

A
BRIEF RETROSPECT
OF THE
EIGHTEENTH CENTURY.

PART FIRST;
IN TWO VOLUMES:

CONTAINING
A SKETCH OF THE
REVOLUTIONS AND IMPROVEMENTS
IN
SCIENCE, ARTS, AND LITERATURE,
DURING THAT PERIOD.

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OF MASSACHUSETTS.

VOL. II.

PUBLISHED ACCORDING TO ACT OF CONGRESS.

NEW-YORK:

PRINTED BY T. AND J. SWORDS,
NO. 160 PEARL-STREET.

1803.

District of New-York, ss.

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CONTENTS

OF THE

SECOND VOLUME.

	Page.
CHAPTER XII. PHILOSOPHY OF THE HUMAN MIND	1
CHAPTER XIII. CLASSIC LITERATURE	35
CHAPTER XIV. ORIENTAL LITERATURE	54
Section 1. <i>Hebrew Literature</i>	55
Section 2. <i>Arabic Literature</i>	69
Section 3. <i>Persian Literature</i>	72
Section 4. <i>Hindoo Literature</i>	75
Section 5. <i>Chinese Literature</i>	83
CHAPTER XV. MODERN LANGUAGES	91
Section 1. <i>English Language</i>	95
Section 2. <i>French Language</i>	108
Section 3. <i>German Language</i>	110
Section 4. <i>Swedish Language</i>	114
Section 5. <i>Russian Language</i>	115
CHAPTER XVI. PHILOSOPHY OF LANGUAGE	122
CHAPTER XVII. HISTORY	129
CHAPTER XVIII. BIOGRAPHY	149
CHAPTER XIX. ROMANCES AND NOVELS	155
CHAPTER XX. POETRY.	180
Section 1. <i>Epic Poetry</i>	185
Section 2. <i>Didactic Poetry</i>	190
Section 3. <i>Moral and Devotional Poetry</i>	193
Section 4. <i>Satirical Poetry</i>	195
Section 5. <i>Descriptive Poetry</i>	201
Section 6. <i>Pastoral Poetry</i>	203
Section 7. <i>Lyric Poetry</i>	205
Section 8. <i>Elegiac Poetry</i>	207
Section 9. <i>Drama</i>	209
CHAPTER XXI. LITERARY JOURNALS	234

	Page.
CHAPTER XXII. POLITICAL JOURNALS	247
CHAPTER XXIII. LITERARY AND SCIENTIFIC ASSO-	
CIATIONS	256
CHAPTER XXIV. ENCYCLOPÆDIAS, &c.	264
CHAPTER XXV. EDUCATION	270
CHAPTER XXVI. NATIONS LATELY BECOME LITERARY	302
Section 1. <i>Russia</i>	303
Section 2. <i>Germany</i>	314
Section 3. <i>United States of America</i>	330
RECAPITULATION	410
ADDITIONAL NOTES	443

A

BRIEF RETROSPECT

OF THE

EIGHTEENTH CENTURY.

PART FIRST.

CHAPTER XII.

PHILOSOPHY OF THE HUMAN MIND.

IF the physical sciences have received great improvements during the century under consideration, it is feared the same cannot, with truth, be said respecting the science of the human mind, and the auxiliary branches of philosophy. In this wide field, new *experiments* and *discoveries*, in the proper sense of the words, can have no place; and there are serious grounds of suspicion, that many modern systems of high claims, and imposing aspect, are, by no means, substantial additions to the sum of knowledge. There is no doubt, indeed, that we have happily gotten rid of much pedantry and jargon, which once obtained currency among the learned. We have thrown off the stiff, uncouth, and disgusting habiliments which

formerly enveloped the systems of the schoolmen. But, in many cases, there is reason to believe, that one jargon has been discarded only to adopt another equally exceptionable. Various old dresses have been laid aside, to make way for others more fashionable, indeed, but no less fantastic and odious. This character, however, though it belongs to many modern metaphysical writers, by no means applies to all. The last age has, doubtless, produced some writers, to whom we are indebted for substantial improvements, and real progress in the interesting field of inquiry under consideration. Even some of those, who taught doctrines, in general, delusive, yet have shed new light, and contributed to clear the way for those who should come after them. By many *running to and fro*, though they frequently deviated into the paths of error, *knowledge* has been, on the whole, increased.

It has been peculiarly happy for this branch of philosophy, that, in modern times, the principles and power of *language* have been more studied, and better understood, than in any preceding century. One great cause of the darkness and perplexity which so long hung over many of the doctrines of mind, was the loose and inaccurate manner in which the terms employed to explain the phenomena were used. This evil, though not entirely, has been, in some measure, corrected. The use and abuse of terms have received a more enlightened attention than in former times. The art of definition has become more precise, intelligible, and popular. The senseless prating about *occult qualities*, and the perpetual use of unmeaning words, have gradually become less fashionable. A habit of more precisely distinguishing between cause and effect, between those things which may be investigated and those which are beyond the reach of the human mind, and between those

truths which are self-evident and such as require demonstration, has been introduced, and is still gaining ground. And although the sceptical tendency of the age has retarded the progress of this department of philosophy in these various respects, yet we have reason to rejoice that so much progress, through defiles of error, has been made as to render the last age one of the most distinguished periods in the annals of the human mind.

It is, however, a curious fact, that while a much more simple and intelligible philosophy of mind has, in the course of the last age, taken the place of former perplexed and abstruse systems, yet the study of metaphysics, through the whole of that age, has been almost uniformly declining in popularity. That taste for light and superficial reading which so remarkably characterizes modern times, cannot endure the accurate, the profound, and the patient thinking, so indispensably necessary for pursuing investigations into the laws, powers, and progress of our intellectual faculties. Hence the word *metaphysics* is seldom pronounced but with contempt, as signifying something useless, unintelligible, or absurd. But the profundity and difficulty of the subject do not form the only reason of that general neglect, and want of popularity attending studies of this kind, at a period when they might be expected to command more esteem and attention. The dreams, and mystical nonsense of the schoolmen, which scarcely began to be rejected till the time of DESCARTES, and which were not generally thrown aside till after the labours of Mr. LOCKE, led a large number, even of the literary and ingenious, to decry pursuits of this nature, and to imbibe strong prejudices against them. These prejudices have descended through successive generations, and are yet far from having lost their influence. But if *mind* be our *better part*;

if its powers and activity be all important, as every one must acknowledge them to be; and if some correct understanding of these powers be intimately connected with our improvement, comfort, and usefulness; then to despise metaphysics is to despise one of the noblest objects of human inquiry, and to display a most unworthy ignorance of the comparative worth of those studies which invite our attention.

It was before remarked, that at the opening of the century, Mr. LOCKE had laid his *Essay on Human Understanding* before the world. The publication of this great work forms an era in the history of metaphysical science. The author was the first who gave, in the English language, an example of writing on such abstract subjects, with simplicity and perspicuity; and there is, perhaps, no work, in any language, "better adapted to teach men to think with precision, and to inspire them with that candour and love of truth which is the genuine spirit of philosophy."

Though DES CARTES had done much, before the time of Mr. LOCKE,^a to correct the errors which abounded in the ancient systems of metaphysics; and though some of the leading opinions of that great French philosopher were adopted by the illustrious Briton, yet the latter was, in many respects, an original, and a reformer in science. His investigations concerning the origin and formation

^a DES CARTES was the first metaphysician who drew a plain and intelligible line of distinction between the *intellectual* and *material* world, or between *spirit* and *body*. The importance and utility of this distinction are obvious. He was the first who showed that the analogical mode of reasoning, concerning the powers of the mind, from the properties of body, is totally erroneous; and that accurate reflection on the operations of our own mind, is the only way to gain a just knowledge of them. It was his philosophy which threw the *phantasms*, the *sensible species*, the *substantial forms*, &c. of the old systems into disgrace, and introduced a more simple, perspicuous and rational method of investigating metaphysical truth.

of ideas, concerning the use and abuse of terms, and concerning the extent and limits of our intellectual powers, are well known by those conversant with the philosophy of mind, to display many new doctrines, and to place their author among the most profound thinkers. Mr. LOCKE differed from DES CARTES with respect to the origin of our ideas. The latter thought some of them were *innate*; the former maintained that there are no innate ideas, and that they are all derived from two sources, *sensation* and *reflection*. DES CARTES supposed that the essence of mind consists in *thought*, and that of matter in *extension*; while LOCKE believed that the real essence of both is beyond the reach of human knowledge. The British philosopher explained more distinctly than any one had done before him, the operations of the mind in classing the various objects of thought, and reducing them to *genera* and *species*. He was the first who distinguished in substances what he calls the *nominal essence*, or that generic character, and specific difference, which may be expressed by a definition, from the *real essence*, or internal constitution, which he supposed could not be known; and who, by means of this distinction, pointed out the way of bringing to an issue those subtle disputes, particularly the controversy between the *Nominalists* and *Realists*, which had puzzled the schoolmen for ages. He showed, more satisfactorily than preceding inquirers, how we form abstract and general notions, and the use and necessity of them in reasoning. He first expressed the distinction between *primary* and *secondary* qualities, though the ideas implied in this distinction seem to have been in some measure understood by DES CARTES. And, finally, Mr. LOCKE had much merit peculiar to himself, in exhibiting the ambiguity of words, and by this means solving many difficult

questions which had tortured the wits of former metaphysicians.^b

From the date of this great man's work, the old *Ontology* and *Logic* have declined. The philosophy of mind has assumed a more simple, popular, and intelligible aspect. And although it has been since made to appear probable, that some of the doctrines which he taught are erroneous, especially the theory of perception, which he adopted from his predecessors; yet that he contributed more than any other individual of modern times to develop the nature and operations of the human mind, and to introduce a more rational and correct mode of philosophising on this subject than had before prevailed, seems to be generally admitted.

Not long before Mr. LOCKE published his celebrated *Essay*, Father MALEBRANCHE, a learned and acute metaphysician of France, in a work entitled *Recherche de la Verité, or Inquiry after Truth*, published a doctrine which soon led to singular consequences. He laid it down as a principle, which, indeed, had then been admitted by all preceding philosophers, that we do not perceive external objects immediately, but by means of images, or ideas of them present to the mind. In order to account for the production of these ideas in the mind, he maintained that the soul of man is united with a being possessed of all perfection, who has in himself the ideas of every created being; and therefore that we see all things in God. MALEBRANCHE was sensible that this system left no evidence of the existence of a material world; for if the mind sees all things in God; or if the Divine ideas alone are perceived by us, we cannot be certain that the various forms of matter around us exist, since the ideas in the Eternal Mind were

^b See *Essay on the Human Understanding*, passim; and REID's *Essays on the Intellectual Powers of Man*, vol. i. Essay 2. chap. ix.

the same before any creature was made. This consequence he candidly acknowledged, and maintained that the only evidence we have of the existence of a material world, is derived from Revelation, which assures us that God created the heavens and the earth, and that the *Word was made flesh*. This doctrine was vigorously and ingeniously opposed by its author's countryman and cotemporary, ANTHONY ARNAULD, Doctor of the Sorbonne. But though the latter succeeded in showing the weakness and fallacy of the reasonings which he attacked, he was not equally successful in establishing a consistent and satisfactory theory of his own. The system of MALEBRANCHE, however, notwithstanding its visionary character, was warmly espoused by Mr. NORRIS, an English divine, who, in 1701, published a large and laborious work, designed to explain, support, and extend it. He went beyond the French philosopher, on the subject of the material world; for although he maintained the *probability* of its existence, he denied our having any evidence absolutely decisive that this is the fact.

In 1710 a doctrine still more singular and daring was announced by GEORGE BERKELEY, a philosopher of Ireland, and afterwards Bishop of Cloyne. This gentleman, equally distinguished for the penetration and comprehensiveness of his mind, the extent of his learning, and the eminence of his virtues, denied the existence of a material world; contending that what are usually called sensible objects without us, are only ideas in the mind; that there is nothing in the universe but spirits, and ideas, or images subsisting in, and perceived by them. He differed from Mr. LOCKE in several other respects besides this. He discarded *reflection* as a source of ideas; he divided the objects of human knowledge into two kinds, *ideas* and *no-*

tions. The first, according to him, are presented to us by our five senses; they have no existence when they are not perceived, and exist only in the minds of those who perceive them. The second kind of objects he supposed to comprehend spirits, their acts, and the relations and habitudes of things: of these, he contended, we have *notions* but not ideas. But of all the opinions taught by this great and good man, none have rendered him more famous, than his denial that those prototypes of our ideas, usually called material objects, have any real existence; and contending that all the varied beauties of creation which we behold, are nothing more than fancies or images impressed on the mind for wise purposes, by the omnipotent Creator.^c

Although, as was before observed, Father MALEBRANCHE shrunk from this bold conclusion of BERKELEY, yet he was aware that his reasonings led to it: and, indeed, his work may be said to contain a large portion of the arguments afterwards adopted by the acute and learned Bishop, in their full force. But to BERKELEY is due the honour of having first openly espoused this doctrine, so contradictory to all our feelings and senses; of defending it upon a more formal and extensive plan than any of his predecessors; and of giving new and ingenious views of the subject.^d

About three years after the Bishop's first publication on this subject, ARTHUR COLLIER, an English clergyman, in his book, called *Clavis Universalis, or a New Inquiry after Truth*, endeavoured

^c See *Principles of Human Knowledge*. Dublin, 1710.

^d M. DUTENS, who is anxious to find among the ancients every invention and doctrine to which the moderns lay claim, quotes the following passage, in which something like the *Berkeleyan* doctrine is plainly alluded to. Γινέσθαι τοιόν, καὶ αὐτόν, ἵνα οὐκ ἔχῃ οὐδὲν ὁ ἀνθρώπος· πάντα γὰρ τα φαινόμενα τοῖς ἀνθρώποις, καὶ ἐστίν, τα δὲ μὴδὲν ἵνα ἀνθρώπων φαινόμενα, οὐδὲ ἐστίν. *Sext. Empiric. Pyrrhon. Hypotypos. lib. i. sect. 219.* See *Recherches sur l'Origine de Decouvertes*, &c. tom. i. 53.

to demonstrate the non-existence and impossibility of an external world. The arguments which he adduced in support of his cause are the same in substance with those used by Dr. BERKELEY, though the author says nothing of the work of that celebrated metaphysician, and does not appear to have seen it.

There was only one step more which was left for the most daring metaphysical revolutionists to take, viz. to deny the existence of a *spiritual* as well as of a *material* world. This step was at length ventured upon by Mr. HUME,^e a sceptical metaphysician of Great-Britain, whose acuteness and ingenuity are well known. Adopting Mr. LOCKE's, and Bishop BERKELEY's opinion, that all the immediate objects of human knowledge are ideas in the mind, he traced the consequences of this principle to their utmost extent, and contended that there is neither matter nor mind in the universe! That what we call *body* is only an assemblage of sensations; and what we call *mind* only an assemblage of thoughts, passions, and emotions, without any subject. On the opposition in which the doctrines of the Irish Ecclesiastic and the Scottish historian stand to the common sense, and all the spontaneous and the deepest impressions of mankind, it is needless to remark. Their authors were sensible of this, and it is probable did not, in moments of sober reflection, believe their own speculations. Certain it is, they both acknow-

^e The universal scepticism to which the sophistry of Mr. HUME leads, or rather which it directly embraces, cannot, with propriety, be considered here. Nor is it necessary. The extravagance and the mischievous tendency, especially of some of his opinions, seem, at present, to be acknowledged by all, excepting the desperate few, who are ready calmly to resign all principle, and all belief. The character of his philosophy, "falsely so called," has been exposed with great beauty of rhetoric, by Dr. BEATTIE, in his *Essay on Truth*; and, with great force of reasoning, by Dr. REID, in his *Inquiry into the Human Mind*, and his *Essays on the Intellectual and Active Powers of Man*.

ledged that the adoption of the principles which they maintained ought not to affect the practice of men, who must ever act as if they were known to be false: an argument, one would imagine, itself, of strong presumptive force, against all their plausible reasonings. But however the doctrines inculcated by these subtle disputants might have opposed their own feelings, or shocked the minds of others, it is certain they contributed much to promote that speculative philosophy, the tendency of which is to strike at the root of all knowledge, and all belief.

On observing the sceptical conclusions which BERKELEY and HUME had drawn from the old theory of perception, as it had been taught, in substance, by all writers, from PYTHAGORAS down to their time, some philosophers of Great-Britain were led, about the middle of the eighteenth century, to call this theory in question. If it were assumed as true that we perceive, not external objects themselves, but only the ideas in our minds, they saw no method of avoiding the consequences which had been so daringly admitted. They, therefore, denied the grand doctrine on which the whole superstructure they wished to oppose was built; and endeavoured to show, that, as the premises were gratuitously assumed and false, so the conclusions deduced from them were absurd and impossible. This controversy, doubtless, deserves to be considered among the most memorable of the age; and if the principles and reasonings of certain modern metaphysicians of North-Britain, to the publication of which this controversy has given rise, be regarded as just, they certainly form the most important accession which the philosophy of mind has received since the time of Mr. LOCKE.

At the head of these British philosophers stands Dr. REID, who first, in his *Inquiry into the Human*

Mind on the Principles of Common Sense, and afterwards in his *Essays on the Intellectual and Active Powers of Man*, gave a display, and attempted a refutation of the sceptical philosophy, which no one who suitably estimates the importance of the subject, can peruse without profound respect for the author and the deepest interest in his reasonings. He totally rejected the ideal system, or theory of perception, as taught by his predecessors, and maintained, that the mind perceives not merely the ideas or images of external objects, but the external objects themselves; that when these are presented to our senses, they produce certain impressions; that these impressions are followed by correspondent sensations; and these sensations by a perception of the existence and qualities of the objects about which the mind is employed. He contended that all the steps of this process are equally incomprehensible; that we can assign no other reason for these facts taking place, but that such is the constitution of our nature; and that when sensible objects are presented to us, we become persuaded that they exist, and that they possess the qualities which we witness, not by a train of reasoning, by formal reflection, or by association of ideas; but by a direct and necessary connection between the presence of such objects and our consequent perceptions. In short, the great and distinguishing peculiarity of this class of metaphysicians is, that they appeal from the delusive principles and shocking conclusions of their opponents, to the *Common Sense* of mankind, as a tribunal paramount to all the subtleties of philosophy. The same principle they apply to memory, and other powers of the mind.

It is obvious, from this view of Dr. REID's labours, that, although he has taken much pains to overturn the old ideal system, he has not ventured

to substitute any theory of his own in its place. Indeed it would have been inconsistent with his leading doctrine to have attempted this. His aim rather was, to give a simple and precise statement of facts, divested of all theoretical expressions; to show how long philosophers have imposed on themselves by principles gratuitously assumed, and by words without meaning; and to convince them, that "with respect to the process of nature in perception, they are no less ignorant than the vulgar." Nor let any slight this as a mere negative and unimportant discovery. If it be founded in truth, "few positive discoveries in the whole history of science can be mentioned, which have a juster claim to high reputation, than that which has detected, so clearly and unanswerably, the fallacy of an hypothesis, which has descended to us from the earliest ages of philosophy, and which, in modern times, has not only served to BERKELEY and HUME, as the basis of their sceptical systems, but was adopted as an indisputable truth by LOCKE, by CLARKE, and by NEWTON."

It ought in justice to be stated, that Dr. REID, however great his merit for illustrating and defending the doctrine of *Common Sense*, as taught in his metaphysical writings, was by no means the first who resorted to this method of opposing the sceptical philosophy of the age. Father BUFFIER, a learned and ingenious Jesuit, of France, early in the century, espoused a doctrine substantially the

f *Elements of the Philosophy of Mind*, by DUGALD STEWART, F. R. S. E. &c. p. 94, 4to. 1792. In adopting, from Professor STEWART, this high praise of Dr. REID, and his writings on the human mind, I would by no means be understood to express unqualified approbation of his philosophy. To me his *Essays on the Active Powers of Man* have always appeared much inferior to those on the *Intellectual Powers*. Indeed, in the former there are several doctrines which I must consider as entirely erroneous. But of thus guarding and qualifying one's approbation there is no end. Speaking of Dr. REID's works in general, they are certainly among the most instructive and valuable metaphysical writings of the age.

same, and announced it in his "*First Truths*," as the only ground that could be taken in order to combat successfully DES CARTES, MALEBRANCHE, and LOCKE. It must be owned, indeed, that BUFFIER does not always speak of this faculty or power in man in precisely the same terms with Dr. REID and his followers, nor can their different accounts of the subject be in every case fully reconciled; yet there is doubtless such a similarity between the ideas of the learned Jesuit and those of the celebrated British Divine, that the merit of *originality* can hardly be yielded to the latter. To Dr. REID, however, and some contemporary philosophers, the honour undoubtedly belongs, of having more fully explained the grand principle upon which their system turns; of having extended its application; and of having deduced its consequences in a more explicit and systematic manner.^g

Since the publication of Dr. REID's philosophy, it has been espoused and defended by several dis-

^g See *First Truths*, &c. translated from the French of Pere BUFFIER by an anonymous hand, 8vo. London, 1780. The translator of this work, in a long prefatory discourse, endeavours to fasten the charges of *Plagiarism*, *Concealment*, and *Ingratitude* on Drs. REID, BEATTIE, and OSWALD, with a degree of zeal, acrimony, and contemptuous sneer, by no means honourable to himself. He represents them as indebted to BUFFIER for the substance of all they have written. Whoever this violent assailant is, he certainly does them injustice. To exculpate those gentlemen wholly from the charge of *Plagiarism* would not, perhaps, be easy; but to push the charge so far as he does, and especially to treat their general character and merits as he permits himself to do, cannot fail to disgust every candid reader. After all that he has advanced concerning Pere BUFFIER, the impartial inquirer will find such a degree of originality in the works of the celebrated Scottish metaphysicians, especially those of Dr. REID, as ought to secure to them a high and lasting reputation.

The late Dr. WITHERSPOON, President of the College of New-Jersey, whose vigour and originality of mind are generally known, once informed a friend, that the first publication in Great-Britain in which REID's leading doctrine was suggested, and in a degree developed, was an *Essay* written by himself, and published in a Scottish magazine, some years before Dr. REID wrote on the subject. Those who are acquainted with the talents of the illustrious President, and who know how remote his disposition was from that vanity and arrogance which prompt men to make false pretensions, will probably, without hesitation, accredit his claim.

tinguished metaphysicians, especially in Great-Britain. Among the most able of these is Dr. DUGALD STEWART, Professor of Moral Philosophy in the University of Glasgow. It was before remarked, that Dr. REID, after demolishing the doctrines of his predecessors, and laying the foundation of a new system, forbore to undertake the erection of an improved superstructure on this basis. Professor STEWART, though far from having, in his own estimation, completed such a superstructure, is yet considered as having done something towards it, and as having rendered substantial service to the philosophy of mind. He has carried some of his doctrines to a greater length than they were carried by his great predecessor, and in some important particulars he dissents from that able pneumatologist.^h

The principles of Dr. REID have also been adopted, and perspicuously displayed by Dr. BEATTIE, in his *Essay on Truth*, and other publications; by Dr. OSWALD, in his *Appeal to Common Sense in Behalf of Religion*; by Lord KAIMS, in his *Sketches of the History of Man*; by Dr. A. FERGUSON, in his *Principles of Moral and Political Science*; and by some other respectable writers.

A system of pneumatology, partly belonging to the eighteenth century, from the noise which it made, and the speculations which it excited during that period, is that of the celebrated LEIBNITZ, a philosopher of Germany,ⁱ who was mentioned

^h It is not easy, in this place, to point out the particulars in which Dr. STEWART differs from Dr. REID. The reader will receive satisfactory information on this subject by looking into those chapters in STEWART'S *Elements of the Philosophy of the Mind*, which treat of *Conception*, *Abstraction*, and *Association*.

ⁱ In chronological strictness, the system of LEIBNITZ ought to have been noticed before those of BERKELEY, HUME, and REID; but as the latter stood in close connection with the doctrines of MALEBRANCHE, and as it did not appear expedient to interrupt the course of narration respecting them, it has been judged proper to introduce a brief account of the doc-

in a former chapter. This system appears to have been formed by its author, with a view, on the one hand, to amend the theory of **DES CARTES**, and on the other to oppose the doctrines of **NEWTON**. **LEIBNITZ** conceived the whole universe, minds as well as bodies, to be made up of *monads*, that is, simple substances, each of which is, by the Creator, in the beginning of its existence, endowed with certain active and perceptive powers. A monad, therefore, is an active substance, simple, without parts or figure, which has within itself the power to produce all the changes it undergoes, from the beginning of its existence to eternity. The changes, according to him, which the monad undergoes, of whatever kind, though they may seem to us the effects of causes operating from without, yet are only the gradual and successive evolutions of its own internal powers, which would have produced all the same changes and motions, although there had been no other being in the universe. He taught that every human soul is a monad, joined to an organized body, which organized body consists of an infinite number of monads, each having some degree of active and perceptive power in itself; but that the whole machine of the body has a relation to that monad which we call the soul, which is, as it were, the center of the whole. He further supposed that there are different orders of monads, some higher, and others lower. To the higher orders he gave the name of *dominant*, and to this class belongs the human soul. Those which make up the organized bodies of men, animals, plants, &c. he

trines of the illustrious German in this place. **LEIBNITZ** died in the year 1716. He was considered one of the greatest men of the period in which he lived. In vigour and comprehensiveness of mind he was eminently distinguished; in the variety and versatility of his talents he had few equals; and in the extent of his acquirements he was almost unrivalled.

contended were of a lower order, and subservient to the dominant monads. But every monad, of whatever order, he represented as a complete substance in itself, having no parts, and indestructible by any power less than Divine, which there is no reason to believe will ever be exerted in the annihilation of any being which it has created. Finally, he maintained that monads of a lower order may, by a regular evolution of their powers, rise to an higher order; that they may be successively joined to organized bodies, of various forms, and different degrees of perception; but that they can never die, nor cease to be, in some degree, active and percipient.

This philosopher distinguished between *perception* and *apperception*. The former he supposed common to all monads. The latter, implying consciousness, reflection, and a capacity to comprehend abstract truths, he believed to be peculiar to the higher orders, such as the soul of man. He conceived that our bodies and minds are united in such a manner that neither has any physical influence on the other, each performing all its operations by its own internal powers; yet the operations of one corresponding exactly with those of the other, by a pre-established harmony. According to this system, all our perceptions of external objects would be the same, though those objects had never existed, or though they should, by Divine power, be annihilated. We do not perceive external things because they exist, but because the soul was originally so constituted as to produce in itself all its successive changes and perceptions independently of external objects. Every operation of the soul is the necessary consequence of that state of it which preceded the operation; and that state the necessary consequence of the state immediately preceding it, and so backwards,

till we come to its first constitution, which produces successively, and by necessary consequence, every successive state throughout the whole course of its existence.^j

This system, for many years after its publication, excited uncommon attention, and obtained great currency, especially in the native country of the author. It was early espoused by CAROLUS WOLFIUS, a celebrated philosopher also of Germany, a most voluminous commentator on the writings of his master, and a zealous defender of his doctrines. On the foundation of these doctrines he formed a new system of cosmology and pneumatology, digested and demonstrated in a mathematical method. The principles of LEIBNITZ had also some advocates, either in whole or in part, in other parts of the continent of Europe, and in Great-Britain, for a considerable time. But, at the close of the eighteenth century, their reputation had much diminished, and they were adopted by comparatively few, in any part of the philosophical world.

Among the great theorists in pneumatology which belong to this period, Dr. HARTLEY, a celebrated English physician, also holds a conspicuous place.^k The two grand principles on which his whole system rests, are those of *Vibration* and *Association*. NEWTON had taught that the rays of

^j REID's *Intellectual Powers of Man*, Essay ii.

^k Dr. DAVID HARTLEY was born in Yorkshire, August 30, 1705, and died at Bath, August 28, 1757. His great work, the *Observations on Man*, was published in 1749. He was educated with a view to the clerical profession, in the Church of England; but feeling some scruples about subscribing to the thirty-nine articles, he relinquished that design, and devoted himself to the study and practice of medicine, in which he was eminent. While he departed from the public standards of his church in several important particulars, he was much distinguished for the force of his mind, the extent of his learning, the amiableness and benevolence of his disposition, and the purity of his moral character. He was a firm believer in Revelation, and wrote, though not with orthodoxy, yet with great seriousness and ability in its defence.

light, falling upon the bottom of the eye, excite *vibrations* in the *retina*, and that these vibrations being propagated along the optic nerves into the brain, produce the sensation of seeing. Dr. HARTLEY adopted this hypothesis, and applied it, with ingenious additions and modifications of his own, to the other senses. Mr. LOCKE had thrown new light on the doctrine of *association*, and shown its great influence and importance in the operations of the human mind. Dr. HARTLEY also adopted the leading ideas of this great metaphysician on this subject, and by uniting them with the Newtonian opinions, formed a system on which the praise of great ingenuity and plausibility has been bestowed.

He taught, that the white medullary substance of the brain, spinal marrow, and the nerves proceeding from them, form the immediate instrument of sensation and motion; that whatever changes are produced in this substance, corresponding changes take place in our ideas; that external objects impressed upon the nerves occasion, first in the nerves on which they are impressed, and then in the brain, *vibrations* of the small and infinitesimal medullary particles, which vibration excites a sensation in the percipient principle, which remains as long as the vibration lasts, that is, as long as the object continues to affect the organs of sense. That the medullary substance having once vibrated in a particular manner, does not return entirely to its natural state, but continues disposed to vibrate in that manner rather than any other, which tendency of the brain to the renewal of the vibration is the cause of the retention of the idea in the absence of the archetype. That whatever renews the vibration, renews also the perception; but the renewed vibration being less vigorous than the original one, is called a *miniature vibration*, or *vi-*

bratiuncle, and the renewed perception corresponding with it is called an *idea*. That vibrations may be revived not only by the repetition of external impressions, but by their *association* with each other; and that, of vibrations which have been associated together a sufficient number of times, either synchronously, or in succession, if one be excited, it will excite the miniatures of all the rest. This is supposed to furnish a solution to all the phenomena of the association of ideas.

According to this theory, the nerves are divided into two classes, *sensory* and *motory*; the former being the immediate instruments of sensation, the latter of motion. Both originate in the medullary substance of the brain, and their vibrations influence and modify each other. In short, every sensation, idea, muscular motion, affection, and internal feeling whatever, is supposed, by Dr. HARTLEY, to correspond with some vibratory state of the medullary substance, so that the one may be regarded as the exponent of the other.¹

Though this system contains many ideas, which bear a near relation to the theories of DES CARTES, MALEBRANCHE, and LEIBNITZ;^m and though its two fundamental principles are derived from the works of NEWTON and LOCKE, yet the author has a considerable claim to the character of originality. His doctrines, combined as they are, and formed into a fair structure, belong to himself, and certainly present some new and useful truth. It seems to be the opinion of many that he ought to be classed with the *materialists* of the age, and it is not easy to assign him any other place. This, indeed, is contrary to his own express declarations. He was apprehensive lest the doctrine of corporeal

¹ *Observations on Man*, vol. i. See also BELSHAM's *Elements of the Philosophy of Mind*, &c. 8vo. 1801.

^m *Observations on Man*, vol. i. p. 110 and 111. Edit. Lond. 1791.

vibrations, which forms so prominent a feature of his work, should be deemed favourable to materialism. "He was therefore anxious to declare, and to have it understood, that he was no materialist."ⁿ Notwithstanding this declaration, however, it is difficult to reconcile his doctrines with the immateriality of the soul. Good judges have pronounced that if these doctrines be pursued to their natural consequences, they must terminate in absolute Spinozism. Accordingly it is well known, that some of the most distinguished materialists of the age not only profess to admire Dr. HARTLEY's work, but also adopt his reasonings, and acknowledge him as their great master.

Another metaphysical system, which deserves to be mentioned among the curiosities of the age, is that adopted and published by Lord MONBODDO, a celebrated and voluminous writer of North-Britain. This system is, in fact, little more than a revival of what his Lordship considers the Aristotelian philosophy, or the doctrine of *Universals*, with the addition of some crude and absurd visions of his own, which have been little studied, and still less respected by those who are competent to judge.

ⁿ The following passage is extracted from the *Life of Dr. HARTLEY*, published with the last edition of his work.

"There was but one point in which he appeared anxious to prevent any misapprehension of his principles: that point respected the immateriality of the soul. He was apprehensive lest the doctrine of corporeal vibrations, being instrumental to sensation, should be deemed unfavourable to the opinion of the immateriality of the soul. He was therefore anxious to declare, and to have it understood, that he was not a materialist. He has not presumed to declare any sentiment respecting the nature of the soul, but the negative one, that it cannot be material according to any idea or definition that we can form of matter. He has given the following definition of matter, viz. 'That it is a mere passive thing, of whose very essence it is to be endued with a *vis inertiae*; for this *vis inertiae* presents itself immediately in all our observations and experiments upon it, and is inseparable from it, even in idea.' The materiality therefore of the sensitive soul is precluded, by the definition of matter being incapable of sensation. If there be any other element capable of sensation, the soul may consist of that element; but that is a new supposition, still leaving the original question concluded in the negative, by the fundamental definition of matter."

