in Parliament, and as a knight of that shire he sat in Westminster. In 1387 he lost his wife, perhaps outworn with the privations, the pinching pain of poverty, these years of woe necessitated; and in 1388 he was obliged to sell his annuities to one John Sealby. Gaunt returned to England in 1389, and at his instance Northampton was released, and Chaucer was repensioned, besides being appointed Clerk of the Works at Westminster, Windsor, &c., in which office he materially furthered the interests of architecture. In 1394 John of Lancaster honours or favours him with a pension, and he is still in receipt of his salary as one of the king's esquires, but of other offices he seems to have been deprived. About this period, however, he is believed to have been again settled in poetic retirement near Woodstock, the place of his manhood's early happiness, his dreams, ambitions, and endeavours. This is rendered all the more probable by the fact that his "Astrolabie," written for the education in astronomy of his favourite son, "litel Lowys," is compounded for the latitude of Oxford, and was, therefore, most

probably written in the neighbourhood of that ancient seat of learning. The composition of this work for the special purpose assigned, seems to indicate the possession of learned leisure and homely competence, as well as fatherly interest, and the exercise of so many of the sweet domesticities of life as were possible to the widowed and work-worn poet. He is at this time again made a pensioner of the king to the amount of £20, equal to £360 of our present currency—enough, in addition to other revenues, for comfort, if not for competency. This pleasing outgrowth of parental fondness, written in “lithe English,” does not profess to be original. Its author says, “I ne assurpe not to have founden this werke of my labour or of mine engin. I am but a lewde compilatour of the laboure of old astrologiens, and have it translated into mine English onely for thy doctrine, and with this swerde shall I slay envie.” It proves, however, that he “was well grounded in astronomie.” There are some kindly, fatherly phrases in the dedication which delight us much—*e.g.*, “I perceive by certain evidences thyne abylyte to lerne scyences touching nombers and proportions, and also well consider thy besye prayer in especyal to lerne the tretyse of the astrolabye.” He writes it in English, “for Latine ne canst thou not yet but small, my litel sonne. He prays “every person descrete that redeth or heareth this litel tretyse, to have my rude entending excused, and my superfluitie of wordes, for two causes. The first cause is for that curious endyting and harde sentences is full hevvy at once for such a childe to lerne. And the second cause is this, that soothely me seemeth better to written unto a child twise a good sentence, than he forget it once.” These thoughts, this delicate considerateness, throb out of a fine fatherliness of heart, and from a clear, well-furnished under-

standing. Sixty-three years of busy life had not cooled his sympathy with boyhood, and even the pet little prodigy which his wife had left him as a legacy of love, is sensibly though kindly dealt with. There was sunshine in the old man's soul.

We do not know that it has been before remarked that the works of Chaucer, prior to the issue of "The Testament of Love," are courtly, *débonnaire*, fretted with fantastic fancies relative to chivalric customs, and generally, in spirit, style, portraiture, taste, and machinery, refer to and embody the graces, habits, and finicalities of life among the upper grades of society; but now, when leisure lay before him to make his grand adventure for fame, he turned himself from the circles of vague punctilio, *bienséance*, and noble gentility, to the whole breadth of life as it was in his age, and then in

"Legends blithe
He sang of love or knighthood, or the wiles
Of homely life; through each estate and age
The fashions and the follies of the world
With cunning hand portraying"—

with all the spirit, zest, humour, facile changefulness, and descriptive skill in picturing the motley of custom and costume which then prevailed, of one who "in the original perused mankind."

From Gower's mention of Chaucer's work, "The Testament of Love," in the "Confessio Amantis," published in 1393, and his speaking of him as being "in his dayes olde," it has been generally inferred that "The Canterbury Tales" were commenced about this date, and were not included in those "dytyes and songes" of his with which, at this time, Gower says—

"The land fulfilled is over all."

This, we believe, is a rather hasty conjecture, not supported by fact, and scarcely supportable by inference. For instance, in “The Legend of Good Women,” (1382,) we find it asserted that

“ He made the boke that highte ‘ the House of Fame,’
 Eke ‘ the Deathe of Blanche, the Duchesse,’
 And ‘ the Parliament of Foules,’ as I guess,
 And all ‘ *the Love of Palamon and Arcite,*
Of Thebes, though the story is knowen lite,
 And many an hymne.”

Now, “Palamon and Arcite,” the Iliad of English literature, (the original of which seems to have been derived both from Statius and Boccaccio,) is the topic of “The Knight’s Tale,” the first of the series ; it occupies no fewer than 2239 lines, and we have no other work of Chaucer’s in which it appears. It seems far more natural, therefore, to suppose that the plan had been gradually built up in his mind from the suggestion afforded by Boccaccio’s “Decameron,” (1350,) and that he interlaced in the grand web of his thoughts many of those precious threads of narrative which had been circulating for years among his friends and fellows of the court. That, however, the series had not attained its present form, prior to 1393, is perhaps true ; for in “The Man of Law’s Tale,” after giving an *index rerum* of his “Legend,” he takes up the story “Of thilke wicke ensample of Canace” from the work of Gower, of which we have spoken. On this supposition we have only to regard the prologue and the jokes and conversations which so dramatically occupy the spaces between the tales as *necessarily* new, though we may acknowledge it as highly probable that, prompted by the exigencies of the plot, he may have added many touches to the old poems, and added several fresh, though winter-

flowered, products of constructive fancy to the garland he was engaged in arranging. This inference seems to be borne out by the fact, that the prologue is the most finished, most delicately and characteristically managed, the broadest in outline, freest in pencilling, and most minute in delineativeness of the whole poem, and that the keeping of the several members of the singular and varied pilgrimage are Shakesperian in distinctness of characterisation and sustained representativeness. It is too much to suppose that such vastness of design and variety of executive skill, as well as voluminousness of invention, could have been crowded into the seven closing years of the venerable bard, whose life and mind had been so active in youth and manhood, and who bore the lines of nearly half a century of authorship carved into his broad and thoughtful brow. We incline to believe, then, that with an author's cherishing love for the offspring of his thoughts, he gathered together all the "storied thing" of his bygone and unarranged authorship into one liberal offertory for posterity. The prologue is immeasurably superior in taste, humour, interest, probability, feeling, and vraisemblance to that of its prototype, "The Decameron:" the plot is better sustained throughout; there is greater congruity between the narrations and the narrators; the colouring and types of life are more varied; the classes, company, and individuals are better specialised; and the whole plan is more happily and more artistically conceived. The general form is copied, but the characters, scenery, management, interest, sentiment, style, dramatic pictoriality, and satiric *bonhomie* are all original; the glow of personality, life, sociality, station, and spirit—in one word, *Englishness*—is upon them all, and the

“Nine and twenty in a compaignie
Of sondrie folk by aventure y-fall
In fellowship,”

in the Tabard, at Southwark, are brought before the reader in the palpable reality of health, strength, and truth.

“Legends blithe
He sang of love or knighthood, or the wiles
Of homely life; through each estate and age
The fashions and the follies of the world
With cunning hand portraying.”

No exhaustive criticism of Chaucer's intensely picturesque and vividly individualised poems can be undertaken in an interpretative life-sketch such as this, in which it is chiefly intended to indicate or suggest the special characteristics which the man displayed in his age, and the peculiar influence he brought into such forceful activity, as to have affected his own era, and to have impressed the future with it. The chief aim of Chaucer's life we signalise in his definite and persistent culture of the English tongue. How great must be our debt to the first master-spirit who poured the life of his soul into English with such sincerity, continuousness, straightforwardness, transparency, volubility, earnest thought, and copious versatility. It was right that the crowning work of his active life should be one in which the capacities of the language should be tested to the utmost by the width, scope, variousness, and multiplicity of the matters brought into the harmonies of verse, and so be proved to be wanting in nothing that pertained to the genuine life of his nation. The flux and uncertainty, the fitful literary usage of our speech was at once terminated by its being shown that profound learning, chivalric fantasy, true womanliness, perfect gentility, civic needs, and homely

wants, could all find expression in a national language formed, like the people who spoke it, out of the prime materials that all other nationalities could furnish, worked, kneaded, vitalised by something more than even Promethean heat—the breath of the soul of genius.

Through the changeful vicissitudes of a changeful time, Chaucer held consistently to the political and religious views of his mature manhood, and kept faith with his earliest patron, John of Gaunt. During a number of years this nobleman had held the affections of Chaucer's sister-in-law, the widow of Sir Hugh de Swineford—who had been governess to the daughters of the Duchess Blanche—in thrall. That he really loved her, though unlawfully for some time, for she had borne him three sons and a daughter, was shown by his taking her to wife in January 1396; by acknowledging her children; and by his securing their legitimisation by Act of Parliament in the following year: at which period Lancaster had recovered his influence both with king and people. Chaucer was thus more closely allied to the Lancastrian party, and was more likely to have such influence as it possessed for the advancement of the interest of himself and his children. In accordance with these natural inferences, we find several antiquaries recording a tradition that he resided in Donnington Castle, Berkshire, during the latter years of his life; and Mr Grose, on the authority of a MS. in the Cotton Library, asserts that he was the purchaser. Perhaps the expense of this "romance in stone and lime" hampered his means, or excited the envious hatred of his enemies—persons whom successful merit seldom wants. At any rate, we find that in 1398 he received a grant of the king's protection from arrest and prosecution for two years, as one engaged on urgent busi-

ness for his Majesty. In 1399, too, he got a grant of a pipe of wine annually "in the port of London, from the king's chief butler or his deputy." Thomas Chaucer, the poet's eldest son, was at this time chief butler to the king. On 3d February 1399, John of Gaunt died, and Richard II. appropriated his estates. Henry Bolingbroke, the young duke, then in exile, determined to resist the confiscation, and during the absence of the king in Ireland landed at Ravenspur, in Yorkshire. He seized Richard on his return, carried him captive to London, and extorted an abdication on a charge of misgovernment and breach of constitutional right. On Richard's deposition, September 29, 1399, he claimed to be (and was) crowned, Oct. 13th. One of the earliest acts of the young king was to confirm the grants of annuity and wine to our poet, and to add (as a solatium for the losses sustained by Lancaster's death?) an additional annuity of forty marks. On 24th Dec. 1399, Chaucer took a long lease of a house in Westminster, in the garden of the old convent, on which the chapel of Henry VII. is now built, from the Abbot, named Robert Humodesworth, and there he appears to have resided till his death, Oct. 15, 1400.

If we believe what Shakespeare makes Chaucer's patron say, that

"The tongues of dying men

Enforce attention like deep harmony :

Where words are scarce, they're seldom spent in vain :

For they breathe truth that breathe their words in pain.

He that no more must say, is listen'd to more

Than they whom youth and ease have taught to glose.

More are men's ends mark'd than their lives before."

How much ought we to value the "Gode Council of Chaucer." written on his death-bed, when that solemn hour

had come, in which resignation and composure are most required, and the light of heaven enters the soul through the chinks disease has made! These are the sober, sensible, impressive, but not sombre, thoughts which he left as a parting legacy to his posterity, to us, and ours:—

“Fly from the press, and dwell with soothfastness,
Suffice unto thy good though it be small;
For hoard hath hate, and climbing tickleness,
Press hath envy, and weal is blent o’er all;
Savour no more than thee behoven shall;
Rede well thyself, that other folk canst rede,
And Truth thee shall deliver ’tis no drede.

“Pain thee not each crooked to redress
In trust of her that turneth as a ball;
Great rest standeth in little business;
Beware also to spurn against a nalle:
Strive not as doth a crooké with a wall;
Deem thou thyself that deem’st others’ deed,
And Truth thee shall deliver ’tis no drede.

“That thee is sent receive in buxomness;
The wrestling of this world asketh a fall;
Here is no home, here is but wilderness;
Forth, pilgrim, forth, O beast out of thy stall;
Look up on high, and thank thy God for all;
Waive thou thy lust, and let thy ghost thee lead,
And Truth thee shall deliver ’tis no drede.”

He was the first of the “sovereigns of intellect” who tenanted the south transept of Westminster Abbey, since fittingly named Poets’ Corner. Caxton, the earliest English printer, erected a monument over the resting-place of the first English poet, to

“Protect his memory, and preserve his story.”

Thomas Chaucer, his son, held many honourable offices, and was highly successful as a diplomatist; his daughter,

Elizabeth, became a nun in the Priory of St Helen's, London; but of the fondling, "litel Lowys," we have no history. It is to be feared he was too precocious, and faded early, and that his virtue, worth, and sweetness were not long held back, after his father's death, from the dull grave that hushes all—"the fairest oft the fleetest."

Life's mutations, great and many though they were—student, lawyer, courtier, soldier, prisoner, ambassador, financier, exile, the friend of princes and kings, the companion of noble, patriot, and reformer, but above and excelling all, the poet—came to an end. A fadeless glory is round his memory, and his words, like the soul they issued from, are immortal. Imagination, humour, satire, sagacious observativeness, the very ethereal essence of sociality and song, were in him. The freshness of a May morning is over all his works. They are prolific

"Of more proverbs
Than in this world there growen grass or herbs."

The learning in them is deep, wide, and masterly. They are quaint, *naive*, and (if rightly read) musical. They are full of the thought-life of a true man and Englishman, and they are the "heirs of the invention" of the father of the language of "nobleness and chivalrie"—the strongest, richest, most elegant and valuable of the languages of men.

Chaucer was the "antecessor" of a noble race; "the line of English poets begins with him, as that of English kings with William the Conqueror; and if the change introduced by him was not so great, his title is better. Kings there were before the Conquest, and of great and glorious memory too. But the poets before Chaucer are like the heroes before Agamemnon; even of those whose works have

escaped oblivion, the names of most have perished." It has not been so with

“ Him who left half told
The story of Cambuscan bold,
Of Cambull and of Algarsife ;
And who had Canacé to wife;
That own'd the wondrous ring and glass ;
And of the wondrous horse of brass
On which the Tartar king did ride.”

The preservative magic of genius more effectively than the conservative consecration of sovereignty, has made us the inheritors of

“ Him who first with harmony inform'd
The language of our fathers. . . . Who in times
Dark and untaught, began with charming verse
To tame the rudeness of his native land.”

May we be worthy of the gift of this great and good illustrator of life and literature!



Copernicus—Modern Astronomy.

A.D. 1473-1543.

“ O best endowed and bravest Pole of Poles!
Stupendous was thine insight into things;
And things celestial too; though *stars* not *souls*,
Thine more than any man's the skill that brings
The Truth that *is* from out the Truth that *seems*.
How free thy will, how plastical thy mind,
With love-like bands of light the sun to bind—
A wandering joy till then in all our dreams!—
But bind in honour as a king is bound,
By holy law, to bless, sustain, and rule.
No wonder thou wert crush'd instead of crown'd;
The Church was frighten'd, and abash'd the school.
Oh for another error-quelling Mars,
To range the world of souls as well as stars!”

—*Samuel Brown*, 1852.

“Copernicus, vir maximo ingenio, et quod in hoc exercitio magni momenti est, animo liber.”—*Kepler*.

“The great Columbus of the heavens.”—*Edward Everett*.

“This Copernicus has done much more than he thought of.”—*Hobbes*.



COPERNICUS—MODERN ASTRONOMY.



O those who are acquainted with the grandeur and sweep of modern astronomical speculation, the sublime results of the far-stretching explorations into the vast indefinitudes of space, which its cultivators have accumulated and arranged, and the mightiness of the masses and epochs regarding which the astronomer gives us information, it cannot but be interesting to know something of the "life and times" of that man by whom the central thought of modern astronomy was initiated; while to those who have hitherto contented themselves with a faith in, rather than a knowledge of, the facts of this science it may be not useful only, but pleasing, to be taken to the centre-thought from which all these facts out-radiate, that they may trace out hereafter, with greater ease, in the subsequent developments and progress of the science, the influences set a-working by the genius of that illustrious Pole, who "nature's mystic lore and language" knew so well.

Nicholas Copernicus was born near the old gate in Thorn, (Torunia,) a town on the right bank of the Vistula, in the Palatinate of Masovia, in the ancient kingdom of Poland, 19th February, 1473. In consequence of the name of the great astronomer's grandfather being found in the register of persons admitted to the privileges of citizenship in Cracow,

in 1396, under the Bohemian form *Koppernig*, it has been generally assumed that his paternal ancestors were Boii. The father of Copernicus, who was a surgeon, came from Cracow, and settled in Thorn in 1462. Three years afterwards, he had risen so much in popular estimation that he was elected a member of the council of the town of his adoption. This sufficiently defines his position in society to account for his marriage with Barbara Watzelrod, a native of Thorn, a lady connected by birth with the nobility of Poland. Copernicus received his early education at home, and in the public gymnasium or grammar school, founded 1350, of his native place. He had the reputation, even in his youth, of being "a scholar, and a ripe and good one." His father died shortly after Copernicus had completed his tenth year, and the bereaved mother placed the direction of his studies in the hands of her brother, Lucas Watzelrod, Bishop of Ermland (Warmia.) It was decided that the youth should follow his father's profession; so, after having advanced his elementary studies sufficiently at Thorn, he was entered as a student of medicine in 1491, in the then far-famed University of Cracow, founded 1364 by Casimir the Great. Here he studied classics, medicine, and philosophy. He was here placed under the private as well as the public instructions of the celebrated Albert Brudzewski, afterwards tutor to Alexander, King of Poland. The influence of such a teacher on the mind of a pupil, both by inclination and interest apt in study, could not but have been considerable. Brudzewski was equally distinguished for his attainments in Greek scholarship, his mathematical skill, and his astronomical researches. He was the author of a work on the mathematics of astronomy, which became, and long continued to be, a text-book throughout Europe. For some time the rival in

reputation of Purbach and Regiomontanus, he had now become their successor. Under such a teacher Copernicus was initiated into the mysteries of the astronomy of that age, and made acquainted with the uses of the astrolabe—the instrument then employed in making observations on the stars.

The University of Cracow was at this time also world-famous for the publication of an annual almanac, the preparation of which was a task imposed on the mathematical professor of that university on his appointment. That the professors might have every facility afforded them for the proper performance of this important duty, the university collected, at great expense and trouble, all the *Ephemerides Astronomicæ*, or almanacs, then published, so that it was well furnished, for the time, with the conditions of successful astronomical study. We cannot doubt that Copernicus took due advantage of his opportunities, and that besides making himself well acquainted with the usual branches of a university curriculum, he had acquired a permanent taste, if not a decided thirst, for knowledge. A special interest, however, seems to have been excited in him for astronomical investigations.

To gratify his intense desire for improvement, Copernicus left Poland, to visit the chief foreign seats of learning. In 1495, he entered the University of Padua, then one of the most flourishing educational institutions in southern Europe, as a student of the faculty of medicine. Here he studied the peripatetic philosophy and medicine under Passaro and Teatinus, varying his life by spending his vacations at Bologna, in companionship with Dominico Maria, the most celebrated Italian mathematician of his age, with whom congeniality of taste and studies had made him an intimate

friend. In 1499, Copernicus graduated in Padua as doctor both of philosophy and medicine, the ceremony, as was then usual, taking place in the magnificent cathedral of that city.

In the following year, on the recommendation of his friend Dominico Maria, Copernicus was appointed professor of mathematics in Rome. His reputation had preceded him thither, and he began to expound his favourite science, as well as continued to pursue his astronomical investigations, under the most favourable auspices. A crowd of scholars, artists, and other eminent men, attended his lectures; great applause greeted his steps; he was declared to be nothing inferior to Regiomontanus; and triumph seemed to swell his sails. He had not long occupied this notable position, till the novelty of his doctrines, no less than the greatness of his fame, excited jealousy. The deplorable government of Rome, under Pope Alexander VI., was not of such a kind as to satisfy a Polish scholar. He resigned his professorship in 1502, and returned to Cracow, with the halo of fame on his brow, and the sting of envy in his heel.

During eight years—the eight years in which the Augustan age of Polish literature brightened towards its dawn, under the wisest, bravest, and most magnanimous of Poland's kings, Sigismund I.—Copernicus dwelt contentedly in Cracow. He went little into company, was grave and serious in manner and speech, delighted in quiet, learned, earnest conversation, and was diligent in keeping up a widely diffused correspondence with the first men of the age. His tendency towards unusual and original speculation had developed itself early; the calm daring of his thoughts had won him many admirers; and hence an intimacy with him was much sought after and highly valued. Large masses of his epistles to the eminent scientific and

literary men of his time are still, we believe, to be found among the MS. collections in the library of the University of Cracow.

Copernicus was a man, not only of extensive erudition in the science by which his distinction was gained, but also profoundly thoughtful and extremely cautious in observation and experiment. By the use of the Cracovian *Ephemerides*, and several instruments constructed by himself, he had diligently noted the positions of the stars, and compared them with the places assigned them in the systems of antiquity, till the multiplicity of discrepancies observed between the theoretic and the real led him first to a doubt, and afterwards to a disbelief, of the received canons of astronomy. The date usually given, as that in which this disbelief transformed itself into a new and definite theory, is 1507. We see no reason for doubting this chronological statement, although we know of no positive proof for the fixing of the date. This, however, we may infer, that his devotion to scientific pursuits must have impaired what resources may have been left him by his father, have precluded him from acquiring sufficient means of living from tutorial pursuits or the practice of surgery, and have made him anxious to find some position wherein the earnestness of study might be made compatible with "a competent portion of the good things of this life." The example of his friends Konarski and Zaremba, as well as the advice of his uncle, doubtlessly led him to think of the Church. He took holy orders, was consecrated a priest in Cracow, and was created Canon of Frauenburg, in the diocese of Ermeland, of which Lucas Watzelrod, his uncle, was the bishop. At first, however, the change did not seem to be very advantageous, so far as regarded the furtherance of those investigations which he

was desirous of engaging in, regarding the "jewellery of heaven." His uncle being much engaged at the court, the management of the business affairs of the bishopric was confided to the care of Copernicus. The administrative capacity required for the successful accomplishment of these in the then state of the diocese was of no mean order. Nevertheless, he manifested all the qualities of a consummate adept in business, even while he pursued in private the quiet and "even tenor" of scholarly research.