Lord MONBODDO analyzes sensible objects into *matter* and *form*, and teaches, like most of the disciples of the Stagirite, the eternity of both. He insists that there are in man *four* distinct minds, viz. the *elemental*, the *vegetable*, the *animal*, and the *intellectual*; that of these, the *intellectual* only is immortal; that the soul is not created for any particular body, but transmigrates from one to another; that there are different grades of minds; those which occupy earths and stones, and those which reside in plants and the inferior animals up to man; that gravitation is nothing more than the activity of a soul residing in, and animating masses of earth; and that it is more honourable to the Deity to consider him as operating in all the departments of nature, by the instrumentality of inferior minds, than to represent him as acting on matter immediately. Whether the souls of men transmigrate to the bodies of brutes he is doubtful; but that the souls of vegetables and inferior animals each transmigrate from one to another of their own species, and perhaps from a lower to a higher, and *vice versa*, he thinks there is abundant reason to believe.

So far as Lord MONBODDO agrees with the Aristotelian philosophy, he talks with a semblance of reason, and may be read with patience. But the extraordinary consequences which he draws from this ancient system of pneumatology, the capricious use which he makes of it, and his visionary and fantastic additions to it, render his work as singular a mass of good sense and absurdity, erudition and ridiculous credulity, as any age ever produced.° Mr,

° See *Ancient Metaphysics*, 5 vols. 4to. From the singular opinions which abound in this learned and extensive work, the following selection is offered to the reader as a specimen. That the *Ourang Outang* is a man not civilized; that men originally wore *tails*, and went upon *all fours*; but that the one dropt off, and they rose from the other to an erect posture by the progress of civilization; that the natural state of man is to live without

JAMES HARRIS, in his *Hermes*, and in his *Philosophical Arrangements*, strove, with equal zeal, nearly about the same time, to revive the philosophy of ARISTOTLE, but without so strangely distorting its features, or encumbering it with such heterogeneous and whimsical additions.

Among the new metaphysical theorists of the age, it would be improper to pass in silence the celebrated IMMANUEL KANT, Professor at Koenigsberg, in Prussia. This gentleman, about the year 1781, first published a system of metaphysics and moral philosophy, which has been ever since gaining ground among the literati of Germany, and is now much in vogue in that country. Professor KANT, we are told, was led to the train of thinking, which ripened in his mind into the system which bears his name, by the perusal of HUME's essay on the idea of necessary connection; and of PRIESTLEY's reply to REID, BEATTIE, and OSWALD.^p But from whatever source his ideas are derived, he has formed them into a fabric, which is extolled by his adherents as one of the most sublime efforts of human genius, and as ranking among the most important improvements ever made in science. If we may believe the extravagant panegyrics of these enthusiastic disciples, he has more successfully explored the darkest recesses of the human mind than any individual amongst all his illustrious predecessors, and his writings contain a developement of precisely those truths after which mankind have been seeking for centuries in vain.

habitation, cloathing, fire, or language; that his best and only proper food is raw vegetables; that there have been giants of two and three, and in some instances of eight and nine times the height of ordinary men in these degenerate days; that there are now hordes of men with *tails*, and whole nations who have but one leg; that in Ethiopia there are men who have their eyes in their breasts, and others who have only one eye, and that in their forehead!!! &c. &c.

^p *Elements of the Critical Philosophy*, &c. by J. C. ADELUNG; translated, with additions, by A. F. M. WILLEN, M. D. Lond. 8vo. 1798.

“ Still, however, when inquiry is made, among the followers of this singular man, respecting the general drift of his system, they answer chiefly in negations. It is *not* atheism; for he affirms that practical reason is entitled to infer the existence of a Supreme Intelligence. It is *not* theism; for he denies that theoretical reason can demonstrate the existence of an infinite intelligent Being. It is *not* materialism; for he maintains that time and space are only forms of our perception, and not the attributes of extrinsic existences. It is *not* idealism; for he maintains that noumena are independent of phenomena; that things perceptible are prior to perception. It is *not* libertinism; for he allows the will to be determined by regular laws. It is *not* fatalism; for he defines this to be a system in which the connection of purposes in the world is considered as accidental. It is *not* dogmatism; for he favours every possible doubt. It is *not* scepticism; for he affects to demonstrate what he teaches. Such are the indefinite evasions of this school.”¹ The disciples of this celebrated professor assure us that their system is so profound and extensive, that the acutest understanding cannot tolerably comprehend it by less than a twelve-month’s study; and that to become a thorough master of its subtle and recondite principles, requires the unwearied labour of many years. After such a declaration, it would be presumptuous for one but slightly acquainted with the subject to attempt an exhibition even of the outlines of this plan. But not to omit all notice of so celebrated a system, it may be proper to state the following doctrines, as among the elementary principles which it contains.

¹ *Monthly Review of London*, vol. xxviii. N. S. p. 62. 1799.

Professor KANT teaches that all men have a certain innate faculty, consisting in the capacity of the soul to receive immediate representations of objects; that the representations which this sensitive faculty affords us are perceptions; that all our perceptions have a two-fold form, *space* and *time*; that this faculty ought to be called *theoretical reason*, or *speculative understanding*; and that it is of so limited a nature that it cannot perceive any thing beyond the two forms already mentioned, one of which belongs to the perception of our internal, and the other to that of our external senses. He maintains, that the objects which we perceive in space exist not externally, but only internally; they are mere phenomena, but cannot be said to be only ideal, nor to have no objective reality; because they depend on established laws, and real principles. When, therefore, they are said to exist, no more is meant than that they are perceived in space, or in the form of external organization. He believes, that as the nature and form of our perceptions are determined by the nature of our sensible faculty, so the form of our thoughts, or the manner in which we judge concerning phenomena, or arrange our perceptions, is determined by the nature of our theoretical reason; and as that which, when knowledge is obtained by means of the senses, gives a form to the matter perceived, is called a *pure perception*; so that by which we determine the connection of our observations, and form a judgment concerning them, is called a *pure notion*, or *category*. Those pure notions which are discoverable by an analysis of the judgment, may be reduced to notions of quantity, quality, relation and modification. These categories, considered abstractedly, are not deduced from our perceptions and experience, but exist in the mind prior to these latter, and experience is the result of

their combination with our perceptions; but it is only in connection with our perceptions that these pure notions can be the source of knowledge; for, in themselves, they are mere forms, without any independent existence. They serve to direct us in the use of our observations; but they cannot extend our knowledge beyond the limits of perception and experience."

"There are, according to Professor KANT, two kinds of propositions, concerning which our minds may be employed, analytical and synthetical. The former are those in which we only explain or illustrate that of which we have already some idea; whereas, in the latter, we increase our knowledge, by adding something new to our former idea of the subject. Thus, when we say *all matter is extended*, we form an *analytical* proposition; and when we say, *all bodies have a certain weight*, that is a *synthetical* proposition.

"Without experience, we cannot form any synthetical proposition concerning the objects or matter of our knowledge; but, as the forms of our knowledge are independent of and prior to our experience, we may, with respect to the pure notions already mentioned, conceive synthetical propositions, or acquire pure science; and indeed it is only when we have pure perceptions and pure notions for our objects, that we can arrive at universal and necessary certainty; as is the case in pure mathematics and philosophy, in which we consider truth, abstracted from matter, with respect only to the forms or laws of knowledge and volition.

"Beside theoretical reason, M. KANT ascribes to man another faculty, which he calls practical reason, endued with power sufficient to impel and direct the will. He asserts that, if this faculty were not granted, it would follow that practical laws would not be universal moral precepts, but

only particular maxims, which individuals might prescribe to themselves as the rule of their conduct. To these universal moral laws, practical reason commands our implicit obedience, without any regard to our inclinations or views of advantage. These are indeed sometimes at variance with the dictates of duty, but, in order to diminish their influence as obstacles to virtue, our practical reason must determine us firmly to believe the existence of the Deity, and of a future state in which our happiness will be proportioned to our internal worth. This is what our philosopher calls *rational faith*, as it is independent of all knowledge of its object; for the principles of religion can be neither demonstrated nor disproved by theoretical reason, but are mere postulates of practical reason; and the only theology that is really founded on our understanding, is moral theology, which depends on moral principles.”^r

The complaint that all this is obscure and scarcely intelligible, will probably be made by every reader. An English philosopher tells us, that it would require more than ordinary industry and ingenuity to make a just translation, or a satisfactory abstract of the system in question, in our language; that for this purpose a new nomenclature, more difficult than that of the Linnæan Botany, must be invented. This circumstance itself affords strong presumption against the rationality and truth of the Kantian philosophy. LOCKE and NEWTON found little difficulty in making themselves understood. Every man of plain good sense, who is used to inquiries of that nature, readily comprehends their systems, in as little time as it requires to peruse their volumes. Even BERKELEY and

^r The above brief account of the Kantian system of *Pneumatology* is extracted from a *British Literary Journal*.

HUME, with all their delusive subtleties, found means to render themselves easily intelligible. Is there not reason, then, to suspect, either that the system of Professor KANT is made up of heterogeneous, inconsistent and incomprehensible materials; or that, in order to disguise the old and well known philosophy of certain English and French writers, and to impose it on the world as a new system, he has done little more than present it under a new technical vocabulary of his own? Or, which is, perhaps, not the most improbable supposition, that, being sensible of the tendency of his philosophy to undermine all religion and morals, as hitherto taught and prized in the world, he has studied to envelope in an enigmatic language, a system which he wishes to be understood by the initiated alone; a system which has been pronounced "an attempt to teach the sceptical philosophy of HUME in the disgusting dialect of scholasticism?" At any rate, notwithstanding all the unwearied pains which some of the disciples of this famous Prussian have taken, to rescue him from the imputation of being one of the sceptical philosophers of the age, the most impartial judges will probably assign him a place among those metaphysical empirics of modern times, whose theoretical jargon, instead of being calculated to advance science, or to forward human improvement, has rather a tendency to delude, to bewilder, and to shed a baneful influence on the true interests of man.

The system of KANT has found numerous friends and commentators, particularly in Germany, who contend, that it sets limits, on the one hand, to the scepticism of HUME; while, on the other, it refutes and overturns materialism, fatalism, and atheism, as well as fanaticism and infidelity. Among those who have distinguished themselves as the friends and advocates of this system, REINHOLD,

SCHULZE, SCHMID, JACOB, WILL, REIMARUS, and ADELUNG, hold a distinguished place. On the contrary, among its opponents, we find the names of HERDER, PLATTNER, SELLE, and many others. The controversy to which the *Critical Philosophy* has given rise, as it has produced a multitude of voluminous publications, so it will long be ranked among the most curious and interesting of the age.

In the latter half of the century under consideration, a new doctrine concerning the human mind was announced, which is entitled to some notice in this place. This doctrine, it is believed, was first adopted and advanced by M. HELVETIUS, a celebrated French writer.^s He was followed by M. CONDORCET,^t and some others, also of France; by means of whose writings it obtained considerable currency among the literati of that country, and was afterwards embraced and defended, with much plausibility, by Mr. GODWIN,^v and others, of Great-Britain.^u

The advocates of this doctrine maintain the *Perfectibility of Man*. With regard to the nature of the human mind they appear, in general, to embrace the system of *materialism*.^w They suppose that the thinking principle of man is the result of corporeal organization; that the difference in minds results from the difference of this organization, and more especially from the subsequent circumstances

^s *A Treatise on Man, his Intellectual Faculties, and his Education*. Translated by HOOPER, 2 vols. 8vo. 1777.

^t *Outlines of an Historical View of the Progress of the Human Mind*. 8vo. 1795.

^v *Inquiry concerning Political Justice*, second Edit. 2 vols. 8vo. 1796.

^u It is not meant to be asserted that all these writers agree with respect to the details of their several systems; but that they concur in asserting the *omnipotence of education*, and the *perfectibility of man*.

^w Some of those who profess a belief in the *perfectibility* of man appear to be in doubt with respect both to the *immateriality* and *immortality* of the soul. They are so busied about the improvement of man in this world, that they have little time, and less inclination to bestow a thought on his destiny and prospects in that which is to come.

and education of the individual; that by means of the diffusion of knowledge, and the adoption of better principles and modes of education, the improvement of man in intellect, in virtue, and in happiness, will go on to an illimitable extent; that, at length, mind shall become "omnipotent over matter," perfect enjoyment assume the place of present suffering, and human life, instead of being bounded by a few years, be protracted to immortality, or at least to an indefinite duration.

This system is unsupported by any facts; it is contrary to all the experience of mankind;* it is opposed to every principle of human nature, and it is scarcely necessary to add, to the plainest dictates of Revelation. That man may, and probably will, make great improvements hereafter, in science and art, is readily admitted. That we cannot presume to assign the bounds of this improvement, is also admitted. But that there will be absolutely no bounds to it, or, which is the same thing as to the argument, that it will go on beyond all assignable or conceivable limits, is to suppose the constitution of man essentially changed, his present wants, habits, and mode of subsistence totally superseded, and a nature conferred upon him wholly different from that which his Creator gave him. But as the doctrines held by the advocates of human *perfectibility* become still more important when considered with respect to their moral and political application, the further consideration of their extravagance, weakness, and inconsistency, and the injurious consequences arising

* It is somewhat curious that many of those who adopt the opinion concerning man which is here opposed, believe, at the same time, that this world has existed from eternity. If, amidst eternal revolutions, and eternal progress, mankind have not yet risen above the grade at which we now behold them, there seems little encouragement to hope for any thing like what they anticipate in future.

from their adoption, will be attended to in a subsequent part of this sketch.’

During the last age, several detached parts of the philosophy of mind have been illustrated in a manner greatly superior to the attempts at explanation made in former periods. Perhaps there is no subject to which this remark more forcibly applies than to the great question of *Liberty* and *Necessity*, which, through so many successive ages, has served to puzzle the acutest metaphysicians. Never, probably, was any point more largely, ably, and profoundly discussed. The writings of LEIBNITZ, COLLINS, HUME, HARTLEY, PRIESTLEY, and BELSHAM, on the side of moral *necessity*; and of CLARKE, BUTLER, REID, BEATTIE, DE LUC, GREGORY, and HORSLEY, in favour of *liberty*, are well known, and form very important materials in the metaphysical history of the age. But the greatest work which the century produced on this subject, and certainly among the ablest ever written on any department of philosophy, is that by the celebrated American Divine, Mr. JONATHAN EDWARDS, for some time President of the College of New-Jersey. This gentleman wrote on the side of moral *necessity*, or against the self-determining power of the will; and investigated the subject with a degree of originality, acuteness, depth, precision, and force of argument, which the accurate reader cannot contemplate but with astonishment. It will not be said that he has brought to an issue a controversy, which will probably last as long as men exist on earth; but that he has thrown much new light on the subject will be questioned by none; and that he has approached as near to a *de-*

y Some further remarks on this delusive system will also be found under the head of *Education*, in the present volume. But in the *third* division of the work, in which it is proposed to take a view of the *moral* principles and establishments of the eighteenth century, a more particular consideration of it will be attempted.

monstration, that the doctrine of moral *necessity* (as explained and guarded by him) is the only scriptural and philosophical doctrine on this subject, as the nature of such inquiries admits, is certainly the opinion of some of the best judges in every part of the literary world.^z The extremes to which the system of the venerable President has been carried by several subsequent writers, and the consequences deduced from it, were far from being recognized by him; and with respect to some of them, they are, beyond all doubt, illegitimately drawn.

It is worthy of remark, that our great countryman, Mr. EDWARDS, appears to have been the first *Calvinist* who avowed his belief so fully and thoroughly in the doctrine of moral necessity as his book indicates. Though all Calvinistic writers before his time were characterized by a firm adherence to the doctrine of *Predestination*; yet they seem, for the most part, to have adopted a kind of middle course between his creed and that of the Arminian *contingency*. The penetrating and comprehensive mind of EDWARDS went further; demonstrated that this middle ground was untenable, and presented a more clear and satisfactory view of the doctrines of free grace, when contemplated through the medium of his main doctrine, than had ever before been given.^a

That class of philosophers who taught that the soul was *material*, were, until the eighteenth century, generally ranked among infidels, and in most

^z Soon after the publication of President EDWARDS's celebrated work on the *Will*, he received the thanks of several Professors of the Universities of Holland, and of other gentlemen of distinction, in various parts of Europe, for having, in their opinion, thrown more light on the subject than all preceding writers. This publication has long been considered and quoted as a standard work on the side of this question which it is designed to defend.

^a See his *Inquiry into the Freedom of the Will*, &c. *passim*.

instances, really deserved this character. Hence a *materialist* has been commonly considered as a denomination tantamount to a charge of atheism itself, or at least of criminal indifference to religion. The Christian world, accustomed to connect this tenet with such heresies as those of SPINOZA, HOBBS, COLLINS, and others, of a similar character, naturally concluded, that a belief in immaterialism necessarily flowed from a belief in Christianity. The last age is distinguished by the adoption of this anti-christian error, by some who profess to embrace the Christian faith. Among these the most conspicuous and active is Dr. PRIESTLEY,^b who maintains that “man does not consist of two substances essentially different from each other; but that the conscious and thinking principle, or what we generally term the soul, is merely a property resulting from a peculiar organical structure of the brain.” On this principle he attempts to show that the idea of the natural immortality of the soul is wholly fallacious; that the properties of sensation and thought, and of course all the distinguishing characteristics of the thinking part of our nature, must be extinguished by the dissolution of the organized mass in which they exist; and therefore that the only reason which men have to expect a state of consciousness or enjoyment hereafter, is derived from the scripture doctrine of the resurrection. In former parts of this work the services of Dr. PRIESTLEY in the physical sciences have been mentioned with high respect, and with frequently repeated tributes of applause. It is to be regretted that so much of what he has written on the philosophy of mind, and almost the whole of his writings on the subject of theology, should be so radically erroneous, and so subversive

^b *Disquisitions concerning Matter and Spirit, and Correspondence between PRICE and PRIESTLEY.*

of all the interests of evangelical truth and practical piety.

The controversy respecting the immateriality of the soul between Dr. CLARKE and Mr. COLLINS, and many years afterwards between Dr. PRICE and Dr. PRIESTLEY, forms a very important part of the metaphysical history of the period in which they lived; and probably furnishes some of the most luminous views of this interesting controversy that were ever presented to the world. Some of the immaterialists of this age, such as Dr. CLARKE, Dr. PRICE, and others, maintained, that the mind has one property, viz. *extension*, in common with matter, and, consequently, that it occupies space; and has a proper locality, or, as the schoolmen express it, *ubiquity*; while others, such as Dr. WATTS, perhaps more consistently and philosophically supposed, that mind has no common property with matter; that it is inextended, does not occupy space, and has no proper locality.^c

The celebrated dispute between the *Nominalists* and *Realists*, which perplexed the schoolmen for so many ages,^d and which all their acuteness was not able to terminate, was carried on with great warmth, under different names, and with some

^c See *Correspondence between PRICE and PRIESTLEY*; and also *Elements of the Philosophy of Mind*, by T. BELSHAM.

^d The *Realists* followed the doctrine of ARISTOTLE with respect to *universal ideas*. They taught that previous to, and independent on matter, there were no universal *ideas* or *essences*; but that the ideas or exemplars, which the Platonists supposed to have existed in the Divine mind, and to have been the models of all created beings, had been eternally impressed upon matter, and were coeval with, and inherent in, their objects. On the other hand, the *Nominalists*, who embraced the doctrine of ZENO and the Stoics, insisted, in opposition both to the Aristotelians and Platonists, that these pretended *universals* had neither *form* nor *essence*, and were no more than mere *terms*, or *nominal* representations of their particular objects. The doctrine of ARISTOTLE chiefly prevailed until the eleventh century, when ROSCELINUS embraced the Stoical system, and founded the sect of the *Nominalists*, whose opinions were propagated with great success by ABELARD. These two sects frequently disputed and divided into inferior parties among themselves.

new modifications, through the whole of the last century. And though still far from being concluded, yet probably there was never so much light thrown on the question in any preceding period. Of those who maintained the doctrine of the *Realists*, it is believed that Mr. HARRIS, Dr. PRICE, and Lord MONBODDO were among the most eminent; while the system of the *Nominalists* was espoused and defended, with great ingenuity, by Bishop BERKELEY, Mr. HUME, Dr. CAMPBELL, Professor STEWART, and many others. Mr. LOCKE, Dr. REID, and a few more under the name of *Conceptualists*, adopted a kind of middle course between these far-famed disputants.

Besides the writers on the general philosophy of mind, or on particular parts of this science, whose names have been mentioned in the foregoing pages, a number of others are entitled to notice in the metaphysical history of the last age, as having either written professedly on the subject, or interwoven much matter relating to the philosophy of mind in the discussion of theological, moral, and literary subjects. Among these Bishop BUTLER, Dr. HUTCHESON, Mr. GROVE, Dr. CAMPBELL, Dr. A. SMITH, Mr. TUCKER,^e and Mr. ALLISON, of Great-Britain; BEAUSOBRE, CONDILLAC, and many more, of France; LOSSIUS, TETENS, FEDER, KRUGER, and MENDLESSHOM, of Germany; CROUZAZ, LE CLERC, BONNET, and several others, of Geneva; and a much longer list which might

^e See *The Light of Nature Pursued*, by EDWARD SEARCH, Esq. 7 vols. 8vo. 1768, 1778. The real author of this work was ABRAHAM TUCKER, Esquire. It contains much new, curious and highly interesting discussion on metaphysical and moral subjects. Of Mr. TUCKER, Dr. PALEY, in the preface to his *Moral and Political Philosophy*, speaks in the following terms: "I have found in this writer more original thinking and observation upon the several subjects that he has taken in hand, than in any other, not to say, than in all others put together. His talent for illustration is unrivalled. But his thoughts are diffused through a long, various, and irregular work."

be selected from different parts of Europe, are entitled to respectful distinction.^f Indeed, the connection is so close between the philosophy of mind and moral science, that every systematic writer on the latter subject has, in a greater or less degree, treated of the former. This will more fully appear, when we come, in a future division of the present work, to take a view of the various moral systems which have obtained currency, or excited attention in the last age.

CHAPTER XIII.

CLASSIC LITERATURE.

AT the revival of learning in the fifteenth century, *Classic Literature*, or the study of the best ancient writers of Greece and Rome, was an object of primary and enthusiastic attention among the literati of Europe. The remains of those writers were sought with avidity, and studied with persevering diligence. Criticisms and commentaries upon them abounded. To gain possession of a classic manuscript; to remove an obscurity in an ancient text; or to propose a new reading, was then considered among the most honourable and useful of all literary achievements. At that time he who could lay claim to the character of an adept in the Greek and Latin tongues was, of course, a great and learned man; while,

^f With the writings of the greater part of the metaphysicians above mentioned, which belong to the continent of Europe, especially those of Germany, the author knows little but by report; it will not, therefore, be expected that he should deliver any formal statements or opinions concerning their doctrines.

without this, however solid, extensive and valuable his knowledge of other subjects, no one could be rescued from the charge of barbarous and contemptible ignorance. In a word, instead of considering classic literature as a *means* of obtaining more important knowledge, the directors of public taste, at that period, unwisely erected it into an ultimate *end*, and taught their followers to consider it as the most worthy object of pursuit, to all who were ambitious of becoming learned. This was an improper extreme. The more judicious had just cause to lament that such a disproportionate share of regard was bestowed on language, to the neglect of studies more important and immediately practical.

This error began to be corrected about the beginning of the seventeenth century. At this period, brilliant discoveries in natural philosophy began to arrest the attention of the learned world, and the physical sciences in general became more objects of regard. But this decline of classic literature was gradual. One error was not immediately exchanged for its opposite. The Latin language was now generally employed as a medium of publication in science; and although it had come to be generally considered in its proper light, as a *means* rather than an *end*; yet both this and the Greek were generally and deeply studied by all who had a taste for letters, or aspired to distinction in knowledge.

At the beginning of the eighteenth century the study of the ancient languages was still esteemed an essential part of liberal education. It was then the habit of the learned not only to write and speak the Latin tongue with the greatest facility; but they also still employed it as a medium for conveying the result of their philosophical labours throughout the literary world; and most of those

who laid claim to the character of scholars, had an extensive and accurate acquaintance with Grecian literature. In both these respects the eighteenth century produced a singular revolution. The Latin language has in a great measure ceased to be that familiar medium of conversation and of writing, among the learned, that it once was; and the Greek, though nominally retained, as a branch of study in modern seminaries of learning, has become almost unknown even to the liberally educated. A belief is daily becoming more prevalent and popular that the time bestowed on the acquisition of these languages, if not entirely wasted, might at least be more usefully employed. This belief, of course, has had considerable influence on modern plans of education. And although in a few of the ancient European seats of learning, some portion of the former zeal for classic literature still remains; yet even in these a considerable decline from their wonted eminence is plainly visible; and in by far the larger number the decline is great, humiliating, and evidently on the increase.

The vernacular tongue, it is believed, first began to be employed in works of science, to the rejection of the Latin, in Italy. From that country the practice made its way into France, and soon became general. Great-Britain was the next, in order, to adopt this innovation, which was admitted last of all into Germany and Holland. At the present day the number of books published in any other than the living languages is extremely small.

In America the decline of classic literature is especially remarkable and prevalent. Many of our colleges require in their students but a superficial acquaintance with the Latin language; and with respect to the Greek, are contented with a smat-

tering which scarcely deserves the name of knowledge. And although in others, laudable exertions have been, and continue to be made, for retaining to some profitable extent this part of education, yet the popular prejudice against it is strong and growing; and there is too much reason to fear that this prejudice will, at no great distance of time, completely triumph.^g

The causes of this revolution are various. Since the commencement of the eighteenth century, the physical sciences have been gradually extending their bounds, demanding more attention, and acquiring greater ascendancy. As the objects of study multiplied, a less degree of leisure was left for any particular pursuit. The splendour of several new branches of philosophy, as they successively rose into view, attracted the studious, and gave a new turn to fashion. Hence those who employed themselves in the illustration of the classics, in the settlement of various readings, or in making themselves masters of those venerable remains of antiquity, soon sunk in popular esteem. It became fashionable to represent them as persons void of taste; as "word catchers, that lived on syllables;" as far below the votaries of science in dignity. This ridicule sensibly diminished the public respect for classic literature, and still continues to operate with undiminished force.

^g While a great fondness prevails in the United States for giving young men a *College education*, and obtaining for them the usual academic honour of a *diploma*, there is also a prevailing disposition, not only among the youth themselves, but also among parents and guardians, to give them as small a portion of classic, and especially of Greek literature, as possible. Against this latter language, it seems, particular hostility is denounced. And in some of our colleges it requires the exertion of all the authority vested in the immediate instructors, and the governors, to prevent popular ignorance and prejudice from expelling the study of Greek from their plans of education. This is a circumstance which threatens much evil to the interests of literature in our country; and unless the trustees and other officers, to whom the direction of our seminaries of learning is entrusted, combine to oppose the plausible but delusive literary heresy, another generation will witness the most unhappy effects arising from its prevalence.

Another cause which has doubtless contributed to produce the effect in question is, the inconceivable enlargement of the sphere of enterprise and activity which the past age exhibited. New objects of profit and pleasure have arisen, and engaged the public mind; new fields of labour and adventure have been thrown open; and, of course, in calculating an education for active life, the refinements of ancient literature began to receive a smaller share of regard. To which may be added, that the increased intercourse of mankind, on the one hand, by bringing several living languages more into use, necessarily diverted a share of attention from the ancient; and, on the other, by rendering the study of various modern tongues more easy and useful, took away one important argument in favour of a learned language as a medium of general intercourse.

It must be admitted, that this manifest decline of classic literature has been attended with some advantages. In consequence of discarding dead languages, as the ordinary medium of philosophical publications, such writings have become more accessible and popular; the student has more time left for becoming acquainted with his vernacular tongue; the attention of the learned is more directed to moral and physical sciences; the youth destined for active life is no longer condemned to waste his days by devoting them to objects which are, to him at least, of subordinate importance. In a word, the gradual disuse of what are called *learned* languages, may be regarded as an important branch of the system of those who consider the general diffusion of knowledge as a desirable object; and who wish to make every part of it as popular as possible. There are few things more directly calculated to break down the "wall of partition" between the literary and the other

classes of citizens, and to render liberal information the common portion of all ranks in the community, than making living languages the only means of intercourse, and removing the necessity of acquiring any other.

But if some advantages have attended the decline of classic literature; if it have produced a greater diffusion of knowledge, and favoured the progress of the arts and sciences, there is, perhaps, reason to doubt whether it has not produced more and greater evils. It has rendered the intercourse between learned men more difficult, for want of a common medium. It has produced a necessity to consume more time in the acquisition of various modern languages. And, what is of no less consequence, it has caused some of the best and most precious works of antiquity to be little known at the present day, and of consequence to be, in a great measure, lost to the world.

It has been asserted, by the ablest philologists, that the knowledge of the Greek and Roman writers has a most important influence in promoting literary taste. Those writers display excellences with respect to the structure and polish of language, which, it seems to be generally agreed, are unrivalled in the annals of composition. To study these excellences has a natural tendency to render the mind familiar with the philosophy of grammar, and to inspire it with a taste for the refinements of eloquence. It has a tendency to form in the student a capacity to discern, and a solicitude to attain the purity, the precision, and the graces of speech. Perhaps it may be questioned whether a man can possibly understand any one modern language, in its various inflections, beauties, and shades of meaning, without having some acquaintance with those ancient tongues. Certain it is, that almost the whole of that invaluable mass

of instruction on this subject, to be derived from *etymological* inquiries, depends on such an acquaintance, and must be commensurate with its extent. Hence it is supposed, by some of the most judicious literary historians, that the high estimate set on classical literature, and the enthusiastic attention paid to it, until within a few years past, may be considered among the principal causes of that rapid improvement in several European languages, which distinguishes the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. By diligently studying the ancient models of composition, and habitually referring to them as standards, the literati of those days were enabled to transfuse their beauties into the living languages; to give the latter a large portion of the copiousness, regularity, and numerous excellences of the former; and to convert them from that miserably defective and barbarous state in which they were found, to a degree of richness and refinement bordering on rivalry with their admired patterns.

If these facts and reasonings be admitted, it would seem to follow, that the same course of studies which contributed so much to raise modern languages to their present refined and improved state, must also be considered as useful, if not indispensably necessary to the preservation and support of those excellences which they have attained. The tendency of living languages to fluctuate and change is universally known. The intercourse of different nations; the ignorance, presumption, and affectation of authors; the gradual introduction of provincial barbarisms, and many other causes, are frequently found to debase the purity, and, in no small degree, to affect the regularity of modern tongues. Of the mischief which has been often done, in these respects, even by a single popular writer, the annals of literature furnish numerous

instances. It is true, to possess a language absolutely *fixed*, is neither possible nor desirable. New discoveries in science, new refinements in art, and the continual progress made in various departments of human knowledge, call for new words and phrases, and necessarily give rise to many corresponding changes, some of which are invaluable improvements in speech. But if left unrestrained, these innovations will be wantonly and injuriously multiplied. Every unfledged sciolist will assume the office of a reformer. Additions and alterations will no longer be made conformably to the analogy of the stock on which they are grafted; and language will speedily degenerate into a corrupt, capricious, and unintelligible jargon. Against this degeneracy, perhaps, no barrier is more effectual than the study of the ancient classics, and continually referring to them as the best standards of literary taste which mankind possess. The most illustrious models of English style have, undoubtedly, been produced by those who were intimately acquainted with those classics. Scarcely an instance can be found of an author who was ignorant of them, and who, at the same time, attained any high degree of excellence as a writer in his own language. And if ever the time should come when the polished tongues of antiquity shall cease to be studied in our seminaries of learning, it requires no spirit of prophecy to predict, that our vernacular language will gradually lose the purity and regularity of its proper idioms; become loaded with anomalies and meretricious ornaments; and no longer exhibit that philosophic uniformity, and systematic beauty, which are so desirable and useful. It is believed that the style of some very popular writers, within the last thirty years, furnishes a very instructive comment on the foregoing ideas, and affords abundant evidence of their truth.

But this subject may with propriety be considered as a matter of still more serious concern. To discourage the study of ancient languages, is to discourage one important means of supporting and defending Revelation. With what boldness would every heresiarch assail the foundation and the purity of our faith, if its teachers were generally ignorant of the original records of truth! With what confidence would unbelievers triumph, and with what manifest advantages would they be armed, were the friends of religion unable to appeal to the primitive oracles of inspiration, and to the primitive witnesses of their authenticity! To recommend the dismissal of classic literature, therefore, from plans of education, is not only to declare war against taste and sound learning, but also to betray the interests of evangelical truth, and put a new weapon into the hands of its enemies.

No wise man, indeed, would think of enjoining the acquisition of the dead languages upon every youth who seeks a liberal education. To impose such a task upon those who have no view to any of the professions denominated learned, or whose circumstances in life leave little leisure from the toil of active pursuits, would be to make a very improper use of one of the most important portions of life. But that the acquisition is abundantly worthy the labour of making it, to those who have the time and the means necessary for the purpose; that some knowledge on this subject has a tendency to meliorate the whole literary character, even if it be afterwards forgotten; and that the prevailing and increasing disposition to neglect this department of study ought to be regretted as among the fashionable follies of the age, would seem to follow necessarily from the foregoing remarks.

But notwithstanding the declining state of classic literature during the eighteenth century, this period was distinguished by a few events and characters which attracted considerable attention, and which are worthy of being noticed in the present sketch.

The labours of learned men, during the age under consideration, to facilitate the acquisition of the Latin language, have been numerous and useful. *Dictionaries*, *Grammars*, and other similar works have been executed on new and improved plans, with great diligence, perseverance and success. A number of scientific publications have been made in this language, in various parts of Europe, in the course of the century, which will long remain monuments of the learning and taste of the age. A few publications of this description have been made in Great-Britain; but by far the greater number on the continent of Europe. Well executed and useful helps for acquiring the Greek language have also been multiplied during the eighteenth century, and have contributed to the degree of cultivation which it received.

Before the commencement of the eighteenth century, it is believed, the Latin language was always taught by means of grammars written in the same language. In other words, a plan of instruction was adopted which presupposed the knowledge of that which was meant to be acquired. This absurd custom subjected youth to unnecessary labour, and burdened their memories with words to them altogether unmeaning. In the course of the century a considerable improvement in this respect took place. *Grammars* and *Dictionaries* in the popular language became more common. And what is worthy of remark, in this century, a *Lexicon* for enabling those who understand no other language than English, to acquire the know-

ledge of Greek, was for the first time presented to the public by the celebrated Mr. PARKHURST, of Great-Britain, whose learned and useful labours for promoting the study of the ancient languages, and especially of those in which the sacred volume was originally written, are well known.

In Greek literature the learned men of Holland, for a considerable part of the century, bore the palm from the contending world. Among these, SHULTENS, HEMSTERHUIS, RUHNKENIUS, VALCKENAER, LENNEP, and SCHEID, will long be remembered with respect by the friends of learning. The first named of these great scholars, the immortal ALBERT SHULTENS, early in the century, investigated, with singular erudition and acuteness, the derivation and structure of several languages, and particularly the Greek. He was followed by his countryman, the celebrated TIBERIUS HEMSTERHUIS,^h who undertook to derive the whole Greek language, various and copious as it is, from a few short primitives, on a plan entirely new. His doctrines were further pursued and illustrated by his disciples, LUDOVIC CASPAR VALCKENAER,ⁱ and JOHN DANIEL LENNEP,^j who offered to the world many refined and curious speculations on the subject. To these succeeded EVERARD SCHEID,^k a disciple of the same school, who wrote largely and learnedly on the proposed system of derivation, but differed materially from his preceptor and his fellow pupils. Besides the services rendered to Greek literature by the great critics above men-

^h HEMSTERHUIS did not himself, it is believed, publish his doctrine respecting the derivation of the Greek language. This was done by his disciples.

ⁱ Vide LUDOVICI CASPARI VALCKENAERII *Observationes, quibus via munitur ad Origines Græcas Investigandas, et Lexicorum defectus resarciendos.*

^j Vide JOANN. DANIEL. LENNEP *De Analogia Linguae Græcæ, sive Rationum Analogicarum Linguae Græcæ Expositio.*

^k Vide *Etymologicum*; and *Animadversiones ad Analogiam Linguae Græcæ.*

tioned, the *Ellipses Græcæ* of LAMBERTUS BOS; the *Doctrina Particularum* of HENRY HOOGEVEEN;¹ and the ingenious speculations of Lord MONBODDO, in his *Origin and Progress of Language*,^m have all contributed to unfold more clearly than before the etymology, the genius, the beauties, and the various excellences of this ancient tongue.

But the services of these eminent critics have not been all stated. While they pursued further than their predecessors, the analysis of the Greek language, they purified the Grammar from many absurdities and errors; they interpreted and amended many passages in ancient authors; and contributed in various ways to facilitate and recommend the study of those authors. And even if all their speculations respecting the analysis of the language, and especially concerning the origin and meaning of the *particles*, should be judged to be wholly unfounded, which probably few will suppose to be the case, they will doubtless be pronounced to have thrown much light on the subjects which they discussed. But a satisfactory view of their ingenious and useful labours can only be obtained by the careful perusal of their numerous publications.

It might have been expected, in an age in which the intercourse of men was so much extended as in the last, and in which so many rich repositories of ancient manuscripts were for the first time opened

¹ *Doctrina Particularum Linguae Græcæ, Auctore et Editore HENRICO HOOGEVEEN.* 2 Tom. 4to. This is a large, ingenious, and learned work, on the origin and meaning of the Greek *Particles*. Lord MONBODDO speaks of it in terms of great respect and approbation. See his *Origin and Progress of Language*.

^m Lord MONBODDO derives the whole Greek language from combinations in *duads*, of the ω with the other five vowels, α , ϵ , ι , σ , υ ; the ω being always last: so that $\alpha\omega$, $\epsilon\omega$, $\iota\omega$, $\sigma\omega$, $\upsilon\omega$, are the radical sounds, from which the whole language is derived. It is very remarkable, that the British philologist adopted almost precisely the same doctrine on this subject which had been before taught, though without his knowledge, by HEMSTERHUIS, and his followers, of the Leyden school.

to the inspection of the intelligent and the curious, that many remains of ancient genius, before unknown, would have been brought to light. Few acquisitions, however, of this kind have been made by the republic of letters. The industry and zeal of former times, in this pursuit, seem to have left little to be gained by modern exertions. The small additions which have been made during the last age, to the classic treasures before possessed by the world, may perhaps deserve some brief notice.

It had been long known that a composition bearing the title of an *Hymn to Ceres*, and ascribed to HOMER, existed in the second century; but learned men considered it as irretrievably lost. In the eighteenth century this composition was brought to light; and what is remarkable, it was found in one of the rudest and most unclassical countries of Europe. About the year 1775 CHRISTIAN FREDERIC MATTHÆI, a learned German, having been invited to settle at Moscow, in Russia, obtained access, soon after taking up his residence there, to a number of Greek manuscripts, deposited in the library of the *Holy Synod* in that city. Among these manuscripts he found the *Hymn to Ceres* above mentioned, almost entire, which he sent to his friend D. RUHNKENIUS, of Leyden, who, in 1780, committed it for the first time to the press, accompanied with learned annotations." It is, indeed, far from being certain that this *Hymn*, notwithstanding all its celebrity, is really the production of the immortal Grecian bard to whom it is ascribed.^o The learned editor himself expresses

ⁿ This *Hymn* was elegantly translated into English verse, and accompanied with learned notes, by RICHARD HOLE, LL. B. 8vo. 1781.

^o It is generally known that of the other *Hymns* ascribed to HOMER, suspicions have been entertained that the greater part, if not all, are spurious. See on this subject DAVIDIS RUHNKENII *Epistola Critica in Homeridarum Hymnos et Hesiodum, ad virum clarissimum* LUDOV. CASP. VALGKENARIUM, 8vo. Lug. Bat. 1749.

much doubt with respect to this point. The composition, though exquisitely beautiful, is said by good judges to want some of the more striking characteristics of HOMER, and, in particular, to be deficient in that energy and spirit for which he is so remarkable.^p

Nearly contemporaneous with the above mentioned discovery in Moscow, was another made in Venice, by M. VILLOISON, a learned Frenchman, who, among many valuable manuscripts which he examined in the Library of St. Mark in that city, found a very curious copy of the *Iliad*, made in the tenth century, and enriched with the *notes* and *scholia*, hitherto unpublished, of sixty of the most eminent critics of ancient times. Besides the *notes* and *scholia*, the manuscript was found to contain *various readings*, equally numerous and important, drawn from the ancient editions of HOMER, given by Chios, Cyprus, Crete, Marseilles, Sinope, and Argos; editions before known only by name, and by some citations of EUSTATHIUS. This manuscript also exhibits various readings drawn from many other editions; so that it may be emphatically called the HOMERUS VARIORUM of all antiquity, and more especially the HOMER of the famous school of Alexandria. M. VILLOISON has since committed this copy of the first Epic poem to the press, and thereby made an inestimable present to the lovers of Greek literature.

To this chapter belongs also some notice of an event which the classical scholar regards with no small interest. Nearly thirty years ago the President DE BROSSES, a distinguished philologist of France, finding, in the course of his researches, some remains of an *History of the Roman Republic*,

^p Vide Ομήρου Ὕμνος εἰς Δήμητραν: vel HOMERI *Hymnus ad Cererem*, nunc primum editus a DAVIDE RUHNKENIO. Lug. Bat. 8vo. 1780.

by SALLUST, which had been supposed to be entirely lost, undertook the arduous task of restoring it. After taking immense pains to collect all the quotations which had been made from this precious relic, by the ancient grammarians and others, he found himself in possession of more than seven hundred fragments, which he laid together with so much skill and patience, as to produce a connected work, by no means unworthy of the celebrated Roman whose name it bears. This work was translated into French, and published in 1777, at *Dijon*, in three volumes quarto, under the following title: *Histoire de la Republique Romaine dans les cours du vii. Siecle*, par SALLUSTE, &c. It will be readily supposed, that a production of one of the greatest historians of antiquity, recovered in a manner so extraordinary, excited much of the attention of learned men, not only in France, but also throughout the literary world.

Among the numerous monuments of ancient genius, both in literature and the arts, which were dug out of the ruins of *Herculaneum*, in the course of the last age, there were many hundred manuscripts, which excited high expectations among the learned. Of these nearly *eighteen hundred* manuscripts, chiefly Greek, have been long deposited in the Museum at *Portici*, belonging to the King of Naples. But so much trouble and expense have attended all the attempts hitherto made to unrol and decypher them, that the anticipations of the curious have been hitherto but little gratified. It is hoped, however, that better success may attend future exertions in this ample field of literary labour.⁹

⁹ In 1802 it was announced to the public, by a letter from Italy, that a manuscript of some importance had been, a short time before, found in the Museum at *Portici*. It seems the PRINCE OF WALES lately requested of the Court of Naples to authorise Mr. HAITER, one of his librarians, to examine the manuscripts in that museum, which were dug from *Hercula-*

Many correct and magnificent editions of classic authors have been given to the public, by learned men, and literary institutions, in the course of the last age. These editions not only present specimens of great typographical elegance; but many of them are also enriched with various readings, faithfully collected from numerous manuscripts and printed copies; and with learned annotations, of great value to the student. To give a complete list of these editions in the present brief sketch is impossible. A few only of the most remarkable can be noticed, and these in a very transient manner.

Of the *Greek* classics, the works of *Homer* were edited, during this period, with great splendour, by WOLFIUS and CLARKE; *Herodotus*, by GRONOVIVS and WESSELING; *Thucydides*, by DUKER; *Xenophon* and *Polybius*, by ERNESTUS; *Longinus*, by TOUP; *Demosthenes*, by REISKE; *Hesiod*, by KREBSIUS, BODINI, and LOESNER; *Pindar*, by HEYNE; *Euripides*, by MUSGRAVE; *Sophocles*, by CAPPERONIER; *Aristophanes*, by KUSTER; *Lucian*, by REITZIUS, HEMSTERHUIS, and GESNER; *Plutarch*, by REISKE; *Theocritus*, by REISKE and WHARTON; *Epictetus*, by UPTON; *Anacreon*, by MATTAIRE; *Æschylus*, by PAUW and PORSON; *Diodorus Siculus*, by WESSELING; *Dion Cassius*, by FABRICIUS and REIMARUS; *Lysias*, by TAYLOR; *Isocrates*, by BATTIE and AUGER; and *Callimachus*, by BENTLEY and ERNESTUS.

Of the *Latin* classics the following editions, made, during the period under review, are worthy

neum, that their contents might be ascertained. The authority was granted. Mr. HAITER entered on the task with great zeal and intelligence; and soon discovered a work of EPICURUS, entitled, *Of the Nature of Things*, which was known only from the mention made of it by some writers of antiquity, and which appears to have served as the basis for the poem of LUCRETIVS, on the same subject. At the date of the account a copy of this manuscript was preparing for the press.

of particular notice : *Virgil*, by BURMANN, HEYNE, and WAKEFIELD; *Horace*, by BAXTER, GESNER, and ZEUNIUS; *Cicero*, by VERBERGIUS, OLIVET, and LALLEMAND; *Livy*, by MATTAIRE, DRAKENBORCH, RUDDIMAN, and HOMER; *Tacitus*, by GRONOVIVS, ERNESTUS, BROTIER, GRIERSON' and HOMER; *Sallust*, by HOMER; *Quintilian*, by BURMANN, ROLLIN, GESNER, and HOMER; *Lucretius*, by HAVERCAMP and WAKEFIELD; *Ovid*, by BURMANN; *Lucan*, by BURMANN, BENTLEY, and CUMBERLAND; *Persius*, by CASAUBON and HOMER; *Terence*, by BENTLEY; *Justin*, by GRONOVIVS; *Cæsar's Commentaries*, by CLARKE; *Phædrus* and *Petronius Arbiter*, by BURMAN; *Pliny*, senior, by BROTIER; *Pliny*, junior, by LONGALIUS; *Tibullus*, *Catullus*, and *Propertius*, by VULPIUS; *Suetonius*, by PITISCUS, BURMANN, and OUDENORP; *Eutropius*, by HAVERCAMP; *Claudian*, by GESNER; *Florus*, by DUKER and FISCHER; *Quintus Curtius*, by SNAKENBURG; *Aulus Gellius*, by GRONOVIVS; and *Silius Italicus*, by DRAKENBORCH.

From the above very imperfect list it appears that classic literature has been cultivated, during the last century, with most zeal and success in Germany and Holland; Great-Britain is, perhaps, entitled to the next place; and afterwards, in succession, come France and other countries on the continent of Europe. Greek literature in France was at a low ebb during the greater part of the period of this retrospect, and is still but little cultivated in that country.

But the eighteenth century is especially distinguished by the number and value of the *Transla-*

* Mrs. GRIERSON, an Irish lady, who was "possessed of singular erudition, and had an elegance of taste, and solidity of judgment, which justly rendered her one of the most wonderful as well as amiable of her sex. Her *Tacitus* is one of the best edited books ever delivered to the world." See HARWOOD's *View of the Classics*.

tions of classic authors which it produced. The Greeks were almost, if not entirely strangers to this kind of literary labour. The Romans had a few translations, but they were little esteemed, and gained their authors but small consideration in the republic of letters. A number of performances of this kind were produced in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries; but in the eighteenth they more than ever abounded, and attained a degree of excellence altogether without example. A few of the most valuable of these may be mentioned, without attempting to furnish a complete list.

The following translations of *Greek* classics into the *English* language, during the late century, deserve particular notice. The *Iliad* and *Odyssey* of *Homer*, by POPE and COWPER; *Herodotus*, by LYTTLEBURY, BELOE, and LAMPRIERE; *Thucydides* and *Xenophon*, by SMITH; parts of the works of *Aristotle*, by TWINING, PYE, ELLIS, and GILLIES; *Lucian*, by FRANKLIN and CARR; *Demosthenes*, by LELAND; *Epictetus*, by CARTER;[†] *Plutarch*, by LANGHORNE; *Longinus*, by SMITH; *Polybius*, by HAMPTON; *Isocrates*, by GILLIES; *Isæus*, by JONES; *Hesiod*, by COOKE; *Theocritus*, by POLWHELE; *Æschylus*, by POTTER; *Sophocles*, by POTTER and FRANKLIN; *Euripides*, by POTTER and WOODHULL; and *Callimachus*, by TYTLER.

The translations of *Roman* classics during the same period were still more numerous. Of a very long list the following may be considered as a specimen. The *Eneid* of *Virgil* was presented in an English dress by PITT and BERESFORD, and the *Eclogues* and *Bucolics* of the same illustrious Ro-

^s The translation of the *Iliad* by POPE is pronounced, by Dr. JOHNSON, to be "a poetical wonder; a performance which no age or nation can pretend to equal; a work, the publication of which forms a grand era in the history of learning." *Life of Pope*.

[†] Mrs. ELIZABETH CARTER is another instance of great classical erudition and taste in a female of the eighteenth century.

man, by WHARTON; the works of *Horace*, by SMART, CREECH, FRANCIS, and BOSCAWEN; *Juvenal*, by MADAN; *Persius*, by BREWSTER, MADAN, and DRUMMOND; *Livy*, by HAYE and BAKER; *Tacitus*, by GORDON and MURPHY; *Lucan*, by ROWE;^v the *Metamorphoses of Ovid*, by GARTH, DAVIDSON, and CLARKE; the *Orations of Cicero*, by GUTHRIE; and selections from the same, by DUNCAN; *Sallust*, by GORDON; the *Commentaries of Caesar*, by BLADON; the *Epistles of Pliny*, by ORRERY and MELMOTH; the *Epistles of Cicero*, by MELMOTH; the *Epistles of Seneca*, by MORRELL; *Terence*, by COOKE and COLMAN; *Tibullus*, by GRAINGER; *Aulus Gellius*, by BELOE; and *Plautus*, by WARNER.

The translations made into several of the languages of the continent of Europe, during the period under consideration, are numerous and respectable. But of these too little is known to attempt any thing like a discriminating selection. The *Iliad* and *Odyssey* of *Homer* were ably translated into German, by VOSS; into Italian, by CÆSAROTTI,^u and CERUTI; into French, by ROCHEFORT; and into Spanish, by MALO. The *Cyropædia* of *Xenophon* was translated into French, by DACIER and GAIL, and into German, by WIELAND; *Thucydides*, into French, by LEVESQUE, and *Herodotus*, into the same language, by LARCHER; the *Politics of Aristotle*, into French, by CHAMPAGNE; *Theocritus*, into the same language, by GAIL; *Demosthenes*, also into French, by TOURREIL; *Hesiod*,

^v "The version of *Lucan*," says Dr. JOHNSON, "is one of the greatest productions of English poetry; for there is perhaps none that so completely exhibits the genius and spirit of the original. It deserves more notice than it obtains; and as it is more read will be more esteemed."

^u Several of the translations above mentioned, made on the continent of Europe, are said to possess first rate excellence. In particular those of VOSS and CÆSAROTTI, both poetical, are represented as having merit of a superior kind.

into German, by SCHUTZE; and *Plutarch*, also into German, by PENZEL.

Versions of *Virgil* were made, in the period of this retrospect, into Italian, by BENDI; and into German, by VOSS and SPITZENBERGEN; of *Horace*, into French, by SANADON and DARCU; of *Sallust*, into German, by SCHLUTER; and of *Tacitus*, into French, by GUERRIN, BLETTERIE, and DOTTERVILLE.

But notwithstanding all the labours of learned men to promote the knowledge of the Greek and Latin classics, the study of them was almost uniformly declining from the beginning to the end of the century. And in the course of little more than two centuries, this kind of knowledge, from being considered the most interesting and important that could occupy the attention of man, came to be regarded, by a large portion of the literary world, as among the most useless objects of pursuit.

CHAPTER XIV.

ORIENTAL LITERATURE.

THE literature of *Asia*, the birth-place and cradle of our species, where Philosophy first reared her head, and whence Greece and Rome borrowed a large portion of their knowledge, cannot be otherwise than highly interesting to the enlightened and inquisitive mind. At the beginning of the eighteenth century much had been *written*, but comparatively little was really *known* concerning that important part of the globe. The works

of POCOCKE and HYDE, of Great-Britain; of ERPENIUS and GOLIUS, of Holland; and of D'HERBELOT, BOCHART, BOUCHET, and others, of France, toward the close of the preceding century, had all communicated to the public much curious and valuable information, respecting various eastern countries, particularly *Arabia*, *Persia*, and some parts of *India*. But these works had so limited a circulation, and the intercourse between Europe and the East was so small, that few were excited to pay much attention to this branch of literature. In Great-Britain, especially, during the first half of the century, oriental learning was at a low ebb, insomuch that, during the reign of George I. a great orientalist was a rare phenomenon in that country.

But in the latter half of the century under consideration, more encouraging prospects began to open. Indeed, within the last forty years, some departments of oriental literature have been cultivated with a fervour of zeal, and with a brilliancy of success, highly interesting and honourable to the age. And even in those departments which have been less diligently and successfully cultivated, some events and characters have adorned this period, which are worthy of notice in the present sketch.

HEBREW LITERATURE.

The first place in this chapter is due to that language in which it pleased infinite Wisdom to record and convey the divine will to man. A language which, if it be not the most ancient in the world, will doubtless be considered among those which have the best claims to this honour. With regard to this language, though it has been less

studied through the learned world in general, during the last age, than in some preceding periods; yet several events took place, and a number of important publications were made respecting it, which it would be improper to omit in the most rapid survey of oriental learning.^w

The controversy respecting the *Vowel-Points*,^x which was begun in the sixteenth century, by ELIAS LEVITA, a learned Jew, and which was pursued with so much zeal and learning, in the seventeenth, by the BUXTORFS, CAPELLUS, WALTON, and others, was continued in the eighteenth, and gave rise to much interesting discussion. Early in the century M. MASCLEF, a Canon of Amiens, published his grammar, in which he undertook to teach the Hebrew language without points.^y He was opposed by GUARINUS, a Benedictine of France, with great learning and warmth; but defended by his countrymen, the famous Father CHARLES FRANCIS HOUBIGANT, M. DE LA BLETTERIE, and others. The system of MASCLEF ob-

^w For a number of the facts and names mentioned in these paragraphs on Hebrew literature, the author is indebted to his venerable friend, the Rev. Dr. KUNZE, senior of the Lutheran Clergy in the State of New-York, and late Professor of Oriental Languages in Columbia College. The various acquirements of this gentleman, and particularly his oriental learning, have long rendered him an ornament of the American republic of letters. He has probably done more than any individual now living to promote a taste for Hebrew literature among those intended for the clerical profession in the United States. And though his exertions have not been attended with all the success that could have been wished, owing to the want of that countenance from the public and from individuals which is necessary; yet he is doubtless entitled to the character of a benefactor of the American churches.

^x The great questions concerning the Hebrew *Points* respect their antiquity and importance. The first question is, whether they were invented by the *Masorites*, a set of learned Jews, who are supposed to have lived about the fifth century after Christ, and who are said, by the addition of *vowels* and *accents* to have fixed the true reading of the sacred text; or whether these vowels were employed by those who first wrote the Hebrew language, and of course made a part of the original writing of the scriptures? The second question has a respect to the utility and importance of the points; or how far they are necessary and useful?

^y *Grammatica Hebræa, à punctis aliisque Masorethicis inventis libera.* 1716.

tained general credit in France; but the greater number of German and Dutch critics opposed it. In England it was, with some alterations, espoused and introduced by HUTCHINSON, who was followed by BATE, and PARKHURST, and more recently by Professor WILSON, of the University of St. Andrews, in North-Britain.

The antiquity and importance of the *Points* have also been maintained, during the period in question, by the great ALBERT SCHULTENS, of Leyden; by the learned Professor JAMES ROBERTSON, of Edinburgh; and by the celebrated orientalist, Professor TYCHSEN, of Germany. On the other hand, the points have found zealous opponents in the same period, in SHARPE, of Great-Britain; in DUPUY, a learned Frenchman; and in the celebrated JOHN DAVID MICHAELIS, of Germany.^a The result of this controversy seems to be a general impression, among those most competent to judge, that the points cannot boast of that antiquity which SCHULTENS and ROBERTSON would assign to them;^a but that they were invented by men deeply skilled in the language; that they serve as a good commentary, and are therefore of great utility, and deserve to be respectfully regarded.

In 1736 Bishop HARE published a plan for ascertaining and restoring the *Hebrew Metre*.^b He supposed that he had revived the knowledge of the true versification of this language, and that

^a Professor MICHAELIS, in the former part of his life, was favourable to the points; but afterwards changed his opinion. He was one of the most stupendous oriental scholars of the age, and probably one of the greatest that ever existed.

^a *Clavis Pentateuchi: sive Analysis Omnium Vocum Hebraicarum, &c. Auctore JACOBO ROBERTSON, S. T. D. Ling: Orient. in Acad. Edin. Prof.* 8vo. 1770.

^b *Psalmorum Liber, in Versiculos Metricè divisus, et cum aliis Critices Subsidiis, tum præcipue Metricæ ope, multis in locis integritati suæ restitutus. Edidit FRANCISCUS HARE, S. T. P. Episcopus Cisterciensis. Tom. 2. 8vo.* 1736.

he was in possession of principles by which it might be scanned, like any other poetry, and its rhythm discovered with the utmost precision. He supposed that in Hebrew poetry all the feet consist of two syllables; that no regard is to be paid to the quantity of the syllables; that when the number of syllables is even, the verse is *Trochaic*, and the accent to be placed on the first; but that when the number is odd, the verse is to be accounted *Iambic*, and the accent to be placed on the second syllable; that the periods generally consist of two verses, often of three or four, and sometimes of a greater number; that verses of the same period, with few exceptions, are of the same kind; that the Trochaic verses, for the most part, agree in the number of feet, but that to this rule there are a few exceptions; that in the Iambic verses the feet are in general unequal, though in some instances it is found to be otherwise. To accommodate the sacred text to these doctrines, he indulged in many conjectures and fancied emendations, which were altogether capricious and unwarrantable.^c This hypothesis was generally considered, by the most judicious critics, as a fanciful and unfounded speculation. The Bishop's doctrine was, however, adopted by Dr. THOMAS EDWARDS, of Great-Britain, a contemporary Hebrew scholar of considerable reputation. It was also adopted and carried to a still greater length, by Mr. WILLIAM GREEN, an English clergyman, in his *metrical version of the Psalms*.^d But at the close of the century, it is believed, this doctrine

^c GOMARUS, a learned Hebraist of Holland, in the seventeenth century, invented and taught an hypothesis concerning *Hebrew Metre*, somewhat resembling that of Bishop HARE, but not attended with so many arbitrary and conjectural emendations of the sacred text.

^d *A New Translation of the Psalms from the Original Hebrew.* By WILLIAM GREEN, M. A. Rector of Hardingham, Norfolk. 8vo. 1762.

had few if any advocates, and had entirely ceased to command public attention.

A much more valuable improvement in Hebrew literature, in the period under consideration; was that effected by the labour and talents of Dr. LOWTH, Bishop of London. This profound and elegant scholar, in the year 1753, published a learned and highly interesting work on *Hebrew Poetry*, in which he displayed its structure, genius, beauties, and various kinds, more successfully than any preceding writer.^e This great work, which is regarded by every orientalist as a most important acquisition to the Hebrew critical art, formed a memorable era in the investigation of the subject of which it treats. The Bishop has been followed in this laudable and instructive inquiry, by HERDER, a learned, ingenious, and eloquent writer of Germany, who is said to have pursued the subject still further, and to have thrown additional light on the spirit of Hebrew poetry.

The publication of the works of the celebrated JOHN HUTCHINSON, in Great-Britain, at an early period of the century, doubtless contributed something to promote the study of Hebrew in that country. It was before remarked that this philosopher and his followers laid great stress on the integrity of the common Hebrew text, and drew from a fanciful interpretation of Hebrew words many theological and philosophical principles, in their view of the utmost importance. This circumstance, of course, prompted all who applied themselves to the study of HUTCHINSON's writings, and especially those who studied them carefully and deeply, to acquire as much Hebrew learning as they were

^e *De Sacra Poesi Hebræorum Praelectiones habitaë a ROBERTO LOWTH, &c. &c.* 4to. 1753. This work has been translated by the Rev. G. GREGORY, F. A. S. and published in 1787, in 2 vols. 8vo.

able. Those who have attended to the progress of knowledge in Great-Britain during the last age, have probably been able to trace very distinctly the influence of this visionary philosophy in producing the effect which has been stated.

Of the great number of Hebrew grammars which have been published since the revival of letters, that of BUXTORF, till near the close of the seventeenth century, had received by far the largest share of public approbation. And though it was dry, complicated, tedious, and of course difficult to be acquired; yet as it was on the whole well constructed, and contained an excellent body of masoretical rules, it continued long to be the reigning favourite among the teachers of this language. CAPELLUS seems to have been the first who made a successful attempt to divest Hebrew grammar of its superfluous precepts, and perplexing appendages. Since his time the system of simplification has been carried still further by MASCLEF, and many others, both the advocates and opposers of the points.

At an early period of the century, Professor DANZ, of Germany, published a Hebrew and Chaldeac Grammar, in which he almost entirely departed from the methods before in use. Instead of perplexing the learner with numberless *minutiæ*, which are apt at the beginning to disgust and discourage, he presented the elements of the language in a simple, easy, and attractive form. The Danzian method soon became general, was adopted as the ground work in innumerable subsequent grammars, and is yet the prevailing one in the schools and universities of Germany. The Hebrew grammars produced in Great-Britain, during the last age, were numerous, and a few of them highly valuable. Out of a long list which might be made, those of PARKHURST, ROBERTSON, GRAY,

WILSON, and FITZGERALD, are entitled to particular distinction.^f

In the eighteenth century, for the first time, grammars, dictionaries, and other books, for teaching the elements of the Hebrew language, were presented to the public in *English*. Before this period, all such works were in the Latin language, and of course the acquisition of this language, at least, was necessary before any thing could be done towards acquiring the Hebrew. In the last age this difficulty was removed. Those who are acquainted with no other than their native tongue are now furnished with books, by means of which they may be conveniently initiated into the knowledge of Hebrew literature, so far as is necessary for enabling them to peruse the sacred scriptures. Mr. PARKHURST, it is believed, first obliged the public with a work of this nature. His example was followed by his countryman, Mr. BATE; since which time the same means for rendering Hebrew literature more accessible, have been adopted by Professor WILSON, Professor FITZGERALD, and several others.

Those who studied the Hebrew language in the eighteenth century derived an advantage from the circumstance of the other oriental dialects, the Syriac, Chaldeac, Arabic, and even the Coptic and Æthiopic, being more and better cultivated during this time than in any former period. The aid furnished to the student of Hebrew by the knowledge of these dialects, will be readily un-

^f In the formation of some of these grammars the *Points* and *Accents* are employed; in others they are rejected; while, in a third class, a middle course is pursued between a total rejection and an unlimited admission of them. The last is particularly the case with the grammar of Dr. FITZGERALD, Professor of Hebrew in the University of Dublin, published in 1799. He retains the vowel points, and such of the accents as are most distinguishable and useful. All the other accents, of which the number is considerable, he has discarded.

derstood and appreciated by those who have any knowledge of the subject. The labours of RE-LAND and SCHULTENS, in Holland; of REINECCIUS, the MICHAELISES,^g (especially the last of that name) STOCK, EICHORN, BODE, STORR, and ADLER, in Germany; of LA CROZE, in France; of DE ROSSI, in Italy; and of DURELL, RIDLEY, WOIDE, and WHITE, in Great-Britain, to illustrate these auxiliary languages and dialects, or to present the public with various readings, and versions from them, are well known, and have often been the subjects of high praise.

The collection and collation of ancient Hebrew *Manuscripts*, which were pursued in the eighteenth century to an extent greatly beyond any former example, may be considered as among the distinguishing honours of the age. In 1707 Dr. JOHN MILL, a learned English divine, published an edition of the New Testament, with the various readings, collected from many different manuscripts, to which he had devoted the unwearied labour of thirty years. In 1752 the celebrated WETSTEIN, of Germany, whose talents and erudition are well known, published a work on the same plan, but, as many suppose, executed with greater judgment. He, like his predecessor, expended much time and labour in his work, and travelled into foreign countries to examine all the manuscripts that could be procured.^h These pub-

^g In 1762 that illustrious orientalist, JOHN DAVID MICHAELIS, published a number of curious and interesting questions, relating to Arabic literature, which he had directed to a number of learned men, sent by the King of Denmark into Arabia, and to which he desired their attention. These queries not only led to much inquiry, and produced much information, from the persons to whom they were immediately addressed; but they also led to a more general study of the Arabic language, as an auxiliary to the Hebrew, than had before taken place in the colleges and universities of Germany.

^h The collations and various readings of MILL, KUSTER, WETSTEIN, GREISBACH, MATTHEI, and others, will be noticed more particularly when the *Literature of the Christian Church* shall come under consideration, in the fourth and last part of this work.

lications, together with a conviction of its utility and importance, animated Dr. BENJAMIN KENNICOT, of the University of Oxford, to engage in a similar undertaking with respect to the Hebrew text of the Old Testament. As early as 1753, by a dissertation on the state of the common printed text, he called the attention of the religious world to his design, and laid the foundation of his great work. His plan was no sooner announced than he found ample support both of a pecuniary and literary kind.ⁱ He collated more than 700 manuscripts, obtained from different countries,^j besides many printed copies; and was enabled from these sources, to present a very curious and instructive amount of various readings. In 1776 the first volume of his work appeared, and in 1780 the second, which completed his plan, was laid before the world.^k Every lover of oriental literature must feel himself under deep obligations to this great collator, not only for the light which his indefatigable labour threw on the sacred Scriptures, but also for that taste and zeal in Hebrew literature, and particularly in biblical criticism, which his example evidently and remarkably revived in Great-Britain.^l

ⁱ The literary aid rendered to Dr. KENNICOT, was received from almost every part of the Christian world, particularly from Great-Britain, Germany and France. The pecuniary aid with which he was favoured, for the prosecution of his plan, was derived chiefly from his own country, in which there was raised, by subscription, for this purpose, the sum of £36,000 sterling, or upwards of 160,000 dollars. A degree of liberality which reflects the highest honour on Great-Britain and the age.

^j Among the great number of manuscripts examined by Dr. KENNICOT, there was one from America. This belonged to the family of the late Mr. SOLOMON SIMSON, of the city of New-York, who sent it to the learned collator in 1771, and had it returned in 1772. This manuscript is the 144th in Dr. KENNICOT's list, under the title of "*Codex Americanus Neo Eboracensis*."