The business difficulties in which Copernicus suddenly found himself immersed arose in this wise. In 1225, the Teutonic knights having returned from Palestine to a retirement in Venice, had been invited to convert Masovia to Christianity. As a condition of, as well as a reward for, the accomplishment of this desirable end, they had received a grant of land. They succeeded, by the most horrid tyranny, in reducing the inhabitants of that district to a nominal recognition of Jesus, but a real subjugation to themselves. Not contented with the territory with which their order had been endowed, they stretched out their conquests and oppressive domination greatly beyond their prescribed limits. Tyranny invariably produces revolt. Resistance was determined on, and hostilities, at first desultory, but latterly combined, were commenced. The exigence at length grew so alarming, that a convention was held, in 1454, in the native town of Copernicus, to devise and carry out such means as seemed likely to be successful in enabling the people to throw off the tyrannous yoke with which they were enthralled by those knightly despots. In 1466, by a treaty of renunciation signed at Thorn, the movement was ostensibly finished by the vanquishment of the Teutonic usurpers. This victory was more seeming than real, how-

ever ; for the oppressors substituted guile for force, and by stealthy and insidious encroachments on their neighbours were rapidly regaining a complete though unapparent triumph. They had begun to exercise their sly rapacity in the diocese of Ermeland ; and Copernicus, with all the enthusiasm of a citizen of the town in which their defeat had been determined on and sealed, set himself to cross their designs, resist their machinations, and render their efforts effectless. Bribes, menaces, and entreaties were all vainly employed to move his firm and resolute will. Copernicus conquered ; and the vanquished knights, with pitiable malice, called in the aid of some obscure plagiarist from Aristophanes to introduce him, Socrates-like, as one of the *dramatis personæ* of a comedy performed at Elbing, another town which they had founded. Amid the buffoonery of this comedy a burlesque of his astronomical theories was presented, and the mob was excited to hissing, hooting, and wonder at the priestly wiseacre who *could*, in opposition to the plain teaching of his own eyes, suppose that the earth moved round the sun.* The pleading of Copernicus against

* The following *résumé* of the plot of this piece may not be uninteresting :—The stage exhibits the interior of an astronomer's study, furnished with many ridiculous instruments ; in the centre stands an old man, a burlesque representation, in appearance and dress, of Copernicus. Behind him is Satan, and by his side a clown. Copernicus devotes himself to the Prince of Darkness, burns a Bible, and—more heinous still—tramples upon a crucifix. With resin torches the face of the astronomer is lighted up to represent the sun, whilst he juggles several apples round his ruddy face, in imitation of the revolving planets, after which he vends quack medicine and pomatum, and the farce closes, amidst blue, green, and crimson lights,—melodrama's darlings,—by Satan seizing him, to drag him to a region underlying human graves, whence issue belching, sulphurous flames, declaring all the while that he would hang him head downmost during

the recording of a final judgment on *such* evidence, before *such* a jury, was pithy and concise—“*Mathematica mathematicis scribuntur*”—mathematics are written for mathematicians. His appeal has been successful, judgment has been reversed, the satire and the science of the Teutonic knights are now alike objects of contempt, while the name and fame of Copernicus are brightened with the progress of the suns.

Though the Court had, by a royal decree, compelled the restitution of the usurped estates, the contention between the Canon of Frauenburg and the warlike missionaries of the cross was not yet fully ended; for when it became known that at a diet to be held at Graudentz, in 1521, the subject of the debasement of the coin of the realm, which had been extensively and systematically practised by the knights, was to be taken into serious consideration, Copernicus was chosen nuncio for the diocese of Ermeland, and made earnest and valuable efforts for the correction of this heinous political and moral crime. The definitive settlement of this question being encumbered with many difficulties,—amongst others, the infringement of rights acquired by several towns, *e.g.*, Dantzic and Elbing, to coin their own money,—the consideration of the subject was postponed till a future diet. Copernicus has left behind him evidences of his interest in this matter in the tables which he constructed to show the mode in which the current coin of Poland, Prussia, and Lithuania might be reduced to a common and uniform, yet standard issue.

eternity, for having ventured to disturb the settled earth. The humour is made more *telling* by the appendix of asses' ears to his caput, the jokes of the merry-andrew, and the wondrous vision of the gateway of the place of Fate, which blazed so triumphantly for the reception of the destruction-deserving priest.

The incident of the Elbing comedy sufficiently shows that the views which Copernicus entertained regarding the solar system were somewhat widely known. Another circumstance still more signally proves that, though his opinions were, as yet, formally unpublished, they were very far from being either unknown or unnoticed. When the reform of the Calendar was agitated in the Church, Bishop Paul, of Middleburg, the president of the special congregation convened for the consideration of that subject, besought, by an autograph letter, the co-operation and assistance of Copernicus. To this subject the attention of the Canon of Frauenburg had been given from the time that Pope Leo X. (1513-1522) had first mooted the question. He had early arrived at the conclusion that the chief cause of the failure of any scheme for effecting such a purpose lay in the inadequacy, if not the absolute erroneousness, of the results obtained by the labours of former astronomers, "as regards the length of years and months, on the one hand, and the relative movements of the sun and the moon on the other." To investigations upon these matters he accordingly devoted himself. When, therefore, Bishop Paul solicited his aid, he was not only willing, but specially fitted to give good help; and he did not refuse compliance, but wrote a treatise on the fixing of the exact length of the year, which was laid before the congregation, and was undoubtedly employed in the ultimate decision of that long-debated point. This is clearly proven by the authority of Christopher Clavius, the person appointed by Gregory XIII. to superintend the reformation, finally accomplished in October 1582, who, in his work "On the Calendar," says that "Nicholas Copernicus, an illustrious mathematician of our age, by a most diligent comparison of his own observations with those of

Hipparchus, Ptolemy, Albategnius, and the Alphonsine tables, has ventured, by an incredibly healthy shrewdness, new hypotheses being attached thereto, to demonstrate this increase and decrease of the solar year, and to reduce the inequalities of the year to a certain and definite law; and has discovered, by a *calculus* derived from his hypotheses, that the solar year, when it has increased to its greatest extent, is a little greater than that which Ptolemy calculated, viz., $365^{\text{d}} 5^{\text{h}} 55' 57'' 40'''$, but that when it has decreased to the utmost, it is a little less than Albategnius found it, viz., $365^{\text{d}} 0^{\text{h}} 4' 55'' 7'''$; so that the medium magnitude of the Alphonsine year is somewhat nearly an average between the longest and the shortest duration."

The above quotation proves satisfactorily that although Copernicus did not live to see his opinions adopted, they were yet allowed silently to operate in the production of important changes, and that though the efficient promoters of the Gregorian calendar cautiously abstained from assenting to the peculiar hypotheses implied in his suggestions, they made such use of his labours as bore real testimony to their value, virtual testimony to their truth.

Strange, that at this very time Providence should have raised up two men in Europe whose genius should be subversive of the past, and potent to upbuild the new—Luther and Copernicus—the one the reformer of the *theology*, the other of the *science* of the age! Strange, that in this era there should be two protests, entered simultaneously, from opposite hemispheres of thought, against the domination of authority! Stranger still, that those two men, working towards the same end,—the emancipation of the human soul from the trammels of a bigoted conservatism,—should have had no brotherly sympathies, no links of communion;

that they seem to have risen up unrecognised by each other as "fellow-helpers ;" and that each, absorbed in the working out of his own purpose, was shut out by the very energy and concentrativeness requisite to the accomplishment of *that* from sympathy with his co-labourer in the enfranchisement of thought! Yet so it was; and these twin-born children of progress pursued each his own way, unwitting that in the grand drama of history they were bringing about the wonderful *dénouement* of modern civilisation.

The pathway to the attainment of true *science* was blocked up by the dogmas handed down, sanctioned, and authoritatively decided by the Church, and the "true and living way" of access to a *theology*, potent over the whole faculties of the human soul, had long exhibited a placard, whereon was inscribed the fatal words, "No thoroughfare! Trespassers will be prosecuted." But the ocean yielded up to Columbus a new world; the mechanism by which thought becomes winged was discovered; the idea of nationality had been evoked; Luther opened the Bible, and Copernicus unriddled the mysteries of the sky, notwithstanding the prohibition which the papal hierarchy had issued against change and progress. The dominion of the senses, and the tyranny of tradition, had both been resisted, and the freedom of the human understanding had been proclaimed as the necessary condition of truth, holiness, and civilisation. The calmly studious life of the great astronomer has been somewhat overlooked in the noise of the polemics of the great reformer; yet there is a heroism in the silent, though laborious toilsomeness of a student's life not undeserving of its reward, not effectless in human history, not forgotten of God, though frequently disregarded by man.

We have noticed some events in the life of Copernicus,

which have carried us beyond the period at which his theory of the planetary system had been elaborated, and, in some measure, made known to his contemporaries. Alone on the outposts of scientific conquest; undesparingly tenacious the solitary sentinel-house, erected on the utmost verge to which intimidated inquiry had ventured to extend her power; self-centred and self-upheld, although uncheered by sympathy of thought or companionship in study, with the noble heroism of patient labour, he has been engaged in waging an uncompromising warfare with doubt, error, difficulty, and distance; and he now brings with him the fruits of his victory, and the trophies of his conquests. Let us now turn our attention to the modes and processes by which, overstepping the wonted boundaries of human thought, he substantiated a new and true explanation of the majestic and slowly-evolving phenomena of the far-off firmament. To effect this, we must turn back the pages of the history of science, and retroject our thoughts far into the distance of former centuries, when experimental philosophy scarcely existed, and authority had closed the doors of further investigation. In going from the light into the darkness there is little chance of acquiring distinctness of vision. Let us rather voluntarily shut our eyes to the light which the after centuries reveal, until we are able to turn our faces towards the light thereof, and find some use for the illumination which it can throw back upon the past.

Early in the history of our race the stars had attracted the loving watchfulness of thoughtful men. They gazed on them long and patiently as they sparkled in the intense blue of an Oriental sky. They had grouped them into constellations, traced their pathways, calculated their wanderings, and determined the periods in which their journeys were

performed. The *phases* of "the two great lights" had been so scanned and studied, that their slowest changes were marked, known, and registered. Almost all the facts ascertainable by mere inspection had been placed in the treasuries of science. Intellect, however, had not yet overleaped the barriers of sensation, and secured a pathway to higher truths than sense gives. Hence every effort made to explain the phenomena of the stars accepted as real and true that which was only apparent. The Greeks expended their grandly theoretic intellects upon the scientific construction of astronomy, and brought into being a multitude of hypotheses, according to which the mystic motions of the heavenly bodies *might* be explained. These could not then be subjected to any decisive test, but continued to retain the fascination, as well as the indefiniteness, of dreams. Hipparchus saw this deficiency, and endeavoured to supply it, by the institution of continuous, accurate, and constant observation. Following his example, Ptolemy closely examined facts, and patiently pursued his researches into the secrets of the motions of the orbs of heaven. At length, having accumulated observations, he began to theorise, and, for a time, by a most ingeniously-devised system of cycles and epicycles, satisfactorily accounted for the phenomena of the planetary motions. This system was recognised as true, enjoyed the popularity of centuries, and eventually became so tenaciously engrafted upon human thought, as to defy, apparently for ever, any attempt at extirpation. Some few rude remonstrances had been made, some concessions had been granted, some trivial innovations had been introduced, but in all its essentials the Ptolemaic system was that which universally prevailed when Copernicus devoted himself to the emancipation of science from the fetters of authority, and

the limitations of the single sense through which astronomical phenomena become knowable.

Copernicus was well read in all that related to the doctrines of astronomy, a profound student, a bold thinker, a patient investigator, an ingenious contriver of experiments, and a truly pious man. During thirty years he observed the varied processions of the heavenly bodies, compared their positions with those resulting from the Ptolemaic theory, which showed—

“The sphere,
With centric and *excentric* scribbled o'er
Cycle and *epicycle*, orb in orb ;”

computed their distances, motions, and relations, in the hope of reconciling the complexity of the whole with some simple idea, such as seemed worthy of the God of the creation. The effort was vain. Each new experiment showed only the superlative degree of intricate disorder. There seemed no hope, unless he took “a new departure,” changed his tact, and thus corrected the faulty reckoning of those voyagers into the ocean of space who had preceded him in the attempt to reach scientific truth.

Another hypothesis having become necessary, Copernicus began to think over the various suggestions which had been thrown out by the ancients for the explanation of the appearances which the sky presented to the sight. He remembered that Pythagoras had supposed that the grand central fire of the universe—the sun—was stationary, and that the planets revolved in order and harmony round that brilliant mass. Could this guess be the key to the truth? Thought might catch the secret upon due inquiry. Doubt, prejudice, and difficulty stood before him to oppose his progress, but at last, conviction having been matured within

him, he rises to new effort, and forsaking the useless and untenable determinations of ignorant authority, set out on a voyage of discovery into the far-distant spaces of the sky. Borne away, in the pellucid car of imagination, after flashing

“Through the midst of an immense concave
Radiant with million constellations, tinged
With shades of infinite colour, . . .
An ever-varying glory,”

he reached the sun. There, in the azure canopy, he saw the stars, no longer stationary, but floating along through immensity; in the unimaginable harmony of regulated motion, he beheld—

“Each with undeviating aim,
In eloquent silence, through the depths of space
Pursued its wondrous way.”

All seemed explained. Complexity vanished, and simplicity appeared. The sweep of those worlds which inhabited the far splendours of space was periodical, calculable, and precise. They swirled along their diverse orbits in the same direction, and filled the same belt in the radiance through which they sped their ceaseless career. The earth was no longer the monarch of motion; his sceptre was given to the sun, while the faithful moon, accompanying her lord in his exile, seemed to devote herself to the task of comforting him in hours of gloom, and to circle him with her love.

Not all at once did the simple beauty of truth attract and charm. There were still moments when error retained its power, and prejudice refused to yield; but decision came at last, and when experiment, frequently and carefully repeated, had verified the deductions of reason, he announced, with modesty, the new theory of astronomy, and became, by that

announcement, the founder of a new dynasty of thinkers—sealed up an old epoch, and unsealed a new.

A revolution was initiated. A few bold thinkers, struck by the simple grandeur of the new conception, sought from its author an explanation of his theory, proved by experiment, and attested by results. Among the most noteworthy of these was George Joachim, surnamed Rheticus, (1514–1576,) one of those enthusiasts for knowledge who follow its track with unslacking zeal. Appointed at the early age of twenty-three to be professor of elementary mathematics in the University of Wittenburg, he laboured there with much acceptance for about two years, when hearing—probably from his superior, Reinhold (1511–1553)—of the changes introduced into astronomical science by Copernicus, he left his chair, repaired to Frauenburg, and became the disciple, assistant, and friend of the father of modern astronomy. This noble student, who forsook position and fame to enlarge his own acquirements, found Copernicus an adept in all kinds of knowledge. His enthusiasm was fired, and despite of personal peril, he became the zealous advocate, as well as the earliest public expounder, of the new tenets. This he did in a letter addressed to Dr Schoner, entitled, "*Narratio de libris Revolutionum Revdi. Doct. Nicolai Copernici*," printed at Dantzic in 1541, in which he asserted that the rotation of the earth is not a probability, but a truth, such a truth as Aristotle himself would have been willing to acknowledge and adopt.

But the fame which brought Copernicus this whole-hearted disciple and loving admirer had excited some envy amongst those of his own order, as well as some displeasure in the palaces wherein preferment is arranged and given. In 1537, on the demise of Bishop Maurice, the successor of

his uncle, he was nominated one of four candidates for the bishopric of Warmia. There can be little doubt that Sigismund I., when he appointed John Flachsfinder, surnamed Dantzigus, (1484-1548,) was influenced by the desire of not appearing to favour and reward the well-known contemner of authority, if he was not even anxious to indicate his own aversion to the promulgation of the new theory. Dantzigus was indeed a most deserving person. He had been born a peasant, was educated at Cracow, was made professor of poetry there, became the secretary of the king, and had held the office of ambassador in England before his appointment to the bishopric of Warmia. He had had his share of honour and reward, yet he was preferred to Copernicus, who thereafter neither received nor looked for worldly advancement. Doubtlessly the successorship to his uncle would have been most grateful to his feelings, and must have seemed little more than a just reward for his powerful efforts to diminish the power of the Teutonic knights. His rejection, therefore, seems to bear the import of a "vote of censure" on his innovating philosophy, unless, indeed, we are to believe that he was tinctured with Lutheranism, a supposition which *has been* entertained, but which appears to rest on far too narrow a basis.

If it be as we suppose, how galling must this pointed dissent, if not dissatisfaction, have been to his noble soul! Already had his spirit travailed exceedingly in the task of unravelling the intricate confusion of false science, and with undaunted perseverance defied and overcome the difficulties which beset the pathway of a new traveller in an untrodden way. But now, as if the toils he had undergone had not been enough to strain, with the exquisite torture of over-tension, the sinews of human thought, just when the signal

whisper of success has been uttered, to the shout of derision formerly mouthed by the multitude are added the piercings of the malicious arrows of revenge, and the pain of the wounds occasioned by the crown of thorns which envy loves so well to plait for and to place on the brows of those who bow not "to the world, nor the world's law."

It is gratifying to know, however, that in the meanwhile Copernicus had the kindly offices of charity to withdraw his thoughts from the pressure of life's cares, and the blessings of the poor to weigh in the balances against the muttered slanders of the superstitious or the silly, the laughter of the prejudiced and ignorant, or the perverse zeal of the bigoted and over-conservative. To vary his severer studies, he amused himself with drawing, painting, and mechanical contrivances, devoted himself to the gratuitous attendance of the sick, busied himself in superintending the water supplies of the village, and in arranging the administrative concerns of the canonry. However sedulously employed in investigating the motions of those dazzling masses which wheel their mighty circles through the convolved heavens, he did not forget his duties as a denizen of earth, or neglect to add his mite of help to the distressed or sorrowing.

Discouraged, but not disheartened, by his defeat in the candidature for the bishopric, Copernicus laboured on. Rheticus came, heard, examined, and was convinced. He threw himself boldly forward as the claimant of public recognition for the grand discoveries which the modest ex-candidate had made. Not contented with this, he prevailed on Copernicus to register his discoveries and to expound his views. To this advice Tideman Gysius, Bishop of Culm, and Cardinal Schomberg of Capua added their entreaties. Copernicus had, indeed, completely determined, as we for-

merly stated, the whole of the elements of his theory by 1530, but we do not believe, as some do, that his *magnum opus* was composed and finished at that date. It is true that there are traces of his having begun such a work while resident in Cracow, but we know that he was naturally hesitant and careful. We may well assume, then, that having determined upon laying his speculations before the learned, he would feel anxious to set them forth with all the care at his command, and that he would, at least, re-write his work, and test its teachings, incorporating therein the latest light he had received upon the subject. He would give the copy forth slowly, and revise discreetly, thus loading his advanced years with labour they were ill fitted to bear. Amidst disappointment and anxiety the work was at length done, and under the editorship of Rheticus, and the superintendence of Andrew Osiander, of Nuremberg, it was consigned to the press. Messengers were despatched from the printing-office to carry the proofs safely into the hands of Copernicus himself, for jealousy tracked his doings, and the voice of enmity had been heard muttering, like the prelude to a storm. "May God have pity on us," writes Gysius, of Culm, "and avert the blow which now threatens thee! Thine enemies and thy rivals combined—those who charge thee with folly, and those who accuse thee of heresy—have been so successful in exciting the minds of the people of Nuremberg against thee, that men curse thy name in the streets; the priests excommunicate thee from their pulpits; and the university, hearing that thy book was to appear, has declared its intention to break the printing-press of the publisher, and to destroy the work to which thy life has been devoted. Come and allay the tempest; come quickly, or thou shalt be too late!" The threatened riot assumed a most formidable

aspect. Thrice an attempt was made to enter the premises, and once the power of fire was tried. The printers wrought with their pistols at hand, and the friends of Rheticus, Gysius, and Copernicus kept watch and ward by day and night. The manuscripts of the book were stolen by a compositor from the office, and the leaves were burnt in the public market-place. Such were the dangers which overhung the issue of the revolutionary work. As day by day the knowledge of all these doings reached the ears of Copernicus, his soul became more and more subjected to excitement; and his anxiety became intense. Alas! too intense, as the issue proved. He had received notice that in three days more a messenger would be sent with the finished volume. His frame, already strung to the highest pitch, yielded; he burst a blood-vessel; to the hemorrhage a stroke of paralysis succeeded, and memory and life began to fail. The awful anxiety of suspense had overcome the semi-exhausted life-powers, and thus it was with him as it ever is with men in the *crisis* of their being.

“The ocean of to-morrow
Breaks upon life’s rocky shore
With its turmoil, with its sorrow,
Evermore, ah, evermore!
Flowing, ebbing, ebbing, flowing,
Its emotions change and glide;
Fears of unknown trouble throwing
Solemn shadows o’er the tide.”

In the indescribable agony of this uncertainty, which had unnerved his frame and almost overwhelmed his mind, he lay nursing hope even in the embraces of despair. And yet the ominous words, *too late*, would keep sounding in his ears, and booming through all the avenues of thought.

Life began silently and stealthily to ebb away. The torpor of death was closing the gateways to the palace of the soul. When suddenly sounds are heard, the rapid tramp of a horse's hoofs brings a strange sensation to that half-shut ear. It stops—it is—it is the messenger from Nuremberg! He dismounts, hastens in; the eye of Copernicus sparkles with renewed life, his cheek flushes, and the pulses of his heart revive. He raises himself slowly, grasps the precious volume, touches "the great legacy he was to bequeath to mankind," turns his ardent gaze on its still damp pages, and smiles. The hour is come. The book falls from his hands; "the common safeguard against oppression" is *here*; a faint voice rises on the quietude of the sick-room—"Lord, *now* let thy servant depart in peace." These words said, Copernicus rested from his labours in the kindly care of Death. That was the 23d of May 1543. Evening had passed away and taken her stars with her, morning had brought the rising sun and the glory of a new day; but before the shadows again fell, Copernicus had gone to yield up his account to the Sovereign of that creation whose mysteries, while acknowledging their inscrutability, he had attempted in part to know, to interpret, and to describe.

The years passed on. The long ripening process of a great thought required to be gone through. Copernicus departed, but his thought remained. Wafted hither and thither, like the seeds of a plant, it sought a congenial soil to germinate in. *That* was found, and modern astronomy arose, flourished, and still flourishes.

So lived, so died, he who gave the first real impulse to that thought which, through Moestlin and Giordano Bruno, the after-ages inherited. "Tycho Brahe attempted to restore the absurdities of the Ptolemaic system," but the rebellion

of experimental science is only to be quelled by proofs excelling in cogency those given by it ; the attempt failed, and the Copernican system of the universe was effectually incorporated with the thoughts of men after it had produced such results as the names of Kepler, Galileo, and Newton recall. Let us reverence him as one of the heroes of old, whose life-battle was spent in honour ; but while we do so, let us not forget that

“Earth hath her heroes still, who strive
In silence for the right ;
Unheralded to battle come
Truth, Patience, Firmness, Might.”



Lord Clive—The Conquest of
India.

A.D. 1725—1774.

“ Strange are the destinies of men and states!
And oft within the little round of life,
Where effort and effect, so stern in strife,
Wage battle 'neath the banner of the fates,
The strong will works a noble purpose out,
By giving scope to energies sublime,
By putting age-old evils to the rout,
Making mankind its debtor for all time.
Clive's influence, Indian history recast,
And moulds even yet the future of the East;
And must, or Britain's empire shall have ceased
To wield sure lordship o'er its regions vast.
Arcot and Plassey did not all decide,
But Clive began the glory gain'd by Clyde.”

—*Jul. Sleeman.*

“ A heaven-born general, who, without experience, surpassed all the soldiers of his time.”—*Lord Chatham.*

“ Every person who takes a fair and enlightened view of his whole career, must admit that our island, so fertile in heroes and statesmen, has scarcely ever produced a man more truly great, either in arms or in council.”—MACAULAY'S *Lord Clive.*



LORD CLIVE.—THE BRITISH EMPIRE IN INDIA.