^k *Vetus Testamentum Hebraicum cum variis Lectionibus*. Edidit BENJ. KENNICOT, S. T. P. Oxonii. 1776, 1780. 2 vols. folio.

^l It is certain, that since the publication of KENNICOT's work, the study of Hebrew has remarkably revived in Great-Britain. At the close of the eighteenth century it is probable there was a greater number of Hebrew scholars in that country than at any former period within an hundred years, perhaps than ever before.

When Dr. KENNICOT began his celebrated work, he entertained an opinion decidedly opposed to the integrity of the common Hebrew text of the Bible. But, though there is no reason to suppose that he altered his opinion afterwards; yet his labours certainly produced a conviction in the minds of discerning and impartial men, entirely contrary to what he expected. They confirmed rather than destroyed the general confidence in the masoretical reading; and instead of subserving the cause of infidelity, or heresy, by unsettling the sacred text, as the *Hutchinsonians* and some others had predicted, their influence was directly of an opposite kind.

Encouraged by the success of Dr. KENNICOT, and influenced, also, by the circumstance of his having a convenient and easy access to the Ambrosian Library of Milan, JOHN BERNARD DE ROSSI, Professor of Oriental Languages in the University of Parma, undertook a similar work, which he completed, and laid before the world in 1786.^m He collated many manuscripts which KENNICOT had never seen, and added many important readings to the former treasure. His work may, therefore, be considered a very useful supplement to that of his laborious predecessor. The same effect resulted from this publication as from that of KENNICOT. It tended to confirm the masoretical text, and disappointed the hopes of those who wished to unsettle or dishonour it.ⁿ Drs. DOEDERLEIN and

^m *Varia Lectiones Veteris Testamenti, ex immensa MSS. editorumque Codicum congerie haustæ, et ad Samar. Textum ad vetustiss. versiones, ad accuratiores S. Criticæ fontes ac leges examinatæ, opere ac studio JOHAN. BERN. DE ROSSI, S. T. P. et in R. Parmensi Acad. Ling. Ori. Prof. tom iv.* The author speaks thus of his work, "*Producuntur hic variæ Lectiones V. T. ex immensa MSS. editorumque codicum congerie; id est, ex mille quadringentis septuaginta et amplius sacri Textus codicibus.*"

ⁿ It is well known that in the common Hebrew Bibles there are remarks, or various readings in the margin, called *Keri*, to distinguish them from the reading in the text, called *Cetib*. The latter is, in many places, ob-

MEISSNER, of Germany, by selecting and publishing, in a cheap and convenient form, the most important and useful of the various readings exhibited by KENNICOT and DE ROSSI, produced a work which does honour to themselves, and deserves to be mentioned as one of the ornaments of the age.*

Many other publications were made, during the eighteenth century, which facilitated and promoted the study of the Hebrew language. Among these the *Critica Sacra* of EDWARD LEIGH, an English divine, and the *Clavis Linguae Sanctæ* of CHRISTIAN STOCK, a learned German, are worthy of high praise. As the seventeenth century was adorned by the BUXTORFS, of Switzerland, and the study of the oriental languages greatly promoted by their example and their labours, so the eighteenth was rendered remarkable by the wonderful oriental learning, and the numerous publications on this branch of literature, by the MICHAELISES, of Germany. There were three in succession of this name, who all hold high and honourable places in the list of modern scholars, viz. JOHN HENRY, CHRISTIAN BENEDICT, and JOHN DAVID. The last, who was the son of JOHN HENRY, and who was nearly half a century engaged in promoting oriental literature, exceeded both his father and uncle in this species of erudition, and, indeed, might probably with truth be pronounced the greatest orientalist that the western world ever beheld. His *Oriental and Exegetical*

scure and difficult of construction. The *Keri* is the Masoretical emendation, or different reading; and of these there are in the Bible about *one thousand*. It is remarkable that, of this number, *nine hundred and eighty-six* have been found in the texts of different manuscripts, by the industry of Kennicot and De Rossi. A result so honourable to the *Masorites* could scarcely have been expected.

o Biblia Hebraica, olim à CHRISTIANO REINECCIO edita, nunc denuo cum variis lectionibus, ex ingenti codicum copia, à B. KENNICOTTO et JOHAN. BERN. DE ROSSI, &c. ediderunt J. C. DOEDERLEIN, et J. H. MEISSNER, 8vo. Leips. 1793.

Library,^p and his numerous detached treatises, may be said to have formed a new epoch in Hebrew literature in Germany. Another work of great importance, which deserves to be mentioned, and which certainly contributed to keep alive and extend the zeal for this branch of literature which had been before excited, was a periodical publication, entitled the *Universal Library of Biblical Literature*, printed at Leipsic, from the year 1777 to 1786, in eighteen volumes. This publication was conducted by Professor EICHHORN, of Jena, and is full of masterly criticism, and most valuable information for the orientalist.^q To these may be added the *Oriental Library* of Professor HIRT; the *Apparatus Criticus* of the learned BENDEL; the great Hebrew *Lexicon* of CALMET, a stupendous monument of erudition; and the various publications of Drs. HUNT, SHARPE, LOWTH, and many others, in Great-Britain, and on the continent of Europe.^r

The study of the Hebrew language in America has long been at a low ebb. At the close of the seventeenth century much knowledge of this language appears to have existed among those venerable Divines who planted and ministered to the churches in New-England. Indeed, at that period

^p This is a periodical publication, begun in 1771, and concluded in 1783, and consists of 23 volumes, besides the general index. It was renewed in 1786, under the title of *Neue Orientalische Bibliothek*, and continued for a number of years, in which time there were at least 8 volumes more published.

^q In this rich treasure of oriental learning are found valuable treatises not only from the pen of the immediate conductor, but also many from Professor BRUNS, Professor TYCHSEN, and others, whose names are a sufficient pledge for the display of great erudition and talents in oriental literature.

^r For a more particular notice of several publications since those of Dr. LOWTH, more particularly by Drs. NEWCOME, BLANEY, WINTLE, HODGSON, and a long catalogue of Hebrew translators and critics, the reader is referred to the fourth part of this work, under the head of *Biblical Literature*.

this kind of knowledge was possessed by very few in any other part of our country. Accordingly the colleges of *Harvard*, in Massachusetts, and of *Yale*, in Connecticut, it is believed, are the only seminaries of learning in the United States in which the Hebrew language has been, for any considerable portion of time, regularly taught; and at the present period they are the only American seminaries in which there are regular oriental instructors.^s A few of those destined for the clerical profession in our country, make themselves acquainted, to a small extent, with this language, so inestimably important to every biblical critic; but the acquisitions of such are generally made by their own unassisted industry, or by means of private tuition.^t

In 1779 the office of instruction in the Hebrew language was added to a professorship, then held in the University of Pennsylvania, by the Rev.

^s If the author does not mistake, the Hebrew language has been taught in Harvard College for nearly a century, and during the greater part of that time by a professor regularly appointed for the purpose. In Yale College, there has been, for many years, more or less attention devoted to Hebrew literature; but it was not until the autumn of 1802 that a professor for this branch of instruction was appointed. The gentleman selected to fill this office is the Rev. EBENEZER G. MARSH, who has the character of an excellent Hebrew scholar.

^t About the year 1760 the Rev. J. G. KALS, a German clergyman, who had an uncommon stock of Hebrew learning, came to America. Anticipating the want of Hebrew types in this country, he brought with him a large edition of a voluminous Hebrew grammar, which he had composed, and some time before published; and many copies of a dictionary, also his own production, together with many other books of a similar kind. He expected, by the sale of these works, and by the encouragement which he should meet with as an instructor of this language, to gain an ample support. But he soon found that Hebrew literature was not a very saleable article in America; and that all his zeal was not sufficient to inspire even his clerical brethren with a general taste for its cultivation. Being present at a meeting of the clergy, when some candidates for the gospel ministry were examined, and finding that ignorance of this language was not considered as a disqualification for the sacred office, he rose and made a speech, filled with reproaches, in which he denounced his brethren as "*a generation of vipers,*" and left them with disgust. When the members of the same ecclesiastical body afterwards heard of his being in distress, and made a liberal collection for his relief, he received it with this sarcastic remark, "I am Elijah; the ravens must feed me."

Dr. KUNZE; but few availed themselves of the opportunity thus afforded for gaining a knowledge of this ancient tongue; and the professorship was continued only for a short time. In 1784 Professor KUNZE removed to the city of New-York, and was soon appointed to a station in Columbia College, similar to that which he had held in the University of Pennsylvania.^v This professorship had a slender support afforded to it, by an annual allowance from the legislature of New-York, for five years; but at the end of this time, the allowance being withdrawn, the department of oriental instruction was discontinued. This is one among the several instances of disreputable literary retrocession, by which the United States were distinguished at the close of the eighteenth century.

Some small publications for promoting Hebrew literature were made in America during the century under review. Among these a Hebrew Grammar, by JUDAH MONIS, many years ago a teacher of this language in the University of Cambridge, in Massachusetts; a grammar, by STEPHEN SEWALL, also some time since an Hebrew instructor in the same institution; and a work of a similar nature by Dr. JOHNSON, formerly President of King's College, in the city of New-York, may be reckoned the most considerable.^u They are

^v Professor KUNZE, soon after receiving this appointment in Columbia College, entered on the duties of his office with an enlightened and ardent zeal. That he might be more extensively useful, he took the earliest opportunity of sending to Europe for a number of curious and voluminous works, in oriental literature; and resolved by this means not only to furnish himself with the best publications for teaching the Hebrew language in the most profitable manner, but also for initiating his pupils into the knowledge of the *Arabic* and *Syriac* dialects, for which he was abundantly qualified. But all his exertions were rendered abortive by the unreasonable and misplaced *economy* of our Legislators, who have not infrequently acted as if they considered the interests of literature among the most unimportant objects of their attention.

^u Professor KUNZE also composed a Hebrew grammar on an improved plan, for the use of his pupils, which he designs to publish as soon as a prospect of sufficient encouragement appears.

only mentioned in this place as evidences that there has been some taste for Hebrew literature in America; and especially that a few individuals have displayed some zeal for its promotion, which only required public patronage to have been more successful.

ARABIC LITERATURE.

Though something was said in the preceding section of the Hebrew language having been more successfully studied in modern times, on account of the increased knowledge of Arabic literature; yet the subject is worthy of more particular notice.

Scarcely any oriental language was so well understood in Europe, at the close of the seventeenth century, as the Arabic. The excellent publications of ERPENIUS and GOLIUS, of Holland, for facilitating and recommending this branch of eastern literature, had been then laid before the world, and were of so superior a character, that, by means of these helps, Sir WILLIAM JONES assures us, we may understand the learned Arabic better than the deepest scholar at Constantinople, or at Mecca.^w The *Bibliothèque Orientale* of M. D'HERBELOT, a very learned and entertaining work, may also be mentioned among those aids which had been furnished in the preceding century, for the attainment of the same object. Since that time further light has been thrown on the literature of Arabia, by the observations of several travellers, and by the labours of various learned men.

Early in the century ADRIAN RELAND, of Holland, and JOHN HUDSON, and Mr. LE ROQUE,^x of

^w See Sir WILLIAM JONES's *Works*, vol. i. p. 39.

^x *Translation of ABULFEDA's Arabia*. 12mo. Lond. 1718. And also his *Account of Arabian Customs and Manners*. 12mo. Lond. 1732.

Great-Britain, laboured much, and with very honourable success, to illustrate the literature and science of Arabia. They were followed by ALBERT SCHULTENS,^y of Holland, and GEORGE COSTARD,^z an English divine, who were certainly among the most accomplished Arabic scholars of the age, and whose various publications contributed to extend this species of knowledge. The latter, in particular, distinguished himself by his illustrations of Arabian astronomy; and has been pronounced, by a good judge, to be one of the most profound oriental astronomers ever born out of Asia. In Arabic literature, also, the labours of the MICHAELISES, REISKE, BODE, and STORR, of Germany; of Professor WHITE and Sir WILLIAM JONES, of Great-Britain; and of M. RENAUDOT, the Abbé MARIGNY, and M. DE SACY, of France, deserve to be mentioned with high encomium. To the above may be added the information communicated by several travellers, among whom NIEBUHR, of Denmark, holds a distinguished place.

As in the seventeenth century the learned men of Holland were the great sources of information in Arabic literature, and had done more than those of any other country in Europe, to advance its cultivation; so in the eighteenth it is believed that Great-Britain and Germany successfully vied with that country in the production of eminent Arabic scholars. Still, however, Holland held a high place with respect to this branch of oriental literature. The names of RELAND and SCHULTENS alone do

^y *Monumenta Antiquissima Historiæ Arabum*. SCHULTENS signalized himself by maintaining, in opposition to GOUSSET and DRIESSEN, that, in order to gain a perfect knowledge of the Hebrew, it was necessary to join with it not only Chaldee and Syriac, but also, and more particularly, the Arabic.

^z See his *Letters on the Rise and Progress of Astronomy among the Ancients*. 8vo. 1746. And also his *General History of Astronomy, including that of the Arabians*. 4to. 1777.

great honour to their nation, and may stand in the place of an host of minor orientalist.

In the eighteenth century, the *Koran*, or sacred book of the Mahometans,^a was, for the first time, translated into English, from the original Arabic. In the seventeenth century that work was first translated into the French language, by M. Du RYER, Consul of the French nation in Egypt, but in a very imperfect manner. Soon afterwards a translation from this version, with all its inaccuracies and imperfections, was made into English, by ALEXANDER ROSS, who knew but little of the French language, and nothing of the Arabic; and who, of course, as might have been expected, added a great mass of mistakes to those of Du RYER. But in the century under consideration, this ancient record of the Mahometan faith was ably translated into English, from the original Arabic, by Mr. GEORGE SALE, an English gentleman, profoundly versed in the literature of Arabia, and who accompanied his work with instructive and highly interesting annotations. The appearance of this version may be considered as forming an epoch in the progress of the sacred literature of Arabia, among the learned of Europe. The translations of some other important works, both prose

^a "The book which the Mahometans call the *Koran*, or *Alcoran*, is composed of several papers and discourses of MAHOMET, which were discovered and collected after his death, and is by no means that same *Law* whose excellence MAHOMET vaunted so highly. That some parts of the true *Koran* may be copied in the modern one, is indeed very possible; but that the *Koran*, or *Law*, given by Mahomet to the Arabians, is entirely distinct from the modern *Alcoran*, is manifest from this, that in the latter MAHOMET appeals to and extols the former, and therefore they must be two different compositions. May it not be conjectured that the true *Koran* was an Arabic *Poem*, which MAHOMET recited to his followers, without giving it to them in writing, ordering them only to commit it to their memories? Such were the laws of the *Druids* in Gaul, and such also those of the Indians, which the Brahmins receive by oral tradition, and get by heart." MOSHEIM'S *Eccles. Hist.* vol. ii. p. 158.

and poetical, from the Arabic, in the course of the last fifty years, may also be mentioned as favourable to the same object.

PERSIAN LITERATURE.

The Persian language was also an object of considerable attention, and the knowledge of Persian literature made some progress in Europe during the last age. It was before remarked that the labours of Dr. HYDE, towards the close of the seventeenth century, contributed much to the promotion of this object. This gentleman, from various Persian and Arabian writings, from the relations of travellers, together with numerous letters from persons in the east, compiled his celebrated work on the Ancient Persians, which has been ever since regarded as a standard work in this branch of literature. Since that time much has been accomplished in the same field of inquiry. An attempt will be made to select a few out of the numerous facts and names which might be mentioned under this head.

About the middle of the century M. ANQUETIL DU PERRON, of France, made a voyage to the East, for the purpose of recovering the writings of ZOROASTER, or ZARATUSHT, the celebrated ancient philosopher, who is said to have reformed, or founded, the religion of the Magi. After spending a number of years in Persia and India, and applying himself to Persian literature with great zeal, he returned to his own country in 1761, and not long afterwards published a work under the title of *Zend-Avesta*, a work ascribed to ZOROASTER, and said to contain his pretended revelations. Though it seems to be generally agreed that this

work is spurious,^b and that it was compiled long posterior to the time in which ZOROASTER lived; yet it is, on several accounts, an interesting publication, and a rich source of instruction to the student of Persian literature.^c

About the time in which M. ANQUETIL published this work, the study of the Persian language began to receive much attention, and to become fashionable among some of the literati of Great-Britain. WARREN HASTINGS, under whose auspices, when afterwards Governor of India, oriental literature was cultivated with so much zeal, became, early in life, fond of this language, and exerted himself to diffuse a knowledge of it in his own country. Sir WILLIAM JONES, also, while yet a youth, discovered much of that enthusiastic attachment to eastern learning, in which he afterwards made such astonishing progress.^d In 1773 he pub-

^b Sir WILLIAM JONES, on the appearance of this work, immediately decided that it was spurious. See his *Lettre a M. A—— du P—— dans laquelle est compris l'Examen de sa traduction des livres attribues a ZOROASTRE*. 1771.

^c *Zend-Avesta, Ouvrage de ZOROASTRE, &c.* 3 tom. 4to. 1771.

^d Sir WILLIAM JONES was one of the brightest ornaments of the eighteenth century, and in some respects one of the most wonderful men that ever existed. He died in 1794, after having lived a little more than 47 years. In this short period he had acquired an extent of learning, and a variety and elegance of accomplishments, which seldom fall to the lot of an individual. There were few sciences in which he had not made considerable proficiency, and in most his knowledge was profound. His capacity for the acquisition of languages has probably never been excelled. In Greek and Roman literature his early proficiency was the subject of admiration and applause; and knowledge of whatever nature once obtained by him was ever afterwards progressive. The more elegant dialects of modern Europe, the French, the Spanish, and the Italian, he spoke and wrote with the greatest fluency and precision; and the German and Portuguese were familiar to him. At an early period of life his application to oriental literature commenced; he studied the Hebrew with ease and success, and many of the most learned Asiatics have the candour to avow that his knowledge of Arabic and Persian was as accurate and extensive as their own. He was also conversant in the Turkish idioms, and even the Chinese had attracted his notice so far as to induce him to learn the radical characters of that language, with a view perhaps to further improvements. It was to be expected, after his arrival in India, that he would eagerly embrace the opportunity of making himself master of the Sanscrit; and the

lished his *History of Nadir Shah*, and the year following his *Persian Grammar*; both of which works hold an important place among the events in oriental literature with which the age is marked. The version of the former from the original Persian into French, he undertook and accomplished from a regard to the literary reputation of his country, that it might not be carried out of England with the reflection that no person had been found in the British dominions capable of translating it. The same accomplished Briton afterwards made several important publications, connected with Persian literature, and shed much additional light on this department of eastern learning.

TO MR. FRANCIS GLADWIN, also of Great-Britain, one of the most unwearied labourers in oriental literature which the eighteenth century produced, the public is much indebted for the aid which he rendered to students of the Persian language. Besides several important translations,

most enlightened professors of the doctrines of *Brahmah* confessed, with pride, delight, and astonishment, that his knowledge of their sacred dialect was most critically correct and profound. To a proficiency in the languages of Greece, Rome, and Asia, he added a knowledge of the philosophy of those countries, and of every thing curious or valuable that had been taught in them. The doctrines of the Academy, the Lyceum, or the Porch, were not more familiar to him than the tenets of the *Vedas*, the mysticisms of the *Sufis*, or the Religion of the Ancient Persians; and whilst, with a kindred genius, he perused with rapture the compositions of the most renowned poets of Greece, Rome, and Asia, he could turn with equal delight and knowledge to the sublime inquiries or mathematical calculations of BARROW and NEWTON. Besides all these acquisitions the theory of music was familiar to him; he had made himself acquainted with the modern interesting discoveries in chemistry, and his last and favourite pursuit was the study of botany, in which he made great progress, and had his life been spared, would probably have been a reformer and discoverer. His poetic productions discover a vigorous imagination and an elegant taste. His learning and talents as a lawyer were still more eminent. His abilities and integrity as a magistrate and a judge were universally applauded; and, to crown all, the purity of his life, and the fervour of his piety, as a CHRISTIAN, shed a lustre upon every other accomplishment. See a *Discourse delivered before the Asiatic Society in May, 1794, by Sir John Shore, now Lord Teignmouth*, prefixed to the first volume of Sir William Jones's Works.

which alone intitle him to distinction; he published a grammar intitled the *Persian Moonshee*; and also a *Compendious Vocabulary, English and Persian*. These were presented to the public about the year 1780, and have received great and just praise.

Besides the above mentioned gentlemen, who were eminently distinguished as promoters of Persian literature, some others deserve to be respectfully noticed, as having contributed to the same object. Among these, Mr. RICHARDSON, by his *Specimens of Persian Poetry*, and other publications; Major DAVY, by his *Institutes of Timour*; Major OUSELEY, by his *Oriental Collections*; and M. MIRKHOND, by his *Historia Priorum Regum Persarum*, have rendered important aid to the students of oriental learning. To these may be added the valuable information given respecting the arts, sciences, and literature of Persia, by TAVERNIER, FRANKLIN, NIEBUHR, and various other intelligent travellers in that country.

HINDOO LITERATURE.

In this branch of oriental literature the eighteenth century presents a degree of progress highly interesting and honourable. Though it is now more than three centuries since Europeans first navigated to India; and though the inhabitants of that and the adjacent countries merit the attention of the curious more, perhaps, than any other people on the globe; yet it is but a few years since any suitable inquiries were instituted, and any satisfactory information obtained, respecting the literature and science of that important portion of the Asiatic continent.

Early in the century, the *Lettres Edifiantes et Curieuses*, enriched with communications from

missionaries in India, were published, and engaged much of the attention of the literary world. After these, M. RENAUDOT,^e of France, and THEOPH. S. BAYER,^f a learned German, each communicated to the public some important information concerning the literature and sciences of Hindostan; insomuch that, notwithstanding the great improvements in oriental knowledge since their time, they are still quoted frequently and with high respect. To these great orientalists, after an interval of many years, succeeded Mr. HOLWELL^g and Mr. Dow,^h of Great-Britain, who spent some time in the East, and who professed to give the public much new and curious information concerning the religion and sacred literature of the Hindoos. The publications of these gentlemen, however, are by no means consistent with each other, or with themselves; and although they contain, especially the works of Mr. HOLWELL, some useful and instructive matter, they are far from being considered unexceptionable authorities, by later and better informed writers.

Mr. WARREN HASTINGS, soon after receiving the appointment of Governor of Bengal, formed the design of procuring a complete code of the laws and customs of the Hindoos. With a view to the accomplishment of this design, he invited, about the year 1773, a number of Brahmans, who were learned in the Sanscrit language, from Benares, and other parts of the country, to convene in Calcutta. They complied with the invitation, and after making large collections from the most

^e *Anciennes Relations des Indes, et de la Chine*, &c. 1718.

^f *Elementa Literat. Brahmanica*, &c. 1732.

^g See his work on the *Fasts, Festivals, and Metempsychosis of the Hindoos*, 2 vols. 8vo. 1766, and also his *Interesting Historical Events*, 2 vols. 8vo 1766.

^h *Translation of FERISHTA's Indian History*, 3 vols. 4to. 1770.

authentic books, both ancient and modern, the whole was translated into the Persian language, from which an English version was published by Mr. NATHANIEL B. HALHED, in 1776. The publication of this work may be regarded as an important event in the history of Hindoo literature.ⁱ

It was long ago known, that all the science and literature possessed by the *Brahmans* were recorded in the *Sanscrit*,^j an ancient and sacred language which was understood only by a few of the most learned among themselves, and with which the rest of mankind were wholly unacquainted. For nearly three centuries different Europeans, settled in India, sought to acquire a knowledge of this language, but without success. The Brahmans, either systematically opposed to the use of any means for gaining proselytes to their religion and habits, or suspecting that some improper use was intended to be made of the information solicited, uniformly refused to instruct any one in their sacred books. But, at length, won by the address and persuasion with which the application was presented, and being convinced that no intention hos-

ⁱ About the middle of the sixteenth century, AKBER, the sixth in descent from TAMERLANE, and a Prince of distinguished talents and virtues, ascended the throne of Hindostan. As in every part of his extensive dominions, the Hindoos formed the great body of his subjects, he laboured to acquire a perfect knowledge of their religion, sciences, laws, and institutions; that he might conduct every part of his government, particularly the administration of justice, in a manner as much accommodated as possible to their own ideas. In this undertaking he was seconded by his vizier, ABUL FAZEL, a minister whose understanding was not less enlightened than that of his master. By their assiduous researches and consultation of learned men, such information was obtained, as enabled ABUL FAZEL to publish a brief compendium of Hindoo jurisprudence in the *Ayeen Akbery*, which may be considered as the first genuine communication of its principles to persons of a different religion. About two centuries afterwards Mr. HASTINGS imitated and surpassed the example of AKBER. See ROBERTSON'S India, p. 260.

^j The word *Sanscrit*, according to Mr. WILKINS, is compounded of the preposition *San*, signifying *completion*, and *Skrita*, *finished*, implying that the language is exquisitely refined and polished.

tile to them or their religion was entertained by the applicants, they yielded. Mr. NATHANIEL B. HALHED, before mentioned, was the first Englishman who acquired a knowledge of the *Sanscrit*. He was soon followed in this interesting acquisition by Mr. CHARLES WILKINS, and Sir WILLIAM JONES, who were not long in giving to the public the fruits of their labours.

The first translation ever made from the sacred language of the Brahmans into English, was by Mr. WILKINS, and published in 1785. This translation was from the *Mahabarat*, an epic poem much esteemed among the Hindoos, and which, in the original, is very voluminous, consisting of more than four hundred thousand lines, of which Mr. WILKINS translated at least one third, but published only an Episode, entitled *Baghvat-Geeta*. The publication of this work excited great curiosity in the literary world, and was the occasion of increased attention to eastern learning. In 1786 a second translation from the *Sanscrit* language, by Sir WILLIAM JONES, was laid before the public. This was *Sacotala*, a dramatic poem, of great antiquity, and indicating considerable refinement, both of sentiment and manners, among those who could produce or relish it. In 1787 Mr. WILKINS again laid the republic of letters under obligations to him, by publishing a version of the *Heeto-pades*, or *Amicable Instruction*, a series of connected fables, interspersed with moral, prudential, and political maxims. These were followed by several other versions from the Sanscrit of less importance, by Mr. WILKINS, Sir WILLIAM JONES, and some anonymous hands.

In addition to the various translations which have been made from this ancient language, its structure, beauties, and antiquity, have been the subjects of much ingenious and instructive investigation, within a few years past. Among these the inquiries

of Mr. HALHED,^k and especially of Sir WILLIAM JONES, deserve particular attention, and the highest praise.^l To Father PAOLINO, formerly Professor of Oriental Languages in the *Propaganda* at Rome, the public are also indebted, for some useful exertions to promote the study of Sanscrit. During a residence of thirteen years in India he acquired much information concerning this language, and formed a grammar, which is said to exhibit its elements in a very clear and satisfactory manner.

The institution of the *Asiatic Society*, in Calcutta, in the year 1784, forms an important era in the history of oriental learning. The design of this association was to trace the antiquities, arts, sciences, and literature of the immense continent of Asia. It was planned and founded by Sir WILLIAM JONES, who was long its president, and certainly the most active and extensively useful member. How diligent, and unwearied the labours of this association; and how curious and valuable the results of their investigations, are generally known by means of the several volumes of *Asiatic Researches*, which have been laid before the public in the course of the last fifteen years. In these volumes, the intelligent reader will find an amount of information, on the subjects of inquiry be-

^k Mr. HALHED is of opinion that the *Sanscrit* was, in ancient periods, current, not only over all India, considered in its largest extent, but over all the oriental world; and that traces of its original diffusion may still be discovered in almost every region of Asia.

^l "The *Sanscrit* language, whatever be its antiquity, is of a wonderful structure; more perfect than the *Greek*, more copious than the *Latin*, and more exquisitely refined than either; yet bearing to both of them a stronger affinity, both in the roots of verbs, and in the forms of grammar, than could possibly have been produced by accident; so strong, indeed, that no philologer could examine them all, without believing them to have sprung from some common source, which, perhaps, no longer exists. There is similar reason, though not quite so forcible, for supposing that both the *Gothic* and the *Celtic*, though blended with very different idioms, had the same origin with the *Sanscrit*: and the old *Persian* might be added to the same family." See Sir WILLIAM JONES's *Third Discourse before the Asiatic Society*.

fore stated, which the whole literary world could not have furnished antecedently to their appearance. By studying the *Sanscrit* language, in which the most authentic and ancient records of the Hindoos are written; by opening communications between distant regions of the East; and by frequently penetrating into the interior parts of the country, conversing with the learned men, inspecting their monuments, and observing their habits and manners, an astonishing mass of new facts has been obtained and given, by their labours, to the public; and from the same source, much more, perhaps, of still greater value, may be expected. They have entered into paths of inquiry which, if diligently and skilfully pursued, must conduct to the richest treasures of information.

It is believed that neither the original *Vedas*,^m which are the sacred books of the Hindoos, nor the *Shastahs*, which are commentaries upon them, have ever yet been exhibited complete in any European language. At the beginning of the eighteenth century, scarcely any thing was known of these books, out of their native country. Since that time, important extracts from them have been published, and a tolerable view of their contents presented to the world, first by Mr. HOLWELL, before-mentioned; afterwards, though with less faithfulness, by Mr. DOW; and at still later periods, by Sir WILLIAM JONES and others." The disclosures which these publications have effected, concerning the sacred literature of the Hindoos, have served equally to interest and to gratify the curiosity of the philosopher and the Christian.

^m The books called *Vedas* are four in number. They are so denominated from *Veda*, a Sanscrit root, signifying *to know*.

Sir WILLIAM JONES tells us that the four *Vedas* are comprized in eleven large folio volumes, a complete copy of which was obtained by Col. POLIER, of Great-Britain, who resided many years at *Delhi*, and displayed the most laudable zeal in collecting Indian curiosities.

The Astronomy and Chronology of Hindostan engaged much of the attention of oriental scholars, especially towards the close of the century under consideration. The honour is due to the French of having commenced this inquiry in a regular and scientific manner. M. LE GENTIL first brought to light, from the recesses of their temples, with any tolerable accuracy, the Astronomy of the Brahmans.^o Since he wrote, the inquiry has been pursued more fully and ingeniously by his countryman, M. BAILLY;^p by Sir WILLIAM JONES, who has contributed to the illustration of almost every part of oriental literature and science; and by Mr. PLAYFAIR,^q of the University of Edinburgh; and still more recently by Mr. SAMUEL DAVIS, Mr. JOHN BENTLEY, and others, whose valuable communications appear in the *Asiatic Researches*. To these may be added the chronological inquiries of Mr. MARSDEN and Mr. PATERSON. The result of all which is the most complete proof, that the extravagant and ridiculous claims made by the Brahmans, concerning the antiquity of their nation and their sciences,^r are wholly destitute of foundation. Indeed, the latest inquiries afford satisfactory evidence not only that no antiquity inconsistent with the Mosaic chronology can be claimed by them; but that the dates of their most ancient books and records are far more recent than even the friends of the scripture history at first supposed.

The Geography of India received much elucidation

^o See *Le Voyage dans le Mer de l'Inde, &c. par M. LE GENTIL.* 1769.

^p *Traité de l'Astronomie Indienne et Orientale.* 1787.

^q See *Transactions of the Royal Society of Edinburgh*, vol. ii. p. 135.

^r In all the computations of the Brahmans the most enormous extravagance appears. They suppose the period which has elapsed since the creation to be more than seven millions of years! In the same spirit of boundless absurdity, they make the circumference of the earth to be 500,000,000 *yojanas*, or 2,456,000,000 British miles; and the height of many mountains to be 100 *yojanas*, or 491 British miles!

tion, by the labours of learned orientalists in the course of the last age.' At an early period of the century JOHN HUDSON, of Great-Britain, commenced this inquiry, and pursued it with honourable success. He was followed, after an interval of many years, by M. D'ANVILLE, of France, who, in his *Antiquité Geographique de l'Inde*, and in his *Eclaircissemens Geographiques sur la Carte de l'Inde*, gave a more satisfactory and scientific view of the subject than any who had gone before him. The next important publication on the geography of India was by Major RENNELL, who, in his *Map of Hindostan*, and in his *Memoir* accompanying the same, made a present of incomparable value to the public. And, finally, the services rendered to this branch of oriental inquiry by Sir WILLIAM JONES, Colonel WILFORD, and several other members of the *Asiatic Society* of Calcutta, demand many acknowledgments from the friends of literature and science.

Besides the contributors to Hindoo literature above named, a number of other gentlemen, who have employed themselves in promoting the same object, deserve to be respectfully mentioned. Among those the several publications of Mr. ORME, an English gentleman much conversant in Hindoo learning; those of Mr. COLEBROOKE, who has translated some Hindoo writings, and thrown considerable light on the history and literature of Hindostan; the *Sketches* relating to the letters and science of that country, successively given by FORSTER, CRAUFORD, and KINDERSLEY, all of Great-Britain; and the various works of different comparative value, by Sir JOHN SHORE, Sir WIL-

, Though the *Geography* of India does not strictly fall under the denomination of *Hindoo Literature*; yet, as the two subjects have generally been treated in such a manner as to stand in connection with each other, it is thought proper to introduce this paragraph here.

LIAM OUSELEY, Mr. BURROW, Mr. HUNTER, and a number more of the same country, who spent a considerable time in India, have added much to our stock of knowledge respecting that important portion of Asia. But among all the writers on this subject, few have rendered such essential service to the cause of oriental literature as the Reverend THOMAS MAURICE, a learned and ingenious English Divine, who, in his *Indian Antiquities*, has collected and laid before the public a mass of information respecting the theology, geography, jurisprudence, political establishments, and various literature of Hindostan, so rich and instructive, as will entitle him to the lasting gratitude of every friend to liberal knowledge, and genuine religion.^t

The living languages of India have been better and more extensively understood by Europeans of the eighteenth century than ever before. This is particularly the case with the *Bengalee* language, of which grammars and dictionaries were introduced into Europe for the first time during this period, and into which a part of the Christian Scriptures were for the first time translated. The establishment of the British East-India Company, and the extensive commercial arrangements of that association, may be considered as bearing a near relation to these events, and as having exerted a favourable influence on the general interests of oriental literature.

CHINESE LITERATURE.

It is generally known that Europe is indebted to the learned men of France for almost all the knowledge of Chinese literature of which it can boast.

^t See *Indian Antiquities; or Dissertations relative to Hindostan*, 7 vols. 8vo.

As early as the sixteenth century, a number of French Jesuits penetrated into China, and by their learning and address conciliated the favour of the government. These missionaries were followed by others, of various characters and talents, and, in fact, a succession of them was maintained, amidst many changes of reception and treatment, until after the middle of the century under consideration. The opportunities which they enjoyed for exploring the literature and science of that empire were diligently improved. Much of the information which they acquired was transmitted, at different periods, to Europe; and though the faithfulness of their narratives has sometimes been called in question, the works compiled from their letters and journals may be considered as, on the whole, the richest sources of instruction in this department of oriental inquiry.^v

Toward the close of the seventeenth century, M. COUPLET, one of the missionaries above mentioned, translated such of the works of CONFUCIUS, the celebrated Chinese philosopher, as have been preserved. This was considered as an important service to literature, and gave him an honourable place in the list of oriental scholars. Not long afterwards a very extensive and interesting publication made its appearance in France, under the title of *Lettres Edifiantes et Curieuses des Missions Etrangères*. The greater part of this work, which was compiled from the papers of the missionaries, and which extended to more than forty volumes, was published at an early period of the eighteenth century, and contains an ample fund of instruction concerning the literature and science of China.

^v The missionaries have been perhaps too freely charged with the want of fidelity in their accounts of China. Later inquiries have shown that there is ground for this charge, at least in some instances. Still, however, these accounts are highly valuable, and abundantly worthy of perusal.

This was followed by the *Anciennes Relations des Indes, et de la Chine*, of M. RENAUDOT, which made an important addition to the stock of information before possessed on the subjects of which it treats. To these succeeded the great work of Father DU HALDE, entitled a *General Description of China*; and a work, under nearly the same title, by the Abbé GROSIER, both of which are considered as publications of the first class, and as containing much instructive matter relating to the learning, arts, and general condition of the wonderful country which they describe.

The singular intricacy of the Chinese language, the difficulty of acquiring a tolerable knowledge even of its elementary principles, and the restraints which have long been imposed upon all intercourse between the learned men of Europe and of China, have prevented an acquaintance with that language from becoming more frequent in the literary world. Hence, while the philosophy, astronomy, history, and other sciences of China have been deeply investigated, and some knowledge of them extensively diffused, during the last age, the characters and structure of the language of that country have been but little explored. A few attempts, however, were made, in the period under review, and not altogether without success, to communicate to the public some information on this subject. In the beginning of the century, and nearly about the same time, THEOPHILUS SIGIFRED BAYER, before mentioned, and M. FOURMONT, a learned orientalist of France, published their researches in the Chinese language. The former was one of the greatest proficient in the literature of China that the age produced; the latter also attained high eminence in the same walk of learning, and published a grammar of the Chinese language, which has received much praise. A few years after-

wards M. DE GUIGNES published the result of his inquiries respecting this language, and gave some specimens of its characters and words.^u He was followed by M. PAUW, a learned Prussian, who presented to the world what he called *Philosophical Researches* concerning the Chinese, which, though they indicate the strongest prejudices, yet contain some useful information.

In 1761 a very singular and curious performance made its appearance in Great-Britain. This was a translation of a Chinese novel, under the title of *Hau Kiou Chooan*, or the *Pleasing History*, in four volumes. The translation had been made a number of years before by Mr. JAMES WILKINSON, a British merchant, who had resided for some time at Canton, where he studied the Chinese language. The editor was Dr. THOMAS PERCY, who accompanied the publication with extensive and learned notes, which have a tendency not only to illustrate the composition immediately connected with them, but also to throw new light on the character of Chinese literature in general.^w

In 1776 was published the first volume of an extensive work on the literature, sciences, and history of China, compiled from papers communicated by French missionaries in that country. Two Chinese young men, after residing several years in France, and receiving a liberal education, returned to their own country in 1765. They carried with them a number of questions, from some learned societies of France, particularly relating to the literary and philosophical condition of China, and

^u See *Memoirs of the Royal Academy of Inscriptions and Belles Lettres*, especially vols. xxx. xxxvi. and xxxviii.

^w It is said that the Reverend Dr. BLAIR, the celebrated teacher of Rhetoric in Edinburgh, once remarked in conversation, that the *Pleasing History* contained a more authentic and interesting account of the internal state of China, than all the other publications on that subject that he had ever seen.

to which answers were requested from themselves and the missionaries. The communications made in consequence of these queries were published in the work above mentioned. In these communications, and especially in those which relate to the Chinese language, Fathers AMIOT and CIBOT make the most respectable figure, and have given the most valuable information.* Besides these, M. LE GENTIL, M. SONNERAT, and M. LANGLES, of France; and Sir WILLIAM JONES, Sir GEORGE STAUNTON, and others, of Great-Britain, have given the public some instructive accounts relating to the letters, arts, and philosophy of the Chinese empire.

The last conspicuous labourer in this field of inquiry is the Reverend Dr. HAGAR, a learned German, who resided a number of years in the east, and gained an uncommon acquaintance with the Chinese language. His knowledge enabled him to present the public with a work on this language, in which he entered into a more full and satisfactory explanation of its elementary characters than had been before attempted. This is the first systematic work that has been published in Europe on Chinese writing and reading, and evinces great industry and apparent skill in the author.†

It is worthy of remark, that all the investigations in oriental literature by which the last age was distinguished, furnished new and very im-

* See *Memoires Concernant l'Histoire, le Sciences, les Arts, &c.* extending to a number of volumes in 4to.

† See *An Explanation of the Elementary Characters of the Chinese Language, with an Analysis of their Ancient Symbols and Hieroglyphics, &c.* by JOSEPH HAGAR, D. D. Though this work was not actually published till the beginning of January, 1801; yet as both the acquisition of Dr. HAGAR's Chinese learning, and the composition of this work belong to the eighteenth century, they have a place assigned them within that period.

portant arguments in favour of the truth of Revelation. Early in the century which is the subject of this retrospect, it was supposed, and some zealous adversaries of revealed religion diligently propagated the idea, that inquiries into the chronology and other sciences of several eastern nations, strongly opposed, and were in a fair way wholly to destroy the credibility of the Mosaic history. Assertions of this kind were, in particular, made with great confidence, by certain sceptical philosophers of France, who were always ready to believe any thing which might release them from the obligation to believe in Christianity. Later and more accurate investigations, however, have shown that this opinion is totally erroneous, and that the more deeply we penetrate into the literature and science of the east, the more striking evidence we find in favour of the scripture account of the creation and age of the world, and also in support of several important doctrines of the Gospel.

The light which modern oriental inquiries have thrown on the Mosaic system of chronology was before mentioned. Those who undertook to assail the sacred history by means of arguments drawn from the high assumptions of the Brahmans, and of the literati of other eastern nations, have been completely refuted; indeed the annals of science scarcely furnish an instance of hostile invaders being more entirely defeated, and their arms turned more directly against themselves. It has been proved by indisputable authorities, "that the personages who are said to have flourished so many thousand years in the earliest ages, were of celestial, not terrestrial origin; that their empire was the empire of imagination in the skies, not of real power on this globe of earth; that the day and year of Brahmah, and the day and year of mortals,

are of a nature widely different; that the whole jargon of the *Yugs*, or grand periods, and, consequently, all those presumptuous assertions of the Brahmins, relative to the earth's antiquity, have no foundation but in the great solar and lunar cycles, or planetary revolutions."²

Very rich and curious information has also been derived from late oriental inquiries, which serves at once to illustrate and confirm the scripture doctrine of the *Trinity*. One of the most learned and accurate orientalists of the age considers the following facts as decisively established by recent investigations, viz. "First, that in the *Sephiroth*, or three superior splendours of the ancient Hebrews, may be discovered the three hypostases of the Christian Trinity; secondly, that this doctrine flourished through nearly all the empire of Asia, a thousand years before PLATO was born; and, thirdly, that the grand cavern-pagoda of Elephanta, the oldest and most magnificent temple in the world, is neither more nor less than a superb temple to a Tri-une God." If the doctrine of the Trinity be contained in the Old Testament scriptures, as it certainly is; and if some knowledge of this stupendous mystery of our holy religion were conveyed to the faithful in the earliest times, which we may safely presume to have been the case; then it was natural that some ideas of this doctrine, more or less distinct, and connected with a greater or less portion of fable, should be found, as the result of tradition, in most nations of the world. That this is really the case, the learned have long had increasing reason to believe. But the inquiries of the eighteenth century, and especially those instituted in the east, have rendered this truth more indisputably apparent than ever, and have thus

* See MAURICE's *Indian Antiquities*, and his *History of Hindostan*.

furnished new evidence in favour of those precious doctrines which are connected with it, and which are fully brought to light in the gospel.

Similar references to the *Fall* of man, and the *Deluge*, have also been found by discoveries in the east, as well as allusions of the most remarkable kind to the mission and character of the MESSIAH; all tending to support the idea of a common faith having descended by tradition from the family of NOAH to their posterity; and thus to furnish a new, and, considered in all its relations, a most powerful argument in favour of the authenticity of the sacred history.

This tendency of literary and scientific discoveries in the east, to confirm the sacred history, has been ably displayed by Sir WILLIAM JONES, and other contemporary writers whose inquiries appear in the *Asiatic Researches*; but by none so extensively, and in a manner so convincing and popular, as the Reverend Mr. MAURICE, of Great-Britain, who, in his *Indian Antiquities*, and his *History of Hindostan*, has presented a view of the subject, so incontrovertible and satisfactory as to place him among the most meritorious defenders of Revelation which modern times have produced.

The illustration of sacred scripture by means of circumstances incidentally mentioned in books of eastern travels, is a most interesting and instructive field of inquiry, both to the philosopher and the Christian. Services of this nature, more rich and valuable than ever before, have been rendered to biblical criticism, during the eighteenth century. One of the most useful writers on this subject which the age produced, was the Reverend Mr. HARMER, of Great-Britain. He published an extensive and learned work, in which, by means of information derived from voyagers and travellers in the east, he placed many passages of scripture

in a light altogether new; ascertained the meaning of others, not discoverable by the methods commonly used by interpreters; and proposed many probable conjectures highly instructive to the sacred critic.^a Several other writers of considerable note have also presented the public with useful observations on the same subject.

CHAPTER XV.

MODERN LANGUAGES.

IN this chapter it will only be attempted to present some brief and general remarks on the improvements which have been received during the last age by the more cultivated living languages of Europe. To propose a discussion of greater extent would be to engage in an inquiry altogether incommensurate with the design and the limits of the present sketch.

There is no living language in Europe which can boast of greater antiquity than five or six centuries. Derived from various sources, and rising from rude beginnings, to a regular and consistent character, they have been gradually becoming more rich, copious, and polished during the greater part of this time. To trace the causes and the means of these improvements through their interrupted and devious course, is here neither necessary nor possible. It would be a task of great magnitude and difficulty to the most accomplished philologist.

^a See *Observations on divers Passages of Scripture*, &c. 4 vols. 8vo. 1776 and 1787.

The portion of these improvements which belong to the eighteenth century may, in general, be pronounced to be very great, and to demand particular consideration in tracing the revolutions and the progress of this period. They deserve the more attention on account of their connection not only with the literary and scientific, but also with the social and political interests of the age.

The *increased intercourse* of men, during the last century, led to important revolutions and improvements in the living languages. By means of this intercourse the learned of different nations have become more acquainted with the idioms and beauties of many other languages than their own; and this acquaintance has caused the respective treasures of each language to become, in a degree, the common property of all. Hence the more cultivated tongues of Europe have been very perceptibly enriched, within a few years, by the adoption of many significant words and phrases from each other, as well as from those which are, in general, less worthy of imitation.

The effects of this extended intercourse have been aided by the great number of *translations*, by which modern times are peculiarly distinguished. There never was an age in which the most esteemed literary productions of different nations were so extensively circulated, or exhibited to the world in so many different languages. The unexampled prevalence of this practice has rendered the characteristic peculiarities of various tongues better known, and produced the insensible incorporation of them with others. This is the great source of those "imported" words and phrases which have sometimes received the approbation of philologists, but of which they have, perhaps, more frequently and justly complained.

The numerous *discoveries* in science and the arts, during the period under review, also led to the introduction and familiar use of many terms of which the learned of the preceding age were entirely ignorant. Almost the whole dialect of philosophy, both natural and moral, has become new within the period in question. How rich and valuable the stores which language has received from this source, can only be adequately conceived by those who are able to take a distinct view of the improvements in philosophy, and all the arts of life, in the course of the last hundred years.

To the above considerations may be added the numerous instances of the new coinage of words, by popular writers, arising either from necessity, from caprice, from vanity, from affectation, or other causes. Some of these new emissions, however they may fail on the score of authority, must be considered, on the whole, as useful additions to modern languages. From this source the augmentation of our literary treasures is constant; and if due vigilance be exercised to guard against capricious and wanton innovation, substantial advantages to the interests of language may thence be expected to flow.

The influence of all these considerations, taken together, has introduced an amount of modification and improvements into modern languages, within the last century, beyond all doubt, greater than were ever introduced in any preceding period of equal extent. That large additions have been made to the number of words, no one can for a moment hesitate to admit. But this is by no means all that may be asserted.

The *style* of composition also, in most of the living languages, has been greatly improved since the commencement of the eighteenth century. The style of the best writers, at the present day,

though perhaps inferior to the exquisite refinements produced by Grecian and Roman taste, is essentially superior to that which was employed by the most correct models of the preceding age. Modern languages now exhibit more grammatical accuracy, more precision, energy, and polish, and a more graceful, luminous, and philosophic construction, than they could boast at that period. We have thrown off "the useless load of words which incumbered our predecessors," and discarded their circuitous and tedious routes to a meaning, which formerly disgusted the literary traveller. In short, the first class of writers of the eighteenth century display a smoothness and force of manner, a taste in the selection of words, and a scientific perspicuity of arrangement, which are no where to be found so admirably united in those who went before them.

These remarks do not apply, with unqualified propriety, to all the living languages of Europe. The Italian language, it is believed, was considerably before any of the rest, in attaining its highest point of refinement. This was chiefly accomplished before the commencement of the last age, since which time it is not known that any radical or important improvements have taken place in that language. The French language also, if the writer does not mistake, had received by far the greater part of that cultivation which it now exhibits, before the period of this retrospect. Still, however, it is supposed that both these languages, and especially the latter, may with truth be represented as partaking in some degree of the large mass of improvement which has accrued to many others within the last age.

But not to content ourselves with these general remarks, let us descend to the particular consideration of some of those living European lan-

guages, which may be supposed to have received the greatest number of improvements during the last century, and to be most worthy of notice.^b

ENGLISH LANGUAGE.

The English Language has received, during this period, a large portion of the improvements which have been mentioned. From the middle of the sixteenth to the commencement of the eighteenth century, English style had been in a regular course of refinement and general melioration. The great British Lexicographer, Dr. JOHNSON, tells us that the writings of Sir PHILIP SIDNEY, who died in 1585, furnish a boundary beyond which he made few excursions in search of the "wells of English undefiled."^c After SIDNEY, the important successive improvements conferred on our language by SHAKSPEARE, HOOKER, MILTON, CLARENDON, TEMPLE, TILLOTSON, SPRAT, DRYDEN, and LOCKE, are well known, and have been frequently the subjects of eulogium by the literary historian. But still these writers left many defects to be supplied. Their respective styles, though various, were, for the most part, formal, feeble, circuitous, abounding with excrescences, and cumbrous parts, and in many instances perplexed, inaccurate, and inelegant to a very high degree. These charges, indeed, do not equally belong to all that have been

^b In the following sections the intelligent reader will observe that the Italian, the Spanish, the Dutch, and several other important dialects of modern Europe, are omitted. The reason for this omission is the best in the world. It is because the author knows so little of those languages, and is so entirely ignorant of the details of improvement which they have received, that he cannot undertake to state them. It is presumed, however, that the improvements which have lately taken place in most of the cultivated living languages, respectively, agree in so many respects, that the exhibition of those which belong to one may be considered as applying in a considerable degree to the rest.

^c Preface to the *Dictionary of the English Language*.

mentioned; for few would admit that SHAKSPEARE, MILTON, and DRYDEN were feeble writers. But the general application of the character above stated will scarcely be denied. And though it may be allowed, that the most of those writers were free from some faults which have since become fashionable, still they were chargeable with others equally great, and more inconsistent with the philosophy of language.

The eighteenth century opened with better prospects. The writings of ADDISON formed an important era in English literature. In truth, this celebrated author attained, at once, a style of composition so much superior to that of any who had gone before him, that none can peruse the monuments which he has left us of his taste without admiration. He was less faulty in multiplying synonymous words than his predecessors. He displayed also more judgment in the choice, and more precision in the use of terms. The forced metaphor, the dragging clause, the harsh cadence, and the abrupt close, were carefully excluded from his pages. He exhibited, in an eminent degree, that correctness, perspicuity, ease, and harmony, in which preceding writers had been so remarkably deficient. He was the first English prose writer who discovered any thing like distinguished taste in the choice and management of figures. "Pure, without scrupulosity, and correct, without apparent elaboration; equally free from studied amplitude, and affected brevity; familiar, but not coarse; and elegant, but not ostentatious,"^d he deserves to be ranked among the most meritorious reformers of our language.

While ADDISON was employed in communicating to English style a new degree of ease and

^d JOHNSON.

polish, SWIFT was successfully engaged in cultivating it, with a particular view to its purity and precision. Endowed with a mind among the most vigorous of the age in which he lived, and directing particular attention to the subject of language, he attained distinguished excellence as a writer. He was the first who attempted to express his meaning without "subsidiary words and corroborating phrases." He was still more sparing in the use of synonymes than ADDISON; and without being very solicitous about the structure or harmony of his periods, he attended particularly to the force of individual words. Less figurative and adorned than ADDISON, he learned more successfully than he, to avoid the diffuse and feeble manner which had so generally characterized English composition. Mr. HUME supposes that the first elegant prose in our language was written by SWIFT.

To Mr. POPE, also, English style is much indebted. "He cultivated the beauties of language with so much diligence and art, that he has left, in his *Homer*, a treasure of poetical elegances to posterity. His version may be said to have tuned his native tongue; for since its appearance, no writer, however deficient in other powers, has wanted *melody*." The style of English versification attained in his hands that sweetness of harmony, that grace of embellishment, that *curiosa felicitas*, which have never since been surpassed. There is scarcely a happy combination of words, or a phrase musical and captivating, which is not to be found in his writings.

The improvements introduced by these benefactors to English literature were pursued and extended by several contemporary and succeeding

writers. Among the first of these SHAFTESBURY and BOLINGBROKE hold an honourable place.^f The style of the former, though excessively and elaborately delicate, and displaying a continual fondness for artificial arrangement, and affected stateliness, is still rich and musical, and contributed not a little to improve the public taste. The writings of the latter, exhibiting the ease and elegance of ADDISON with more vigour, were also useful in promoting the prevalence of correct and elegant composition. Neither of them, however, can be said to have introduced a fashion of writing wholly new, or to have formed a remarkable era in the history of the English language. The same may be said of MIDDLETON, FIELDING, SHERLOCK, SMOLLET, HAWKESWORTH, GOLDSMITH, MELMOTH, and several others. With various talents and modes of expression, and with different degrees of literary merit, they all contributed something to the cultivation of style, and each displayed some new and peculiar excellence, without producing, singly, any thing like a revolution in manner.

The change introduced into English style by Dr. JOHNSON, deserves particular notice. This great philologist, while he was ambitious to convey important moral and literary truth, laboured also to “refine the language of his country to grammatical purity, and to clear it from colloquial barbarisms, licentious idioms, and irregular combinations; to add something to the elegance of its construction, and something to the harmony of its cadence.”^g Nor did he labour in vain. He effected important

^f It will readily occur to the reader that nothing is meant to be spoken of here but the *style* of these writers. The tendency of their publications, in a moral and religious view, will be particularly noticed in a subsequent part of this work.

^g *Rambler*, vol. iv. No. 203.

improvements in English style. He improved the form of its phrases, the construction of its sentences, and the precision and appropriateness of its diction. He introduced a strength and solidity of expression; a dignity, not to say pomp of manner, which, though becoming in him, can scarcely be imitated without danger; and in the happy art of exhibiting a number of adjunct ideas in the same sentence with perspicuity and vigour, he has rarely if ever been equalled. He enriched the language, also, with many words, adopted from the Greek and Latin. In this, indeed, he has been censured by some, and perhaps with justice, as having gone too far, and resorted to foreign aid without necessity. But though it be admitted that he has, in some instances, transgressed his own rules, yet he certainly added largely to the stores of English diction, and may, on the whole, be considered one of the greatest benefactors to English literature that the age produced.

But signal as the improvements in style which Dr. JOHNSON either introduced, or contributed to promote, yet it cannot be denied that, in some respects, he gave countenance to a false taste in writing. He brought into vogue, a style, which is, perhaps, too far removed from the ease and simplicity of colloquial discourse; which too much abounds in artificial embellishment, formal monotonous structure, and elaborated figure; and which, when employed on subjects less dignified than those of which he usually treated, is extremely faulty. His manner, perverted and extravagantly extended, has led many fashionable writers to suppose that a continual glare of metaphor, an unceasing effort to exhibit epigrammatic point, and an undistinguishing stateliness of march, were among the superior beauties of composition. These faults, together with the short sentences, so much

affected within a few years past, by several popular writers, are among the fantastic errors, which a spirit of misguided imitation, or a perverted taste, have brought too much into use.

It would be unpardonable, in this sketch, not to take notice of several other writers, who, toward the close of the century in question, made a distinguished figure in the annals of English style. Among these, perhaps, the most worthy of our attention, are the author of the letters of JUNIUS, Mr. BURKE, Sir JOSHUA REYNOLDS, and Bishop WATSON. The remarkable characteristics, and the peculiar excellence of the style of JUNIUS are well known. Mr. BURKE, though sometimes very inaccurate, yet furnished many specimens of splendid and forcible eloquence, which would have done honour to the brightest era of Grecian or Roman taste. While the writings of Sir JOSHUA REYNOLDS^b and Bishop WATSON, more chaste and correct, and scarcely inferior in force and other beauties, will long be read as admirable models of English composition.

To the above names might be added those of Dr. BEATTIE, Dr. BLAIR, and several others, both in North and South Britain, either still living or lately deceased, who have contributed to form and extend a taste for elegant writing. But to these it would be impossible to do justice without engaging in a discussion too minute for the limits of the present sketch.

In English *historical* style, HUME and ROBERTSON are, unquestionably, the best models. The former excels in ease, spirit, and interest; the latter in purity, dignity, strength, and elegance. The

^b In this remark, the charge against the memory of Sir J. REYNOLDS, as having been assisted by Mr. BURKE, in the composition of those noble discourses which he delivered before the Royal Academy, is taken for granted to be false, or, at least, not true to the extent which has been stated.

great improvement which they have effected in this kind of composition, since the time of CLARENDON, and of RAPIN, must be obvious to the most careless reader. Mr. GIBBON has attempted to carry the ornaments of this kind of style much higher than his predecessors had ventured. But it seems to be the opinion of most impartial judges, that many of his favourite ornaments are meretricious; that his loftiness is often nothing more than bombast and affectation; that what he imagined to be beautiful splendour of diction, is frequently disgusting glare; that in aiming at a dignity far above the ease of discourse, he becomes so “fantastically infolded” as to be obscure, if not unintelligible. His manner has indeed many beauties, but it has also multiplied blemishes; and the reader of taste will probably allow that English style has rather suffered deterioration than gained improvements by his literary labours.

The sum of the matter, then, seems to be this; that English style, since the commencement of the eighteenth century, has become more rich and copious, by a large accession of words; that it has gained a more “lofty part,” and “moves with a more firm and vigorous step;” that the structure of sentences, in our best authors, is more compressed, accurate, and philosophical; that “the connective particles are used with more attention to their genuine meaning;” and, in general, that the scientific spirit of the age has extended itself remarkably, in giving to our language that precision, spirit, force, polish, and chaste ornament, which are so frequently met with at the present day.ⁱ

ⁱ There are some good remarks on English style in the *Inquirer, a Series of Essays*, by WILLIAM GODWIN. Though no friend to human happiness can recommend the moral or religious principles of this writer, which are pre-eminently fitted to delude, corrupt and destroy; yet he is himself master of a vigorous style, and his judgment on a question of literary taste is entitled to respect.

The English language is, indeed, capable of much greater improvement, and will, probably, receive more than it has yet attained. Improproprieties, and violations of analogy are to be found, in considerable number, in the best writers; and many of those words and phrases which modern innovators have introduced, a better taste will, no doubt, indignantly dismiss. If more than forty years ago a celebrated writer could complain, with justice, of numerous departures from the purity of English idiom, and deviations toward the "*Gallick* structure and phraseology," it is presumed that, since that time, the complaint has become better founded. Mr. HUME, and, in a higher degree, Mr. GIBBON, to say nothing of a multitude of less conspicuous writers, are chargeable with many deviations from the purity of our language, and the introduction of many phrases by no means consistent with its analogy. Still, however, it must be admitted, that these faults are accompanied with real and numerous improvements; that the style of our best authors is not only incomparably superior to that which prevailed antecedently to the time of ADDISON, but also, in some respects, superior to his best specimens; and that excellences of style have lately become more common and popular than at any former period; insomuch, that we now often find in an occasional pamphlet, or in the pages of a gazette, a perspicuity, energy, and elegance of diction, for which we might have looked in vain among the best models of the seventeenth century.

Besides the improvements which have taken place in English style, during the last age, the language has undergone several minuter changes, which are not unworthy of being just mentioned. The *Orthography* of our tongue has received considerable modifications. Superfluous letters have been discarded from many words. And, in the

use of capitals, great alterations have been introduced. But besides the changes in orthography which have been generally received, and are now established, several proposals were made, in the course of the century we are considering, for a more radical reform. Of this reform, which consisted in an attempt to render the spelling more conformable to the rules of pronunciation, Mr. ELPHINSTONE, of Great-Britain, and Dr. FRANKLIN and Mr. NOAH WEBSTER, of our own country, among others, have appeared as the most conspicuous projectors and patrons, since the time of Bishop WILKINS. The successive proposals and exertions of these gentlemen, to attain this favourite end, were all unsuccessful. The great majority of philologists seem to have considered them as useless in themselves, calculated to injure the analogy of the language, completely subversive of etymological principles, and productive of numerous inconveniences and evils.

The attention lately paid to English *Orthoepey*, may be considered as peculiar to the eighteenth century. The pronunciation of our language was, a few years ago, in a very crude, loose, and neglected state. This circumstance attracted the notice of several ingenious and accurate men, who perceiving the importance of some regular and consistent plan of pronouncing, engaged in a system of reform on this subject; and by exhibiting the anomalies of pronunciation, and pointing out its analogies, were enabled to lay down rules, which have proved extensively useful. Among those writers who deserve high praise on this subject, Mr. ELPHINSTONE, before mentioned, is entitled to the first place. At the commencement of his in-

j This word, like the art which it is designed to express, is of recent formation. It is derived from the Greek words *ὀρθοί*, *rectus*, and *ἔπος*, *verbum*, and signifies the *art of pronouncing well*.

quiries, he found *Orthoepey* in a most chaotic condition. In his *Principles of the English Language*, he did much towards reducing the chaos to order, and laid down the principles of a just and regular pronunciation. But by treating the subject in a way not calculated to be popular; and by endeavouring to make an extravagant and ill-judged reform in the orthography of the language, he lost that portion of credit with the public, to which his merit entitled him; and his labours were less useful than they ought to have been. After Mr. ELPHINSTONE, Dr. KENRICK appeared as a teacher and reformer in pronunciation; and his *Rhetorical Dictionary* may be regarded as a very respectable and useful contribution for this purpose. Next to him came Mr. SHERIDAN, who carried his improvements on this subject still further; and in his *Dictionary*, gave to the public a standard of pronunciation much superior to any thing that had been offered by his predecessors. He was succeeded by Mr. NARES, who, in his *Elements of Orthoepey*, treated the subject in a new and ingenious manner, and introduced yet greater improvements. The last distinguished writer on this branch of English Grammar, is Mr. WALKER.^k This gentleman, in his *Critical and Pronouncing Dictionary*, seems to have united the different excellences of those who went before him; to have avoided many of their mistakes; to have supplied a large portion of their defects; and, on the whole, to have furnished the republic of English literature with the best standard of pronunciation which the language affords.^l

^k Since the publication of WALKER's work, a pronouncing dictionary has been presented to the public by Mr. JONES, also of Great-Britain. It is believed that the best judges consider this work as containing little if any real improvement on that of WALKER.

^l See preface to WALKER's *Critical and Pronouncing Dictionary*.

Notwithstanding the splendid excellences of composition displayed in the writings of ADDISON, POPE, and SWIFT, all the treatises on *English Grammar* in use when they wrote were crude and unsatisfactory. The principles of the *Greek* and *Latin* tongues were transferred to the English, and grammatical works formed accordingly. On this plan every writer upon English grammar had proceeded anterior to the time of Dr. LOWTH. The number and value of his improvements are generally known to grammarians. Since his time the labours of PRIESTLEY, SHERIDAN, ASH, TOOKE, PICKBURN, WALKER, WEBSTER, MURRAY, and others, have produced additional light and improvement in the grammar of our language. The best English grammar now extant is that by the last named writer, Mr. LINDLEY MURRAY, who, by this publication, and by several others connected with it, and designed as auxiliaries to its principal purpose, has become entitled to the gratitude of every friend to English literature, and to true virtue.^m

At the beginning of the century in question, there was no *Dictionary* of the English language which deserved the name. Not long afterwards there appeared one superior to all that had gone before it, by Mr. BAILEY. This work, though possessing considerable merit, especially in the *etymological* department, was still defective in so many respects, that it was by no means a safe or

^m Mr. LINDLEY MURRAY is a native of Pennsylvania, but resided during the early part of his life chiefly in the city of New-York. Having removed to Great-Britain, for the benefit of his health, he has employed his leisure, for a number of years, in improving the grammar of his native tongue, and in making such other publications as have a tendency to form the minds of youth to a love of literature and of virtue. The excellence of all his literary labours, and the charitable appropriation of the product of his works, to which he has long rigidly adhered, have secured for him a station in the public esteem too high to render eulogium necessary in this place.

adequate guide. BAILEY was succeeded by several others of inferior note, who laboured as English lexicographers, but they did little worthy of being recorded. In this state of things, Dr. SAMUEL JOHNSON, a distinguished philologist of Great-Britain, undertook to compile a grand national dictionary, a task to which learned academies had generally been considered alone equal. His plan of the work was laid before the public in 1747, and in 1755 this wonderful production of the labour of an individual issued from the press. It must be acknowledged, that the *Dictionary of the English Language*, notwithstanding all its splendid merits, is an imperfect work. Its illustrious compiler was, in a great measure, ignorant of the *philosophy of language*, which at that period was little understood by the most profound grammarians. His *etymological* investigations are too often superficial and unsatisfactory; and his numerous omissions of words unquestionably belonging to the language,ⁿ indicate either carelessness or haste in the execution of his task. Added to these faults, his style of definition has been criticised as "loose and pedantic;" he has been accused of a needless and improper subdivision of meanings; and his frequent indulgence of a taste for "neoteric importation from the Latin," is considered, by many, as a departure from his own principles, by means of which the purity of our tongue has suffered injurious mixtures and adulterations. Still, however, viewing the work of JOHNSON as the production of one man; recollecting how small a portion of his life it employed; considering its immense superiority to every thing of a similar kind

ⁿ Dr. JOHNSON, in his *Dictionary*, has collected about 48,000 words. The Reverend H. CROFT asserts that he has made a list of 11,000 more, which he proposes to introduce into a new work. See WENDEBORN'S *View of England*, &c.

which had gone before it; and taking into the account also, that it was written "with little assistance of the learned, and without any patronage of the great; not in the soft obscurities of retirement, or under the shelter of academic bowers, but amidst inconvenience and distraction, in sickness and in sorrow," it must be regarded as a wonderful monument of philological taste, erudition, and labour.