THE Right Hon. William Pitt, (afterwards Lord Chatham,) then one of His Majesty George II.'s principal secretaries of state, received a communication dated "Calcutta, 7th January 1759," in which "the present possessions and future prospects" of the East India Company were passed under review; the means necessary "to enable the Company to take the sovereignty [of India] upon themselves," or, if it be thought "worthy the Government's taking it into hand," it is proven "that there will be little difficulty in obtaining the absolute possession of these rich kingdoms." The writer of this letter, which anticipated the issues of history by a century, was Robert (afterwards Lord) Clive,—a man whose career was so useful and glorious as to tempt the pen of "the Philosopher of Fernelly;" to draw forth from Lord Macaulay one of the most striking and eloquent papers which have ever enriched the pages of the *Edinburgh Review*; and to establish a name which merits appreciative mention in the historic annals both of Europe and India, as the inaugurator of that policy which Britain has recently (1858) consummated

by the annexation of India as an integral part of the dominions of her sovereign.

There is no *chance* in human life ; all its issues are the results of an intexturing and combination of personal qualification and providential causation. The great "shaping Spirit" is supreme over the plan, pattern, and product of existence. To show in one concrete instance how truly and how grandly—using only the commonplace of life, and the seemingly accidental occurrences therein—Providence penetrates the soul with suggestion, such impulses as animate thought, such influences as stir to action, such aims as task the soul's best energies, will, we fancy, neither be useless nor unprofitable ; and we have selected for this purpose the biography of one who achieved eminence in the midst of the most unpropitious circumstances, by the spontaneous and persistent energy with which he pursued the main object of his life ; even while he was, indisputably, working out one of those grand changes in history which all-prescient Providence had fixed—that the age-hoar and amazing civilisation of Hindostan might be supplanted by a benigner, because a Christian, form of social life. This new central light by which we propose to examine the early phenomena of European conquest in the East will, we hope, exhibit events in such a form as, while not detracting from their picturesqueness, may increase their interest and intelligibility. Therein will lie our justification for bringing again, and now, under review a life and an epoch on which the best energies of genius have already been exerted.

ROBERT CLIVE was born in the manor-house of Styche, in the parish of Moreton Say, near Drayton-in-Hales, in the hundred of North Bradford, Shropshire, 29th September 1725. His father, Richard Clive, a practising attorney,

married Miss Rebecca Gaskill, by whom he had a family of thirteen children, of whom Robert was the eldest. Before he had completed his third year, Robert Clive was sent to reside with his uncle-in-law, Mr Bayley, of Hope Hall, Manchester, where he was brought up in youth, and was more remarkable for wayward intractability of temper, ingenuity in mischief, and audacity in the execution of boyish freaks and pranks, than for application to study. A dashing perversity and fearlessness, as well as imperiousness of manner, secured to him the ringleadership of plot and play in school and at home. He was "put to school" at Lostock, in Cheshire; at Drayton-in-Hales; at the Merchant Taylors' in London; and in them all acquired so wild a reputation that he was at last consigned to the private tuition of a Mr Sterling. It had been intended that he should follow his father's profession; but the daring unmanageability of his disposition induced his friends to regard themselves as lucky in getting rid of an annoyance by the attainment for him, in 1743, of a writership in the service of the Hon. East India Company. He set off immediately, scarcely eighteen, scantily furnished with money, and had a long and dangerous voyage. The ship was unseaworthy, and required to put in for repairs,—first at Brazil, where it lay nine months, and again at the Cape of Good Hope. It was the autumn of 1744 before he reached Madras, and then,—he had been obliged to borrow money from the captain at a high rate of interest; and the only friend to whom he had letters of introduction had started for Europe months ago. Shy, proud, lonely—perhaps repentant—he held aloof from patronage and hospitality, and began his duty with moody irritability. He felt himself misplaced, grumbled at destiny, and moped himself into a

chronic *melancholia*, whose morbid gloom almost eclipsed and always clouded his reason. Life, so pent up and dull, became unendurable ; and one day, in an excess of misery, he attempted suicide. Twice the pistol, laid against his forehead, was snapped, yet missed fire. He threw it down dissatisfied. A fellow-clerk shortly after entered. "Fire that pistol out of the window!" said Clive. He obeyed. The pistol went off, and Clive, starting up, exclaimed, "Fate has something in reserve for me to do then!" and walked out. The perturbed state of his mind made him insubordinate, reckless, and a gambler—*anything* to brace his nerves and keep his mind alert. Personal disputes and public quarrels were the result. Once the Governor of Madras commanded him to apologise to his secretary for some insolent language he had used. Clive sullenly did so. The kindly functionary asked him to dinner. "No," replied Clive ; "I have not been commanded to dine with you." Again, he had lost considerably at cards, by two officers, whom he afterwards detected in the act of cheating, and whom, consequently, he refused to pay. One asked satisfaction : Clive complied. They met. Each was furnished with a loaded pistol, which, after having retired a given number of paces, each was to fire when he chose. Clive fired first, and missed. His opponent walked up to him, put the cold muzzle to Clive's head, and demanded an instant retractation. "Shoot!" said Clive ; "I said you swindled—I maintain so still." The officer ejaculated, "Madman!" withdrew his pistol, and the matter was at an end. These are neither instances of bravery nor hardihood : they are merely signs of the reckless carelessness of his life, to which despair had reduced him. But the life-task of Clive lay before him, and that very excitement and worthy

labour for which he pined and yearned were nearly ready to employ his hand. Panting impatiently under the unprofitable restraints of a merchant-clerk's duties, and chafing and chiding at Fortune and Fate, he did *not* see the glimmer and the sheen foreshowing his futurity of fame,—

“As the sun,
Ere it is risen, sometimes paints its image
On the atmosphere.”

A few preliminary explanations will be required now, before we can adequately comprehend this epoch of crisis for Clive, India, and Britain.

The Portuguese, shortly after 1497, began to hold commercial intercourse by sea with India; but about a century thereafter, the Dutch and the English extended their ambition to the Orient. On Dec. 31, 1600, 220 merchants and gentlemen of London became incorporated by charter into a Company possessed of the exclusive right of trading in the East Indies. On the renewal of this charter in 1616, the number of shareholders was increased to 950. In 1634, a new Company, in which Charles I. had an interest, was formed; but this soon merged into its elder rival, and they became incorporate and one in 1650. In 1661, Charles II. granted a new charter, in which the Company was empowered “to make peace or war with or against princes and people, not being Christians;” and, in 1668, Bombay—which had been given by Portugal as a portion of Catherine's dowry—was ceded to the Company on payment of an annual rent of £10 in gold. In 1682, a new rival company was projected, but failed; and a new charter was acquired by the old association in 1693. The Company did not, however, attain an organised form till 1711; and in 1744, the House of Commons confirmed the privileges of the

Company, and granted an extension of their monopoly till 1780.

About 1612, the Company's agents procured leave from the native authorities to establish warehouses at Surat, Ahmedabad, and Cambay; and gradually their factories spread over the chief islands of the Oriental Archipelago. In 1640, Fort St George, at Madras, was founded; and in 1645, a factory, by permission of Mogul Shah Jehan, was erected near the present site of Calcutta. In these several places, as well as in Bombay, the Company carried on a trade in exporting from India, calicoes, diamonds, drugs, saltpetre, silk, tea, pepper, porcelain, &c., and importing in exchange, bullion, hardwares, lead, quicksilver, woollens, &c. In 1715, power was granted to them to purchase thirty-seven townships in Bengal, where Calcutta was already assuming the importance of a settlement. There were, in 1744, the three presidencies—Bombay, Madras, and Calcutta—with their dependent territories, lying along the mere outskirts of Hindostan, in the possession of the English East India Company.

The aboriginal Hindoo population of the country lying south of the mountains of Himalaya, and peaking forward into the Indian Ocean, were invaded by Mahmoud of Shizni, early in the eleventh century; and towards the close of the twelfth, an Affghan dynasty was seated on the throne of Delhi. A century later a revolution occurred, and a new and longer-lived Mohammedan dynasty acquired dominion; but the entire subjugation and subjection of the Hindoos to a Mohammedan monarch was not accomplished till Baber, a descendant of the "mighty Tamburlaine,"

"Thirsting for sovereignty and love of arms,"

founded a wide and stable empire in 1525. The petty

Hindoo princes were replaced by tributary kings or nabobs, and, by daring yet judicious government, the whole of northern India was brought and kept under the sway of the Mogul emperors. On the death of Akbar, in 1605, Jehonghir succeeded. The empire was then apportioned among fifteen subahdars or viceroys, by whose favour—with the consent of their imperial master—the English company obtained the earlier trading settlements on the north-west coast already mentioned. With his great-grandson, Aurungzebe, the dominion of the Moguls attained its highest growth and its widest stretch. But the glory of his power excited envy, and the Persians attacked his empire, while an associated confederacy of native Hindoo tribes, whose territories lay along his borders, waged a war of raids against him. On his death the subahdars revolted and asserted their independence. Feroksere, Aurungzebe's great-grandson, granted leave to purchase those townships near Calcutta of which we have already spoken, probably in the hope of attaching the English to his cause in an invasion of his territories threatened by the Persians under Nadir Shah. While revolt, insurrection, and war distracted and disturbed the Indian peninsula, the ambition of Europeans was inflamed, and there arose a determination to claim a share in the booty to be gained in the struggle.

We must again retrace the lines of time, and strive to delineate the respective positions of those European nations whose interests and enterprise led them to take part in the ongoings of the Hindostanee troubles, and to embroil themselves with each other in the endeavour to snatch as much as they could from the disunited inhabitants of the East.

Under the financier Colbert, in the reign of Louis XIV., an East India Company was established by the French.

Though indefatigably pursued for upwards of fifty years, the objects of their desire seemed doomed to utter failure ; for, in 1744, they possessed only one important settlement—Pondicherry, on the Coromandel coast, a fortified town near the mouth of the Gingee, and about a hundred miles southwest of Madras. Their other settlements were Carical, south of Pondicherry ; Mahe, a small seaport on the Malabar coast ; and Chandernagore, a town sixteen miles further up the Hoogly than Calcutta, granted to the French, with an adjoining territory of 2330 acres, by Aurungzebe, in 1676. Not only was the French company closely modelled after the English one, but it followed and kept as near to the tracks of English commerce as was possible. But France has always had a predilection for military organisation, and she had not neglected here to plant her standards, and to place her forts with due regard to warlike contingencies. In the Indian Ocean, too, the islands of Mauritius and Bourbon, east of Madagascar, were French dependencies under military government. The continental possessions of France in the East were under the governorship of Joseph Francis Dupleix—a man of ability, energy, and ambition, well trained and practised in the management of business ; while the insular territories were ruled over by an officer whose experience in colonial affairs was extensive, and whose personal prowess and abilities were regarded as of a very high order—Labourdonnais. Such men, both by inclination and interest, could not fail to be watchful of the course of events, and wishful of an opportunity to make quick-heeled advances on behalf of France—they stood on tiptoe with expectancy.

The Dutch, besides holding large possessions in the Spice Islands generally, had fixed upon Batavia, a town in the

north-west of the island of Java, as their capital in the Eastern Archipelago ; had succeeded in expelling the Portuguese from Ceylon, and in bringing the maritime districts of it into subjection ; they possessed, besides, a strongly garrisoned and flourishing establishment at Chinsura, on the right bank of the Hoogly, about four miles from Chander-nagore, and twenty from Calcutta.

At this particular time we have in India a weak central government, revolted subahdars, invading enemies, insurgent subjects, or raiding neighbours ; and upon their coasts, and in their vicinity, anxious competitors for profit, fame, and national renown, held in check by the accident (then rare) of peace ; but ready “ to let slip the dogs of war ” on any plausible pretext ; for by success therein all their wishes were to be gained, and, perhaps, even more than all.

In 1740, Charles VI. of Germany—in whom the male line of the House of Hapsburg terminated—expired, and almost immediately thereafter the war of the Austrian succession broke out. It had its origin in the will of the German emperor—called the Pragmatic Sanction—signed in 1724, by which the order of the succession and accession of the royal family of Austria was regulated. By this document—which had obtained the adhesion or concurrence of all the chief royal families of Europe, except the Bourbons—it was arranged that Maria Theresa, only daughter of Charles VI., and her children, should succeed him. On his demise, it was determined by France, Prussia, Spain, Saxony, Bavaria, and Sardinia, to dismember and partition the Austrian dominions. Stirred by a noble spirit of resistancy, the young empress staked her fortunes on the hazard of war—the burden of which, however, fell latterly upon England on the one part, and France on the other. The formal

declaration of war between these nations was issued in 1744.

As soon as the news of the commencement of hostilities arrived, Labourdonnais decided on seizing at once the advantages placed in his grasp by this opportune conjuncture. The Indian Ocean was quickly astir with his fleet, and on 14th September 1746, the British residents at Madras saw a French fleet at anchor on the surf-beaten coast. In five days the French flag waved in Fort St George, and articles of capitulation were in process of signature. The English were placed on parole, and a moderate ransom was agreed to for the restoration of the city, if paid within a given period. Dupleix, however, had other aims on hand, and feeling offended that the glory of first stepping into the troubled waters of Indian policy had been taken from him, fomented the spleen of the English, and annoyed his rival by thwarting his schemes in their nicest point—his honour. Asserting that he alone was authorised to represent France on Continental India, he sent an officer and troops to assume the permanent management of Madras, to take the English as prisoners of war, to plunder the town, and to carry the governor and chief inhabitants of the place to Pondicherry. The parole contract being thus broken, many Englishmen escaped from Madras to Fort St David. Clive escaped disguised as a Mussulman. Danger whetted his temper, and stirred his blood.

Dupleix, (19th December 1746,) anxious to gain the full advantage of the consternation which the English felt at this sad and sudden turn of events, concentrated a force before Fort St David. Resistance having been determined on, Robert Clive volunteered his services; and, in daring sortie, with deadly impetuosity and irrepressible bravery, hazarded

his untutored intrepidity against the trained bands of the enemy. His valour and discretion were so conspicuous, that he was rewarded by an ensigncy in the Company's army—a position which, though bringing him under the influences of "Captain Sword," did not release him from the drudgery entailed on him by his previous enlistment under "Captain Pen." The siege was hastily raised by Dupleix on the appearance of Admiral Griffin's fleet, and Clive's musket was unwillingly re-exchanged for the goose-quill.

An expedition against the Mauritius having failed, Admiral Boscawen, its leader, disembarked his troops before Pondicherry, with the design of revenging the siege of Fort St David. This thirty-one days' unsuccessful enterprise restored Clive to the restless ecstasy of war, where he displayed the energy and coolness of his nature in acts of gallantry and at moments of danger so strikingly as to rouse the jealousy of some of the "regular" officers; and he found it necessary to rebut the sneers made on him as an "interloper," by challenging one of the officers to personal conflict in a duel. The latter refused, and was expelled from the service. Peace was, however, concluded in Europe in 1748, and matters in India were relegated to the *status in quo ante bellum*.

This, however, could not be. Hostilities had arisen, and no treaty could settle the young hot blood of Clive, who had tasted "the insatiate joy" of a vocation, or calm the insurgent ambition which swelled in the heart of Dupleix. The pathway to power was open and inviting; and shrewd men saw that no restraint could be vigorous enough to check the desire for "sovereign sway and masterdom" which had been excited. The genius of Dupleix soon carried the fierce spirit of warfare into diplomacy, and a new contest of chicanery and circumvention began. The rivalry was inap-

peasable, and peace impossible. Supremacy must be had by one or other at all hazards.

Dupleix schemed, plotted, counterplotted, and planned; power in his grasp, and an army at his command. Clive spent doleful days among sheaves of invoices and piles of ledgers in Writers' Buildings, Madras, and his hand grew nervous as his soul revolted against the calm and unexciting life he lead, which he unluckily strove to render more endurable by gaming.

Ul Mulk, subahdar of the Deccan, or south country of Hindostan, died in 1748, leaving six sons and a grandson to contest for the occupancy of the vacant throne. Dupleix at once determined to rush into the thick of the hostilities, and to work out of those troubles which distracted Hyderabad a signal success for his native country, and glory as well as profit to himself. Ul Mulk had proclaimed his grandson heir, and appointed Anwar-u-deen, nabob of Arcot in the Carnatic, the territory on which both Madras and Pondicherry were situated, guardian of the child. Anwar-u-deen connived at the murder of the child; and Nazir Jung, eldest son of Ul Mulk, was proclaimed subahdar of the Deccan. Merzapha Jung, his nephew, at the head of a large party of Hindoos and Mussulmans, disputed his accession. Dupleix not only encouraged Merzapha, but also paid a ransom of £70,000 to the Mahrattas for the liberation of Chunda Sahib, formerly prime minister (dewan) of the Deccan, of whose children he was the guardian, that he might set him up as a rival to Anwar-u-deen, who, as well as Nazir Jung, were favoured by the English, and—inclined to return the compliment. The tools, or puppets, of Dupleix took the field, well helped by their master, and marched into the Carnatic. Anwur-u-deen met them. He was slain; the

enemy seized his eldest son ; and his youngest, with some difficulty, escaped to Trichinopoly. Nazir Jung entered the field aided by Major Lawrence ; they caused the subahdar and nabob to retreat to Pondicherry. Dupleix sent them out, reinforced, to fight. A mutiny in the French corps led to the dissolution of the army. Merzapha surrendered to his uncle, and was imprisoned ; and Nazir Jung, ungratefully refusing to implement his promises to Major Lawrence, was left to himself. Dupleix bribed some of his chiefs, and Nazir Jung was murdered. Merzapha was released and seated on the throne, while Dupleix, as a reward for his timely help and crafty suggestiveness, was proclaimed Dewan of the Deccan ; a present of £200,000, besides silks, gems, &c., of more than equal value, was given him, and immense treasure was supplied by him to the French exchequer from the hoards of the conquered subahdar and nabob. The greatness of Merzapha was short-lived. The Patan chiefs, by whom the obstacle to his elevation was removed, revolted because he would not comply with some of their exorbitant demands, and he was slain. M. Bussy, the French representative at his court, immediately released Salabut Jung, one of Ul Mulk's sons, and declared him subahdar ; and the gigantic schemes of Dupleix seemed about to go on unhindered to success. The infatuation of gratified vanity, however, defeated his purposes ; for one morning the residents in Fort St David and Madras saw the white flag of France unexpectedly waving round their boundaries, as if challenging them to overpass the barriers to their advancement France had erected. No heart with British blood in it could brook an insult such as that. War was accordingly determined on, and Captain Ginger, an over-cautious and hesitant commander, was sent to raise the

siege of Trichinopoly, where Mohammed Ali, Anwar u-deen's son, was sorely bestead.

Lieutenant Clive accompanied this force as commissary, and when it was defeated at Valconda, he set out alone to Fort St David for more men and ampler stores. These he succeeded in obtaining, and although attacked by a horde of Polygars, against whom he maintained a running fight, led the men and brought the stores triumphantly to Trichinopoly. His bravery and energy were rewarded with a captaincy. He encountered and overcame a French force while conducting another detachment of auxiliaries to the besieged city. During his brief sojourns at Trichinopoly, and from information acquired in his repeated journeys, Clive learned sufficient to convince him, that unless more energetic measures were instantly taken, Chunda Sahib would be the nominal victor, and the Frenchman, Dupleix, the real one. Such an event would have led to the complete sweeping away of the British from the Indian coasts, and the entire subjugation of Hindostan to France—then fast ripening into Encyclopædism and maturing for the Revolution. How much of all that men hold dear and prize, hung upon this single “gage of battle!” England's material wealth and moral grandeur—India's ultimate civilisation and religious advancement—might we not even say, the future “balance of power in Europe,” depended on the wit of soul, the virtuous bravery, and intelligent skill of those who held the springs of causation at their sword-points. Clive's dashing intrepidity had taught him the grand secret of success—

“Dull not device by coldness or delay.”

No sooner, then, had he formed a scheme likely to touch effectively this very turning-point of fortune, than he hastened

to its execution. The daring cunning of this new plan at once startled and pleased—but “impossibilities” hemmed and circumvented its accomplishment. Clive urged, with all the passionate earnestness of a man who sees his way and feels his nerves tingle for the moment of action, first the practicability of the scheme, then the desperate ebb to which the fortunes of the Company were reduced; and more from a conviction that “when things are at the worst they’re sure to mend—or end,” Mr Saunders, the Company’s agent at Madras, consented to stake, upon Clive’s assurance of success, the whole future of the Company in India. Clive’s plan was this—Create a diversion from Trichinopoly by an attack on Arcot, the wealthy capital of Chunda Sahib, a place containing 100,000 inhabitants, garrisoned with about 15,000 of the best trained troops, well provided with guns and ammunition, and thus relieve Mohammed Ali from the threatening power of France, and by causing a dispersion of the troops of Chunda Sahib and his allies, increase the opportunities of active hostilities and the chances of war. With 200 Europeans and 300 trained Sepoys—after leaving Madras and St David’s almost defenceless—Clive took his leave of the former garrison on the 26th of August 1751; by the 29th he had reached Conjeveram, forty miles inland. Here a thunder-storm, such as might have awed the very stoutest soul, broke upon his march; but he was dauntless, and continued his progress. Spies from this inland capital saw and reported the strange disregard, even to the rage of nature, which these islanders exhibited, and the commandant of the garrison, struck by the event, evacuated the place, and gave the assailants free ingress. So far Clive’s anticipations were justified, though the struggle was delayed, not over. He proclaimed im-

munity to life and property unless used against him, and by restraining his men from pillage or injury, won the regard of the inhabitants, who, on promise of payment, helped him to repair the walls and to prepare for the siege which he expected. Twice he threw himself from the fortress upon the encamping enemy, though with little success. In a third sortie he totally routed them, and sent out his company to prevent the enemy from intercepting some guns he had commissioned from Madras—retaining only eighty armed men in Arcot. The enemy hastened to re-collect, and rushed upon the citadel. He held them at bay till his own forces, with the guns, entered the gate. Now, Chunda Sahib, at all hazards, to save his capital, detached largely from the siege-force of Trichinopoly, and hurried with intense anxiety to Arcot. Ten thousand men invested it; while Clive's diminished force scarcely manned the ramparts. For fifty days the siege was pressed; heavy guns made breaches in the walls; constant musketry swept the fortifications; supplies were held back, and yet Clive's indefatigable zeal sustained his men and kept up the throb of courage in their hearts. The Sepoys, when scarcity had overtaken them, petitioned him to give rations of solid rice to the Europeans, and to serve them with the boilings of the day's allowance only. Bribes were tried, threats were uttered by the rajah; but Clive despised them both. No negotiations but those of weapons could be entered into then. An attempt to relieve Clive, from Madras, failed. Ginger and Mohammed Ali passively accepted the siege, and made no attempt to benefit by the withdrawal of troops secured by the audacious risks of Captain Clive. At length Clive's boldness brought him his reward. Morari Row, a Mahratta chief, admiring the man who, in India, first proved

that the British could fight, came to his help with 6000 men. Chunda Sahib had resolved on an assault. On a holy day—14th November 1751, kept with exceeding fervour, increased by plenteous allowances of bang—the attack was begun at dawn. Clive was ready. Bang-made bravery and superstitious ardour failed. The enemy, though nearly ten to one, was repulsed at every point. The master-mind was lord of the situation. Quailless strength of soul, a rare capacity for eliciting and holding at his will the sympathies of his coadjutors, supplied Clive with the whole magic of war, and though he had never studied its arts or been trained in its schools, the best authorities commend his tactics and write his canons in their books. A futile fire was kept up till night, by the command of Chunda Sahib, to conceal his retreat. On the morrow the enemy had fled. Clive was triumphant. Guns, treasures, military stores, became his, and he acquired the honourable title of Sabat Jung—the Daring in War—from the admiring natives, who looked upon his success as having in it a dash of the miraculous. In this crisis of England's fate, one man only—"The hero of Arcot"—seems to have foreseen and foreknown the intense issue of the strife, and to have shown himself fit for the emergency from which the rise of British power in India dates and endures.