The English dictionaries which have been given to the public since that of Dr. JOHNSON, are numerous. They have, in general, however, contented themselves with servilely copying that great lexicographer, and have made few important additions to his labours. To this general character Dr. ASH is an exception: considering his dictionary as a collection of all kinds of words, scientific, technical, obsolete, colloquial, decent, or otherwise, it is doubtless the most complete extant; and so far as the mere *number* of words is an excellence, his work must be pronounced much superior to that of JOHNSON. It may fairly be questioned, however, whether such an indiscriminate admission of words as Dr. ASH has thought proper to adopt, be not more injurious than useful. The dictionaries of KENRICK, SHERIDAN, WALKER, with a comparative view of their respective merits, were before noticed. But as these were designed rather to promote English *Orthoepy* than the general interests of our language, the further consideration of them will not be attempted in this place.

It is worthy of remark, that the eighteenth century has produced a great *extension* of the knowledge and use of the English language. Within the last forty or fifty years this language has been gradually becoming more known among the learned of other countries, and its best models of composition more studied. Mr. POPE is said

to have lamented that his writings were not likely to be much read, excepting by the inhabitants of one small Island. Had he lived till the present day he would have seen better prospects opening to his literary ambition. To say nothing of the immense continent of North-America, where the productions of that great Poet will probably long be perused by many millions; and to place also out of the account, the extensive foreign dependences of Great-Britain, where English literature is likely, in time, to flourish; it is an undoubted fact, that the language in which he wrote is incomparably more read and spoken on the continent of Europe, since his day, than ever before.

FRENCH LANGUAGE.

The French language, during the last century, received modifications and improvements in a considerable degree similar to those which have already been noticed as belonging to the English. It was before remarked that this language was some time before the English in the progress of improvement. The reign of Louis XIV. has been commonly called the *golden age* of French literature, and the period of perfection in French style. It is probable that this opinion is rather better founded than that which assigns the reign of Queen ANNE as furnishing the highest grade of refinement in English composition. The publication of the famous *Dictionnaire de l'Academie Française*, a great and splendid work in its day, formed an important æra in the history of the French language. The grand object of the Association which compiled this Dictionary, and presented it to the world, was to improve and fix their language; and there can be no

doubt that the publication was, in a considerable degree, subservient to these purposes.

But to expect a living language to be absolutely stationary, is to expect that which borders on the region of impossibility. Accordingly, since the completion of the great national dictionary just mentioned, the French language has gained large accessions of words and phrases, and has received various kinds of melioration. The work of the Academy has long been superseded by the private and better Dictionary of M. RICHELET, which has been honoured with high and general praise. But even this latter is far from embracing the numerous additional words with which learned philologists of that country have endowed their language.

The large work of M. COURT DE GEBELIN, on language, published a few years ago, contains an extensive and learned investigation of French *Etymology*, which has thrown new light on the structure and genius of that language. Indeed, within the last thirty years of the century under consideration, several writers of high reputation, but of whom the author has too little knowledge to speak distinctly, have undertaken, with considerable success, to exhibit the beauties and defects of their native tongue, and to point out the means for its further refinement.

The list of those writers who contributed, in the course of the last century, to enrich and polish the French language, is too large to be given at length, even if the information requisite for this purpose were possessed. Out of the great number, FONTENELLE, VOLTAIRE, ROUSSEAU, and BUFFON, deserve to be selected, as standing in the first rank. Since the date of their writings it may be doubted whether the language has gained any real refinements. If an air of metaphysical abstraction, and antithetic point, be more prevalent among

some late popular writers of that country than formerly, it is believed no substantial improvements have been made in the vigour, the polish, the precision, and the chaste ornaments of French style.

At the commencement of the eighteenth century, it is probable that there was no living language so generally understood, and so correctly spoken, among the learned of all civilized countries, as the French. It was then spoken as the most polite medium of intercourse at several of the courts of Europe, and the acquisition of it considered as an important part of liberal education. Since that time the knowledge and use of this language have greatly extended. It has, in fact, almost become, what the Latin once was, an universal language. Perhaps it may be asserted that a larger portion of mankind, at the present day, understand and speak this language, than were ever before known to be acquainted with a living tongue.*

GERMAN LANGUAGE.

The German Language, in the course of this century, has been greatly enriched and refined. Until the middle of the century it remained in a rude and unpolished state. Such of the learned

* Some remarks on modern improvements in the *Spanish* language, would naturally follow this section, if the author were sufficiently acquainted with the nature and amount of these improvements to make even general remarks on them. It may not be improper, however, to mention, that the *Royal Spanish Academy of Madrid*, founded in 1713, was instituted for the express purpose of cultivating and improving the national language. With this view, after spending many years in the requisite preliminary investigations; after devoting much attention to the selection of such words and phrases as were used by the best writers, and noting those which were either low, corrupt or obsolete, that learned Society published, in 1783, the *Diccionario de la Lengua Castellana*; a work, which, though defective in *etymological* inquiries, and in several other respects, is yet by far the best extant.

men of that country as had then devoted themselves to philology, chiefly studied the ancient languages, to the neglect of their own. Most of their scientific publications then made were in Latin. Since that time more has been done to promote the interests of German literature, and especially to cultivate the German language, than had been done for several centuries before. One of the first steps in this course of cultivation was the publication of the *Messiah*, by KLOPSTOCK. When that celebrated poem made its appearance, the many new combinations of words, and the various licences of language with which it abounded, excited much complaint among the countrymen of the author; but these innovations soon became familiar, gradually gained admirers, and at no great distance of time were generally adopted, by the best German writers. KLOPSTOCK was particularly successful in improving the versification of his native language. He introduced a new style of poetry into his country; and has been generally followed as one of the best authorities in polite literature. This celebrated poet has also done much to improve the *orthography* of his language. He first suggested, and by his own example enforced, the propriety and necessity of reform in this department of the German tongue. His proposals, indeed, were not adopted in their full extent; but they led others to direct their attention towards this object; and to him therefore is due a large share of the credit arising from the improvements which have since taken place.^p

Next to the radical reform introduced by KLOPSTOCK, the writings of many others of the literati of that country have had a considerable influence in promoting the same object. Among these the

poems of HALLER; the *Idylls*, and *Death of Abel*, of GESSNER; the fables and moral writings of GELLERT; the numerous and diversified productions of WIELAND; and the various works of LESSING, HERDER, GOETHE, SCHILLER, VOSS, and many others, have all contributed a share, to render a language once but little esteemed in Europe, one of the most copious, energetic, and rich of modern tongues.

But among late German writers no individual is entitled to more honourable mention than J. C. ADELUNG, a celebrated philologist of that country. His labours in studying and improving his native language have been extensive, persevering, and successful to a degree almost without precedent. He has produced works, in this department of literature, with which the productions of learned academies, and royal societies, can scarcely be brought into competition. His *Grammar of the German Language*^g is an elaborate and systematic work, unquestionably superior to all preceding works of a similar kind, and has contributed much towards forming and regulating the language of which it treats. But his greatest work is a *Complete Dictionary of the High German Language*.^r In the composition of this extraordinary work he spent the greatest part of thirty years, and it is pronounced, by good judges, to come nearer to the idea of a perfect dictionary than any other effort of human diligence hitherto published. It contains a larger number of words than any other extant; the definitions are singularly lucid and satisfactory; every word is scientifically arranged, with respect to its literal and metaphorical signification; the etymologies of words are pursued with an acuteness and a skill which render them highly instruc-

^g In two volumes large octavo.

^r It consists of five volumes large quarto.

tive; and the author displays an acquaintance with the history of his language, and the peculiar merits of its best authors, which eminently qualified him for the task which he undertook to execute.

This grammar and dictionary, we are told, have been useful, beyond any other publications, in correcting the orthography, in exploring the etymology, and in regulating the syntax of the German language. The incessant efforts of ADELUNG have also served to animate and guide the exertions of his countrymen in pursuit of the same object. Since he wrote, philological inquiries have acquired an ascendancy and a prevalence in that empire which they never before possessed. Grammars, dictionaries, and critical essays, have unusually abounded. Questions for elucidating and improving the language have been published by academies and literary associations in every part of the country, and have occupied much of the attention of learned men. And, finally, their popular writers, especially their poets and dramatists, are continually adding to the stores of the language, new words, and combinations of terms, which, though in some cases they have been considered as injurious innovations, have yet contributed not a little to the mass of improvement.

This language, as well as the two preceding, has been much more studied towards the close of the eighteenth century than ever before. So many interesting works in literature and science have been published in Germany, particularly within the last thirty years, that the acquisition of the language seems now to be regarded by the literati of Europe as nearly of equal importance with that of the French or English, which have, heretofore, engaged such pre-eminent attention.

SWEDISH LANGUAGE.

The Swedish Language, in the course of a few years past, has also undergone great improvements. Previous to the middle of the century, it had been much neglected, and, like its kindred dialects, the German and the Danish, was but little esteemed in Europe. About that time JOHN IHRE, Professor of Belles Lettres in the University of Upsal, was commissioned, by Queen ULRICA ELEONORA, to translate into Swedish *The Ladies' Library*, by Sir RICHARD STEELE. In obeying this command, he was naturally led not only to study his native language, but also to compare it with the more polished tongue from which the translation was to be made. The result of these inquiries was an attempt to place the language of his country on a more respectable footing than it had before held. With this view he published his *Glossarium Sueco-Gothicum*, which displays great erudition, the talents of a master in criticism, and uncommon sagacity in detecting both the faults and the beauties which he wished to make known. In this work the author exhibits, with great skill, the analogy and etymology of the Swedish language; and may be regarded as standing with the highest in rank among its distinguished cultivators and reformers.

Since the time of Mr. IHRE other writers have employed their talents on the same subject. These writers have established rules of construction, corrected the orthography, discarded foreign phrases and corrupt modes of expression, and by producing works in a correct, elegant, and refined style, have done much to improve their native tongue. Among these, DAHLIN, BOTIN, GYLLENBORG, CREUTZE,

KLEWBERG, LEOPOLD, and LIDNER, are perhaps entitled to the most honourable mention, and furnish examples of Swedish style according to its latest and best improvements. In 1786 a literary association, under the name of the *Swedish Academy*, was established at Stockholm. The principal object of this institution is to cultivate the language of that country; with which view it is said to be preparing for publication a national *Grammar* and *Dictionary*.^s

RUSSIAN LANGUAGE.

The Russian Language, during the period under review, has also been much and successfully cultivated. This language, which is a dialect of the Sclavonian, was, at the beginning of the eighteenth century, in a wretchedly irregular and neglected condition, very few compositions of dignified character having then appeared in it. Since that time it has employed much of the attention of learned men; grammars and dictionaries have been formed, with many successive improvements; numerous translations from other languages have contributed greatly to enrich and polish it; the Russian academy has long been diligently engaged in its cultivation; and writers of taste have done much to confer upon it regularity and ornament. Previous to the year 1707 the alphabet of this language consisted of thirty-nine letters. In that year it was newly modified, and reduced to thirty. These are chiefly made up of Greek and Roman letters, together with some characters, to express sounds, which are peculiar to the Sclavonian tongue. Though the language of Russia is still imperfect,

^s See *A General View of Sweden*, by M. CATTEAU.

it is said, by those who have studied it, to be remarkably rich, harmonious, and energetic, and well fitted for every species of composition.*

Among the improvers of Russian style, in the last century, the first place is due to THEOPHANES PROKOPOVITCH, Archbishop of Novogorod, a gentleman of learning and taste, who, during the reign of PETER the Great, laboured much to promote, among his countrymen, a fondness for polite literature, and especially to encourage the study of their native tongue. He was followed by LOMONOSOF, a distinguished poet and historian. He, as well as THEOPHANES, was a Russian by birth, and is stiled the "great refiner" of the language of his country. Next to him stands SUMOROKOF, a distinguished dramatist, who displayed many beauties of composition, which were before unknown in the Russian language; and contributed greatly to the diffusion of a taste for poetry, and a zeal for philological and other polite acquirements. To these may be added the name of KHERASKOF, the author of the first *Epic Poem* in his native language, a work greatly admired by his countrymen, and the appearance of which may be considered as forming an era in the history of their poetry, and, generally, in the progress of their literary character.†

In order to spread a taste for literature among her subjects, CATHARINE II. in 1768, appointed a committee to order and superintend translations of the classics, and the best modern authors, into the Russian tongue; and made a liberal allowance for defraying the expense of the undertaking. In consequence of this order, a considerable number of the most esteemed Greek and Roman writers,

* COXE's *Travels into Russia*, &c. vol. ii. chap. viii. and also TOOKE's *View of the Russian Empire*.

† COXE's *Travels into Russia*. B. v. c. viii.

and some of the first class in the English, French, and German languages, became naturalized in her empire." Those who have any acquaintance with philology will readily perceive, that the attempt to transfer the contents of these rich, refined, and regular languages into one less cultivated, must always issue in communicating more or less of the excellences possessed by the former to the latter.

Besides the numerous and important improvements in the more cultivated languages, for which the eighteenth century is distinguished, we may also mention, as a peculiarity of the age, equally worthy of remark, the extensive knowledge which has been acquired, by learned philologists, within a few years past, of many other living languages, even some of the most barbarous and unpolished. The amount of information communicated by modern voyagers and travellers on subjects of this nature, is great and valuable. Among these STRAHLENBERG, SONNERAT, MARSDEN, THUNBERG, FORSTER, and many others, are entitled to honourable distinction.

The idea of tracing the origin and history of nations through the medium of inquiries into their respective languages, if not first conceived, was certainly first reduced to practice, to any considerable extent, in the century under review. It is believed that the first considerable specimen of an inquiry of this nature was given by Mr. JACOB BRYANT, of Great-Britain, a gentleman whose profound erudition, critical sagacity, and unwearied labour, are among the signal honours of the age.^w Nearly

^u COXE's *Travels into Russia*.

^w It is impossible for any friend to virtue and sound learning to pronounce the name of this veteran in literature without veneration. In his *Observations and Inquiries relating to various parts of Ancient History*, and in

about the same time appeared the celebrated and voluminous work of M. COURT DE GEBELIN, before mentioned, in which, with great learning, but with perhaps less judgment, he has investigated the history of nations through the same medium.*

Large and curious collections of languages remarkably abounded in the eighteenth century. Among these the collection of J. LORENZO HERVAS, a native of Spain, but residing at Rome, deserves respectful notice. This learned man, in his great work, entitled *Idea del Universo*, gave a general synopsis of all known languages, their affinities, differences, &c. of which the best judges have spoken in terms of high praise. Of later date, the *Philosophical and Critical Estimate of Fourteen Ancient and Modern European Languages*, by D. JENISCH, of Germany, is also a valuable acquisition to the student of philology.

But the most extensive collection of modern languages which the last age produced, was that formed, toward the close of it, by the learned academicians of St. Petersburg, in Russia. The Empress CATHARINE II. conceived the vast design of compiling an "Universal and Comparative Vocabulary of all Languages," and ordered such a work to be undertaken. Accordingly M. PALLAS, a distinguished member of the Imperial Academy of Sciences, assisted by a number of other learned men, engaged in the arduous task, and laid the first part of the work before the public in 1786, and another portion of it three years afterwards.

his *New System, or Analysis of Ancient Mythology*, he has displayed an extent, and a minuteness of information truly wonderful, perhaps unequalled by any other individual living; and a degree of critical acumen, and philosophic soberness of inquiry, joined with a love of truth, and especially of Evangelic truth, which entitle him to the lasting gratitude both of the philosopher and the christian.

* *Monde Primitif analysé et Comparé avec le Monde Moderne.* 9 tom.
4to.

This *Comparative Vocabulary*^y may justly be ranked among the wonders of the century. Specimens of so great a number of languages were certainly never before brought together by human diligence. And the work, while it reflects great honour on the illustrious editor, and his learned coadjutors, and on the public spirit of their employer and patron, the Empress, furnishes most instructive documents, not only towards the formation of an enlightened theory of language, but also for investigating the history of man.

The *Celtic* or *Gaelic* language was the object of much inquiry, by a number of learned men of the last century. Grammars and dictionaries of its different dialects were formed, and new light thrown on the structure and probable history of the language. In these inquiries PELLOUTIER, BULLER, JONES, MALLET, and SHAW were much and honourably distinguished. The *Gothic*, in several of its most important dialects, was also diligently and successfully investigated, during the last age, by WACHTER, SCHILTER, IHRE, LYE, and several other learned philologists.

Much valuable information was obtained, during the same period, concerning the languages of the *aboriginal* nations residing on the American continent. For collecting this information, and communicating it to the public, we are indebted to CHARLEVOIX, CARVER, ADAIR, LONG, CLAVIGERO, Reverend Mr. ZEISBERGER,^z Reverend Dr. ED-

^y *Linguarum totius Orbis Vocabularia Comparativa; Augustissimæ cura collecta. Lectionis Primæ, Linguas Europæ, et Asiæ complexæ, pars prior.* Petropol. 1786. 4to. *et Pars Secunda.* Petropol. 1789. 4to.

^z Mr. ZEISBERGER was a respectable missionary, sent by the *United Brethren* to preach the gospel among the Indians. His work referred to is an *Essay of a Delaware-Indian, and English Spelling-Book*, printed at Philadelphia in 1776. Besides this gentleman, several other persons, belonging to the same religious communion, have contributed much to the elucidation of Indian languages. Among these, Mr. PYRLÆUS, many years

WARDS,^a and many other gentlemen of observation and diligence. Mr. JEFFERSON, the President of the United States, has also made much inquiry into the languages of the American Indians, and devoted considerable attention to the collection of specimens. But there is certainly no individual to whom we are under so many obligations for investigating these languages, and presenting rich vocabularies to the public, as Professor BARTON, of Philadelphia, whose name we have had occasion to mention so frequently, and with so much respect, in several of the preceding chapters of this work. This gentleman has made large collections of Indian languages,^b which he has, with great learning and ingenuity, compared with each other, and with some of the languages of the eastern continent. By these investigations he has, not only in his own opinion, but also in the judgment of many of his best informed readers, satisfactorily proved, *that there is but one radical language among the Indians on the American Continent; and that the nations of America and those of Asia have a common origin.*^c

ago a missionary to some of the American tribes, and Mr. HECKEWELDER, who at this time holds an important station in a western mission, deserve to be mentioned with particular distinction, and with many acknowledgments, for their unwearied and intelligent inquiries on this subject.

^a JONATHAN EDWARDS, D. D. late President of Union College, at Schenectady; the excellent Son of a still more illustrious Father, whose name was mentioned in a former chapter. Besides the great learning and talents displayed by this gentleman on various theological subjects, which will be noticed in their proper place, he published *Observations on the Language of the Mubhekancew Indians*, &c. New-Haven, 1788, in which, with a number of ingenious remarks on the structure and genius of the language, he gave some curious specimens of its vocabulary.

^b See *New Views of the Origin of the Tribes and Nations of America*, 8vo. 1798, second edition.

^c The following passage from Dr. BARTON's work is thought worthy of being inserted at length:

"The inference from these facts and observations is obvious and interesting: that hitherto we have not discovered more than one radical language in the two Americas; or, in other words, that hitherto we have not discovered in America any two, or more, languages between which

The enemies of Revelation, half a century ago, laid great stress, not only on the diversity of *complexion and figure*, but also on the *variety of languages* among men, as arguments for discrediting the sacred history. Both these arguments, by later investigations, have been clearly refuted. Indeed, modern inquiries into the languages of different nations, instead of giving countenance to the rejection of the sacred volume, have rather served to illustrate and confirm its historical records; for they have resulted, if not in complete proof, at least in establishing the highest probability, that all languages bear an affinity to each other; that they may all be traced to a common stock; and that we have reason to conclude, independently of the Mosaic history, that the human race sprang from a single pair.

we are incapable of detecting affinities (and those often very striking) either in America, or in the old world. Nothing is more common than for Indian traders, interpreters, or other persons, to assert, that such and such languages bear no relation to each other; because, it seems, that the persons speaking them cannot always understand one another. When these very languages, however, are compared, their relations, or affinities, are found out. It is by such comparisons that I have ascertained, that the language of the Delawares is the language of such a great number of tribes in America. It is by such comparisons, that future inquirers may discover, that in all the vast countries of America there is but one language: such inquiries, perhaps, will even prove, or render it highly probable, that all the languages of the earth bear some affinity to each other. I have already discovered some striking affinities between the language of the Yolofo (one of the blackest nations of Africa) and certain American tribes. What a field for investigation does this last mentioned circumstance open! Whilst philosophers are busied in investigating the influence of climate and food, and other physical agents, in varying the figure and complexion of mankind, they should not neglect inquiries into the resemblances of all languages. The farther we push our researches of this kind, the more we discover the proofs, if not of the absolute derivation of all mankind from one pair, at least of the ancient intercourse of all the nations of the earth."

CHAPTER XVI.

PHILOSOPHY OF LANGUAGE.

UNDER this head it is intended to present a brief and general view of those inquiries into the *Origin and Progress of Language*, and of *Universal Grammar*, which have been pursued with so much success in modern times. These, it is believed, are in a great measure peculiar to the period under consideration; or, at least, have been conducted more extensively and more successfully than ever before.

The *Origin* of language is a question concerning which disputes have been long and warmly maintained; some contending that it is an invention of man, gradually growing from rude inarticulate cries, into a regular, polished, and systematic form, in the progress of civilization; and others asserting that it must have been revealed from heaven. This controversy arose many centuries before that which is now under review; but in no preceding age was it ever considered in a manner so extensive, learned, and satisfactory. The former opinion was defended with great zeal, erudition, and ingenuity, by Lord MONBODDO,^d of North-Britain; by Father SIMON, M. VOLTAIRE, and the Abbé CONDILLAC, of France; and by M.

^d Lord MONBODDO supposes that language is not natural to man; that men *sang* before they *spoke*; that before they arrived at the point at which language began to be used, they conversed together by signs and inarticulate cries; that from these latter language was gradually formed; that all languages are derived from *Egypt*, the great source of science and cultivation; that the Egyptian language is the same with the *Sanscrit*, or sacred language of India, of which the Greek is a dialect. See his *Origin and Progress of Language*.

HERDER,^e and others, of Germany. The latter doctrine was adopted, and maintained, during the period under consideration, by M. SUSSMILCH, Dr. BEATTIE, Dr. BLAIR, and by many other writers, who have treated either formally or indirectly on the subject.

The true nature and philosophy of language, or the principles of *Universal Grammar*, seem to have eluded the inquiries of the most sagacious for many centuries. A multitude of writers of the first character, from PLATO down to LEIBNITZ, treated largely and ably on the subject; but they did little more than to copy the mistakes of each other, or to present a succession of delusive systems, which would not bear the test of more enlightened examination. Though this may appear strange to a careless or superficial inquirer, yet when the extreme difficulty of the subject is duly appreciated, it will no longer be a matter of surprise that so many great men should, in their investigations, have gone so wide of the mark.

After the many preceding failures to examine with success the philosophy of language, Mr. LOCKE undertook the task, in his great work on the *Human Understanding*.^f But while he threw much light on the doctrines of mind, and treated more successfully than any preceding writer of the composition and use of terms, he did little to advance the knowledge of universal grammar. His successor, Dr. HARTLEY,^g assuming different ground, attempted also to form an analysis of language, and to present a philosophical view of the subject. But, like his predecessors, his labours served only

^e HERDER accounts for the origin of language on mechanical principles, or by combining the organical structure of the body with the faculties of the mind which inhabit it, and the circumstances in which the being is placed, in whom this organization and these faculties are united.

^f *Essay on Human Understanding*. Vol. II. book iii.

^g *Observations on Man*. Vol. I. chap. iii. sect. 1.

to show more clearly than ever, the importance, the profundity, and the difficulty of the inquiry.

Dr. HARTLEY was followed by Mr. JAMES HARRIS, a learned English gentleman, who, in his *Hermes*, professed to treat this subject in a formal and systematic manner.^b He acknowledges himself to be indebted for some of the leading principles of his system to APOLLONIUS, a learned grammarian of Alexandria; but he is, perhaps, still more indebted to Professor PERIZONIUS, a celebrated philologist of Leyden, who, early in the century, in his notes on *Sanctii Minerva*, delivered nearly the same doctrines; so nearly, indeed, that good judges have denied to Mr. HARRIS the honour of having made any important improvement upon them.

The system of grammar taught in *Hermes* is the following. The author divides all words into two grand classes, called *Principals* and *Accessories*. The former he subdivides into two branches, *Substantives* and *Attributives*; the latter into two others, *Definitives* and *Connectives*; so that under one of these four species, *Substantives*, *Attributives*, *Definitives*, or *Connectives*, he includes all the varieties of words. He considers articles, conjunctions, and prepositions, as having no signification of their own, but as deriving a meaning only from their connection with other terms. On these leading principles his boasted fabric rests.

Mr. HARRIS was doubtless a learned and ingenious man; but as some of the best judges utterly deny that his doctrines of general grammar are either original or just, it is not probable that they will long be considered as doing him much honour. His work, however, was, for many years, received with high approbation, not only in the na-

^b See *Hermes, or a philosophical Inquiry concerning Universal Grammar*, 1751.

tive country of the author, but also on the continent of Europe, and has, even yet, many ardent admirers.

About the time that Mr. HARRIS laid his doctrines before the public, the philosophy of grammar was an object of laborious and learned inquiry at the celebrated Greek school of Leyden. In these investigations the great SCHULTENS, and after him Professor HEMSTERHUIS, and his disciples, made a distinguished figure. SCHULTENS examined the derivation and structure of the Greek language with great care, and particularly gave some new and interesting views of Greek particles. Afterwards Professor HEMSTERHUIS undertook to derive the whole Greek language from a few short primitives, on a plan entirely original. His speculations were carried further, and received new light, by means of the inquiries of his pupils VALKENAER, LENNEP, and others. Though the labours of these great philologists were chiefly confined to the Greek language, yet they were intended to throw light on Universal Grammar, and to educe principles applicable to all languages. To give even a brief account of the various opinions which they taught would require a more intimate acquaintance with them than the writer of this retrospect possesses, and would lead to a detail inconveniently and disproportionably extended. It is sufficient to say, that though they failed to form a fair, consistent, and regular fabric, yet they furnished many insulated facts, and useful materials, and analysed many words and classes of terms, in a manner which did them great honour, and rendered important aid to the philosophical grammarian.ⁱ

ⁱ For some further information concerning the celebrated Dutch etymologists above mentioned, see *Observations on the Nature of Demonstrative Evidence*, by THOMAS BEDDOES, 8vo. 1793. No man can look into the

The Dutch etymologists were followed by Lord MONBODDO, who, in his *Origin and Progress of Language*, gave some general views of the philosophy of grammar. Like PLATO and ARISTOTLE, to whose doctrines, especially those of the latter, he looked with the profound veneration of a disciple, he divided language into two parts, *Noun* and *Verb*, and endeavoured to bring all the other parts of speech under these general denominations. But while he adopts this division of words, in one part of his work, he retracts it in others, and admits principles wholly inconsistent with the general doctrine. So that, though he must be acknowledged to have given some learned and ingenious views of language, yet the praise of having formed an original, consistent, and satisfactory system of philosophical grammar must be wholly denied him.

In 1786^j this perplexing and mysterious subject, which had so long eluded the researches of philosophers, was unfolded by an English philologist of great acuteness and erudition, in a manner which the ablest grammarians have generally and justly praised. In that year was published the celebrated ΕΠΕΑ ΠΙΤΕΡΟΕΝΤΑ, or *Diversions of Purley*,^k by Mr. JOHN HORNE TOOKE, a work in which, as good judges have asserted, “ by a single flash of

writings of Dr. BEDDOES without discovering marks of a vigorous, original, and active mind. But are the precipitancy and decision with which he pronounces on some of the most important and difficult questions which occur to the human mind, and the satyrical, contemptuous severity which he indulges towards some of the greatest benefactors to science, consistent with the cautious and candid spirit of philosophy?

^j As early as 1778, Mr. TOOKE, in his letter to Mr. DUNNING, laid before the public the substance of the *sixth*, *seventh*, *eighth*, and *ninth* chapters of the *Diversions of Purley*, printed eight years afterwards.

^k The Greek scholar will immediately perceive, that the first part of this whimsical title signifies *winged words*, and refers to the author's doctrine of derivation. The second part alludes to the celebrated seat of President BRADSHAW, at which he amused himself with the composition of the work.

light," he has done more to explain the whole theory of language than any, or than all his predecessors. He seems at length, indeed, to have terminated the dispute, and to have dispelled the darkness which, for so many ages, had rested on the subject.

The leading doctrine of Mr. TOOKE is, that there are only two *necessary* parts of speech, viz. the *Noun* and the *Verb*, and that all other words, whether *adverbs*, *conjunctions*, *prepositions*, &c. are to be considered as *corruptions* or *abbreviations* of these two; and, of course, that the latter classes of words, instead of being in themselves, as both Mr. HARRIS and Lord MONBODDO had taught, mere unmeaning sounds, might be traced to a distinct and sensible signification. In dividing all words into two grand classes, Mr. TOOKE agrees with the plan which Lord MONBODDO adopted from PLATO and ARISTOTLE; but with respect to the remaining details of his system he is original, and presents a much more consistent and philosophical view of the subject than any preceding writer. In a few small particulars also, the doctrines of the *Diversions of Purley* had been anticipated by the learned Dutch etymologists before mentioned; but the points of coincidence between them are so few and unimportant as to take away nothing material from Mr. TOOKE of the honour of originality.'

l The author of *Επεα Πλεγμένα* lately published the first volume, of a new and enlarged edition of his work, intended to consist of three vols. 4to. It is to be regretted, however, that instead of bringing new support to his theory, or pursuing the investigation further than he had before carried it, he has filled up the additional space which the enlargement of his plan afforded him, with nothing more than caustic strictures on the writings of his opponents, and unseasonable exhibitions of his political opinions. Mr. TOOKE and Dr. BEDDOES, in their respective styles of writing, bear a strong resemblance to each other. It is not improbable that the latter has made the great philologist his model. They have both great merit in their way; but it is to be hoped that in several attributes of their composition they will have few imitators.

The general doctrine of Mr. TOOKE, especially so far as it applies to the English language, has been pronounced, by the best judges, to be fully established; and the probability is strong that it applies with equal exactness and felicity to all other languages. So far as they have been investigated the result is decidedly in favour of such an opinion. The inquiries of the great etymologists of Leyden, before mentioned, though they differ from Mr. TOOKE in many respects, furnish, at the same time, strong confirmation of his doctrine. But it is plain that the absolute proof of the universal truth of this doctrine would require an extent of acquaintance with languages, which can never be acquired by any individual, and which, to be collected by numbers, will require a long course of patient labour. It is to be regretted that so few philologists have pursued the path marked out by Mr. TOOKE, and that none have been found to extend the inquiries which he commenced, into regions which he was unable to explore. Even some of the latest writers on the continent of Europe, who have undertaken to philosophize on the subject of language, proceed chiefly upon old and exploded principles; and appear either not to be acquainted with, or not to embrace the discoveries of the sagacious Briton, whose work forms so important an era in the history of philosophical grammar.

Besides the great theorists above mentioned, the philosophy of language has been treated, with great learning and ingenuity, during the period under consideration, by Drs. CAMPBELL^m and BEATTIE,ⁿ before mentioned; and by President DE BROSSES,^o M. BEAUZEE,^p the Abbé GIRARD,

^m *Philosophy of Rhetoric*, 2 vols. 8vo.

ⁿ *Theory of Language*, published in his *Dissertations*, 2 vols. 8vo. 1783.

^o *Formation Mechanique des Langues*.

^p *Grammaire Generale*, 2 tom. 8vo. 1767.

the Abbé CONDILLAC,^g and M. COURT DE GEBELIN,^r of France. The opinions taught by the celebrated Scottish professors are too generally known to render a detailed view of them here either requisite or proper; while, with respect to the doctrines of the learned French philologists, the author has too little information to attempt even a general sketch.

These inquiries into the philosophy of grammar have had, it is believed, an useful effect on many modern writings, and, with respect to their probable influence hereafter, may be regarded as of great value. Every investigation which has for its objects the structure, the analysis, and the real improvement of language, doubtless tends, in proportion to its success, to advance the interests of education, to promote every department of science, especially the science of the human mind, and, in general, to increase the happiness of man.

CHAPTER XVII.

HISTORY.

THE historic Muse, during the eighteenth century, had many votaries. From the time of TACITUS to the commencement of this period, she had been supplicated by multitudes, but with little success. After the revival of letters, the first historical productions of respectable character were composed in Italy; but with these the author is

^g See the first vol. of his *Cours d'Etude*, in 16 vols. Paris 1775.
^r *Hist. de la Parole*, and *Grammaire Universale*.

too little acquainted to compare them with subsequent works of the same class. It may be asserted, however, that previous to the age under review, no historians had arisen, for many centuries, who might be compared with the illustrious models of Greece and Rome, without incurring a sort of literary profanity. But early in the century which is the period of this work, the prospect brightened. Specimens of history began to appear so much superior to the uncouth and meagre compilations of preceding ages, as to inspire a just hope that a more auspicious era was at hand.

There are several circumstances belonging to the historical productions of the eighteenth century which are peculiar to this period, and which distinguish it from all preceding times. An attempt will be made to take notice of some of the more obvious and important of these circumstances in the following pages.

The *number* of historical works produced in the course of the age, is the first circumstance of a peculiar kind which attracts our notice. No former period, certainly, can be compared to this with respect to the multiplication of historical records. Scarcely any portion of time, or the affairs of any nation, or the lives of any conspicuous monarchs, have escaped the notice of some writer who aspired to the rank of an historian. Indeed, this, like every other department of modern composition, has become, within a few years past, so crowded with adventurers, as to render the enumeration of them next to an impossible task.

The historians of the first class in the eighteenth century presented their readers with a greater portion of *truth*, and instructive matter, than any preceding writers of the same class. The works of the best Greek historians are notoriously corrupted by a large mixture of fable. The same remark

may be applied, though not to an equal extent, to the finest Roman models. The best historical works of modern Europe are certainly entitled to more credit, with respect to authenticity. It is not meant to be asserted that they are free from misrepresentation and fable, with which they all, in different degrees, abound; but merely that they contain much *less* of these than their predecessors. The reasons of this superiority are obvious. The ancient historians could only consult manuscripts and traditional records. The former were comparatively rare, difficult of access, liable to mutilation, and other injuries, and not easily corrected, when erroneous, by collations with many others which detailed the same facts. The latter is a source of information so obviously imperfect and fabulous, that no prudent writer, in ordinary cases, would receive materials from it with confidence. The stores of information open to modern historians, are more numerous, rich, and authentic. The art of *printing* has multiplied records beyond all former example. The increased intercourse between distant countries, and the facility with which documents may be collected from every civilized quarter of the globe, also present a new and most important advantage to the modern compiler of history. Accordingly, this class of writers, in the course of the century under review, admitted less fiction into their narratives; stated truths in a more luminous, connected and satisfactory manner; and went, in general, more deeply, and successfully into the relations of political causes and effects, than any of their predecessors.^s

^s This remark is meant to be a general one; but it admits of some exceptions. The histories of CLARENDON and BURNET, in the preceding century, may be considered as vying, in point of *authenticity*, with the best subsequent works of the same kind. They are both said to be partial; but what book, or what mind was ever completely free from partiality?

We have at least one instance on record, of an eloquent Greek historian attending the Olympic Games, for the express purpose of publicly reciting his history to the assembled multitude. It is natural to conclude that a work formed with a view to such an exhibition would be rather an agreeable *poem*, accommodated to popular prejudices, and addressed to popular feelings, than a faithful record of facts, for the instruction of posterity. The historians of the present day lay their authorities before the reader, and their caution is excited, and their fidelity rendered more vigilant by the recollection that the same sources of information are open to others, and that contemporary rivals, and many classes of readers, will sit in judgment on the truth of their narratives.

Another great improvement, which began in the eighteenth century to characterize the more formal and dignified works on civil history, is connecting the progress of literature, science, arts, and manners, with the chain of civil and military transactions. Very imperfect views of these collateral, but important and interesting objects of inquiry, are to be found in any histories of an earlier date. But of late years, and particularly within the last half century, the best historians have interwoven with their narratives of political and military events, much amusing and valuable information, concerning the religion, learning, laws, customs, trade, and every other object tending to throw light on the progress, genius, and condition of different communities. The importance of this improvement will be readily appreciated by those who love to study the course of improvement which the human mind has exhibited; or who reflect how intimately revolutions, and other national events are often connected with the current of literary, moral, and religious opinions; and how

much a knowledge of one is frequently fitted to elucidate the other.

The author to whom we are probably more indebted than to any other individual, for introducing and recommending this improvement in civil history, is M. VOLTAIRE. His *Age of Louis XIV.* was one of the first specimens of a work upon this plan. The attention and admiration which it excited, and the degree in which it has been imitated and surpassed, by many succeeding historians, are generally known.

The best historians of the eighteenth century differ from those of the same class in ancient times, in excluding *speeches* and other extraneous matter from the body of their works. This practice it is well known was much in vogue among the ancients, and was an important part of the *poetical* and even *dramatic* structure at which they appear to have aimed in their historical compositions.^t The exclusion of every thing of this kind from the best models of history which the last age produced, deserves to be mentioned as a modern improvement. Connected with this circumstance is the practice, also recently introduced, of subjoining to historical works, in the form of appendices, those speeches, state-papers, and other documents, for the support or illustration of their narratives, which would have encumbered or disfigured the text; but which, at the same time, lay open to the reader the sources of information, and augment the sum of instruction and amusement.

Another point of difference between the most respectable historians of the eighteenth century and their predecessors, consists in the superior ex-

^t Lord MONBODDO pronounces that no man can write history as it ought to be written without the introduction of *speeches*; and that excluding them is one of the numerous symptoms of literary degeneracy which characterize modern times.

cellence of the *style* employed by the former. It is not intended to institute a comparison with respect to this particular, between the best ancient models of history and those of modern times. But it can be doubted by none that the first class of historical works produced in the last age far transcend in excellence of manner, every specimen in this department of composition, which, for fifteen centuries before, had been given to the world.

The first English historian who seems to have paid any attention to style, and who rises to any thing like the dignity of this species of composition, is LORD CLARENDON. The histories which preceded his, though many of them invaluable as repositories of facts, were dull and uninteresting compilations, thrown together without taste or skill, and apparently without even an attempt to excel with respect to style. He had the honour of introducing an higher kind of historical writing among his countrymen; and his work may doubtless be pronounced to have formed a remarkable era in this branch of English literature. Though his sentences are tediously long and involved, and his narratives equally prolix and perplexed; yet he wrote remarkably well for his time, and deserves an honourable place among the improvers of historical style. After CLARENDON, towards the close of the seventeenth century, came Bishop BURNET, who, though inferior to his predecessor in dignity, went beyond him in sprightliness and perspicuity. He was accused of being partial to the houses of Orange and Hanover; but with respect to manner, and general authenticity, he is entitled to much praise, and certainly contributed something to the improvement of English historical style.

On entering the eighteenth century, RAPIN appears as the first respectable historian. His *His-*

tory of England, written in the French language, was first published at the Hague, in 1727, and soon afterwards translated into English by TINDAL. Though RAPIN was by no means master of an agreeable style; and though his zeal to be as full and accurate as possible, led him to protract his work to a tedious length; yet he is entitled to the honour of having compiled one of the most complete, impartial, and satisfactory histories extant. He was one of the last historians of any conspicuity who loaded the text of his work with *speeches* and *state-papers*.

In 1758 another *History of England* was published by Dr. SMOLLET. This production is scarcely equal to the talents of the writer, being compiled in great haste, and rather with a view to profit than fame, and with scarcely any attention to original sources of information. Still with regard to style, it was a considerable step in the course of improvement, and exhibited excellences in this respect superior to any preceding English historian. Dr. SMOLLET was followed by his countryman Mr. HUME, who made trial of his distinguished powers in the same field, and with splendid success. He far excelled all his predecessors in beauty and excellence of historical style, and at once raised the character of his country, in this branch of literature, to a very high rank. His work, indeed, is charged with glaring partiality; and that spirit of hostility to religion which he was known to possess too frequently appears, whenever, in the course of his narrative, a pretext for this purpose was presented. It must even, further be allowed, that, with respect to style, in which his great excellence lies, he is not without considerable faults. But in the choice and arrangement of his materials, and especially in native ease, spirit, and force of language, he has no equal among modern historians,

and has certainly furnished a specimen of history which will bear a very honourable comparison with the illustrious models of Greece and Rome.

Soon after Mr. HUME's publication, his countryman and contemporary, Dr. ROBERTSON, gave to the public his *History of Scotland*, which was followed by the *History of CHARLES V.* and the *History of America*. This gentleman unquestionably deserves a place among the greatest historians of the age, if he do not occupy the very first station. Though his narrative is not equal to Mr. HUME's in ease and spirit, yet he exceeds him in uniform purity, dignity, and elegance of diction. In these respects Dr. ROBERTSON may be pronounced to stand at the head of all modern historians, and perhaps to have no superior of any age.

In enumerating the first class of English historical writers, Mr. GIBBON comes next in order. The *History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* forms an interesting article in the catalogue of modern historical works. The insidious and malignant zeal to discredit religion so often manifested in this work, is well known. And the artificial structure, the circuitous obscurity, and the meretricious ornaments of the style are no less generally acknowledged. Notwithstanding, therefore, all the learning, and other splendid accomplishments of this celebrated historian, he is far from having furnished a model that can be safely imitated, or conferred any real improvement on this department of English literature. Nor is his work less hostile to all the interests of decorum and virtue, than to the best rules of taste and criticism.^v

^v Those who would see a faithful exhibition of the partiality, the want of regard to truth, and the shameful obscenity which abound in Mr. GIBBON's celebrated work, especially in the fourth, fifth and sixth volumes of the quarto edition, will do well to consult the very able review of this part of the work, by Mr. WHITAKER, first published in a British literary journal, and since reprinted in a separate volume. 8vo. 1791.

Though the three last mentioned writers are generally represented as holding the first rank amongst English historians, there are some other names, worthy of honourable distinction, belonging to the period of this retrospect. Lord LYTTLETON'S *History of HENRY II.* has long and deservedly sustained a very high character. Dr. GOLDSMITH'S *Histories of Rome and England* are written in the agreeable style of that popular author. The *History of England*, by Mrs. MACAULAY, is a very respectable specimen of female talents, and holds a conspicuous place in the list of English historical compositions. Besides these the histories of Dr. HENRY, Professor STUART, Dr. WATSON, Mr. MITFORD, Dr. GILLIES, Dr. COOTE, Mr. FERGUSON, Dr. RUSSELL, Mr. ANDREWS, Mr. BELSHAM, and several others, have received much praise. To designate the comparative and peculiar merits of each of these would lead to a discussion altogether beyond the limits of this chapter. It is sufficient to say that, with different views, and various grades and kinds of talents, they have all presented the public with works which do them honour, and which occupy an important space in the annals of English literature.

But it was not only in Great-Britain that historians of an highly respectable character arose in the course of the last age. Most of the countries of Europe, and especially those distinguished by the cultivation of letters, may boast of a number who hold an elevated rank in the same department of literature.

The historians of France, during this period, were numerous and distinguished. Early in the century M. ROLLIN, by his *Ancient History*,^w estab-

^w The respect every where paid by M. ROLLIN, in the course of his history, to the government and providence of God, and to Revelation, deserves particular notice, and is one of the numerous characteristics of

lished his character as an interesting and instructive writer, and has been more generally perused and praised than most other historians of the age. He was followed by M. VERTOT, who, in several historical works, displayed considerable talents, especially in gracefulness of manner, and in the happy art of rendering his narrative entertaining. Next in order occur the numerous and extensive historical works of M. VOLTAIRE. There can be no question that this writer, in style, in comprehension of mind, in the philosophical cast of his inquiries, and especially in his reflections, exceeded all the former historians which his country had produced. But it requires only a slight acquaintance with his works to perceive that he is partial, uncandid, grossly defective in authenticity, and disposed, upon every pretext, to depart from probability, truth, and decorum, for the purpose of reviling the religion of Christ.* The Abbé MILLOT succeeded VOLTAIRE, and in his *Elements of General History*, an elegant and popular work, raised a monument to the honour of himself and his country. The Abbé RAYNAL, in the *History of the East and West Indies*, presented the public with a production, which, though not generally respected as authentic, drew much of the attention of the literary world.^y To these it would be unpardonable

this great work, which recommend it to the general perusal and regard of those who love truth, virtue and piety.

* The degree of credit due to M. VOLTAIRE, as a recorder of facts, will appear in the perusal of a work entitled the *Letters of certain Jews*, &c. written by the Abbé GUENNE, Professor of Rhetoric in the University of Paris, and published about the year 1770. In this work the author is enabled, by his profound erudition, his vigorous and penetrating mind, and his talents for mild, but most efficient satire, to place the historian of *Ferney* in a point of light by no means honourable either to the accuracy of his learning, or to his love of truth.

y The Abbé RAYNAL's work is said, by Mr. BRYAN EDWARDS, to have no more title to the character of authentic history than *Robinson Crusoe*. This is, probably, an extravagant mode of expressing what is no doubt true, that the Abbé is often chargeable with taking his statements from imagination rather than from authentic records.

not to add the justly celebrated *History of the Reign of Queen Elizabeth*, by Mademoiselle KERALIO,^z which has been pronounced by good judges to be an impartial and elegant production. Several other respectable historians appeared in France, towards the close of the century, who would deserve to be mentioned in connection with the foregoing names, did our plan admit of entering into further particulars.

In Germany no historical work deserving of high praise, with respect to arrangement, structure and style, had appeared prior to the middle of the century under consideration. Since that time the successive works of SCHMIDT, MULLER, HABERLIN, HEINRICH, SCHILLER, WAGNER, GALLETI, BUCHHOLZ, BECK, MEINERS, BACKZO, and several others, have raised the character of their country with respect to this species of composition. Of these it is believed that SCHILLER, in ease, spirit and interest of narrative, and in correctness and elegance of style, stands at the head of the list of German historians.

In Sweden, BENZELIUS and WILDE, soon after the commencement of the century, first undertook to present the history of their country in a connected and agreeable form. They were succeeded by DAHLIN, who pursued the same course with more taste and success. About the same time appeared the work of BOTIN, which is much distinguished for the excellence both of its matter and style. Besides these, a still larger performance of LAGERBRING deserves a respectful notice among the improved specimens of history which that country produced during the period of this retrospect. To the above names may be added those of CELSIUS and HALLENBERG, who have also been

^z *History of the Reign of Elizabeth Queen of England*, 4 vols. 8vo. 1785.

considerably praised, in their own country, for several historical compositions.^a

The historians of the rest of Europe, during this period, though numerous, were few of them extensively known, or highly esteemed. The *History of Denmark*, by M. P. F. SUHM, is said to be a work indicating considerable erudition and talents. The *History of Mexico*, by CLAVIGERO, and the *History of the New World*, by MUNOZ, as they supplied, in some degree, important *desiderata* in the republic of letters, may be regarded as among the most interesting of the numerous volumes which might be recounted, did our limits admit of such details.

On the whole, it is believed that Great-Britain produced the best models of historical composition of which the eighteenth century can boast. Though some of the French historians, and particularly M. VOLTAIRE, seem to have led the way in forming the present improved taste in this species of writing; yet there can be no doubt but that their British successors went far beyond them, and produced histories which, in the choice and arrangement of facts, in dignity, purity, and elegance of style, and in general authenticity, display an assemblage of excellences which were never before equalled in any age or country. Next to these the historians of France and Germany justly claim superior rank. The other countries of Europe stand in an order, with respect to degrees of excellence, which it is neither easy nor necessary to adjust.

Though America has not yet produced historians who can vie with the first class of British models, yet she has given birth to a number quite proportioned to her literary age and standing, and some which will do her lasting honour. These all

^a CATTEAU'S *View of Sweden*, chap. xxiii. 8vo. Lond. 1790.

belong to the eighteenth century. The first historical work published by a native American, was the *History of Virginia*, by the Reverend WILLIAM STITH, President of William and Mary College. This gentleman was learned, collected his materials with a singularly minute care, and, it is said, may be relied on, as exceedingly faithful and accurate; but his manner is inelegant, and uninteresting. STITH was followed by Mr. BEVERLY, who wrote the history of the same Province, up to the year 1700. If his predecessor were too minute and tedious, BEVERLY ran into the opposite extreme, and failed of being so instructive or pleasing as he might otherwise have been, from his excessive brevity.

The next American who displayed his talents in this department of literary labour was CADWALLADER COLDEN, Esquire, Lieutenant-Governor of the Province of New-York, who was before mentioned as a respectable physician, botanist, and astronomer. His *History of the Five Nations of Indians* is another monument of his talents and diligence. In 1756 WILLIAM SMITH, Esquire, published his *History of the Province of New-York*, a work which, though executed at an early period of the life of the author, and in great haste, yet affords a large and very valuable amount of instruction to the student of American history. In 1765 Mr. SAMUEL SMITH published a *History of New-Jersey*, which appears to be a judicious and faithful compilation. A few years afterwards Governor HUTCHINSON presented to the public his *History of Massachusetts*, which holds a respectable rank among the historical productions of this country. He was followed by Dr. DAVID RAMSAY, of South-Carolina, who, in his *History of the American Revolution*, and his *History of the Revolution in South-Carolina*, has done honour to

his fidelity, diligence, and literary taste. In 1792 the Reverend Dr. JEREMY BELKNAP completed his *History of New-Hampshire*, a work which will long be considered as an honourable testimonial of the industry and judgment of the author.^b Two years afterwards Dr. SAMUEL WILLIAMS gave to the public his *History of Vermont*, which indicates an ingenious and philosophical mind, and contains much useful information. The next American history is that of the *District of Maine*, by JAMES SULLIVAN, Esquire, which affords a considerable portion of interesting instruction to the student of American history. In 1797 appeared the *Civil and Ecclesiastical History of Connecticut*, by the Reverend Dr. BENJAMIN TRUMBULL, a performance which, for the fulness of the information which it exhibits, and the minute accuracy and fidelity manifested in every part of the narrative, deserves high praise.^c In the same year was published a *History of Pennsylvania*, by Mr. ROBERT PROUD, which, though not distinguished by much taste in the selection and arrangement of its materials, nor by the correctness or elegance of its style, is yet entitled to credit as a faithful compilation of facts, especially as it presents a concise view of the society of *Friends*, and a very satisfactory account of the settlement and progress of that denomination of Christians in Pennsylvania. The last important work of this kind given to the

^b Dr. BELKNAP will long be respectfully remembered by the friends of literature in Massachusetts, and in the United States. Besides presenting the public with works which must be considered among the best specimens of history and biography which our country has produced, there were few men in America more learned, of more solid and useful talents, or more devoted to the establishment and support of literary and scientific institutions. He who shall attempt hereafter to give a view of the progress of literature in New-England, and especially in Massachusetts, must assign a conspicuous place to the character and labours of Dr. BELKNAP.

^c This gentleman is now engaged in compiling a *History of the United States*, on which he has bestowed much time and labour, and of which those who know his fidelity and accuracy, entertain high expectations.

American public is a *Continuation of the History of Massachusetts*, by GEORGE R. MINOT, Esquire, of that State, a work of considerable merit, and which it is hoped the ingenious author will be induced soon to complete.^d

A new plan of history was introduced, a few years ago, by the Reverend Dr. HENRY, of Edinburgh, in his *History of Great-Britain*,^e in which the civil, military, naval, commercial, constitutional, and scientific departments of his work are severally placed in distinct chapters, and while their mutual influence is stated, may each be read separate from the rest, through the whole period embraced by the historian. In this plan he was followed, with some improvements, by Mr. JAMES P. ANDREWS, whose premature death the literary world has much reason to regret; and to whom it is hoped some successor will appear as competent to tread in his steps as he was in those of Dr. HENRY.

The mode of writing history in the form of *Letters* is, in a great measure, if not entirely, peculiar to the century under consideration. This form of historical composition, it is believed, was first introduced into the English language by Lord LYTTLETON, and was afterwards adopted by Dr. GOLDSMITH, Dr. RUSSELL, and others. That it presents some advantages, chiefly on the score of that ease and familiarity admissible in the epis-

^d Since the above was written, this gentleman, to the regret of all who knew him, has been removed by death. His learning and talents, combined with a degree of modesty, urbanity, and dignity of character truly rare, endeared him to a large and respectable circle of friends, and rendered him one of the ornaments of his native State. Seldom has the memory of any man been more highly respected, or more fondly cherished by his acquaintance, than that of GEORGE RICHARDS MINOT.

^e Some years before the appearance of Dr. HENRY's work, Dr. MOSHEIM had adopted a plan somewhat similar in his *Ecclesiastical History*. Dr. HENRY is entitled to the honour of having introduced this plan into *civil* history, and of having conferred upon it several important improvements.

tolary style, is obvious; but whether it be consistent with the proper structure, continued narrative, and true dignity of history, may certainly be questioned.

A new species of historical composition to which the age under review has given rise, is that which is commonly called *Statistical History*. The word *Statistics*, as the name of a peculiar kind of inquiry, was first introduced into the English language by Sir JOHN SINCLAIR. He derived it from the German writers, who have long employed the term to signify those topics of inquiry which interest the *statist*, or *statesman*. That is a proper *Statistical* history of any country which exhibits every thing relating thereto, which the *rulers of the State* are concerned to examine and know. Those who have given histories of this kind in Germany are numerous. The first and most conspicuous *Statistical* historian in the annals of English literature is Sir JOHN SINCLAIR, who has collected, in this form, an amount of information concerning North-Britain, which does much honour not only to the individuals who furnished the information, but also to the industry and public spirit of the editor.^f

The execution of a plan of *Universal History*, to any considerable and useful extent, was first accomplished in the eighteenth century. It is certain that English literature can boast of no respectable production of this kind before the commencement of the period in question. Since that time works of this nature have been compiled in various parts of Europe, and some of them are entitled to high praise, with respect both to their fulness and their judicious structure.

^f Proposals have been published for the compilation of *statistical histories* of several of the American States, and smaller districts of our country. Among the most important and promising of these are the proposals made by the Connecticut Academy of Arts and Sciences, to publish a statistical history of that State. From the talents and learning included in that body high expectations are formed concerning their projected work.

The last age was also very productive of another class of historians, in a great measure peculiar to it. These are the persons who have undertaken to deduce the progress, and exhibit the condition of *Counties, Cities*, and other particular *Districts*. Among those who have distinguished themselves, by works of this kind, in the English language, are Mr. GROSE, Mr. POLWHELE, Dr. AIKEN, Mr. PENNANT, and many others, whose industry and judgment, in bringing together so large a mass of documents relating to the several objects which they undertook to describe, deserve the highest praise.

There is another species of historical composition, in some measure peculiar to the age under review, of which several meritorious specimens have been given. It consists in an exhibition of ancient events, literature, and manners, under the denomination of *Travels*, and in the fictitious style of *Romance*. In this class of writings the *Athenian Letters*, printed in Great-Britain, in 1740, are entitled to the first place. This work consists of the imaginary correspondence of a set of Greek gentlemen, the cotemporaries of SOCRATES, PERICLES, and PLATO; but was in reality the actual correspondence of a society of ingenious and learned gentlemen in the University of Cambridge, who, under fictitious characters, communicated to each other the result of their researches into ancient history, and, through this medium, laid before the public an entertaining and instructive work.^g

^g When this correspondence had continued for a considerable time, and the number of letters had become so large as to render the transcribing of them for the use of the association too troublesome, it was agreed to print *twelve* copies, which was accordingly done, in the year 1740; but the work was not then published. In 1781, another small edition of *one hundred* copies was printed; but the work could not yet be said to be published, as the circulation of it was confined to a few individuals. It was not until 1798 that it was, strictly speaking, laid before the public, in two vols. 4to. This work is said to be the best commentary on THUCYDIDES that ever was written. It was at first supposed that BARTHELEMI had

The next remarkable production of this kind, which has been still more celebrated than the *Athenian Letters*, is the *Travels of Anacharsis*, by M. BARTHELEMI. The models of this learned composition are said to have been the *Cyropædia*, and the *Travels of Cyrus*; and the author, we are told, devoted to it the labour of thirty years. Its great merit and singular popularity are well known. *The Travels of Antenor*, by M. LANTIER, in imitation of BARTHELEMI's work, is, in every respect, inferior to that curious production.

Besides the various kinds of history which have been mentioned, the eighteenth century produced histories of several *Arts*, *Sciences*, and departments of *Literature*. These, if not peculiar to this period, have greatly increased, in the course of it, in number, accuracy and value. Of the large list which might be recited, it is proper to notice, with particular respect, the learned and judicious *History of Philosophy*, by BRUCKER, abridged and presented in an English dress, by Dr. ENFIELD; the *History of Astronomy*, by M. BAILLY; the *History of Optics* and of *Electricity*, by Dr. PRIESTLEY; the *History of Chemistry*, by BOERHAAVE, WEIGLIB, and others; the *History of Medicine*, by LE CLERC and SPRENGEL; the *History of English Poetry*, by Dr. WARTON; the *History of Music*, by Dr. BURNEY; the *History of the Law of Nations*, by WARD; the *History of Jacobinism*, by the Abbé BARRUEL; and the history of the *Fine Arts*, by the Abbé WINCKLEMAN, and others.

The plan of publishing large *Collections of State Papers*, for historical purposes, though conceived, and in some degree executed, before the commencement of the eighteenth century, yet pre-emi-

taken the plan of his work from this publication; but it has since appeared that he had never seen the *Athenian Letters* previous to the completion of his celebrated *Travels of Anacharsis*.

nently belongs to this period. Never, certainly, were collections of this kind so numerous, extensive, and rich, or so useful to the historian, as during the last age. They were so numerous, indeed, that no attempt can be made here to recount even the most voluminous and remarkable which were compiled in various parts of Europe. The most curious and valuable *Collection* of this kind that has been made in America, is that by Mr. EBENEZER HAZARD, of Philadelphia, who, for his useful labours, is entitled to the thanks of every one who wishes to become acquainted with American history.^b

Among the various contrivances to facilitate the acquisition of historical knowledge, to which the age in question gave birth, may be mentioned the *Charts of History*, in different forms, which modern ingenuity has framed. These, it is believed, were first brought into Great-Britain from the continent of Europe. Among the first presented to the British public were those invented and delineated by Dr. PRIESTLEY, with whose indefatigable labours we meet in almost every department of literature and science. The *Lectures on History*, by the same gentleman, may be considered, on the whole, as one of the most able and useful works produced by its author; and indeed as among the best and most satisfactory views of that subject which the age furnished.

The eighteenth century not only gave birth to many original productions of the historical kind, but also to many very valuable translations of the works of ancient historians. This exhibition of the well-constructed and elegant productions of antiquity in modern dress, while it de-

^b See *Historical Collections*, &c. by EBENEZER HAZARD, A. M. 2 vols. 4to. 1792 and 1794.

serves to be mentioned among the literary enterprises which distinguish the age under consideration, may also, at the same time, be pronounced to have exerted a favourable influence on the character of modern historical composition.

It is impossible to dismiss this subject without recollecting how much the researches of historians, in the eighteenth century, have contributed to furnish evidence in favour of Revelation. There never was a period in which *Antiquities* were so extensively and successfully investigated; and every step of this investigation has served to illustrate and support the sacred volume. A few superficial inquirers, in the course of the century, supposed and hoped that they had made discoveries from the stores of antiquity which would be found destructive of the inspired history. But these fond hopes were soon disappointed. When the path of inquiry opened by these sanguine discoverers was pursued further, and the facts on which they rested their opposition to Scripture were more closely examined, they were found to terminate in evidence of a directly contrary kind from that which was at first expected. In this view it may be asserted, that some portions of the evidence in favour of Christianity, instead of growing weaker by time, are more convincing and satisfactory to the candid mind, at the present hour, than they were, or could have been, fifteen centuries ago.

CHAPTER XVIII.

BIOGRAPHY.

BIOGRAPHY is one of the oldest species of writing. After the restoration of learning this branch of historical composition became particularly popular in Italy and France. From the latter country the same taste passed into Great-Britain, where it has been ever since growing. Since the commencement of the eighteenth century, every literary country of Europe has produced a greater number of biographical works than at any former period. There certainly never was an age in which *Memoirs*, *Lives*, collections of *Anecdotes*, &c. respecting the dead, were so numerous, and had such a general circulation, as that which is the subject of this retrospect.

Perhaps few works have contributed more to form a taste for biography, in modern Europe, than the *Dictionary* of M. BAYLE, one of the most curious and learned publications of any age. Early in the century under review this work was translated into English, and circulated in Great-Britain. Not long afterwards it was republished, with very large additions, which nearly doubled its original extent. The *Biographical History of England*, by GRAINGER, is entitled to the next place in recounting the British productions of this nature. This was followed by the *Biographia Britannica*, by Dr. KIPPIS, after the manner of BAYLE. Since the appearance of this large collection of biography, several works, of a similar kind, have been laid

before the British public by ADAMS and others. The last publication of this class, and in some respects the best, is that by Drs. ENFIELD and AIKEN, undertaken a short time before the close of the century, and yet unfinished.

Besides these general biographical works, there were others, intended to exhibit the lives of particular classes of eminent persons, of which a number of high character were compiled and circulated during the last age. The *Lives of the British Admirals* form an important and interesting collection of this kind. The *Biography of illustrious British Naval Characters*, by CHARNOCK; the *lives of Eminently Pious Women*, by Dr. GIBBONS; the *Biographia Medica*, by HUTCHINSON; the *Biographia Literaria*, by Dr. BERKENHOUT; and several other similar works, are also entitled to respectful notice in enumerating this class of modern writings.

The biographical collections made on the continent of Europe, during the last age, were numerous and extensive, especially in the French and German languages. Among these the *Histoire Littéraire*, of M. SENNEBIER, has attracted much attention, and received much praise. Besides this, the *Biographical Dictionary of learned Swedes*, by GEZELIUS; the *Lives of the Great Men of Germany*, by KLEIN; and the large biographical works, by SCHRANCK, SCHILLER and MEINERS, of Germany; by D'ALEMBERT, of France; and by TENEVELLI and FABRONIUS, of Italy, deserve honourable distinction. Of many others, perhaps equally worthy of commendation, the author has too little knowledge to enable him to speak, and especially to delineate their character.

But amongst all the *Collections of Lives* which the eighteenth century produced, the greatest, if not in bulk, yet in sterling merit, is the *Lives of the English Poets*, by Dr. SAMUEL JOHNSON. It

is believed that this collection is without a parallel in any language, and certainly unequalled in the history of English literature. The author has been charged, indeed, with discovering strong and even bitter prejudices against some of the best characters which he undertook to review. But admitting this to be true, and in some instances there is perhaps too much foundation for the charge, it may still be asked, where the student of polite literature will meet with another collection of biographical sketches, at once so original, instructive, and entertaining; with a body of criticism so refined and discriminating; with a work abounding in so many beauties of style, so many just observations on human nature, so many curious and striking remarks on various departments of knowledge and of life, so many comprehensive views, and all so pure in their moral character, as the *Lives of the Poets* display? The stores of literature, it may be confidently pronounced, will furnish him with no such work.ⁱ

Among the numerous single biographical works which the last age produced, it will be impossible to recount all, or even the greater part of those which are worthy of notice. A few of those which are distinguished in the annals of English literature may be slightly mentioned. The *Life of Cicero*, by Dr. MIDDLETON; the *Life of Erasmus*, by Dr. JORTIN; the *Life of Swift*, by Mr. SHERIDAN; the *Life of Metastasio*, by Dr. BURNEY; the *Life of Doddridge*, by Mr. ORTON; the *Life of Petrarch*, by Mrs. DOBSON; the *Life of Bacon*, by Mr. MALLET; the *Life of Lorenzo de Medici*, by

ⁱ While this warm and unreserved praise is bestowed on Dr. JOHNSON, and particularly on the great biographical work which is the subject of the above paragraph, it is perhaps proper to inform the reader, that my opinions, on a variety of subjects, by no means coincide with those which he frequently avows, and takes pains to inculcate. What these opinions are, it would be unsuitable in this place to detail.

Mr. ROSCOE; the *Life of Burke*, by Dr. BISSETT; and the *Life of Milton*, by Mr. HALEY, claim a distinction in this class of modern writings, which demands particular notice.

The *Life of Dr. JOHNSON*, by Mr. BOSWELL, is a curious and singular specimen of biography. Perhaps no character was ever so fully displayed in its alternate exhibitions of greatness and littleness as the illustrious subject of this work. Mr. BOSWELL, in the compilation, had in view as a model, the *Memoirs of GRAY*, by Mr. MASON; but in the opinion of the best judges, the biographer of JOHNSON, with all his vanity and weakness, greatly exceeds Mr. MASON in the quantity, the variety, and the richness of his materials. In favour of this plan of biographical composition much may be said. Had we memoirs of this ample and minute kind of every great benefactor to the interests of science, literature and virtue, they would form a most curious, and, in some respects, an invaluable treasure. But it may well be questioned whether dragging into public view, and placing on permanent record, the occasional follies, the temporary mistakes, and every unguarded sally of merriment or passion, into which a great mind may be led, ought to be approved or encouraged. To delineate a character faithfully in its leading features, whether great and honourable, or otherwise, is the duty of every good biographer; but to crowd the pages of an eminently wise and vir-

j Works intended to do honour to learned and ingenious men, by collecting their wise and witty sayings, and giving familiar details of their conduct, were compiled many centuries anterior to the eighteenth. The earliest work of this kind now extant is the *Memorabilia* of XENOPHON. WOLFIIUS, in his *Causaboniana*, tells us that the first of the *books in ana*, was that compiled in honour of the great SCALIGER, and called *Scaligerana*, drawn from the papers of VASSANT and VERTUNIAN, who took the whole from the mouth of that celebrated scholar. In later times works of this nature have wonderfully multiplied. *Monthly Review*.

tuous man's life with the recital of every momentary error and ridiculous foible; to dwell with as much studious care on the trivial follies and prejudices of such a character, as on his sublime powers and excellence; and to record every vain or erroneous saying, or unjustifiable action, which cannot be considered as properly belonging to the character, may be safely pronounced to be a plan of biography which, though highly interesting, is neither useful nor wise.^k

The manner of M. BAYLE has been imitated by many subsequent writers. Of these the most remarkable compiler of individual *Lives*, in the English language, is Mr. HARRIS, whose biographical works, on JAMES I. CHARLES I. OLIVER CROMWELL, and CHARLES II. are generally known, and have been much applauded.