Success favours the persistent; and Clive possessed that unsleeping energy which constitutes the chief characteristic of each master mind.

"Sloth, the nurse of vices,
And rust of action, was a stranger to him."

Arcot was but the beginning of a succession of triumphs. Reinforced by a few soldiers from Madras, and aided by the troops of Morari Row, Clive took the fort of Timery, fell

upon a corps, headed by the French, despatched from Trichinopoly to the assistance of Chunda Sahib—with whom they had effected a junction—and defeated it, gaining the treasure chest of the rajah. Arnee surrendered unresistingly ; and Conjeveram, after a brief struggle, was effectually reduced. The flush of glory in Clive's heart made him irresistible, and each additional victory acted as a spur to his zeal. His vigorous restlessness changed waverers into allies, and his indomitable spirit wrested submission from each adversary. Covered with the renown of unexampled conquests, he proceeded to Fort St David to report progress and plan a future.

It was only, however, where the man of clear aim and decisive policy directed action and compelled obedience, that matters progressed favourably. Ginger and Mohammed Ali still remained cooped up in Trichinopoly, effortless, and Chunda Sahib had collected a new army, which Dupleix had reinforced with 500 formidable French infantry, under European leaders. After laying waste the districts whose inhabitants were favourable to Mohammed Ali, the rajah attacked Poonamalee, and succeeded in destroying it and the English residences in its neighbourhood. Clive was asked to meet him, did so, and, after a keen contest at Coverspak, totally routed the enemy. Elated with their hard-won victory, Clive's army on their homeward march came within sight of a city, recently erected by Dupleix in commemoration of his success in founding a French empire in India, and named by him the "City of Victory." A lofty column, on whose four sides it was intended to inscribe, in different languages, an *epigraph* regarding the glories and labours of the French statesman, was just reaching completion. Clive immediately resolved upon the demolition of

the boastful lie. This was done, as an indication to India of the unchallengeable hardihood of the British, of the futility of the French policy, and of the real weakness of the self-styled leading power. To Dupleix it was undoubtedly throwing down a gage of battle, which it would be hazardous to accept and dangerous to refuse. It certainly committed Clive to ultimate hostilities, and made him sufficiently marked as the antagonist of the Dupleix policy. He returned to Fort St David unopposed and untouched, his intended work more than accomplished, and his men enthusiastic for new adventures.

Clive was next nominated to command an attack upon the lines of the enemy entrenched round Trichinopoly; but while he was organising his force, and just on the point of marching, Major Lawrence, his superior—a brave, carefully-bred, practical soldier—arrived from England, and assumed the leadership of the expedition. Clive unhesitatingly relinquished the nomination, and accepted a subordinate position, where he ought to have been first. Duty does not so much love place as labour, and Clive was possessed of the fine military instinct of subordinacy in the ranks, and indomitability in action. No slight labour lay before the English forces. Trichinopoly stands at the head of the delta of the Cauvery river, 190 miles south-west of Madras. Its fort is placed on an isolated rock, which rises 600 feet above the alluvial expanse that lies around. Chunda Sahib and M. Law, commander of the French contingent, completely blockaded the fort and town, and the British required to besiege the besiegers. Law had established his head-quarters on Seringham, an island formed by two branches of the Coleroon; it is holy ground in a Hindoo's eye, and contains one of the most famed

pagodas of Southern India. Clive suggested that he, with half the British force, should occupy the village of Samiaveran, right in the line of communication between Trichinopoly and Pondicherry, where Dupleix sat designing those webs of policy which his agents were not astute enough to work, and he was not brave enough to manage in person. Lawrence assented. Clive made a rapid dash upon the rajah's forces, broke their lines, and enabled Lawrence to effect an entrance into the beleaguered fort. He afterwards completely effected his design, but that mainly through a somewhat melodramatic series of war incidents, in which Clive was the leader. Samiaveran was the master position of the siege; Dupleix perceived this, and sent a relieving corps under M. d'Auteuil; Clive resolved to intercept it; d'Auteuil retreated to Uttalore, and Clive, immediately countermarching, regained his quarters. Law heard of Clive's departure, and determined upon attacking the enfeebled encampment during its commander's absence; aided by forty English deserters, under an Irish officer, he proceeded to effect his purpose. Unaware of Clive's return, Law led about 800 men towards the camp. The English sentinels challenged the advancing force, the deserters responded; they passed in; but their impatient haste defeated the success of the manœuvre. They fired at once. One of their musket balls shattered the chest which Clive—snatching a moment's rest after his long march—used as a pillow. He was instantly awake. Rushing amongst his men, he found them under arms, but entirely in ignorance of what had occurred. Clive, in a passion, flew upon the French Sepoys, thinking they were his own, and scolded them in the confusion for their folly, until one of them convinced him of his mistake by wounding him on the thigh.

Unappalled by this unexpected apparition of an armed enemy in the very heart of his own stronghold, he called for an instant surrender from the foe; a number yielded, and he gave them in charge of a band of Sepoys of their own party. Suddenly the mist cleared away from his view; he divined the trick, and counter-plotted so sagaciously as to hold active hostilities in check till daylight broke, when he gave deadly fight to the enemy. Faint with the loss of blood, leaning upon the shoulders of two of his men, he ordered the action. One of the deserters, fearful of the evil upshot of the exploit, fired at Clive, but missing his mark, killed one of Clive's supporters. Thrice had Death, in one engagement, thus aimed at the life of the leading thoughtsman and strategist among the British, but, unnerved by the hardihood of the hero, failed in his purpose.

This failure rendered affairs desperate. Chunda Sahib left his followers to shift for themselves, and, instead of honest capitulation, chose to negotiate for escape with the leader of Clive's Tanjore contingent. He proved false, and put the rajah to death. Law persistently braved and endured, waiting for help which could not come, for Clive intercepted every auxiliary band. At length he was compelled to submit. Dupleix's schemes, however craftily conceived, were foiled on every side. He bribed, intrigued, flattered, promised, and threatened; but Lawrence vanquished his nephew under the walls of Gingee, and Clive was summoned to Madras to undertake a new enterprise.

Covelong, twenty miles south of Madras, and Chingleput, about fifteen miles south-west of that, were then in the hands of the French, and interfered with the interests of Madras. It was advisable they should be reduced, and this was the mission to which Clive was called. The only available forces for

this expedition were 500 freshly-levied Sepoys, and 200 Europeans, crimped from the dens of London, or exiled from its gaols, and pitched, like shot rubbish, on the quays of Madras. A regular Falstaff's regiment it was! However, Clive, born to manage men, soon disciplined them into daring, by the most successful and contagious of all agencies—example. He led his motley brigade of vagabonds against Covelong, and it was captured. While their exultation was at its full, he marched them on to Chingleput. A detachment had just left it to help the Covelongians. They were too late. Clive heard of their advance, placed his men in ambush, and at a wave of his hand they delivered such a volley as resulted in the immediate flight of the auxiliaries. Ill news travels fast; but Clive was at Chingleput almost as early as the report of the disaster. Without delay he commanded an escalade, and the assault was just on the point of commencing, when the French commander begged a truce, and afterwards stipulated for a surrender, accompanied by the honours of war. Clive was glad to purchase real success at the price of gratifying this little piece of mere vanity; and while the French commandant issued with flying colours and beating drums, Clive entered with the calm collectedness of a genuine hero. But the effects of wounds, and of this three years' strain on the mind, unnerved and enfeebled him, and the hour of reaction came. He returned to Madras, a fitting subject for a sick nurse. This he found in the young, handsome, and amiable sister of his old friend, Mr Maskelyne, in whose company he had escaped from Madras eight years before. "Pity is akin to love," and Miss Margaret Maskelyne's affections were gained in the sick-room of him who had won honours in the camp and on the tented field. On 15th March 1753

Clive, by marriage, united his destiny with hers, and shortly thereafter, on leave of absence, he and his bride embarked for England, where, on 7th March 1754, Edward Clive, their son, was born.

Clive's reception in his native country was enthusiastic and flattering. He was everywhere fêted and caressed. The Court of Directors of the East India Company, at a magnificent public banquet, presented him with a diamond-hilted sword, value £500,—a gift which he, much to his credit, only accepted on condition that a similar honour should be conferred on his superior, Lawrence. He had acquired a considerable amount of wealth in his brief but brisk military career, and dutifully expended a portion of it in relieving the paternal estates of heavy mortgage burdens, and assisting in the establishment of his brothers and sisters. He rattled his equipages grandly among the nobility, and mingled in the political intrigues of the time. Flattered and befooled into a parliamentary contest, he was, after the usual complimentary (?) acknowledgments to the "free and independent electors," chosen, 1754, member for St Michael's, Cornwall. He was ousted on petition, by a merely party dodge, and after all his waste of wealth, was left apparently careerless.

In the meanwhile, the French and English India Companies had met to arrange their difficulties, and had agreed to relinquish their warlike antagonism. Clive was at home; Duplex was recalled, and thanklessly treated by those for whose interest he had toiled; halcyon days of peace in India beamed from the treaty papers of the directors. The English were superior in the Carnatic, the French held chief sway in the Deccan, and all seemed equable and fair; but European politics became complicated, and pre-

monitory mutterings of a continental war were heard in the *salons*. Clive had pretty well indoctrinated the Company with his opinion, that there could be no real peace in India for the English while any other European power was influential there; and he was known, on the trustworthy testimony of Major Lawrence, to be “a man of an undaunted resolution, of a cool temper, and of a presence of mind which never left him—born a soldier.” With the intention of being ready, should war really become imminent, the Directors of the India Company invited Clive to reaccept office under them, with a royal commission, as colonel. He instantly agreed, and left England for Bombay—the general rendezvous for the British navy on Indian service—with three companies of Royal Artillery, and 300 infantry, in February 1755. Colonel Scott, his senior officer, expired before Clive reached Bombay, and he thus became chief of the British forces in India. He would have invaded the Deccan at once, but a recently-concluded treaty or convention stood in the way, and he was reluctantly compelled to delay the execution of his purpose.

The restless ardour of his disposition soon pointed out other occupation. Angria, a Mahratta pirate, the scourge of the coast of Malabar, held the rocky fortress of Gheriah, and from an excellent, land-locked harbour, his barques issued to plunder the neighbouring coast towns, or to seize the vessels of traders. Clive proposed to Admiral Watson the reduction of this stronghold; and the proportions of the expected booty having been agreed on, they set to work, and in two days succeeded in razing the pirate’s dens to the ground, and defeating the outlaws. Clive thereafter sailed for Fort St David, where he arrived, by a singular coinci-

dence, on the very day of the capture of Calcutta, the memorable 20th June 1756.

The circumstances of this catastrophe may be briefly told. Aliverdy Khan, Subadar of Bengal, died April 1756, and his grand-nephew, who adopted the name of Surajah Dowlah, "Sun of Empire,"—a dissolute, ignorant, tyrannical, and selfish prince—succeeded him. He hated the British, and coveted their wealth; and he resolved at once on their extirpation from his territories. With an army of 30,000 cavalry, 40,000 infantry, and 400 elephants, he marched against Calcutta, whose inhabitants were just strengthening their forts against invasion by the French, and invested it on 18th June. The hearts of the Europeans failed them for fear, because as yet unprepared for resistance to such a force. They thought it the best policy to get on shipboard and escape. A few were left behind, and these determined to hold out, in the hope of gaining terms. The place was stormed; they were all taken, and to the number of 146, thrust into a twenty feet square dungeon, which, before morning, had become a putrid charnel-house, from which only twenty-three issued alive. The rest had perished by the intolerable pangs of suffocation and thirst. As an example of the atrocious criminality of ignorance and self-indulgent apathy, the Black Hole of Calcutta has become proverbial. Intense hate for the man who, having committed a wrong like that, boasted of having thereby exterminated the British, and evinced no sign of horror at the hideous deed, deepened into a slakeless thirst for vengeance. When, therefore, on the 16th of August, the news reached Madras, the governors of the presidency felt fell as tigers, and resolved upon the instantaneous chastisement of the

offending Surajah. The whole available strength of the Company was immediately and unhesitatingly placed under the command of Clive, with power to adopt the most summary and signal proceedings. By the 11th of October, 900 European infantry and 1500 Sepoys were embarked, and set sail in five men-of-war and five transports. Admiral Watson led the navy. They reached Fulta on 22d December, and immediately disembarked. Clive at once marched through the jungle upon Budge-Budge. It capitulated, and he went on to Fort William. Watson had got ready to batter it from the seaboard as soon as Clive had surrounded it on land. Operations were at once begun: by the 2d of January 1757, it had succumbed; and on the 11th the Hoogly was plundered and burnt. So far hardihood bore him on; and then, when such rash heroism seemed to be unfitting, he plied the arts of negotiation with almost equal skill. He met *ruse* with *ruse*, and knavery with cunning. A trained diplomatist could not have been more adroit in the art of circumventing an enemy smilingly. Clive offered to treat for terms; the Surajah hesitated, but marched on. Clive did not oppose him, even where the strategies of war promised success, though he kept to the open field, and still insisted on negotiation. He was, in reality, but working him into irrecoverable toils. The Surajah got his army between Clive and Calcutta, and had the latter so besieged as to have some of his men in its outer streets, and was already anticipating an easy conquest. Clive was born a match for seemingly adverse fates. He sent, demanding the immediate withdrawal of the Nabob's troops; intimating at the same time that, unless this was done, all proposals for negotiation must cease, and ulterior measures be taken. The Surajah thought this the sublime

of impudence, and replied with passionate scorn. Before daybreak next day, Clive, having formed a single column of 2200 men, cut a bloody avenue through the hosts of the besiegers, and with steady continuity kept on until he had re-established communications with the garrison. The Nabob retreated in dismay, and offered terms. These Clive accepted, though apparently opposed to "the interest and reputation of a soldier," for the following good and sufficient reasons.

News had arrived of the outbreak of "the seven years' war;" M. Bussy was up in the Northern Circars, and anxious to gain an offensive and defensive alliance with the Surajah; Count Lally, whose hatred of Britain had all the intensity of a passion, was preparing a military force for service in the Carnatic; and a French fleet was expected in the Bay of Bengal. The government at Madras, who had stripped themselves of all defence in their anxiety for the infliction of a penal war on the Surajah, were becoming fearful for their own safety in the emergencies that threatened; and pressed for Clive's return. These affairs were likely to strike at the root of the policy he had inaugurated, and in the achievement of which he had done so much. To precipitate a treaty before Bussy could unfold the complications of European politics, and gain over the Surajah to his schemes; to aim a sure blow at the French, early enough to destroy the *prestige* of their arms; and to be able then to flash off into the Circars, against M. Bussy, before reinforcements could reach him, and the reanimation of news from Europe increased the confidence of his troops—seemed to be matters of graver importance, in Clive's eyes, than the grumbling of subordinates, the taunts of governors, or the reproaches of his naval coadjutors. He therefore concluded

a treaty of peace, whose conditions he saw his way through ; for he had matured his diplomacy far-sightedly enough. The fortunes of the British power in India were set "upon the hazard of a die ;" he bravely risked, and luckily won, and claimed that as his justification.

Clive drove on his preparations for attacking Chandernagore, the head-quarters of the French in Bengal. The Surajah was actively negotiating with M. Renault, its governor, for a treaty of alliance. Clive suspected as much, and therefore claimed by treaty the aid of his surajahship against the French, now at war with the British. The Surajah replied by asking Clive's help against the Afghauns, who were threatening him with invasion. Clive unexpectedly agreed, and on the principle of "diamond cut diamond," announced his intention to march for Moorshedabad, to the Surajah's help, so soon as he could manage to storm Chandernagore on his way, that no enemy's camp might be left between his army and Calcutta. On the 23d of March Chandernagore capitulated. The Surajah, conscious of his own duplicity, and not so much trusting as fearing his ally, bribed off the Afghauns, and strictly forbade Clive's advance on pain of being held as an enemy. This put the matter at once on the footing Clive desired ; he determined to have done with him ; and the consummate scoundrelism of Indian diplomacy now received a singular accession to its annals.

Surajah Dowlah had somewhat heavily taxed his rich Hindoo subjects ; and sensitive on this point, they had resolved to try a new master. Meer Jaffier, the Surajah's commander-in-chief, and a marriage relation of the late subahdar, Aliverdy Khan, was the substitute finally fixed on. The arch-plotter was one Omichund, a Hindoo merchant,

who had left Calcutta and gone to Moorshedabad, where he had ingratiated himself with the Surajah by unscrupulous hypocrisy. It was proposed to Clive by a Mr Watts—a semi-spy, semi-prisoner at the Surajah's court—that he should become a party to the plot, declare war against the Surajah, and march at once against Moorshedabad. On the Surajah's taking the field, Meer Jaffier was to pass over, with all his forces, to the British lines, and thus secure an easy and decisive victory. Clive agreed, and prevailed on the demurring Committee of Council at Calcutta to risk the scheme. They saw the advantage of having a Subahdar whose accession entirely depended on them, but they thought the plot unlikely to succeed. However, full of reliance on Clive's irresistible skill, they at last assented, and affairs were ready for immediate initiation, when an unexpected difficulty presented itself. Omichund had, at the last moment, announced that unless by a sealed treaty, he were assured of £300,000, he would disclose the plot and its co-partners to Surajah Dowlah. The British had committed themselves; now they were overreached; and here seemed to be an insuperable obstacle projected on their path. Clive appears to have thought, that in diplomacy as in war, each stratagem was fair that proved successful; and it appeared specially fitting that, by a retaliation of treachery, this traitorous trickster should be himself outtricked. He set himself to "counterplot the scoundrel," and was ready with a plan upon the moment. He, with daring duplicity, proposed that two treaties should be got up; one, on white paper, for Meer Jaffier, to be held to literally; another, on red paper for Omichund, including the stipulated assurance, but *not* to be acted on in that respect at all. The council hesitated, and then yielded assent, and signed *both* treaties,

except Admiral Watson, who resolutely refused to sign any but *one*. The fascination of revenge upon "the villain in grain" was too alluring for Clive, and he *forged* the admiral's name to the other. This seems to us to have been both a blunder and a crime; for it was still further destroying the confidence of the copartnery, and it would, as we think, have been better at once to rush into the thick of war, when everything urged to, and depended on, instantaneous action, and each would have been more anxious than another to risk the event of war than wait for a discovery.

The treaties were forwarded, and all seemed right again. Clive wrote to the Surajah, twitting him with a breach of treaty, by intriguing with the French, and offering to refer his cause to the arbitration of three persons named, who were, of course, Clive's fellow-conspirators. He intimated, at the same time, that if they decided in his favour—which they were sure to do—he should demand reparation for his wounded honour, and a *solatium* for the unnecessary labours to which the navy and army were put by these unfriendly proceedings; and as the rains were near, he would come himself for an immediate answer. The masked batteries were thus suddenly opened upon Surajah Dowlah before he had his own quite ready; for the French had as yet only coquetted with his offers. There was no alternative. The sword alone could be the arbiter.

Procrastination was not Clive's fault; and now impatience seemed to him a virtue. In opposition to the very elements, which, at the monsoon season, by rain and hurricane, render active operations to Europeans all but an impossibility, he set out—though fever, in a malignant form, was almost hourly diminishing his forces—on the 12th of June. On the 19th, while they were encamped round the castle of

Cutwa, the weather broke upon them with unexpected and almost unexampled violence. Here, for the first time, he faltered; the great crisis of his scheme had come, and the big consequences with the small means to work it out, struck him with a strong sense of their contrast. Failure in this was ruin to the British power, his own reputation, and the soldiery who adored him. He called, for the first and only time in his life, a council of war, on the 21st; and it, by a majority of one, advised delay. This was regarded as definitive. But hesitancy was, in this case, defeat, and after-reflection convinced Clive of the perils of such a policy; for, in an hour thereafter, with audacious self-confidence, he had nerved himself to risk the contest.

There seems a gleam of dare-devil nonchalance in this resolve to meet the gathering storm; for Surajah Dowlah had poured forth from Moorshedabad the very "pick and span" of his whole force—40,000 infantry, well (though variously) accoutred; 15,000 cavalry, Rajpoots and Patans, soldiers from their infancy, well-equipped and horsed; and fifty pieces of cannon, with a train of elephants. Clive had under him only 1000 Europeans, to whom danger was delight, and toil but a heightening of the joy of victory; and 2000 Sepoys, who had undergone the discriminating training of his singular soldierly skill. At daybreak of the 23d of June, on a plain near the village of Plassey, about 100 miles north of Calcutta, these forces met. It was a perilous moment; Fate seemed to have enmeshed the soldiery of Clive completely. Drums, clarions, cymbals, and other noisy instruments awoke the morning in the Indian camp. The British, entrenched behind a rude mud fence around a grove, stood

"Still as the breeze, but dreadful as the storm."

The Nabob's cannon boomed a salute of death amongst them, but they told it back with greater caution, certainty of aim, and efficacy of execution. Fire and counter-fire continued for awhile, but no decisive movement was made; each felt that his fate stood on a precipice's edge, down which the slightest rashness might precipitate it. Clive was wary, the Surajah timid, and neither made advances to the dazzling coil and recoil of close warfare. Fatigued by toil, and overpowered with care, Clive sank to sleep during the few moments of calm thus afforded him. Fear of treason in his camp, and inability to manœuvre the magnificent *show-army* he had assembled, seemingly paralysed the Surajah's mind. About noon Clive was awakened, and informed that the enemy were retreating. The day had overcast; the enemy had neglected to "keep their powder dry;" and their artillery had become useless. Clive gave the signal for a rush. The panic was in the foes' hearts already, and they fled in strangely-mingled confusion—all, save a few French soldiers, who, with dauntless daring, held their post in a redoubt until dislodged by Clive's superior force. Encouraged by this stout resistance, some of the Nabob's troops rallied and returned; but the British turned the guns they had taken against the re-assembling multitude, and they fled again more precipitately than before.

Treachery had, no doubt, much to do with this hasty and unseemly retreat, begun by mid-day, before the armies had once been brought within the sword's-arm circle of each other; but it had as truly an embarrassing effect upon the English; for,—with the political jesuitry of a conspiring Hindoo, holding aloof to take advantage of the turn events might take,—it was not until victory had fairly declared in favour of Clive, that his sly ally, Meer Jaffier, fulfilled his



“Clive at once hailed him as Nabob of Bengal, and led him in honour to his tent.”—EPOCH MEN, Page 245.

part of the treaty, and came over to secure what he had not ventured to win. Treason is a dubious game to play at, and that he felt full well, when Clive drew up a guard of the gallant 39th—the heroes of Plassey—to greet him on his coming; for he started, and stammered out some sort of explanation of his apparent inattention to his agreement. Though the maxim, “*qui s’excuse, s’accuse,*” is generally true, Clive at once, in accordance with the policy of expediency in this case adopted, hailed him as Nabob of Bengal, Behar, and Orissa, and led him in honour to his tent.

Meanwhile, the Surajah had fled to his former capital, and there, in hesitation and fear, passed from thought to thought, from plan to plan. To no brave course could he commit himself. He dropped from the palace window in a mechanic’s dress, taking with him a casket of jewels, and escaped. He was ultimately betrayed, taken, and, with Meer Jaffier’s connivance, strangled.

Meer Jaffier was installed in great splendour, amid most pompous forms, by Clive; and the chief articles of the treaty were then begun to be effected. At the meeting which took place regarding these, the outmatched Omichund was told how his own treachery had been surpassed, and under the influence of the disappointment to his avarice, reeled like a drunkard, and became a mere idiotic driveller about wealth and gems. Clive felt a momentary pang, but drugged his conscience at the time with the opiate gladness of success. A perfect shower of wealth fell upon the Company and its servants by this transaction: £800,000 were sent in a hundred boats from Moorshedabad to Calcutta. Clive had the fisc of Bengal opened, that he might take therefrom to his liking. The army and navy both shared handsomely in the gains, and even Admiral Watson came to

believe that Clive, despite his disrespectful forgery, was "the finest fellow in existence."

It is impossible to manufacture kings ; and Clive, though he had successfully become the Warwick of India, could not confer upon his protégé the potency and wisdom requisite to sustain a throne and maintain a kingdom. Meer Jaffier had neither the virtue nor talent which a sovereign ought to have ; he was little skilled in the rare art of wielding authority, and greatly deficient in that foresight, circumspection, and intrepidity which is needed to consolidate a dynasty, and it was not long before Clive was compelled to execute all the essential duties of royalty. Excessive taxation is a daring venture for a new government, if it is a growth from revolution, for the lesson of insurgency is soon and easily learned. The enormous pecuniary liabilities, for which Meer Jaffier had pledged his royal faith, rendered a summary operation on the purses of the wealthy Hindoos an inevitable necessity. The circumstances of Meer Jaffier soon became eminently critical ; the elements of danger and discord were active ; the genius of intrigue was busy ; conspiracies became rife ; and he was less experienced in the management of men than in the manœuvres of policy. Wheedling failed, force prevailed, the perilous moment came, and a rebellion arose ; but Clive suppressed it. Another timely intervention on his client's behalf, Clive made, when Shah Alum, the exiled heir to the sovereignty of Delhi, attempted, with the help of the Viceroy of Oude, to oust Jaffier, and take his throne. He was besieging Patna when the hero of Plassey appeared, and at his coming the army fled. Such a proceeding gained Clive the favour of the imperial majesty of Delhi, who was pleased to nominate Clive to the dignity of an Omrah, and to invite him as "the

high and mighty potentate, Colonel Sabat Jung," to his court. The honour he accepted; the invitation he declined. He was rewarded for these services to Jaffier by the gift of the quit-rent of the Company's Zemindary—equivalent to £30,000 per annum.

While the consolidation of the Company's power in Bengal, the maintenance of Meer Jaffier on his throne, and the organisation of an efficiently drilled and thoroughly disciplined native force, were occupying the constant activities of Clive, Bussy captured the English factory of Vizigapatam, and swept the Circars like an uninterrupted pestilence. Count Lally, who had in the meantime arrived with the French forces, very foolishly suspended him, and substituted the Marquis of Conflans in his office, while he himself boldly and busily re-opened war in the Carnatic. He took Fort St David, Tangore, Arcot, with more than dramatic rapidity, and sat down before Madras. The small garrison there, however, were soldiers, and stood their ground till help came, and Lally abruptly raised the siege. Colonel Forde, detached by Clive, rounded into the Circars, regained all losses there, and stormed Masulipatam, where the French were entrenched, so eagerly, as to cause 3000 to yield to less than 900. Clive was in raptures.

Dangers thickened and crowded tumultuously upon each other. Clive's policy was destined to yet another struggle. Part of his available forces were in Masulipatam, part in Patna, and part on the Coromandel coast; Forde was ailing; and Colonel Eyre Coote was reinstating matters on the borders of Bengal. The Dutch at Chinsura, farther up the Ganges than Fort William or Chandernagore, saw themselves not only outmatched but isolated, and began to bethink themselves that they had been too unambitious.

They drew recruits together ; and as rumours reached them of impending war between Holland and England, they courted Meer Jaffier, and brought round a squadron into the Ganges. Clive held to his policy of British supremacy ; plied the Nabob incessantly with petitions, which gradually became commands, to prohibit the Dutch ships from passing Fulta, a village below Calcutta. He succeeded : the Dutch remonstrated. Clive lined the river with guard-boats, and garrisoned all the little forts on its banks. The Dutch were obstinate ; and Clive ordered Colonel Forde, with 1200 men, to intercept communications between the squadron and Chinsura. After a skirmish near Chandernagore, in which he drove back a force into Chinsura, he found that the men-of-war's men had landed, and were marching upon him. Forde had no orders of council to fight ; and wrote to Clive that this alone prevented him from attacking them. Clive, who was playing an after-dinner rubber at whist, merely took out his pencil and wrote on the missive sent, " Dear Forde, fight them just now, and I'll send the order to-morrow." Forde fought at Bridona, while Clive managed a naval encounter on the Ganges, and the Dutch were thoroughly vanquished. Clive, however, throwing vindictiveness aside, saved Chinsura from pillage by the Nabob. The Dutch apologised ; offered to pay the expenses of the war ; and the hazard he had thus again dared declared in his favour. Conflans was defeated ; Bussy was made a prisoner ; Lally's last hope was destroyed at the battle of Wadewash ; Pondicherry was razed to the ground ; and Surat was acquired from the Emperor of Delhi. Thus the French power was completely and irrecoverably broken. Count Lally was subsequently recalled, arrested, and tried as a traitor, who had sold Pondicherry, and dragged in un-

just ignominy, gagged, to the scaffold. The Dutch were perfectly humbled. Bengal was almost a new creation among the powers of Hindostan; Madras became the master-city of the Coromandel coast; and Bombay was fast working up to the plenitude of power in the western border. Everything was in right trim; the army trained; officers educated in the policy of conquest; the navy on friendly terms with the army; all the traditions of warfare changed into the history of British triumphs; subject nabobs ready to bow while they boasted; and everywhere the alliance of Britain an object of desire. In India all was right: at home, however, the views of Eastern politics were anything but sound, and Clive, determined to exchange the soldier's glaiive for the statesman's glory, left India, 5th February 1760, to teach his policy to the Merchants' Company in Leadenhall Street, and to show them how, by the introduction of a superior civilisation, to endow themselves with wealth, widen the circle of their country's empire, promote the happiness of the millions of India, and, by a wise valour, to unite the scattered and discordant tribes of the East under a rule at once benign, paternal, solid, trustworthy, and energetic. He had given, in his own person, an example of devotion to a distinct policy; of inexhaustible resource and self-reliance; of chivalrous enterprise, undaunted spirit, and then almost unparalleled daring, gallantry, and intrepidity. He had now to impress upon the masters of the fate and future of Hindostan the need for using a prudent sagacity in retaining their position and maintaining their rights.



LORD CLIVE—THE BRITISH EMPIRE IN INDIA.

“HE methods of observation and reasoning in politics” had not specially engaged the attention of Clive ; but he seems to have inherited from nature that invaluable faculty which instinctively harmonises experience by theoretic thought, and suggests the means of overcoming those stupendous difficulties which inevitably arise when, the operations of warfare being ended, the need of providing for the permanent and progressive welfare of a people requires consideration and effectual elaboration. During the period of pupilage consequent on, and subsequent to, conquest,

“Peace hath her victories, no less renowned than war ;”

and these Clive did not forget. Well-fought fields and conquered provinces do not complete the list of the achievements of the Salopian ruler of Hindostan. Amidst the difficulties and dangers of a nascent empire, he initiated a policy, as well as inaugurated a rule ; and, fixing his acute mind on the laws of causation, which form or transform history, he deduced a suitable system of government, capable of being beneficially operative in the early exigen-

cies of affairs, and throughout the after progress of the empire which his right hand had founded, and his energy had, for a time, sustained. Legislative measures could not, however, like a scheme of battle, be self-originated. To be permanent and effective, they must have all the guarantees of formal enactment. When the sword was sheathed, therefore, it behoved Clive to supplant the provisional mandates of a conqueror by the maturely considered regulations of a legislator. So soon, therefore, as in the autumn of 1760 he landed in England, he endeavoured to effect this object by re-entering the House of Commons, and acquiring a large interest in the directorate of the East India Company. A death-threatening illness interrupted, for a time, the pursuit of this thought-absorbing scheme. After a while, however, he rallied, and set to work again. The king, George III., had pointed him out as a proper teacher for any one who desired to learn "the art of war." Lord Chatham had spoken of him as a heaven-born general, and compared him to Frederick the Great. The Board of Directors bestowed upon him a sort of jealous adulation; and at last—though he regarded the honour wholly inadequate as a recognition of his services—he was raised, 15th March 1762, to the Irish peerage, with the title of Lord Clive, Baron of Plassey, and led to expect—though it is to be feared as the reward of political subserviency—at a future period the red ribbon of the British peerage.

When the issue between Bute and Newcastle arose, Clive was almost, in so many words, asked to fix a price upon his services in the administration; but he says of himself, "I still continue to be one of those unfashionable kind of people who think very highly of independency, and to bless my stars indulgent fortune has enabled me to act according

to my conscience." He "thought it dishonourable to take advantage of the times," and so was treated with indifference. But the thought of British supremacy in India still nestled in his heart; and though looked coldly on by the Government, he did not hesitate, in an emergency, to advise the ministry, unasked, regarding the chief points to be achieved in a treaty pending between France and England, in reference to India. His advice was taken, and France agreed to keep no troops in Bengal, or the Northern Circars. This much accomplished, Clive turned his attention to the management of the East India Company; but there the energy of envy had forestalled him. Mr Lawrence Sullivan, who had previously acted in a friendly manner with Clive, had taken umbrage at the letter—previously referred to—in which, addressing Mr Pitt, Clive had proposed the assumption of the Indian Empire by the British Government; and Lord Clive had offended Lord Bute by voting against the peace of 1763. Bute wanted a tool to work his revenge with, and Sullivan was just in that frame of mind to take any means of thwarting Clive. Difference increased to animosity, and animosity led to a rupture, and the quondam friends became thereafter such enemies as only former friends can be. The Court of Directors became the arena of their strife; and it was waged with no want of intensity. The ministry favoured Sullivan, and Clive exerted every available stratagem to oppose him. "He that is a gamester, and plays often, must sometimes be a loser;" and so it happened now. The test-hour came when Sullivan was proposed as chairman of the Directory. The ballot-box brought defeat to Clive, and the opportunity of a large, sweet morsel of revenge to Sullivan. The Court, at his instigation, confiscated the revenue derivable from Meer

Jaffier's present—the jaghire of the territory south of Calcutta. Clive filed a bill in Chancery against it. The case was eminently unfair; for Clive's right rested on precisely the same ground as the Company's treaty, granting the original Zemindary—Meer Jaffier's gift. It is not enough to gain a victory, if we do not also make a right use of it. This was a knowledge Sullivan had not; while Clive could compel defeat itself to be the instrument of his success. The dominant faction rioted in their hour of triumph, but it was short. Like a snow-ball held in the hand, the more firmly it was grasped the sooner it melted.

The ascendant genius of Clive had scarcely been withdrawn from interference with the affairs of Bengal, than the mediocre minds in that presidency began to mismanage their trust, and abuse their power. Revolts were rife; speculation notorious; disorganisation extreme; and, worst and fatalest of all, *dividends* became impossibilities. Alarm prevailed: ruin was imminent; safety—where was it to be found? The shopkeeping instincts of the Company immediately suggested Clive. In full court the proprietors besought the hero of Plassey to revisit the scenes of his former victories, to save his conquests and their capital. They offered him an official recognition of his right to the jaghire; to permit him to name his own committee of council, and the military officers who were to execute his commands; and to appoint him to the new and unexampled office of Governor-General and Commander-in-Chief of the whole of the Company's possessions in the East. So thoroughly do cowardice and fear make men traitors to themselves, that there seemed almost no concession too great for them to make, if asked. Clive modestly sought the undisturbed enjoyment of his jaghire for ten years—to be afterwards disposed of by an

arrangement between him and the Company: but he insisted on the deposition of Sullivan from the chairmanship, and refused, in opposition to every entreaty, to leave England on the commission entrusted to him, until the proprietors had completed their elections to the directorate, in which Clive's friend, Mr Rous, was chosen chairman, *vice* Mr Sullivan; and Mr Bolton, a member of Clive's party, was appointed to the deputy-chairmanship. Next year the Sullivanites, though supported by the Duke of Northumberland and Lord Bute, were completely overcome; but not until they had hived in their breasts a strong and fervid rancour against Clive.

On 4th June 1764, Clive, accompanied by Messrs Sumner and Sykes, set out, and it was April 1765 before the vessel in which he sailed entered the Hoogly. On the 3d of May he reached Calcutta, and that same afternoon he began his official duties. Strangely, indeed, had affairs been mismanaged, or unmanaged, since five years ago he left the empire of Britain in India not a possibility only, but a fact. That Clive had maturely reflected on the changes rendered necessary by the altered aspect of affairs in India, is proven by a lengthy, dispassionate, and statesmanlike letter which he addressed to the Court of Directors, 27th April 1764, while busied with preparations for his departure on the service to which he had been so unanimously elected. In this letter he fully develops the views he entertained, and expresses a determination, if properly supported by the home officials, to settle the Company's affairs in a moderate, safe, judicious, and permanent manner. He points out the want of temptation, on his part, to accept the trust; promises to give up the Governor's usual portion of commercial advantages; and proposes to accept a lower military commission

than his old coadjutor, Lawrence—on whom he had generously settled £500 a year—and then claims that such help as he requires may be freely and promptly given; and that such powers may be entrusted to him as may enable him to show “that the Company possessed the power and the will to protect” its native allies, “not only against foreign enemies, but each against the unjust aggressions of the other.”

We may be certain that on the outward voyage the great responsibilities resting on him would occupy much serious thought, and that he stepped ashore at Calcutta

“Strong in will,

To strive, to seek, to find, and not to yield;”

ready to brave reproach, to inflict salutary castigation, to prefer public business to private interest, to bear up against that sullen discontent which is worse than open hostility, and to contend even with the despair of those whom he should require to foil, rebuke, restrain, dismiss, or punish. Impatient ardour at once impelled him to action, and in two days after his arrival he was prepared to initiate the proceedings which were to make his administration famous, with such sincere honesty of heart, as to be able to say, “I do declare, by that Great Being who is the searcher of all hearts, and to whom we must be accountable, if there must be a hereafter, that I am come out with a mind superior to all corruption; and that I am determined to destroy these great and growing evils, or perish in the attempt.”

The Council was soon a scene of contention. Clive was imperious and intolerant of subterfuge or evasion, and at once proceeded to the investigation of the evils which had brought the affairs of the Company to a pass so disastrous. These arose primarily from what was called the “private trade,” which originated thus—the East India Company

paid no transit dues on their goods, which were protected by a permit, or by their flag. The chief revenues of the native princes were obtained from transit dues, and goods were consequently excised and examined at the several frontier lines of the Customs. The Company's servants had been in the habit of smuggling home and duty-paying goods from province to province, under the protection of these permits, and so realising speedy and enormous fortunes by defrauding the native princes of their dues, and being able to undersell the honest customs-paying trader; they had even gone the length of selling these permits to native traders, and thus succeeded in dishonestly transforming the revenues of the native princes into perquisites for themselves. Under these circumstances, the revenue of Meer Jaffier became so much decreased that he was unable to pay the large sums for which, on his accession, he had become bound to the Company. The Governor (Mr Vansittart) and his Council immediately conceived that they might play Clive's game with the Moorshedabad potentate, and entered into negotiations with Cossim Ali, his son-in-law, by which they agreed to depose Meer Jaffier, and instal him, if he would undertake to "convey" £200,000 to the Council, and to pension his father-in-law with such a sum as would enable him to live as a respectable private citizen. He agreed. Clive's protégé was dethroned, and Cossim Ali enthroned. But as the "private trade" frauds continued and extended, Cossim Ali was unable to secure a revenue sufficient to enable him to discharge his liabilities, and was forced into collision with the parties to whom he owed his elevation. He remonstrated, the Council was inattentive, and the servants of the Company evaded or disobeyed the law. Discontent produced hostility, and

at length Cossim Ali authorised the use of violence for the protection of his rights and revenues. This was objected to, and Cossim Ali, determining not to be outbraved, resolved on abolishing the injustice by abolishing all transit dues, and changing his mode of taxation. The Council objected to this politic measure, demanded its annulment, and backed their demand by an embassy and a number of soldiers. On Cossim Ali's refusal, the English attacked and took the citadel of Patna; but the Nabob immediately stormed the place, took the whole captive, and massacred them; then fleeing his capital, he retired within the territories of the Viceroy of Oude. Meer Jaffier was hereupon, at a stipulated price, reinstated in his ancient dignity, and reigned uneasily, for a while inspired by the rumour that Clive was likely to return. This hope was never realised for him; on February 1765, he died, leaving his English benefactor a legacy of £70,000. Nuzeem-ud-Dowlah, Meer Jaffier's son, was next inducted on the same terms as Cossim Ali,—although a prohibition of any such measures had reached the Council from the Directors,—and thus the Company's servants enriched themselves, while Leadenhall Street was distracted by lack of dividends.

In this plight Clive found affairs on his arrival. The Council pleaded his own conduct as their precedent. Clive replied that his act was not self-planned and selfishly initiated, like theirs, but auxiliary to a scheme originating among the Bengalese themselves, and, besides, that it was experimental, and done at a time when there was "no law" against it, and, consequently, "no transgression" in it. *They*, unjustified by any policy except that of an "itching palm," had, in fact, manufactured a revolt for their own profit, effected it with the Company's forces, and at its charge,

to increase their own hoards, heedless alike of the weal of the Hindustanee, or the wealth of their employers. The hot, imperious, and impetuous manner in which Clive scolded the offenders, they little relished; and when they ventured, by insubordination, remonstrance, opposition, and counter-accusation, to justify, palliate, or defend their criminality, he at once suspended the recusants, and shipped them off to England, where they invested their means in the stock of the Company, that they might purchase revenge. By reprehension, positive enactment, and summary dismissal, he arrested bribery, and thereafter set himself to undo the evils resulting from the private trade fraud. This he accomplished by placing the right of granting permits in the hands of responsible officials. To compensate, in some measure, for the loss thus occasioned, Lord Clive projected and instituted a salt-tax, the proceeds of which were to be divided proportionately among the Company's servants; but this was afterwards objected to (though ultimately allowed) by the Directors.

His next "administrative reform" was to lessen the number of the members of the Council, and to require them to be resident in Calcutta.

The far-reaching policy which had unfolded itself to him before the battle of Plassey was now ripe for another development. Britain was lord of the trade and revenues of India, as well as its military bulwark. The Nabob's government was only a pageant, and it would be well, he thought, that it should be now distinctly arranged that all real power should be ceded to the Company. He resolved to pension Nuzeem-ud-Dowlah into impotence; to acquire the (dewanee) premiership of Bengal, and thus to gain substantive and acknowledged power for Britain in India.

Aware, however, that the instant and open assumption of regal functions and a royal name in Bengal would have embroiled his country with various European nations, and with the surrounding Hindustanese, he employed high diplomatic tact in effecting his purpose, without outward offence to any of the usages of nations. In due form he secured from Nuzeem-ud-Dowlah a grant of the Dewanee ; concluded with Surajah-Dowlah, the vizier of Delhi, a treaty of peace ; and arranged with Shah Alum, the Emperor, for the permanent (nizamut) principedom in Bengal, Bahar, and Orissa, by Nuzeem-ud-Dowlah, and for the collection and management of the revenues, &c., by the British, as his agents. This great, good work, which officially inaugurated an essential epoch in human progress, and made Britain (potential) empress of the "Land of Desire,"—this first legally ratified step in that grand march of conquest which has gone from the seas that bathe Cape Comorin to the shadows that fall from the Himalayas, and from the hither banks of the Indus to the farther borders of the Ganges, was taken with less pomp than the bridal of a merchant's daughter, or the opening of a slip of railway. He who had begun the conquest by the sword now closed it by the pen. On an ordinary table, in a bell-tent, set in an open field, the instrument which formed the earliest legal token of British dominion in the East was signed and ratified ; and well might he say of the vessel which bore the parchments of the treaty, "It will bring the Company the most important news they ever received."

But he had a more difficult task yet to accomplish before he could quit the post his anxious fellow-proprietors had conferred on him. To prevent the civil servants from taking bribes, with the honeyed name of presents, was a

work that needed decision, firmness, and persistency; but to attempt the diminishing of the emoluments of the military force, by whose aid the government was carried on, was one demanding hardihood, daring, and invincible resoluteness. In this, too, he succeeded. Double ("batta") allowance, which had been given by Meer Jaffier, at Clive's suggestion, to induce men to enter the field, the soldiery had still continued to claim and receive; but as the expenses of warfare were now to fall upon the Company's exchequer, Clive resolved to discontinue it. It had been given as an expedient, not promised as a regular honorarium. He accordingly issued a proclamation, announcing that on and after 1st January 1766, the right to double *batta* would cease. Intrigues immediately began. Remonstrances were showered in, and Clive was severely censured in private for his daring intermeddling. He replied mildly, but authoritatively. The military officials, however, trained to think the sword resistless and supreme, believed themselves too important and essential a constituent of the government to be dealt with in this high-handed way. They had been accustomed to inspire awe: were they now to be overawed? A conspiracy was planned, to send in their resignations unless their demands were complied with. To have submitted would have been to have given up civil government, and to have created a military tyranny. At this very time an irruption of a horde of Mahrattas was threatening Corah. Nothing daunted or disconcerted by the untoward aspect of affairs, Clive determined on bringing from Madras and Bombay as many officers as could be spared, and on making no terms with the mutineers, but rather on breaking, at whatever cost, the refractory spirit of the malcontents. "Secure is he who on himself relies." After immense effort,

he succeeded in withdrawing the timid and misguided from the set, arresting the ringleaders, and after their trial and dismissal from the army, subduing the incipient revolution, which would have opened up the whole field of Indian warfare and diplomacy to France and Holland, besides impairing the whole efforts of his life's politics. The persons so detached from the service, of course, enrolled themselves at home among Clive's enemies.

The time occupied in the working out of those various reforms was little more than twenty months. In this period he had concluded advantageous treaties of peace with all the near native powers, had suppressed the private trade fraud, the corrupting bribery system, and the revolt in the army, and had re-arranged almost the whole polity of the Company's service,—scattering, meanwhile, seeds of sound thought in numerous letters to various officials regarding the future of India. Besides this, his example had been one of the utmost disinterestedness. He cheerfully left home, friends, and country, to grapple with hideous wrongs, and yet made and kept a determination to abjure every personal advantage if he could but accomplish the reformation he intended; so that he was able to write,—“With regard to myself, I have not benefited or added to my fortune one farthing; nor shall I, though I might by this time have received £500,000 sterling.” So far did he carry his scrupulousness on this point, that he bestowed the legacy Meer Jaffier had left him on the Poplar Hospital, then a refuge for decayed seamen belonging to the Company's service, but which, on receipt of Clive's donation, enlarged its constitution, so as to include the soldiery as well, and became the united Greenwich and Chelsea of the Indian service.

The active exertions of these few months completely prostrated Clive. He had been "tasking his heart, forgetful of his life and present good," so that by the close of October 1766, his system was all but shattered; and for some time it seemed as if no to-morrow would dawn again for him.

Letters from Leadenhall Street reached Clive in December 1766, cancelling his salt-duty plan, disagreeing with him in the *form* of compensation to be made to the Company's servants, postponing the settlement of that point, yet imperatively commanding the discontinuance of the salt trade. Although Clive was complimented by the Directors for the integrity, good sense, and peremptory rapidity of his proceedings, he could not consent to undo the work which he had so painfully and laboriously arranged; and, before his departure, he perpetuated the salt trade grant till the 1st September 1767, by which time he hoped to be able to convince the Directory of the rightness and righteousness of his plan. These letters besought his lordship to retain office for another year; but from the state of his health he resigned the government into the hands of Mr Verelst, and on 18th January 1767, attended a meeting of the Select Committee for the last time. He was weak, and therefore handed his valedictory address to the secretary to be read. It was a statesmanly paper, full of pithy and weighty maxims, the harvestings of a mind constantly active, continually observant, and having the rare intellectual instinct of prudent forethoughtfulness. He expressed in it his regret at leaving, constrained as he was only by the duty of preserving and prolonging life for other uses—exercised the power given him of naming officials to fill vacancies, and laid down general directions for the future management of affairs. Cautions against greedy haste in

increasing the revenue, or in striving to steal a march on fortune by dishonest inattention to the Company's interest, were accompanied with promises to exert every energy to effect some satisfactory arrangement regarding the salt trade; and his warnings against insubordinate contumacy were exceedingly wise. Towards the conclusion of his address he said, "I leave the country in peace. I leave the civil and military departments under discipline and subordination. It is incumbent on you to keep them so. . . . If you do not make a proper use of that power with which you are invested, I shall hold myself acquitted as I do now protest against the consequences." The mediocre minds to whom these solemn words were spoken soon forgot their influence, if they had ever conceived their importance; and the useful reforms, initiated by Clive, were soon replaced by disorganisation.

At the close of January 1767, Clive embarked on board the *Britannia*, and having set sail from the Ganges, reached Portsmouth 14th July, and arrived in London next day. George III. and Queen Charlotte received him at their levees, and the Court of Directors welcomed him with a profusion of thanks. And well, indeed, they might; for to him, under Providence, the success of the Company was owing, and the glory of the British name had received through him such accessions in India as to be at once a talisman and a terror. In the pregnant summarisation of Lord Macaulay,—“From his *first* visit to India dates the renown of the English arms in the East. . . . From Clive's *second* visit to India dates the political ascendancy of the English in that country. . . . From Clive's *third* visit to India dates the purity of the administration of our empire.” But

“The very noblest heart on earth hath oft
No better lot than to *deserve*,”

and strange ubiquitous enmity clamoured and clangoured round the laurel-foliaged paths of Clive's past life. Venality, made rancorous by his brave baying of the hate of the ill-doing; Envy, turning the keen eye of ungratified desire on his success; Oppression, foiled and fooled in its endeavours; Rapacity, convicted and punished by him in the unshrinking honesty of his determination; and Selfishness, arrested with its grasp unlawfully upon the chief prizes of Fortune, yoked their votaries together to overthrow the vigorous soul who, when men's footsteps were timid in the dark uncertainty of Indian affairs, planted a firm foot on the land, and, with a prescient eye-gauge, marked the time and means for rearing up an empire on the territory which then held but a few trading settlements,—who had transpierced the gloom of events, and illumined the future by the suggestion, initiation, establishment, and maintenance of a polity to which the after-time—even our own days—gave their sanction, and who had redeemed from blundering, dishonest mediocrity the honour of England and of Englishmen.

The weapons and wounds of intrigue are often more deadly than those of war; and they are much less easily opposed or cured. A tricky, strategic strife was opened against Clive in the Directorate. A vote of indemnity to the offenders he had dismissed was passed, and, though the grant of his jaghire was continued for ten years, it was carried by the narrow majority of twenty-nine. He was piqued at the slighting welcome given him; he assumed a defiant and haughty tone, and in every possible manner, except becoming a candidate for membership in the Direc-

torate, strove to hold the East India Company to the furtherance of the views which he had matured in the courts, camps, writing offices, and council chambers of Hindostan. He felt and said that the Directors had "neither abilities nor resolution to manage such important concerns as are *now* under their care;" and in consequence he treated them cavalierly, and they used him coldly.

Clive was ordered by medical men to abstain from business, and to try the arduous toil of idleness—for to such a man so it appeared—as the only agency for regaining health. He was unable to exist in the quietness and quiescence they enjoined; and though, as an experiment, he set out on a continental tour, he speedily returned, and rushed into the warfare of politics with all the irresistible energy of his disposition. Listless do-nothingism seemed to him a living death; and he took his seat in Parliament as the leader of a few persons who, owing their places to him, were pledged to his opinions on Indian affairs. The king asked his views, and promised to forward them; Grenville advocated his Eastern polity; and it was determined to bring in a bill for the better regulation of the Company's affairs, and to arrange the part which the Crown should take in the maintenance of British influence in the East. Great consternation seized the Directorate, and unseemly vituperation was plenteously bespattered upon each other during the contest by the disciples of the rival schools of Indian politicians. This only served to make both ridiculous and hateful to the public. Clive, as the most conspicuous of the *Nabobry*, received more than a full share of obloquy and envy, and every effort was made by his enemies to increase this "evil report;" for the more they heightened popular indignation, the more they lowered his eminence and lessened his

influence. Clive desired to see the territorial sovereignty of India transferred to the British Crown, and wished the trading interest of the Company to be secured and respected ; but his enemies in Parliament and in the Directorate managed to frustrate this design, and a policy of procrastination was adopted, leaving it for our own day to accomplish Clive's prescient scheme. On the appointment of Warren Hastings, who had had a seat with Clive in the Council, and generally coincided in his views, Clive forwarded a note of his policy, and a feeling and sensible letter of advice regarding the position the Company should assume and retain ; but he was scarcely prepared for being treated as an enemy by that Company for whom he had sacrificed so much, as well as for and by whom he had acquired so much. Yet, on 7th January 1772, four and a half years after his return to England, the Company duly informed him, by a formal official note from the secretary, that he should be called to account for his conduct in India. On leave being granted to bring in an Indian bill, Sullivan covertly denounced Clive ; but he replied boldly, with a characteristically grandiloquent account of his "manner of life from his youth up" in the Company's service. It was a vindication, not a defence. A select committee was appointed to inquire into British affairs in India ; and, its reports being published, India and Clive became the twin topics of debate. The public, knowing only one side imperfectly, held him in disrepute ; but he was installed Knight of the Bath, on 15th June 1772, and in the same year was made Lord-Lieutenant of his native county, Shropshire, and of Montgomery. He also laid his plan of Indian polity before the Cabinet. Lord North, by the advice of Chancellor Thurlow, contemplated the confiscation of the

whole estates of the several members, agents, and servants of the Company, past and present, as the only security for the discharge of the immense obligations of the Company ; but Government had approved its transactions, and could not rightly act in such an inconsistent way. At the end of a long contest, out of which Clive, after defending himself with intelligence, force, and pertinacity, came with flying colours, a vote of censure was proposed in Parliament ; but when it was put, every criminating expression was expunged, and it was declared that though Clive had enriched himself, he “did at the same time render great and meritorious services to his country.” Having conquered in this matter, Clive took no part in the subsequent proceedings, which resulted in the granting of a new charter to the Company ; and though he continued to sit in Parliament, he refrained from interfering with its business. Government asked him, it is said, to conduct the American war ; and Voltaire requested permission to use his lordship’s papers to help him in the compilation of a history of the conquest of Bengal ; but the mainspring of his character—self-esteem—was broken, and life was hopeless. When, therefore, pain seized upon him with relentless gripe ; and the gnawing intensity of reflection upon a life misunderstood, a career maligned, and the plan, purpose, and foremost thought of his being, indefinitely postponed, if not set aside, increased it, his mind wavered and lost balance ; for the pivot of right action—reason—had failed, and the sad distemper of the nerves—occasioned by the over-frequent use of opium, as a palliative of pain of mind and body—made him feel “a-weary, a-weary of the world.” An aimless, exertionless, unhonoured, if not dishonoured, existence he could not brook ; and on the 22d of November 1774, he used a

penknife for his own destruction, and by the hand that wielded "the rod of empire," he lay self-vanquished and cold in unexpected death.

The mighty heart, whose pulses had beat to so much of the glorious music of life, is pulseless and still; the soul, to whose view the grand panorama of India's future had been so vividly unfolded, is gone; the affections, which twined themselves so seriously and tensely round the races of Hindostan, are calm and cold; and the politic brain, whose prescient schemes did so much for the greatening and widening of the dominion of Britain in the East, has ceased to concoct subtle and complicated plans of Oriental law and government. But the lessons of his life remain, and the impulses which it impressed on circumstances go sweeping down the tides of time, and touch into shape the outlines of the future. Let us venture to sum up a few of these.

We note, first, His constant faith in the vitality of effort. Second, The thoughtful considerateness with which he formed his plans, and the daring undauntedness with which he executed them. Third, The persistent unity of effort he secured by holding to one great, well-matured idea—British dominion in India. Fourth, The loveable heroism of his nature, and the (with that one exception, when he stooped to win success by trickery) stern honesty of his character. Fifth, His enthusiastic and friendly acknowledgment and encouragement of others,—his ready helpfulness to any one who required aid. Sixth, The width of scope with which his eye glanced at events, to trace their farthest visible bearings on the future. Seventh, His decision of character and resolute unyieldingness, when his convictions were once formed. Eighth, The constancy with which he kept in view the need for inducing a higher, *i.e.*, a moral civilisation upon India,

and the consistency of his patriotism in aiming at the greatness and glory of his fatherland. Ninth, The healthy tone of his patriotism—its nationality and impersonality. How unlike that of the young Corsican, who, at the time of Clive's death, may have been playing the usual pranks of boyhood in the Rue Charles, in Ajaccio, unweeting of the destiny that waited him! How like that of his own great—though specially trained—successor, who dreamed little of Assaye or Waterloo as he paced with his governess the gardens of Dangan Castle in Meath, when the news-sheets of the day brought tidings of Clive's suicide! There is *one* characteristic we wish he had possessed, but which we dare not predicate of him,—the noble Christian life that he exemplified. Alas! he lived in an age when men scoffed at the Saviour's name, and, while they idolised the hero of a day, left the Hope and Succour of the world without a temple in their hearts. That he felt with genuine ardour the faith which puts heart into a man's life, and moves and sustains when all ordinary motives and ordinary supports fail, it were hard to deny; but we have little proof that he walked by "*The True Light.*" He was one of those who in his own age sowed the seed of the world's hereafter, and he has linked himself to history as one of those great souls who have initiated an epoch, and who, in those moments that try men, hold unflinchingly by the banners of Progress and Beneficence.



James Watt—The Utilisation of
Steam.

A.D. 1736-1819.

“ The fables of Old Giants realised,
Behold, in this unsleeping sinewy slave !
He toils in Earth’s deep mines, o’er Ocean’s wave,
Unswerving and unfaltering, unsurprised.
Whether through barren heath and mountain gorge
He’s bidden haste ; or sent to weave and spin
Amid the populous City’s swarming din ;
Or call’d to wield his hammer at the forge,
His throbbing heart with all obedience hies
To do its part in Life’s industrial plan ;
Fatigueless at his task he swinks, nor sighs
To work the will of his weak master, Man.
To thee, be thanks, O Watt ! with genius fraught,
By whom this Cyclops has been tamed and taught.”

ƒ. A. E. Mullens.

“ After years of intellectual toil and mental anxiety, James Watt brought the steam-engine to such perfection as to make it the most precious gift that man ever bequeathed to his race.”—*Sir D. Brewster.*

“ Watt, the man whose genius discovered the means of multiplying our national resources to a degree, perhaps, even beyond his own stupendous powers of calculation and combination, bringing the treasures of the abyss to the summit of the earth ; giving the feeble arm of man the momentum of an Afrite ; commanding manufactures to arise, as the rod of the prophet produced waters in the desert ; affording the means of dispensing with that time and tide which wait for no man, and of sailing without that wind which defied the commands and threats of Xerxes.”—*Sir Walter Scott.*



THE UTILISATION OF STEAM.

TEAM was, for long ages, one of the waste products of nature. It is scarcely a century since the means of utilising it were discovered and invented; and it was yoked in servitude to that mighty and manifold series of mechanical agencies which augments the energies, increases the comforts, and promotes the improvement of the human race. The numerous applications of steam to the useful purposes of life; the various modes in which it can exert a ministry of beneficence; and the many differing methods in which it enlarges the sphere of human influence, and fits itself in, so directly, to the several purposes of an advanced civilisation, could scarcely have been dreamed of by those who watched the rising vapours of the morn on the banks of the green old Nile, on Corinth's shores, or beside the empire-margined Tiber; and, indeed, that it ever could become the subservient serf of man, and execute not only his bidding, but his work, does not, on an *à priori* view of the case, seem very probable even to ourselves. Yet the substance of that same retinue of clouds which girds the sun

“With pomp, with glory, and magnificence,”

or forms that “pestilent congregation of vapours” which casts its gloom over city and town, as well as hamlet, is, in

great part, a similar aëriform mass to that whose force bridges the ocean-spaces between continents; speeds the engine with current swiftness over the iron-lines which link factory-centre to metropolitan populousness, and swinks with almost exhaustless efficacy, as the generator of motions, forces, and means by which the capacity of man has been multiplied to an indefinable extent.

The progress of that marvellous thought by which the industrial power of humanity is so wondrously augmented, from the earliest observation of some reflective man upon the elasticity of vapour, to the moment in which steam was utilised by the genius of Watt, would, if rightly told, form the strangest of "the fairy tales of science," and would be a historic truth far surpassing the sublimest reach of fiction.

Man's progress in the utilisation of steam seems to have been very slow. Hero of Alexandria (cir. 120 B.C.) in a work "On Pneumatics," describes two machines of his own invention, in which a rotary motion was conveyed in the one case by the emission of heated air, and in the other by the immission and emission of steam. The latter is the first known attempt to effect the production of motion by the employment of elastic vapour. It was, however, used only as a toy, and does not seem to have been applied to any utilitarian purpose. This plaything is the original of that distinguished "species" of mechanism now known as the steam-engine. It was for ages a curiosity of mechanics. Nor till the stir and ferment of the Reformation does it appear to have entered into the human mind that the spirals of vapour rising from heated water could become weariless labourers for humanity; and then it was more an outburst of rhetoric than a scientific appraisalment of facts. A volume of sermons by Mathesius, published at Sarepta in

1563, contains a suggestion of such a possibility. About thirty years thereafter, the Alexandrian toy was taken as a model for a mechanical turnspit. Baptista Porta in Italy, and David Rivault in France, occupied themselves as students of the powers, qualities, uses, &c., of steam. Indeed, the need of some new industrial energy appears in the early part of the seventeenth century to have been simultaneously suggested to several minds. Hence originated the many experiments on heat, air, gases, motion, &c., which are recalled to us by the mere mention of the names of Galileo, Descartes, Torricelli, Wallis, Roëmer, and Leibnitz; Stevinus, Newton, Castelli, and Guericke; De Caus, the Marquis of Worcester, Huygens, and Boyle.

A century of tentative approaches—many successive and some parallel—were made to the solution of the question, each supplying some preliminary to its successful accomplishment, none effecting the required result. The knowledge of the qualities and properties of the materials was requisite before contrivance could efficiently act and super-add to nature such appliances as would fit in with her divinely-ordained activities, and cause the ordinary action of the elements involved to achieve a human purpose in harmony with the ever-abiding designs of THE ONE. For this is the great law of discovery—to bring human conceptions into harmony with the Divine plan; and whensoever *that* is accomplished, the means of touching to their required uses the ordinary elements of nature become self-evident. The science of dynamics might also be said to have had its origin in the desire to know the laws of force. The Bernouillis, Varignon, Herman, Euler, Segner, and Boscovich, are the chief names to which the scientific correlation of statics and dynamics may be traced. And though the names

of Newton, D'Alembert, Venturi, Deluc, &c., may not be omitted from a catalogue of the assistants in the discovery of the true theory of the steam-engine, this distinction belongs, perhaps, more justly to the originators of a true theory of heat. Without neglecting to notice the efforts of the Florentine academicians, we may mention the thermometers of Fahrenheit and Reaumur as tending much to the consolidation of this science. But perhaps the greatest achievements in the investigation of the theory of heat were made by Drs Cullen and Black, professors in the Glasgow University, the latter of whom was a patron of the obscure though ingenious mechanician by whom steam was first utilised. Dr Black expounded the theory of latent heat; Scheele introduced the idea of the radiation of caloric: and all these various efforts combined, led to the successful and systematic application of the laws of heat to the furtherance of the mechanical arts, and ultimately to the actual construction of the most marvellous and multiform mechanism of modern days—the steam-engine.

Sir Samuel Moorland, master of mechanics to the King of England, made some experiments upon the elasticity of steam before 1682, and projected a scheme for raising water by the force it afforded. Dr Denys Papin, a native of Blois, who had assisted Boyle in many of his experiments, and who thus had his attention directed to the grand mechanical problem of that time, published in the *Acta Eruditorum* of Leipsic, in 1685, several communications, which show that he had attained a clear idea of the nature of the material facts upon which the construction of a steam-engine depended, and shortly afterwards made some steps towards the construction of such a mechanism. Steam was now well known to be capable of acting as a motive power; the

proper applicability of its force to useful purposes was the great difficulty. To Papin we owe the invention of the digester and the safety-valve. Captain T. Savery, about 1698, invented an engine, in which steam was employed to give a force for the draining of mines or fens, for the propulsion of water through mansions and palaces, and for pumping it from ships. Amontons, in 1699, proposed a fire-wheel; but this, though ingenious in conception, was liable to many derangements, and was found impracticable.

Dr André Dalesme, in 1705, exhibited at Paris an engine for raising water by the force of steam; and Leibnitz, after examining Savery's mechanisms in England, sent a sketch of one of them to Papin, who renewed his attempts to make an effective working engine. Upon the basis of Savery's machine, Thomas Newcomen and John Cawley—the former a blacksmith, and the latter a glazier in Dartmouth—constructed an engine upon Papin's principle of a piston and a condensing process, using, however, Savery's mode of creating a vacuum by cold affusion, for which they were led by an accident to substitute the method of throwing a jet or stream of cold water into the cylinder. Further improvements were made upon this engine by Desaguliers, Henry Beighton, of Newcastle-on-Tyne, John Smeaton, and others, but none of these engines employed the *direct* force of steam as their motive power, and none of the improvers made any alteration in or advance upon the principles of steam mechanism. These engines, therefore, have been designated, for distinction's sake, atmospheric steam-engines. All the elements of a successful adaptation of steam to industrial purposes might now be said to have been gathered together, but, like the dry bones in Ezekiel's vision, they required a Divine

breath to give them the life of usefulness. At length came the hour, and with the hour

“The master hand
That seized the fire-flame, like Prometheus old,
And, out the black shaft, through the grassy land,
Dragg'd up the iron from earth's rocky hold,
And gave command to both. Ye shall not rest
Till striving man is from work's bondage free.
Go, steam! and do man's hest; from east to west,
Ye wheels of iron, at his bidding flee!”

The following *résumé* of the chief steps through which the invention had by this time passed will be found not only intelligible and interesting, but authoritative:—“S. de Caus made steam act to raise water; Worcester performed this operation in a more regular and mechanical manner; Papin used the condensation of steam, and, through that, the atmospheric pressure, as well as the direct expansive force, and he worked the engine by a piston; Savery condensed by refrigeration, instead of the mere absence of fire, but did not use the atmosphere; Newcomen used the jet for condensing, and the atmosphere for pressure, but did not use the direct force of steam; Desaguliers introduced the safety-valve; Beighton and Smeaton improved the mechanism; Dalesme needs not to be mentioned, as we are not informed what plan he executed, but he certainly made no step himself. If the direct force of steam, as well as atmospheric pressure, had been both employed, with the jet of cold water, the safety-valve, and the contrivance for regulating the supply valves, a far better engine than any ever known before the time of Watt would have been produced, and yet nothing whatever would have been added to the former inventions, they would only have been combined together. The result of the whole is, that one of the greatest

theoretical steps was made by Papin, who was, during a long period, little commemorated; and that Savery and Newcomen, who have been by many called the inventors, were the first, of all the ingenious and useful persons whose successive improvements we have now recorded, to apply the steam-engine to practical purposes. France has thus produced the man who, next to Watt, may be regarded as the author of the steam-engine; of all Watt's predecessors, Papin stands incontestibly at the head; but it is almost certain that he never actually constructed an engine. Though the engine of Savery was of considerable use in pumping to a small height, and indeed has not entirely gone out of use in our own times; and though Newcomen's was still more extensively useful, from being applicable to mines, not only had no means ever been found of using the steam power for any other purpose than drawing up water, but even in that operation it was exceedingly imperfect and very expensive, insomuch that a water-power was often preferred to it, and even a horse-power in many cases afforded equal advantages. The great consumption of fuel which it required was its cardinal defect; the other imperfection was its loss of all direct benefit from the expansive force of the steam itself. That element was only used in creating a vacuum, and an air-pump might have done as much, had it been worked by water or by horses. It was, in the strictest sense of the word, an air and not a steam-engine.* When the progress of invention had proceeded thus far, "the genius of Watt, guided by sound judgment, and urged by unremitting application, effected in less than forty years a complete change in the power of mechanism."

* Lord Brougham's Works, vol. i., *Lives of the Philosophers of the Time of George III.*, article, "Watt," p. 30.

In a small, comfortable cottage at the east end of the south side of Dalrymple Street, in the old burgh town and seaport of Greenock—of the Council of which he was treasurer—dwelt Mr James Watt, shipwright, builder, and general merchant, a clever pursuer of many handicraft arts, and a successful conductor of such commercial speculations as the state of trade at that time afforded opportunity for. His wife was Agnes Muirhead, a handsome, well-informed, and good-tempered woman, in whose veins ran the “bluid” of the “lairds of Lachop.” To this honest pair there were born five children, of whom three, two sons and a daughter, died in infancy, and the latest born, John, was lost at sea in the twenty-fourth year of his age—only seven years after the death of his mother, in 1755. Their fourth child was *the* James Watt to whom

“ Nature disclosed the artful plan
To mould the mist into Leviathan.”

He was born 19th January 1736. He was sickly in childhood, and was an object of much anxiety, for the parents, tried by former losses, almost despaired of training him through the perils of boyhood, or of his ever attaining to man’s estate. The delicate boy, though kept long from school, was of an observative and thoughtful turn of mind, and found in the shop and workshops of his father, as well as in the splendid scenery of land-locked sea and towering mountain near him, multitudes of “object lessons,” which excited his intelligence, quickened his aptitudes, and, by gratifying his curiosity, increased his thirst for information. He made teachers of all he saw, and often made himself master of their secrets. His mother taught him to read, his father imparted to him the rudiments of writing and arith-

metic. He was carefully drilled in his lessons, though not harassed with them, and though far outstripped in school-learning by many of the burly youngsters who jibed the feeble home-pet, he had an education of the feelings and senses seldom acquired in those old days of stern catechetical discipline and classical drudgery. Marvellous stories are often told of "the boyhood of great men," as if, in their early years, their future eminence had been foreshadowed. In the biography of James Watt these are not wanting; nor do we think that they are, in this case, apocryphal. It would be impossible for us, however, in a mere sketch, such as this must be, to criticise minutely the tales of his self-suggested discovery of geometrical truths, of his early acquaintance with algebraic formulæ, of his precocious powers of calculation, and of inventing and constructing philosophical toys. It must suffice us to say that such stories seem to be authentically narrated, and appear to be credible, for the boyhood of Watt was different in its conditions from that of the majority of children in his day.

After the anxious expenditure of a mother's care, and the faithful patience of a father's affection, the boy's health seemed to warrant his attendance at a public school, there to be braced by competition, and fired by contact with his age-fellows. In the commercial school of Mr M'Adam he increased his knowledge of penmanship and accounts; under the learned and excellent Robert Arrol, Master of the Burgh Grammar School of Greenock, he acquired a fair acquaintance with Latin, and a "little Greek;" while with a relative of his own, John Marr, he studied mathematics with zeal and purpose, with a loving diligence which won his master's and his parents' admiration. Though not a frequent companion in the giddy joys of schoolboy life, he

was a great favourite with his comrades, on account of his mechanical ingenuity, and his rare power of story-telling,—a power which he exercised with an imaginative fertility and a fascination of style more delightful to his hearers than the daily-drilled narrative of the *Æneid*, the Homeric “Tale of Troy divine,” the verses of

“Him who left half-told
The story of Cambuscan bold,”

or the “linked sweetness long drawn out” of the “Faëry Queene.” Scotland has always been famed for legend and tradition; and in Watt’s youth, when the Jacobite rebellion was an actuality,—when “bonnie Prince Charlie” really fought at Falkirk, feasted in Holyrood, failed at Culloden, and fled thence a fugitive to France,—there can be little doubt that mother-told tales of the stern and sturdy wars of the olden times were frequent at a fireside graced by a female descendant of the ballad-famed Muirheads; or that Watt, having been thrilled himself by the magic of story, had learned to use its witcheries on others.

The home-training, to which Watt was subjected, was judicious though indulgent. Manliness and morality were carefully inculcated, and strictly, but with enlightened affection, enforced. The boy grew up sincere, truthful, honest, persevering, intelligent, and thoughtful. His uncle, John Muirhead, often united with the elder Watt in commercial transactions; the greatest cordiality prevailed between the brothers-in-law; and James Watt had the privilege of frequent intercourse with his uncle’s family, both in Glasgow and at Killearn, on the banks of Loch Lomond. In Glasgow, too, he had another influential relative, viz., George Muirhead, Professor of Humanity in the University there and one of the editors of the magnificent Foulis’

“Homer” (1756-8.) In his fourteenth year, a copy of Gravesande’s “Elements of Physics” came into Watt’s hands, and fired his mind with its destined ambition. He became an experimenter in chemistry, mechanics, electricity, &c., and so cultured in himself the capacities of researchful observation. This phenomenon-watching inquisitiveness did not meet his aunt, Mrs Muirhead’s, notions of utilitarianism, and she scolded him after this fashion:—“James Watt, I never saw such an idle boy. Take a book, and employ yourself usefully. For the last hour you have not spoken one word, but taken off the lid of that kettle and put it on again ; holding now a cup and now a silver spoon over the *steam*, watching how it rises from the spout, and catching and connecting the drops of hot water that it falls into. Are you not ashamed of spending your time in this way?” Ah, good old dame! the boy has been indulging in a glorious dream. The boy-thought is a new heaven-seed implanted in humanity, to release vital force from every-day taskwork, and to produce a substitute for much of the most exhausting bodily labour in the manufactory and the mine, on the roadway, and across the sea ; to supply unskilled labour by art, that so skilled labour may henceforth be the lot of thinking man. The boy’s idle hour has potencies of usefulness in it incomputable by the meagre arithmetic of every-day existence ; for there is in it—as there is at the same time in the mind of a Glasgow professor of morals—a revision of all old notions on “The Wealth of Nations.”

The facilities afforded by his father’s business for acquiring a knowledge of the construction and uses of telescopes, quadrants, and other instruments of a similar sort, quickened in Watt’s mind the love of geometrical, astronomical, and optical studies, and at last inclined him to choose, as his

own pursuit in life, the manufacture of philosophical instruments. The need for a decision on that subject was not forced upon him early. He was in the seventeenth year of his age when some business reverses of his father's made it advisable to provide himself with some means of gaining a subsistence. He was apprenticed to a mathematical instrument maker in Glasgow; but his own ill health, the death of his mother, and his desire to get a proper training in his business, unitedly led him to break his indenture, and to set out for London, whither he went, under the care of his former teacher and cousin-german, John Marr. After a few difficulties, and a little hopelessness, James Watt, on agreeing to pay a premium of £21, and give his labour during the period of servitude, became the pupil, but not the apprentice, of John Morgan, mathematical instrument maker, in Finch Lane, Cornhill, for one year. His father's poverty made him determine on eating only the bread of industry. He worked early and late, with constancy and goodwill, and strove to make himself as little as possible burdensome at home. He jobbed at overhours, and improved both his finances and his skill by the efforts he made, though he injured his health, and gave additional poignancy to the headaches to which he had been subject from boyhood, besides adding to them rheumatic and nervous pains. In the autumn of 1756 he returned to his native land; and having supplied himself with a *kit* of superior tools, and a copy of Nicholas Biron's treatise on "The Construction and Use of Mathematical Instruments,"—translated by a self-taught Scottish mathematician, Edward Stone,—sought an outlet for his energies. Fortune, in this, favoured him. A merchant of Jamaica, Alexander Macfarlane, having died in 1755, bequeathed his collection of mathematical instru-

ments to the Glasgow University; and on the suggestion of Dr Moor, Professor of Greek, and Dr Dick, Professor of Natural Philosophy, Watt was requested to unpack, arrange, clean, and repair them.

He thereafter attempted to establish himself in business in the city of Glasgow, but was opposed in this scheme by the members of the incorporated trades, who, because he was neither a burgess, a regularly-trained tradesman, nor married to the daughter of any one possessed of the freedom of the city, forbade his opening a workshop or warehouse within the burgh bounds. The University came to his help, and gave him the use of a small room within the college precincts, next the apartments occupied by the Messrs Foulis, printers to the University. Watt was appointed mathematical instrument maker to the University; and here, by a variety of miscellaneous exertions of acquired neat-handedness and inborn intelligence, he managed to make a moderate income. Fiddle-making, ornamental nick-nackeries, organ-building—though he was entirely destitute of “musical ear”—employed the spare time of the modest and studious young man, who made and repaired the mechanical contrivances by which grave professors exemplified to sage students the modes of operation in which nature delighted. The city was full of James Watt’s reputation as a handicraft workman, and an intelligent artisan. The professors of the University—all men of note in their departments—encouraged the young mechanic, and the students loved and respected him. Small, steady gains gave him the hope of a living; and by entering into partnership with John Craig, who advanced a small capital in lieu of skill, he increased his chance of making “ends meet.” This commercial companionship lasted from 1759

till 1765, in which year John Craig died. In 1763 James Watt considered himself capable of starting housekeeping on his own account, and succeeded, in July of that year, in persuading his cousin, Miss Miller, whose father was the chief magistrate of Calton, an eastern suburb of Glasgow, to share his small home and his large hopes. This event probably gave emphasis to his desire of doing something more likely to win bread, enjoyment, and fame, than the trade of the artisan afforded opportunity for.

He had the art of waiting without idling, and his interesting activity of thought made him an acquisition to college society. Adam Smith, the political economist; Simson, the geometer; Black, the discoverer of latent heat; Moor, the Grecian; Muirhead, the humanist and orientalist; John Millar, the historian and jurist; Clow, the logician [?]; Principal Leechman; Anderson, the physicist; Robert and Andrew Foulis, the printers, &c., then formed the chief members of the literary society of the city, and they found in Watt a man of congenial intellectuality and taste. These men gave his mind employment and aim; they encouraged his inventive genius, and spurred on his ambition. The old dreams of greatness which as a lad had glorified his life, though gaining him the chastisement of his aunt's disapprobation, began to play about his brain, and his little shop—now in the Saltmarket—was the scene of many experiments for increasing the home-income.

Just as his mind was all alert for some new stroke of money-making ingenuity, the chance came. During the session of 1763-4, John Anderson, who had between 1756-60 occupied the chair of Oriental Languages, then vacated by Watt's relative, George Muirhead, but who was now Professor of Natural Philosophy, required to illustrate

his prelections on elastic vapours by experiments with a model of Newcomen's engine. The instrument belonging to the University broke down, and it was sent to Watt for repair. His mind had been reverting of late pretty frequently to the subject of steam. He had held several conversations about it with John Robison, then a student, afterwards Professor of Chemistry in the University of Glasgow, and, at a later period, occupant of the chair of Natural Philosophy at Edinburgh. This opportune and suggestive reminder, aided as it was by the recent study of Dr John T. Desagulier's "Experimental Philosophy," (1734,) the translation of Gravesande, already mentioned, and B. F. de Belidor's "Science of Engineering," (1729,) and "Hydraulic Architecture," (1739-1753,) was through pressure of business almost becoming effectless. He began to repair it "as a mere mechanician," he says, when he noticed that, though apparently all right, "its boiler could not supply it with steam" enough to keep it working more than a few strokes at a time. This anomaly between means and purpose, however, astonished his persistent curiosity, and he who had studied the science of harmonics that he might construct an organ, and in his impatience to be a thorough master of mechanics learned the then rarely acquired languages of Germany and Italy, was not likely to spare pains or labour to discover the reason of this faultiness in the simplest and most powerful engine that had hitherto been constructed. The determination to find a reply to this imperatively recurring—why?—formed at once the crisis of Watt's life, and the first step towards the emancipation of human industry. "Everything," says Professor Robison, "became to him a subject of new and serious study—everything became science in his hands." In a mind so prone

to reasoning, and so sedulously ambitious of success, it is not to be wondered at that "this little job of the model came opportunely in his way, and immediately took up his whole attention." It would be useless and unprofitable to enumerate the many beautiful though abortive specimens of ingenuity which, with a rare facility and fertility of resource, he produced during the period of experiment which preceded the realisation of his ideal. He tested the theory of heat, investigated anew the properties of steam and other elastic vapours; he employed himself in chemical researches, in inquiries regarding atmospheric air and its powers, and in the careful manipulation of glass, metals, &c., so far as they seemed likely to contribute to the end he had in view. Then he read voraciously, avariciously, and gloated over each newly-gained fact like an alchemist over his crucible. Nor was this insatiable persistency, energy, and thought useless or unrewarded. This competent knowledge supplied him with the power to overcome Nature; for "Nature," as he used to say, "has a weak side, if we can only find it out." His hour of triumph came, and to

"His sagacious mind,
With faculty inventive rarely fraught,"

she communicated the inspiration which enabled him to knit together the engine's bones of steel and sinews of brass, to set in its heart a burning furnace, and to give it the hot breath of a new life, while he reserved to man the power of being the guiding soul of all its motions. "One Sunday afternoon," he says, "I had gone out to take a walk in the Green of Glasgow; and when about half-way between Arn's well and the herd's house, my thoughts having been naturally turned to the experiments I had been engaged in for saving

heat in the cylinder, at that part of the road the idea occurred to me, that, as steam was an elastic vapour, it would expand, and rush into a previously exhausted space; and that, if I were to produce a vacuum in a separate vessel, and open a communication between the steam in the cylinder and the exhausted vessel, such would be the consequence." This idea was alone wanting to the entire success of what Dr Neil Arnott calls "the king of machines." The date of this flash of thought is stated to have been "the summer of 1765."

A century, therefore, has only elapsed since the conception of that mighty engine which has revolutionised human industry, and has compacted into "the days of the years" of each man's life the results and changes of steam's exhaustless energies, the advantages of the labours of those Anakim and Cyclops who have been made our fags and drudges, slaves and bondsmen. These huge leviathans of industry, which plod and toil, and tug and strain their great tireless limbs in our service, in all the multiform processes of labour, are the lineal progeny of that thought-born mechanism which "in the twinkling of an eye" converted the almost useless inventions, studies, and discoveries of many lives into available agencies for economical and expeditious manufacture, travelling, printing, &c., and added in a moment incalculable wealth to the world at large. Truly,

"The value of a *thought* cannot be told!"

And there probably has never been one instant, in the long reach of past ages, when so much latent life was quickened into utility and wealth as that in which this single thought imparted the soul of motion to the mechanism of which James Watt was the inventor, and gave the gigantic skeleton

that elastic life which thrills its pulseless but all-pliant limbs. Oh, the high-bounding feel of intellectual energy, the glow, the quiver and enchantment which the great spirit and busy heart of the "philosophical instrument maker to the University of Glasgow" must have experienced, when that idea rushed from its lurking corner in the mind, and lit up the inanimate masses of the mine with life, and harnessed the matter of the clouds to an everlasting servitude !

The single central thought being now gained, it became the aim and purpose of Watt's life to work into a practical form the intellectual Frankenstein he had created, and to subdue to his ideal the almost incorrigible and very refractory elements to be employed in the construction of the engine, in order that it might become applicable to the uses of daily life, and available in the ordinary operations and processes of the industries of the masses. He did not all at once succeed in wedding and welding the agencies of mechanism, and in amalgamating the ideal and the real. It was a long labour to inspirit the iron thews and the vaporous wanderers through immensity with his purpose, and incline them to work together in friendly simultaneity, that they might transform, raise, and ennoble the whole material existence of humanity, by accepting the drudgery of industry as their portion in the great manifoldness of exertion necessary to supply all human wants. Not all at once, or wholly by him, were the whims of the winds and the passionate rebelliousness of the sea, the freedom of the vapours, and the inert self-will of iron, overcome ; nor, though due to his early thought, was the whole sum of change which civilisation in one century has undergone, the work of his intellect. But he accomplished the subjugation of that one physical power from which commerce and industry draw their noblest

forces; and to his persistent determination to succeed, science owes many of its marvels, art many of its grandest achievements, trade a multitude of improved processes, and commerce the means of nearly annihilating distance, and of almost overcoming time.

Around the simplest steam-engine there ever circles a whole multitude of powers, self-willed and dangerous, but which have all been overcome and harmonised by the constructive ingenuity of the maker. The laws of atmospheric pressure, of friction, of motion, of metallic production and power, of velocities and forces, of expansion and condensation, of economisation of fuel, space, labour, and superintendence, of adaptative construction, of means, ends, causes, and effects, require to be provided for or against, and the mechanism brought into harmony with them all, as well as with the specific industrial purposes which led to its being conceived and made.

The necessary inadequacy of any exposition of the nature and uses of Watt's engine, which can be given by any one except an adept who has long occupied himself in the study of the operations of that multiform mechanism, might restrain *us* from any attempt at a formal description of it. When, however, we remember that *the* distinct achievement of Watt was to bring the elastic force of the vapour of heated water directly and immediately into exercise as a source of power, we perceive that our present business is not to describe that exceedingly complex mystery of mechanism which now starts into thought at the mention of the steam-engine. That hard-working, sweatless monster, whose vibrating beams play at the pit-head, whose cranks turn the wheels of ships or locomotives, or set in motion the complicated mechanical contrivances of manufactories, or whose resounding pistons

clank in the great foundries of our day—wherein human wit has so armed the iron with wise power, that it seizes upon great masses of its smelted ore, squeezes it into plates, cuts it into ribands, or moulds it into almost any predetermined shape—that giant of the forge, the factory, the mine, the rail, and the ocean, that weariless coadjutor of humanity, is a highly-trained and cultured Caliban, compared with the engine to which Watt's early thought gave life. It had little of that recondite multiplicity of parts, processes, requirements, and capacities, which the steam-engine of our time displays. Reduced to the one distinguishing idea, it seems to us that it may be intelligibly represented in our minds as a strongly-compacted cylinder, in which a closely-fitted piston works by the alternate admission of steam above and below it, the said steam being supplied in any convenient way from a suitable boiler, and the said piston being attached in any convenient way to the machinery which it is desirable should be set in motion. The contrivances requisite to subdue and direct the vaporous energy, and the means by which it is adapted to impart its aid to man, are things apart from the ideal plan for bringing the force of steam to act as a direct source of power, and as a manageable appliance wheresoever that power was required in any of the departments of industrial life, or in any of the arts or processes of civilisation. In order, however, to give due prominence to the mechanical side of the subject, we subjoin an authoritative abstract of the changes, and the modes of effecting them, which James Watt made in the passage from an *atmospheric* to that of a *steam* engine:—

“The first and most important improvement of Watt's on the engine consisted in effecting the condensation in a separate vessel, termed the condenser, which communicated with the cylinder. This condenser

being filled with steam from the boiler at the same time with the cylinder, the jet of cold water, admitted into the former only, effected the condensation of the whole volume of steam, both of that in the cylinder as well as that in the condenser, in conformity with the well-known principle in physics, that an action originated in any part of a homogeneous fluid is almost instantaneously communicated throughout the mass.

“To effect still farther the object of this separate condensation, Watt placed his condenser in a cistern, the temperature of which was kept constant by a fresh supply of cold water, brought from a well by a pump; for otherwise the heat given out by the condensing steam would, by heating the vessel and the water surrounding it, have prevented the rapid or almost instantaneous condensation necessary to the efficient action of the engine.

“To comprehend the necessity for a rapid condensation, it must be remembered that the effective power of the engine depends on the pressure on the piston, *minus* any resistance it encounters, and on the space through which it moves. If the steam could be *instantly* converted into water, and so, entirely removed, a perfect vacuum would be formed beneath the piston, in which case, there being no resistance from this source to overcome, a maximum of power would be obtained; but if the condensation be slow, or only partial, since the piston will begin to move the instant there is any inequality in the pressure exerted on its opposite surfaces, its motion will be retarded, or the power diminished, by the resistance to compression offered by the uncondensed steam; and although that resistance would tend to diminish as the condensation proceeded, yet the space occupied by the steam diminishing in consequence of the descent of the piston in nearly the same proportion, the resistance would be nearly constant through the whole of that descent.

“On the other hand, to maintain the temperature of the cylinder as high as possible, Watt at first cased it in wood to retard the radiation, and subsequently surrounded it by a second iron cylinder, admitting steam from the boiler between the two. This casing, or ‘jacket,’ as it is termed, is not used in most modern engines made since Watt’s time, and the effects of radiation from the surface of the cylinder are now chiefly guarded against, as much as possible, by keeping that surface bright and smooth.

“The second of Watt’s improvements on Newcomen’s engine consisted in closing in the cylinder at top, the piston-rod being made to

pass through a cylindrical neck in the top, termed a stuffing-box, from the passage being rendered steam-tight by a stuffing of tow saturated with grease, which, by its lubrication, diminished the additional friction resulting from this arrangement. The object of this alteration was to admit of the elastic force of the steam being employed to impel the piston downwards, instead of atmospheric pressure; for this purpose, the steam was admitted from the boiler above the piston at the same moment that the condensation took place in the condenser, the steam-passage being made double for the purpose, so that the communication with the condenser could be cut off when that with the cylinder was opened, alternately. When the piston-rod descended to the bottom of the cylinder, the counterpoise at the pump-rod raised it again, as in Newcomen's engine; but to allow of this upward motion, it was necessary to remove the steam that was above the piston, and this was done by allowing it to pass under the piston, and into the condenser, through a passage opened at the proper instant for this purpose. Such is the general principle of Mr Watt's *single-acting* engine, which hence became a *steam-engine*, and was no longer an atmospheric one.

“By a further improvement, the counterpoise at the pump-rod was done away with, which obviously had been so much added to the unproductive work of the engine, since this weight had to be raised in addition to that of the water. The upward stroke of the piston was now produced by admitting the steam *below* it, to act by its elasticity, as it had previously done *above*, when causing the piston to descend. Thus the engine became *double-acting*, and assumed that essential general principle which it has ever since maintained, although all the details of its construction have been improved upon by successive engineers.”*

Such is the briefest and most intelligible trustworthy abstract of Watt's early labours we have been able to find. It points to a very different state of matters from that which now exists, and which has been described by a competent authority in these terms, viz.:—“In the present perfect state of the engine, it appears almost a thing of intelligence. It regulates, with perfect accuracy and uniformity, the number

* T. Bradley, article “Steam-Engine,” in *Penny Cyclopædia*, vol. xxii., p. 475.

of its strokes in a given time, counting or recording them, moreover, to tell how much work it has done, as a clock records the beats of its pendulum ; it regulates the quantity of steam admitted to work, the briskness of the fire, the supply of water to the boiler, the supply of coals to the fire ; it opens and shuts its valves with absolute precision as to time and manner ; it oils its joints ; it takes out any air which may accidentally enter into parts which should be vacuous ; and when anything goes wrong which it cannot of itself rectify, it warns its attendants by ringing a bell ; yet, with all these talents and qualities, and even when exerting the power of six hundred horses, it is obedient to the hand of a child ; its aliment is coal, wood, charcoal, or other combustibles ; it consumes none while idle ; it never tires, and wants no sleep ; it is not subject to malady when originally well made, and only refuses to work when worn out with age ; it is equally active in all climates, and will do work of any kind.”*

Though “Truth had wedded Power” in Watt’s thoughtful scheme, and incalculable capabilities of enrichment and enfranchisement from merely, or chiefly, bodily toil lay in his felicitous contrivance, yet great difficulties stood in the way of the practical application of its latent potencies to the economic and industrial arts. Watt was poor, but cautious. He would not willingly trust himself to the money-lenders. There was a sturdy honesty in him, too, which withheld him from exceeding his own means, and a self-control which tempered the glow of the inventor’s enthusiasm to a moderate but patient hopefulness. The care-born instrument, instinct with mind, was laid aside in a

* Dr Neil Arnott’s “Elements of Physics, &c.,” 4th edition, vol. i., p. 384.

delft-ware manufactory at the Broomielaw—the name then given to the city portion of the north bank of the Clyde—while he, feeling the inroad his devotion to its construction had made on his business-income, employed himself in sundry ways, congenial enough to his own mind, though not strictly cognate to his profession, accepting, indeed, any occupation likely to afford him a settled way of providing for the necessities of home. Still his thoughts could not be entirely withdrawn from the unexampled motive-power which lay rusting unused, while he was labouring merely to be able to pay all his debts. Dr Black had introduced him to Dr Roebuck, (born in Sheffield, 1718,) then proprietor of Carron Iron-works, two miles north-west of Falkirk, and resident at Kinneil House, on the banks of the Frith of Forth, near Borrowstounness, about five miles distant from the works.

Roebuck, in planning the Carron Works, had employed John Smeaton, (born at Austhorpe, near Leeds, 1724,) who had, like Watt, been in early life a philosophical instrument maker. One of the great schemes of Roebuck was to use pit instead of char coal in the manufacture of iron, for which purpose he had leased the Duke of Hamilton's coal mines, in the vicinity of Borrowstounness. The depth of the coal seams, however, had made him almost hopeless of success, when he was introduced to the only man who could, at that time, "sell power." He made overtures of assistance to Watt, and thereafter became interested in the progress of the invention. During 1765-6 an unreserved intercourse on the subject was maintained between the two, personally and by letter. Watt experimented at Kinneil House, and Roebuck made the materials for models and machines at Carron. But, in 1766, symptoms of an oncoming "paralysis of poverty" began to manifest themselves

in the affairs of the Carron projector, and fortune deserted Roebuck, and, therefore, Watt. Amid care, and the torture of a consciousness that there was within their grasp a real means of enrichment, more potent than the fabled charm of the alchemist, and of realising a wealth beyond the dreams of misers, they struggled on, downcast in spirit, against a sea of troubles.

The success of Smeaton as a "civil engineer,"—a title which he was the first to adopt as a professional designation,—encouraged Watt to follow his example, and relinquish the making of mathematical instruments, &c., for their use. In 1767 he surveyed a route for a canal to unite the Friths of Forth and Clyde, to pass through the Leven, Loch Lomond, Endrick, &c., into the Forth, above Stirling. Smeaton's plan of joining the seas of the east and west of Scotland by Denny and Carron was preferred, and was in great part executed under his direction. In Watt's journey to London, to be examined before Parliament on the rival schemes, he made the acquaintance of Dr Erasmus Darwin, the ingenious, fanciful, and philosophical poet, then resident at Lichfield, and full of interest regarding the inventions with which Earnshaw, Wyatt, Kay, Hargreaves, Paul Arkwright, &c., were at that time busy, to subdue "the nymph *Gossypia*." To him Watt disclosed the secret of his engine. On this journey, too, probably at Dr Darwin's suggestion, he first saw that marvel of human ingenuity, the manufactory at Soho; through which he was shown by Dr Wm. Small, with whom he had had some conversation regarding his machine. Through this interview, the non-success of his canal scheme became the means of making the king-thought of the age available for his own advantage and the benefit of others.

By May 1768, Roebuck and Watt had arranged to take out a patent; and the latter went to London in August, to make the necessary arrangements. Mr Boulton invited him to Soho. Here he stayed a fortnight. Dr Darwin, Dr Small, Mr Keir, translator of the "Chemistry" of the Scotch-French philosopher, J. P. Macquer, and others who had been asked, met him there. The chief topic of conversation was the new fire-engine, in which, after full explanations, Mr Boulton expressed a desire to be "concerned." Watt's engagements with Roebuck prevented him from closing with this offer; but on his return to Scotland, he wrote a statement to Mr Boulton, explaining his position thus: "By several unsuccessful projects and expensive experiments, I had involved myself in a considerable debt before I had brought the theory of the fire-engine to its present state. About three years ago, a gentleman [Mr John Craig] who was concerned with me, died. As I had, at that time, conceived a very clear idea of my present improvements, and had even made some trial of them, though not so satisfactory as has been done since, Dr Roebuck agreed to take my debts upon him, and to lay out whatever more money was necessary, either for experiments or securing the invention; for which cause I made over to him two-thirds of the property of the invention. The debts and expenses are now about £1200. . . . It gave me great joy when you seemed to think so favourably of our scheme as to wish to engage in it. I therefore made it my business, as soon as I got home, to wait on the Doctor, and propose you as one I wished he would make an offer to, which he agreed to with a great deal of pleasure." Mr Boulton declined becoming a partner in the affair on the terms proposed by Dr Roebuck, and "held off." Hemmed in by want, and pressed with care,

Watt still persisted in his design, and at length, on January 5th, 1769, a patent was granted for "*a new method of lessening the consumption of steam and fuel in fire-engines.*"

Dr Roebuck could advance no money, and Watt was indebted to the voluntary offer of Dr Black for the means of paying the incidental expenses of gaining this patent. Mr Boulton and Dr Small assisted him in drawing out a draft of the specification for his patent—the former, in explanation of his hesitancy as to partnership, saying, in a letter to Watt, "I was excited by two objects to offer you my assistance, which were, love of you, and love of a money-getting, ingenious project;" and entering into detailed reasons for resiling. Dr Roebuck shortly afterwards made a more agreeable offer; but, while negotiations were yet pending through Watt, he became insolvent, and the creditors of the Carron Iron-works, &c., having declared that they did not "value the engine at a farthing," a transfer from Carron to Soho became easier.

In the meantime, bread required to be earned, and Watt made a survey of the canal from the Monkland collieries to the city of Glasgow, nearly twelve miles, for which he afterwards became the engineer, at a salary of £200 per annum. In 1770 he was engaged by the trustees for the estates forfeited by attainder in the rebellions of 1715 and 1745, to survey a canal between Coupar-Angus and Perth. He planned, in the same year, a bridge over the Clyde at Hamilton, and, at the desire of the magistrates of Glasgow, surveyed and reported on the state of that grand river. Other engagements of a similar nature filled up the doubt-distracted years 1770-73, of which the following may be mentioned:—A report on the best means of improving the harbour of Ayr; courses for canals through Crinan and

Tarbet, from Hurler to Paisley, and from Inverness to the western sea (now known as the Caledonian Canal;) the clearing and rendering navigable the channels of the Leven, Forth, Gadie, Devon, &c.; the supplying of Greenock with water; and the construction of docks and harbours at Port Glasgow.

While absent on his survey of the Caledonian Canal route, he received notice of his wife's illness, and on hurrying home, found that she was dead. A son and a daughter survived her. The sadness of death made the miseries of life more perplexing, and the griefs and harassments of the few preceding years, heightened by this latest stroke of fortune's spite, made him heart-sick and unmanned; for "Sorrow's crown of sorrow is remembering happier days." He longed to leave the land of his disappointments and wretchedness—"to try England, or to endeavour to get some lucrative place abroad."

It was just at this time that the insolvency of Roebuck enabled Watt to enter into terms with Mr Boulton, and so to inspire his long-cherished ideal with a life and movement which made it practically useful, while it enabled him to exercise his own kill-care receipt—"Come, my dear sir, and immerse yourself in this sea of business as soon as possible, and do not add to the grief of your friends by giving way to the tide of sorrow." How great a relief this was to his

"Prone brow,
Oppressive with its mind,"

may partly be guessed from his plaintive expression of vexation in March 1770, "It is a damned thing for a man to have his all hanging by a single string. If I had the wherewithal to pay the loss, I don't think I should so much fear



“ A son and daughter survived her. The sadness of death made the miseries of life more perplexing.”—EPOCH MEN, Page 300.

a failure ; but I cannot bear the thought of other people being losers by my schemes, and I have the happy disposition of always painting the worst." The great sorrow of his life was tempered to him, as we have seen, by the opening up of new hopes, opportunities, business, &c., while a "daylight" of success beamed on his prospects. Boulton arranged with Roebuck for the transference of his share in the undertaking ; the latter and Watt signed a mutual discharge ; while the former and he entered into a fresh co-partnery.

In 1774, Watt removed to Soho ; in 1775, application was made for an Act of Parliament extending the previous patent, and this application, notwithstanding the opposition of the famous Edmund Burke, was granted in May of the same year, thus "vesting the property of the new engines in him and his assigns throughout Great Britain and the Plantations for twenty-five years to come." Of course, it was only gained after a strenuous opposition from the miners and engineers whom it would restrain from the use of the machine, unless purchased from the firm of Boulton and Watt.

At the Soho manufactory machinery was constructed, and workmen were trained to make the various portions of the engine, and great precision, accuracy, and fitness of part to part was rapidly attained. The use of the engine extended, and its adaptations were multiplied. This extensive demand induced piracy, and to defend themselves against that, the firm entered the law-courts with great determination, and were uniformly successful ; yet so numerous were the evasions practised, that Watt once wrote, "I have been so beset with plagiaries, that if I had not a very distinct recollection of my doing it, their impudent assertions would lead

me to doubt whether I was the author of any improvement on the steam-engine." The fame of the contrivance spread, and it was looked upon as a boon in various parts of the country. Indeed, negotiations were early opened to accomplish, by its aid, what Paris yet very much requires—an adequate supply of water. Its earliest applications, however, were made in the mining districts, where it speedily supplanted Newcomen's engine, and gave a new impulse to the mining interests, which were all but stagnant and stationary.

This cheapened power of which the world had so much need, revived old mines, caused new ones to be opened, and enabled those then working to yield a profit handsome enough to promote enterprise. This was especially the case in Cornwall and other places where fuel was scarce; and as the price charged by the patentees was only "a third part of the value of the coal saved by the new engine," its use extended as its cheapness became manifest. Yet so great were the difficulties of bringing the steam-engine into general and active use, that the firm of Boulton and Watt had expended £47,000 before they began to gain any return for their outlay, skill, labour, and enterprise. Such are the risks the benefactors of their country require to run before the spirit of custom yields to the genius of civilisation, and before the resistance of ignorance and selfishness is overcome. Moral, like physical power, requires not only to be generated but applied, and to be so applied as to assume the form of force. It was chiefly the fortunate conjunction of the appreciative minds of Roebuck, in the first instance, and of Small and Boulton in the second, that the mighty inventive genius of Watt was freed from the presence of those external cares and daily-life difficulties which would

otherwise have consumed his days in the mere provision of home-income, and would have deprived the world of the readiest, cheapest, and most obedient of servants in every walk of industry.

Other manufactures had reached a point of development when the application of a new species of power had become desirable. The draining-engine in mines relieved the metallic arts of their great repressive influence—expense; but the fictile and textile industries had need, too, of some economic power. Speed was the great need, for on speed of production depended the profitable employment of capital, and the capacity to pay labour. Dearness was dearth. Only by small profits on many articles rapidly made, and suitable for general use, could the due relations of income and purchase, outlay and gain, be maintained. All arts had been employed to heighten the rate of production, cheapen its cost, and quicken into dexterity, by the division of labour, the working staff of our factories. The touch of a new agent was urgently required—and this chiefly in the cotton districts. There—

“First with nice eye emerging Naiads cull
From leathery pods the vegetable wool;
With wiry teeth revolving cards release
The tangled knots, and smooth the ravell'd fleece.
Next comes the iron-hand, with fingers fine,
Combs the wide card, and forms the eternal line.
Slow, with soft lips, the whirling can acquires
The tender skeins, and wraps in rising spires.
With quickened pace successive rollers move,
And these retain, and these extend the rove.
Then fly the spokes, the rapid axles glow,
While *slowly* circumvolves the labouring wheel below.”

To this *slowly* circumvolving wheel Watt could impart power and speed, but it required more than these two—

regularity of action. He had created power, but he had not regulated the pulses of that vigorous vitality which he had injected into the inanimate metals of which his engines were formed; and he stooped again over the rude thewed Samson, and at length tamed and trained him into trustworthiness. The principles on which the engine acted, and the skill with which it was now endowed, made it easily adaptable to the machinery of the industrial arts; and in the very act of fitting them together, fresh aptitudes and new powers were manifested in each, and an interchanging series of progressive improvements was begun, not yet exhausted, if exhaustible.

Many attempts were made to pirate his inventions, or to evade the protective Act which Parliament had granted him; and though he shrank from paper wars, controversies, and law-suits, Watt had occasion often to claim the strong hand of justice to maintain and defend his right. While he readily and honourably acknowledged the efforts of co-labourers in similar pursuits, he resolutely opposed the dishonest appropriators of the schemes of his ingenious, contriving mind, patiently refuted their claims, or perseveringly exposed the knavery by which they sought to profit by a disingenuous employment of his projects and inventions.

In 1775, Mr Watt, after two years of a widower's life, felt it necessary to lighten his family cares by a second marriage, and then wedded Anne Macgregor, the daughter of a wealthy and influential merchant and manufacturer in Glasgow. In that year, too, the Imperial Government of Russia offered him employment at a salary of £1000 per annum. This, however, he declined. In 1778, the King of France granted an exclusive privilege to the Soho manufacturers, to make and sell engines for that country. Though

resident in Birmingham, Watt required to superintend the introduction of his machinery throughout the country, and hence was brought into contact with many of those whose wants in machinery were urgent, and this doubtlessly set his mind more eagerly on modifying his engine to meet the extended requirements of the country. The mere mention of the patents he secured and worked out, with a note of their aim, will abundantly show the activity and inventive capacity of his intellect:—in 1781, for a regulator, and the sun and planet wheel; in 1782, for an expansive engine, six contrivances for regulating motion, a double stroke engine, parallel motion, double cylinders, semi-rotative engine, and steam wheel; in 1784, for a rotative engine, parallel motions, working hammers, improved gearing and working the valves, portable engines, and steam carriages; in 1785, for constructing furnaces and consuming smoke. Besides these, he supplied a steam and condensation gauge, an indicator, and a governor.

It would be vain for us to attempt to explain the uses and adaptations, the savings, applications, and arrangements of which the steam-engine thus became capable. By twenty years' studious thought and persevering labour Watt had succeeded in creating a new source of power, and had contrived many invaluable means of distributing it usefully, wheresoever and howsoever the industrial arts demanded; and the clumsy, intractable, snorting, asthmatic, weak, atmospheric engine, of which he saw the model in 1763, had been, by the steady development of that idea which flashed upon his mind in 1765, transformed into a docile, compact, serviceable machine—resistless as a whirlwind, yet obedient as a planet to its laws—capable of adding its

intense energy to every branch of manufacturing activity—a veritable *steam-engine*.

In 1786 Boulton and Watt were invited by the French Government to Paris, and there met the chief *savans* of that empire, Lavoisier, La Place, Monge, Fourcroy, Berthollet, the last of whom revealed to Watt, who was a well-informed man and a fair chemist, the bleaching properties of chlorine; and he, by communicating that discovery to his father-in-law, was the first to promote the improvement of bleaching in Britain. For Mr Macgregor he also invented a steam-drying apparatus, which materially aided the manufacturers, the calico printers, and bleachers of cotton and linen fabrics in this country, to produce speedily and sell cheaply.

Watt's mind had such a bent towards invention, that he found not occupation only, but amusement also, in contrivances and discoveries. In 1780 he patented a machine for copying letters, drawings, &c.; in 1783 he communicated to Priestley and De Luc the discovery of the composition of water; and in 1784 his letter to the latter was read before the Royal [Philosophical] Society, after which he was chosen a Fellow of the Royal Society of Edinburgh. He had a like honour conferred upon him, in 1785, by the Royal Society, in London; and two years thereafter was elected a corresponding member of the Batavian Society. In 1806 the honorary degree of LL.D. was voted to him by the University of Glasgow; and ten years later he was made a member of the National Institute of France.

In the year 1800 he retired from the Soho manufactory, with a more than handsome competence, and transferred his interest in it to his two sons, James and Gregory—the

latter of whom, however, died of consumption in 1804. This was the beginning of a series of afflicting deaths, in rapid succession, of persons dearly beloved by Watt—forewarnings of the inevitable visitant to every man. Every one feels the loneliness of age, when companions and friends are taken away. So, when Dr Roebuck, in 1794; Dr Black and William Withering, (the botanist,) in 1799; Dr Darwin, in 1802; Professor Robinson, in 1805; Dr Beddowes, in 1808; Mr Boulton, in 1809; Dr P. Wilson, in 1811; De Luc, in 1817, passed away, Watt felt as if “in danger of standing alone among strangers,” and was saddened by the thought.

But invention had then almost grown from a habit to an instinct. He had, in 1787, practised four new methods of making lamps, the secrets of which he imparted to Argand; in 1788 he constructed an instrument for measuring the specific gravity of liquids; in 1789 he found out a way to make tubes of elastic resin without dissolving it. His thoughts were often engaged in contemplating the application of steam to navigation, and the construction of a steam-chaise; he had, in 1786, a wheel carriage “of some size under hand,” and expressed himself as at that time “resolved to try if God would work a miracle in favour of these carriages.” But the hour of such a development had not come, and the true flash of inventive thought on this matter was reserved for one who, then but a boy, was acting as cowherd to widow Ainsley, on the farm of Dewley, and Watt had died before the rail and wheel had been induced by George Stephenson to enter into wedded life as “man and wife.”

In 1785 he turned some of his “idle thoughts” to the

making of an arithmetical machine, capable of performing the processes of multiplication and division; in 1791 he produced an artificial alabaster, almost as hard and as transparent as marble; between 1802-11 he was amusing himself with constructing a likeness-lathe for copying sculptures, &c., and some specimens of the work it achieved were distributed among the mechanist's friends as "the productions of a young artist, just entering on his eighty-third year," thus leading the way to the mechanico-glyptic processes of Bute, Collas, Cheverton, &c.

In 1789 Watt bought a small estate, named Heathfield, of about forty acres of poor land, with a house on it, in Staffordshire, but in the neighbourhood of Soho and Birmingham, by proximity to which it acquired value in his eyes. In consequence of this property qualification he was summoned, in 1803, to undertake the burdensome honour of the shrievalty, but resisted, and was released from the duty of serving. He also, in his later years, purchased property in Brecon and Radnor, on the margin of the Ython and "the sylvan Wye," pitching his home tent at the farmhouse of Doldowlod; and, as resident there, he was summoned to act as sheriff of the latter county, but again successfully resisted. In these two homes he collected round him the familiar furniture and friends of every-day life; in them he spent his studious hours, his seasons of social intercourse, his long, lapsing, delightful fits of novel reading; in them he pursued his inventive amusements, and his passion for horticulture and the raising of fruit; in them he was mildly subject to "the assiduous legislation of Mrs Watt," by whose kindly but imperative methodicality and decision he, with a few occasional but short-lived and good-natured attempts at

rebellion, especially in the matters of late hours and snuff, suffered himself to be ruled and overruled. He slept long and late, walked about modestly, amused himself simply, lived frugally, read much, thought much, spoke gravely, but with a spice of dry humour, was impressive in his manners, attractive in conversation, and much given to salient anecdote and sly fun.

James Watt, who in boyhood was an almost constant sufferer from pain, and whose days in manhood's prime were seldom free from ailments, grew in his old age stronger and healthier. For many years he enjoyed immunity from sickness, but in the autumn of 1819 he became ill. Devoutly recognising the unspairing messenger, he felt ready for the solemnest event of existence—Death. On the 19th August he expired at Heathfield, in calm, unsorrowing hope in God; and a *thinker* less was on the earth. He was interred in the parish church of Handsworth, near the remains of his help-fellow and friend, Matthew Boulton, and over his tomb a memorial sculpture, from the chisel of Chantrey, preserves for posterity the outward semblance of the utiliser of one of the most gigantic energies of nature—a force so mighty, that it already supplies a labour-power nearly equal to that provided by the strength of 500,000,000 men, and so economical, that an equivalent force to that expended by a man during a long day's work can be produced at a cost of less than a farthing. From so much drudgery, then, does it exempt man, or the animals which man would otherwise employ in industries; so much food as would be required for the agents of such immense labours it releases for other purposes; and it leaves to mankind and his living helpers the vegetable products of the soil for their sustenance; while it

moves its huge metal limbs, and gathers the nutriment of the gigantic force which all but vitalises it, from the great coal-fields of the earth ; besides, by its speed of movement and its little cost, it cheapens commodities, and so increases the entire sum of human comforts.

Yet all this has been the result of *one* thought flashed by Providence into a fit recipient soul, and thereafter perseveringly outworked by a struggling thinker, plodding slowly on to the accomplishment of his great ends, and at last succeeding in placing within man's grasp a power that may be yoked to the cotton mill, the mine, the forge, the pottery, the printing-press, the railway carriage, the mighty merchant-man, in unresisting subservience. So great is *thought*—so glorious the endowment placed within, and forming the being of each individual of the race of man—so singularly fertile in ingenuity is that unique Reason with which God has blessed humanity, that inborn activity and motive-power which has been bestowed upon us that we might “subdue” nature. There is surely no argument for the glory of humanity so potent as this of the might that resides in these very minds of ours, and enables them to rule over the energies, forces, and powers of earth, ocean, and air. But if this be a demonstration of the incalculable worth and preciousness of thought, and of the soul, in which thoughts are begotten, how great is the condemnation it brings against those who neglect the culture of the capacities by which human life is so heightened and brightened, civilisation so aided, and man so much more released from the anxieties connected with his sustenance and comfort. In every point of view thought is power—a power always best

used and applied in submission to its own and Nature's laws.

Lord Francis Jeffrey, Watt's friend the Edinburgh Reviewer, has so eloquently descanted on the life, labours, and character of "the great *improver* of the steam-engine ; but in truth, as to all that is admirable in its structure, or vast in its utility, . . . its *inventor*," in words so well and so widely known, that we forbear to quote the exquisite phrases of a eulogy as lofty in language as it is accurate in fact ;—Sir Walter Scott, in the Introduction to the "Monastery," has pictured him so well and so lovingly, as he saw him once, in 1817, on a visit to his native country ;—Lord Brougham, in a work to which we have already referred, has noted the prominent characteristics of his public labours and his private life so carefully and elaborately ;—Arago's *Eloge* is so ornate and fascinating ;—Muirhead's "Life of James Watt" is so full, though so dull, disjointed, and disorderly ;—the speeches delivered by the most eminent men of the time in civic, political, scientific, and artistic circles, at the meeting held in London, June 1824, when a monument in Westminster Abbey was voted to the chief inventor of the age ; and many other publications,—have so illustrated the various and varied phases of his intellectual life, that we cannot compass here even an abridgment of their numerous excellencies ; nor do we feel that our space can allow of a selection from these able materials, so widely attainable. Almost every point has been touched with a pencil of light in the monumental inscription written by Lord Brougham for the statue in Westminster Abbey, which is as follows :—

James Watt.

Not to perpetuate a Name
Which must endure while the peaceful Arts flourish
But to show
That mankind have learned to honour those
Who best deserve their gratitude
The King
His Ministers and many of the Nobles
And Commons of the Realm
Raised this Monument to
JAMES WATT
Who directing the force of an original genius
Early exercised in philosophic research
To the improvement of the
Steam-engine
Enlarged the resources of his country
Increased the power of man
And rose to an eminent place
Among the most illustrious followers of Science
And the real benefactors of the world

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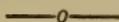
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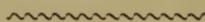
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