Many *single Lives* of eminent men, on different plans, and of various degrees of merit, appeared on the continent of Europe, in the course of the last age. Of these the *Life of Petrarch*, by the Abbé DE LA SADE; and the *Life of Erasmus*, by M. BURIGNI, deserve particular notice. They are both biographical works of great merit, and probably have few superiors of their kind in any language. Perhaps it might be added, that the plan

^k There are two extremes into which biographers are apt to fall. The one is adopting a continued strain of eulogy, and endeavouring either wholly to keep out of view, or ingeniously to varnish over the errors and weaknesses of those whose lives they record. To this fault in biographical writing Mr. HALEY discovers, perhaps, too strong a tendency. If I do not greatly mistake, his *Life of MILTON* and his *Life of COWPER* may both be justly impeached on this ground. The other, and a more mischievous extreme is, recording against departed worth, with studied amplitude, and disgusting minuteness, the momentary mistakes of forgetfulness, the occasional vagaries of levity, and the false opinions, expressed not as the result of sober reflection, but thrown out either in a mirthful hour, or in the heat of disputation. Of the latter fault Mr. BOSWELL's *Life of JOHNSON* furnishes perhaps the most singular example. The proper course is between these extremes; and of this course it is to be lamented that we have so few models.

on which they are composed is, on the whole, the best plan of biography now in use. But these are only two specimens out of a very large list which, were the author sufficiently acquainted with them, might, with propriety, be mentioned with nearly equal honour. The *Life of M. TURGOT*, by M. CONDORCET, and the *Life of M. DE VOLTAIRE*, by the same author, have also been much celebrated and admired, among a certain class of readers.

At the close of the eighteenth century a species of biographical writing came into vogue, of which, it is believed, no example ever appeared in any preceding age. This is the *Accounts of distinguished Living Characters*, with which, for some years past, Europe has abounded. It is not easy to say whether this species of writing is more useful or injurious in its tendency. Like almost every other kind of literary work, however, its effect must depend on the mode in which it is executed. If this be impartial, skilful, and just, it will, doubtless, tend to satisfy curiosity, to encourage rising genius, to correct the foibles of public men, and to extend general knowledge.

Means were adopted, during the last age, for facilitating the acquisition and retention of biographical knowledge, similar to those which were before mentioned as belonging to the department of history. Biographical *Charts* were first formed on the continent of Europe, where they have appeared in various forms. This contrivance, it is believed, was first introduced into Great-Britain by Dr. PRIESTLEY.

CHAPTER XIX.

ROMANCES AND NOVELS.

FICTITIOUS narrative, as a médium of instruction or entertainment, has been employed from the earliest ages of which we have any knowledge. Of this kind of composition, we have some interesting specimens in the sacred writings. But, like every thing else in the hands of depraved man, it has been unhappily perverted and abused. For many centuries the only form of fictitious history in vogue was that of *Romance*,^l or descriptions of the characters and manners of former times, mingled with many extravagant and improbable circumstances, and calculated to meet that fondness for the marvellous, which so strongly characterizes the human mind.

One of the earliest writers of this class, of whom we have any distinct account, but by no means one of the most extravagant of them, was HELIODORUS, Bishop of Tricca, in Thessaly, who lived in the fourth century.^m His work was entitled

^l The word *Romance* is of Spanish origin, and signifies the Spanish tongue; the greater part of which is derived from the ancient Latin or Roman language. It seems the first Spanish books were fabulous, and being called *Romance*, on account of the tongue in which they were written, the same name was afterwards given, by the other nations of Europe, not to Spanish books, which is the proper application of the term, but to a certain class of fabulous writings. See BEATTIE *On Fable and Romance*.

^m Doubts have been entertained whether the work of HELIODORUS were really the first romance. Some suppose that instances of this kind of writing may be traced back as far as the time of ARISTOTLE. Others have thought that, from the *Asiatic Researches*, and other modern publications on Oriental literature, there is reason to believe that the native country of *Romance* is the *East*, which seems to have produced many extravagant specimens, from time immemorial. See *Curiosities of Literature*, by D'ISRAELI.

Ethiopics, from the scene of the adventures being laid in Ethiopia. And although it was a decent and moral performance, and the inhabitants of Antioch attested that it had reformed the females of their city; yet the author, for writing, and refusing to suppress it, was deprived of his Bishopric, and deposed from the clerical office. M. BAYLE humorously observes, that the marriage of *Theagines* and *Chariclea*, the hero and heroine of this romance, was the most prolific of any that he had read of; having produced all the romances which have been written since that time.

After the time of HELIODORUS romances became still more extravagant and absurd in their character. The times and principles of *Chivalry* conferred upon them new features, and gave them a different cast from all the fictitious writings which had before appeared. In these performances the reader was continually presented with the wild absurdities, and the heroic exploits of knight-errantry. Giants, dragons, enchanted castles, fairies, ghosts, and all the tribes of imaginary wonders were constantly passing before him. Probability, and even possibility, were little consulted. To arrest, astonish, and intoxicate the mind, seem to have been their principal objects. But extravagance was not the only fault of the old romantic writings. They were often grossly immoral in their nature and tendency, abounding in every species of impure and corrupting exhibition of vice. They were also, in general, tediously diffuse, extending to many volumes, and fatiguing the reader with their unnecessary prolixity.

Romance retained its empire in every literary part of Europe, until the beginning of the seventeenth century, about which time MIGUEL DE CERVANTES, a native of Madrid, published his celebrated satirical romance, entitled *The History of*

Don Quixote. This performance was expressly intended to pour ridicule on those masses of absurdity and impurity which had so long maintained an influence over the world. Few works were ever so much read, or so effectually answered their proposed end. Its effect was equal to the most sanguine expectations of the author. It destroyed the reign of chivalry; produced a new modification of public taste; occasioned the death of the old romance; and gave birth to another species of fictitious writing.

This may be called romance divested of its most extravagant and exceptionable characters. In the works of this kind the heroism and the gallantry of the old romance were in a degree retained; but the dragons, the necromancers, and the enchanted castles, were chiefly banished, and a nearer approach made to the descriptions of real life. The *Astræa* of M. D'URFE, and the *Grand Cyrus*, the *Clelia*, and the *Cleopatra*, of Madame SCUDERY, are among the most memorable specimens of romance thus pruned and improved. These works, however, had still too much of the improbable and unnatural to please a just taste; and therefore gave way to a further improvement, which was the introduction of the modern *Novel*.

The word *Novel* is intended to express that kind of fictitious history, which presents natural and probable exhibitions of *modern* manners and characters." In this species of writing the extrava-

n Most writers on this subject employ the word *Romance* to express both those performances which portrayed *ancient* manners, with all the extravagance and folly of chivalry; and those which depict *modern* manners true to nature and life. But since the word *Romance* is considered as invariably expressive of something wild, unreal, and far removed from common practice, ought not some other word to be adopted, to designate those fictitious works which profess to instruct or entertain by describing common life and real characters? And is not the word *Novel* well suited to this purpose of discrimination? This word has long been used; but, if I do not mistake, in many instances, without that accuracy of application which is desirable.

gance, the heroic exploits, the complicated and endless intrigues, and the mock elevation before thought necessary, were abandoned: heroes, instead of being taken from the throne, were sought for in common life: in place of the enchanted castles, the conflicts of giants, and the absurdities of chivalry, the incidents which daily happen in the world, the ordinary scenes of social and domestic intercourse, were introduced: instead of the pompous, inflated style formerly admired, and which alone was congenial with the romantic spirit, a more simple and familiar manner was adopted; and, from ten or twelve tedious volumes, the narrative was reduced to two or three, and seldom much exceeded the latter number.

Of modern *Novels* a few appeared in the seventeenth century; but the number was so small, and the character of these, for the most part, so low, that even the names of but a small portion of them have reached the present time. The eighteenth century may be peculiarly and emphatically called the *Age of Novels*. The first great work of this kind, in the English language, was *Joseph Andrews*, by Mr. HENRY FIELDING, a comic performance, which, though sometimes indelicate, and often exceptionable in its moral tendency, yet displays great wit, humour, learning, taste, and knowledge of mankind.* The next was *Pamela*, by Mr. SAMUEL RICHARDSON. This work introduced, and rendered popular, the mode of writing novels in the form of *Letters*, which has been since adopted by many, both in Great-Britain and on the continent of Europe. *Pamela* was succeeded by *Tom*

* Dr. BEATTIE tells us, that Lord LYTTLETON, once in conversation with him, after mentioning several particulars of POPE, SWIFT, and other wits of that time, when he was asked some question relating to the author of *Tom Jones*, began his answer with these words, "HENRY FIELDING, I assure you, had more wit, and more humour, than all the persons we have been speaking of put together."

Jones, which, though by no means pure in its moral tendency, is esteemed by the ablest critics, as the first performance of the heroi-comic kind that was ever written.^p The same author next produced his *Amelia*, in which he imitated the epic poets, by beginning his narrative in the middle of the story. This plan was soon followed by RICHARDSON, in his *Clarissa Harlowe*, and *Sir Charles Grandison*, in both which the epistolary form of writing is retained, to which he seems to have been particularly attached.

The earliest productions of Great-Britain in this department of writing may be considered as her best. FIELDING and RICHARDSON have never been exceeded, and probably not equalled, by any novelists since their day, either in their own or any other country. Each of these authors may be said to have invented a new species of fictitious writing, and to have carried it at once to the highest point of improvement which it has ever reached. Their talents were different, and their works display this difference in a very strong light; but each attained a degree of excellence in his way, altogether unrivalled. FIELDING is humorous and comic; RICHARDSON more grave and dignified. They both paint with a masterly hand; but FIELDING is perhaps more true to nature than his rival. The former succeeds better in describing *manners*; the

^p " Since the days of HOMER, says Dr. BEATTIE, the world has not seen a more artful epic fable than *Tom Jones*. The characters and adventures are wonderfully diversified; yet the circumstances are all so natural, and rise so easily from one another, and co-operate with so much regularity in bringing on, even while they seem to retard the catastrophe, that the curiosity of the reader is kept always awake, and instead of flagging grows more and more impatient, as the story advances, till at last it becomes downright anxiety. And when we get to the end, and look back on the whole contrivance, we are amazed to find, that of so many incidents there should be so few superfluous; that in such variety of fiction there should be so great probability; and that so complex a tale should be so perspicuously conducted, and with perfect unity of design." See the *Dissertation on Fable and Romance*.

latter in developing and displaying the *heart*. In plot and contrivance FIELDING has no superior; while RICHARDSON interests us less by his incidents than by the beauty of his descriptions and the excellence of his sentiments.⁷ FIELDING is most at home when describing low life, and exhibiting the humorous effusions of coarseness and indelicacy.⁷ RICHARDSON, on the other hand, is rather in his element when displaying the purity and sublimity of virtue.⁸ The most eminent writers of different countries have paid homage to the merits of RICHARDSON as a novelist. His works have been translated into almost every language of Europe, and notwithstanding every dissimilitude of manners, and every disadvantage of translation, they have probably been more generally admired and eulogized than those of any other author in this species of composition. Though FIELDING has been less popular abroad, owing, perhaps, to the peculiar appropriateness of his pictures of English manners; yet, in several important attributes of fictitious narrative, he certainly transcends every other writer.

These distinguished and standard novelists have had many imitators, particularly in their own country; but none who have risen to the same degree

⁷ Dr. JOHNSON, once in conversation with Mr. THOMAS ERSKINE, said, "Sir, if you were to read RICHARDSON for the story, your impatience would be so much fretted that you would hang yourself. But you must read him for the sentiment, and consider the story as only giving occasion to the sentiment."

⁸ RICHARDSON used to say, that had he not known who FIELDING was, he should have believed him to be an *ostler*.

⁹ RICHARDSON was a man of great purity and excellence of character. He was one of the best bred gentlemen of his day—habituated to genteel life only—amiable, benevolent, and unaffectedly pious; and no doubt endeavoured, though some have supposed without complete success, to construct all his narratives in such a manner as to give them an unexceptionable moral tendency. FIELDING was less pure in his principles and character, and had been more conversant at some periods with low life. In wit, humour, and knowledge of mankind, he has been pronounced inferior to no individual of modern times excepting SHAKSPEARE.

of excellence which they attained. Among the most successful of these was Dr. SMOLLET. His *Roderick Random* was written in imitation of *Tom Jones*; his *Humphrey Clinker*, the last and best of his works, after the manner of RICHARDSON; and his *History of Sir Launcelot Greaves*, with a view to the manner of CERVANTES.[†] These imitations are by no means without success, and certainly hold, in some respects, a very high place in the list of those fictitious writings which belong to the age under consideration. In exhibiting the peculiarities of professional character Dr. SMOLLET displays great powers. Perhaps no writer was ever more successful in drawing the character of seamen. Sometimes, indeed, his pictures border on the extravagance of *caricatura*, to which his satirical and cynical disposition strongly inclined him. His propensity to burlesque and broad humour too frequently recurs; and he is often indelicate and licentious to a very shameful degree. These remarks apply, in some measure, to most of his works; but to his *Peregrine Pickle*, and *The Adventures of an Atom*, the charge of indelicate description, and immoral tendency, is particularly applicable.

About the beginning of the eighteenth century M. LE SAGE, an ingenious French writer, published his *Gil Blas*, which appears to have been among the earliest works of the novel kind, published on the continent of Europe, that rank with the first class, or that are now held in much esteem. This performance was intended to be a picture of Spanish manners, and abounds with a great variety of incident and vivacity of description. It differs from *Tom Jones* in that it partakes less of the *Epic*

[†] It is obvious, from the definition before given of a *Novel*, that SMOLLET'S *Sir Launcelot Greaves* does not strictly belong to this class; but rather falls under the denomination of *Romance*.

character, and may, with more propriety, be denominated a piece of "fictitious biography;" but resembles that celebrated work in wit, humour, and knowledge of the world. Soon after the publication of *Gil Blas*, the *Marianne* of MARIVAUX, on the same general plan, appeared. This work has a place assigned to it among the best novels in the French language. It discovers much acquaintance with human nature, and, under the veil of wit and incident, conveys much useful moral. Several other novels were written by the same author, but none of them are equal to this. They were succeeded by the fictitious writings of VOLTAIRE and DIDEROT, which were of different kinds, and possessed different degrees of literary merit; but chiefly designed, like most of the other writings of those far-famed infidels, to discredit Religion, both natural and revealed, and to destroy the influence of those institutions which have proved so conducive to human happiness. The novels of DIDEROT, in particular, abound with every species of licentiousness, and have a most pernicious tendency.

M. CREBILLON, the younger, distinguished himself by several works of fiction, executed in a new taste, which, though rendered highly interesting to many readers by their levity, humour, and whimsical digressions, are yet dangerous in their tendency, from a continual display of libertine sentiment. Madame RICCOBONI is another distinguished novelist of France, belonging to the period under review. Her *Fanny Butler*, and several other works, have been much read and admired; but have been also severely criticized, as containing much indelicacy, and even obscenity, in their narratives. M. MARMONTEL, of the same country, also presented the public, during the period under consideration, with a new species of fiction, in

his *Moral Tales*, which, being less prolix than the common novel, combine instruction and amusement in a very pleasing degree. Many of them, however, it must be owned, are indelicate, and corrupting in their tendency, and ought to be considered as especially unfit to be put, as they frequently are, into the hands of children and young persons.

But, among all the French novelists, J. J. ROUSSEAU unquestionably holds the first place as a man of genius. His *Nouvelle Heloise* is one of the most remarkable productions of the age. Eloquent, tender, and interesting in the highest degree; yet full of inconsistency, of extravagance, of licentious principle, and of voluptuous, seducing description. Poison lurks in every page; but concealed from the view of many readers by the wonderful fascination which is thrown around every object. Of the dangerous tendency of his work, indeed, the author was himself fully sensible, and speaks freely. A circumstance which forms one among the many grounds of imputation against the morality of that singular man.^v

The writings of the distinguished novelists above mentioned produced, in every part of Europe, an host of imitators and adventurers in the regions of fiction. To give even a general sketch of the numerous classes of those who have written under the

^v The character of ROUSSEAU perhaps exhibits the most singular and humiliating contrasts that were ever displayed in a human being. Exalted genius and grovelling folly alternately characterized his mind. At some periods he appeared to be under the influence of the most pure and sublime moral feelings; while, at others, the lowest propensities, and most detestable passions, possessed and governed him. Oftentimes, when speaking of morality and religion, one would imagine that sentiments of the most elevated benevolence and piety were habitual to him; but the tenor of his life, and, indeed, his own *Confessions* demonstrate, that an unnatural compound of vanity, meanness, and contemptible self-love, a suspicious, restless temper, bordering on insanity, and a prostration of every principle and duty, to his own aggrandisement and gratification, were the real predominant characteristics of this strange phenomenon in human nature.

titles of *Memoirs, Lives, Histories, Adventures, &c.* would fill a volume. Since the time of FIELDING the *Epic* form of novels has been more in vogue than before. *Plot* has become more fashionable, and is considered more essential to the excellence of their structure. During the last thirty years of the century under consideration, the countries most productive of respectable works in this species of composition were Great-Britain, France, and Germany.

Among the later British novelists, Dr. GOLDSMITH, Miss BURNEY (now Madame D'ARBLAY), Mrs. RADCLIFFE, Mr. MACKENZIE, Miss C. SMITH, and Dr. MOORE, undoubtedly rank highest. The *Vicar of Wakefield* will ever be read with new pleasure, as one of the finest, most natural, and most happily imagined moral pictures that was ever drawn. The author of *Evelina, Cecilia, and Camilla*, has marked out for herself a manner of writing in some respects new. If the reader do not find in her pages those bold and daring strokes which indicate the hand of a great and original genius; yet, in giving pictures of characters and manners, simple, natural, just, lively, and perfectly moral in their tendency, she has no equal among her contemporaries. The performances of Mrs. RADCLIFFE will be presently mentioned as belonging to a new and singular class of fictitious writings. The publications of Mr. MACKENZIE, which belong to this department of literature, have been much read, and have received high praise. Miss CHARLOTTE SMITH holds an honourable place among the ingenious and moral novelists of the age. Dr. MOORE, in describing *English manners*, has acquitted himself with high credit. But the works of the three last will probably never be mentioned as forming an era in the history of Bri-

tish novels, like those of FIELDING, RICHARDSON, SMOLLET, BURNEY, and RADCLIFFE.

To the class of novels, rather than to any other, belongs that remarkable production, the *Life and Opinions of Tristram Shandy*, by the Reverend LAURENCE STERNE. Notwithstanding the often repeated, and well supported charges, brought against this writer, of borrowing without acknowledgment, many of his best thoughts from preceding British and French authors," yet his work is an *unique* in the history of literature. When it first appeared his readers were astonished at the singular farrago of obscurity, whim, indecency, and extravagance which it exhibited. The majority appeared to be at a loss, for a time, what judgment to form of its merits. But some of the friends of the writer, professing to comprehend his meaning, and disposed to place him high in the ranks of wit and humour, gave the signal to admire. The signal was obeyed; and multitudes, to the present day, have continued to mistake his capricious and exceptionable singularities for efforts of a great and original genius. But his genius and writings have certainly been overrated. That he possessed considerable powers, of a certain description, is readily admitted; that the Episodes of *Le Fevre* and *Maria* are almost unrivalled, as specimens of the tender and pathetic, must also be granted; but those parts of his works which deserve this character bear so small a proportion to the rest, and the great mass of what he has written is either so shamefully obscene, so quaintly obscure, or so foolishly unmeaning, that there are

^u It seems to be now well ascertained that STERNE carried to a very great length, the practice of filling his pages with plunder from other writers. His freedoms of this kind with the works of RABELAIS, BURTON (author of the *Anatomy of Melancholy*) and CREBILLON, junior, have been particularly detected.

very few works more calculated to corrupt both the taste and the morals. That a man who bore the sacred office should employ his talents in recommending a system of libertinism; that he who could so well delineate the pleasures of benevolence and purity, should so grossly offend against both; and that volumes which abound with such professions of exalted philanthropy, should contain so many pages on which a virtuous mind cannot look but with disgust and indignation, are facts more atrociously and disgracefully criminal than the ordinary language of reprobation is able to reach.^w

The last age is also distinguished by some productions of a singular kind, partaking of the extravagance of the ancient *Romance*, with some of the attributes of the modern *Novel*. The *Castle of Otranto*, by Lord ORFORD, better known by the name of HORACE WALPOLE, was one of the earliest and most remarkable productions of this kind. To the same class, though in many respects different, belong the works of MRS. RADCLIFFE. This lady has formed for herself a department of fiction which may be called new. She has been justly styled “the SHAKSPEARE of romance writers,” and displays a skill altogether unrivalled “in communicating terrific impressions from imaginary causes.” But it is a remarkable peculiarity of her narratives, and greatly augments her title to praise, that, while the scenes which she exhibits abound with wildness and terror, yet they are so softened

^w “What is called sentimental writing,” says HORACE WALPOLE, “though it be understood to appeal solely to the heart, may be the product of a very bad one. One would imagine that STERNE had been a man of a very tender heart; yet I know, from indubitable authority, that his mother, who kept a school, having run in debt, on account of an extravagant daughter, would have rotted in jail if the parents of her scholars had not raised a subscription for her. Her son had too much sentiment to have any feeling. A dead ass was more important to him than a living mother.” *Walpoliana*, vol. i.

down, and the mind so much relieved by beautiful description, and pathetic incident, that the impression of the whole seldom becomes too strong, and never degenerates into horror; but pleasurable emotion is the predominating result. It ought, likewise, to be mentioned to her honour, that the general tendency of her writings is favourable to virtue.*

To this mixed class also belongs the *Monk* of Mr. LEWIS. While this production evinces talents, it must be considered as highly mischievous in its tendency, and as disgraceful to the character of the writer. In this department of fiction several German writers have made a conspicuous figure, especially the authors of the *Ghost Seer*, *The Victim of Magical Delusion*, and many others of a similar cast. The herd of low and impotent imitators of these works, with which Great-Britain, and other parts of Europe, have abounded for several years past, while they dishonour literature, and corrupt good morals, present a very curious picture of the taste and character of the age which gave them birth.

Among the peculiarities of the century under consideration may be mentioned the practice of conveying certain principles on the subjects of morals, religion, and politics, through the medium of fictitious narrative. Though many works of fiction had been formed, prior to this age, with the view to convey, to a certain extent, moral principles and impressions; yet the plan of attacking particular classes of men, or of doctrines through this medium, and of interweaving systems of morality, theology, or philosophy, through the pages of romances or novels, was seldom, if ever attempted before the eighteenth century.

* *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, the *Romance of the Forest*, and *The Italian*, are considered as the best performances of this lady.

One of the earliest productions of this kind was the *Adventures of Telemachus*, by Archbishop FENELON, which appeared at the beginning of the century. This work was intended to assert and exemplify those moral and political maxims which the pious and benevolent author had before taught to the Dukes of BURGUNDY and ANJOU, when committed to his tuition. The style of this celebrated poem^y is generally admired, the fiction is ably conducted, and the moral is pure and sublime. Its extensive circulation and great popularity are well known. About the same time appeared the *Tale of a Tub*, one of the first publications of Dean SWIFT. The design of this allegorical fable was to expose certain abuses and corruptions in learning and religion, especially the latter; and it has been pronounced in felicity of wit, in force of satire, in copiousness of imagery, and in vivacity of diction, to exceed all the subsequent productions of the author.^z About twenty years afterwards the same celebrated writer published his *Gulliver's Travels*, a performance which was, perhaps, more read than any other of the age. This satirical work is levelled at human pride and folly, at the abuses of learning, at the absurdity of theorists and projectors, and, especially, at the expedients and blunders of politicians. In this, as in the former, the fable is, in general, well conducted, the satire is keen, the description admirable, and the style at once easy, graceful, and vigorous. But the work is by no means free from gross faults. It discovers a prevailing fondness in the author for filthy allusions, and indecent nauseating descrip-

^y *Telemachus*, though not written in verse, is so poetical in its character, that it may with propriety be denominated a poem.

^z This praise must be received with qualification. The *Tale of a Tub* contains some images and allusions highly indelicate, and even grossly offensive. The author is also chargeable with treating serious things, in this performance, with too much levity.

tions. The *Voyage to the Houyhnhnms*, in particular, is very objectionable. Its satire is that of a misanthrope; its imagery and allusions those of a mind which delighted in filth; and its fiction altogether inconsistent and irrational.

In 1759 was published the *Rasselas* of Dr. JOHNSON, a philosophical tale, the design of which was to convey, in the oriental manner, useful lessons respecting the vanity of the world, the insufficiency of temporal things to secure human happiness, and the consequent importance of having a due regard to things eternal. This work has been translated into almost all the modern languages of Europe, and was one of the first moral effusions of that mind which afterwards laboured so much, and so well, to "give ardour to virtue, and confidence to truth." About the same time appeared the *Candide* of M. VOLTAIRE, written to refute the system of optimism, and probably with a wish, also, to discredit the belief of a superintending Providence. There is a considerable similarity in the plan and conduct of *Rasselas* and *Candide*. But the circumstances under which they were published precluded the suspicion of either having been indebted to the other.^a

After the publication of the foregoing works, Mr. RIDLEY, in his *Tales of the Genii*, endeavoured to defend some of the peculiar doctrines of Christianity; while, on the other hand, these doctrines have been covertly attacked, in the *Life and Opinions of John Bunckle, jun.* in the *Memoirs of several Ladies*, in *The Spiritual Quixote*, in *Dialogues of the Philosophers of Ulubrae*, and in several

^a "I have heard JOHNSON," says Mr. BOSWELL, "say of these two works, that if they had not been published so closely one after the other, it would have been in vain to deny that the scheme of that which came latest was taken from the other." BOSWELL'S *Life of Johnson*, vol. i. p. 282.

other works of fiction. That system of opinions usually styled the *New Philosophy*,^b has been exhibited with great zeal, with a view to its defence, in the fictitious writings of DIDEROT, and many other French novelists; and in those of HOLCROFT, GODWIN, MARY WOLLSTONECRAFT, and MARY HAYS, of Great-Britain. The same delusive and mischievous system has been successfully attacked and exposed in *The Highlander*, by Dr. BISSETT; in the *Modern Philosophers*, by Miss HAMILTON; in the *Memoirs of St. Godwin*, in *The Vagabond*, in *Plain Sense*, and in various anonymous publications of the novel kind.

A number of other novelists, both in Great-Britain and on the continent of Europe, deserve to be mentioned, in recounting the conspicuous writers of this class, which belong to the eighteenth century. In Great-Britain female novelists have been numerous and respectable. Among these Mrs. BROOKE, Mrs. INCHBALD, Mrs. SHERIDAN, Mrs. YEARSLEY, Miss SEWARD, Miss WEST, and Miss WILLIAMS have attracted most attention, and been the objects of most applause. In France, out of a long list which might be enumerated, the fictitious writings of M. DE ST. PIERRE, Madame GENLIS, and M. FLORIAN, are worthy of particular distinction, especially on account of their pure moral tendency. In Germany the writers of romances and novels, during the age under review, were extremely numerous. Of these WIELAND is entitled to the first place. The appearance of his *Agathon* is represented as a grand epoch in the

^b By the *New Philosophy* is meant, that system of doctrines concerning the constitution of man, and concerning morals and religion, taught by the author of the *Système de la Nature*, by HELVETIUS, and CONDORCET, and afterwards by several other celebrated writers, both of France and Great-Britain.

history of fictitious writing in that country.^c Next to WIELAND, GOETHE is respectably known as a novelist, not only in his own country, but also throughout Europe. In a word, in every cultivated part of the European world novel writers have incredibly abounded, in modern times; but the author has so little knowledge even of the names of the principal works of this kind, and so much less of their respective merits and demerits, that he cannot undertake to speak of them in detail.

America has given birth to few productions in the department of romance or novel. Indeed, no work of this nature deserving respectful notice; had appeared in the United States prior to the year 1798, when Mr. CHARLES B. BROWN, of Philadelphia, published his *Wieland*, which has been since followed by *Ormond*, *Arthur Mervyn*, *Edgar Huntly*, and *Jane Talbot*, from the pen of the same author. Mr. BROWN discovers, in these several productions, a vigorous imagination, a creative fancy, strong powers of description, and great command, and, in general, great felicity of language. He has the honour of being the first American who presented his countrymen with a respectable specimen of fictitious history; and is certainly the first who succeeded in gaining much attention to his labours in this branch of literature.

It was before observed that the eighteenth century was the *Age of Novels*. Never was the literary world so deluged with the frivolous effusions of ignorance and vanity, in this form, as within the last thirty years. Every contemptible scribbler has become an adventurer in this boundless field of enterprise. Every votary of singular, and espec-

^c LESSING, a German critic, of great learning and acuteness, pronounced *The History of Agathon* to be one of the finest efforts of genius in the eighteenth century; nay, he called it the *first and only* novel, of the Germans, written for thinking men of classical taste.

ally of licentious opinions, has thought this a convenient mode of disguising and serving up his errors. The thirst for this species of composition is inconceivably ardent and extensive. All classes of persons in society, from the dignified professional character to the lowest grades of labouring indigence, seek and devour novels. These ephemeral productions are daily composed, translated, revamped, and reprinted, to indulge the growing demand. What will be the effect and the end of this morbid appetite; whether, like many other diseases, it will work its own cure, or whether it will go on to increase as long as human society shall exist, are questions to the solution of which the friend of human happiness looks forward with deep solicitude.

It has often been made a question, whether romances and novels form an *useful* kind of reading, or the contrary? This question, fifty years ago, was of little moment compared with the importance which it has lately assumed. At that period the number of novels was small, and the popular classes of them sustained, in general, a tolerably pure moral character. Since that time, the case is, unhappily, altered; their number has increased, their character is so changed, and the task of discriminating among them has become so delicate and arduous, that the question above stated must now be regarded as one of the most interesting that can be asked, concerning the literary objects of the day, by the wise and affectionate parent, the faithful guardian, or the mind of general benevolence. It may not be improper, therefore, before taking leave of this singular feature in the history of the eighteenth century, to offer two or three brief remarks on the general tendency of the class of writings under consideration.

That fictitious history, when constructed on proper principles, and executed in a proper manner,

may be productive of utility, is a position too plain to be doubted. It is one of the most powerful means of exciting curiosity, of awakening sympathy, and of impressing the understanding and the heart. Such fiction "may do more good to many minds than the solemnities of professed morality, and convey the knowledge of vice and virtue with more efficacy than axioms and definitions." On this ground it was, no doubt, that the infinitely wise Author of our religion frequently adopted the form of *parable* for communicating the most important truths to his hearers. And, on the same principle, some of the wisest human teachers have used the vehicle of lively and interesting fiction, known to be such at the time, for insinuating into the mind moral and religious lessons, which, in a different form, might not so readily have gained admittance. It is obvious, then, that to this kind of writing, *as such*, there can be no solid objection. Novels *may* be so written as to promote the cause both of knowledge and virtue. They *may* be constructed in such a manner as will tend to lead the mind insensibly from what is sordid and mean to more worthy pursuits, and to fill it with pure, elevated and liberal sentiments. Nay, it may be further conceded, that, out of the myriads of novels which have been composed, a *few* are, in fact, entitled to this character, and have a tendency to produce these effects.

But it is evident, that a kind of writing which, when wisely and ingeniously executed, may be conducive to the best purposes, may also, in the hands of the unskilful or the wicked, produce the worst effects. If an artfully conducted fiction be so well fitted to interest the curiosity, to awaken sympathy, and to impress the mind, then it follows that if this fiction be enlisted on the side of corrupt principle, or licentious practice, it must do

incalculable mischief. The question before us, therefore, must be solved by examining the influence of novels, not as they *might* and *ought* to be composed, but as they are found in *fact* to be written. We are not to assume for our standard the utility which *would* be derived from this species of writing, were it confined to the enlightened and virtuous; but the character and tendency of that heterogeneous mass which is daily accumulating from every quarter of the literary world.

What then is the general character of modern novels? The most favourable estimate that can be made stands thus:—Were the whole number which the age produced divided into *a thousand* parts, it is probable that *five hundred* of these parts would be found so contemptibly frivolous, as to render the perusal of them a most criminal waste of time. And though entirely destitute of character, yet so far as they are the objects of attention at all, they can do nothing but mischief. To devote the time and attention to works of this kind, has a tendency to dissipate the mind; to beget a dislike to more solid and instructive reading, and especially to real history; and, in general, to excite a greater fondness for the productions of imagination and fancy, than for the sober reasoning, and the practical investigations of wisdom.

Of the remaining *five hundred* parts, *four hundred and ninety-nine* may be considered as positively seductive and corrupting in their tendency. They make virtue to appear contemptible, and vice attractive, honourable and triumphant. Folly and crime have palliative and even commendatory names bestowed upon them; the omnipotence of *love* over all obligations and all duties is continually maintained; and the extravagance of sinful passion represented as the effect of amiable sensibility. Surely these representations can have no other ten-

dency than to mislead, corrupt and destroy those who habitually peruse them, and especially those who give them a favourable reception.

But this is not the worst of the evil. A portion of this latter class of novels may be charged with being seductive and immoral on a more refined plan. They are systematic, and, in some instances, ingenious and plausible apologists for the most atrocious crimes. In many modern productions of this kind the intelligent reader will recognize the following process of representation. Corrupt opinions are put into the mouth of some favourite hero, the splendour of whose character, in other respects, is made to embellish the principles which he holds, and the force of whose eloquence is used to recommend the most unreasonable dogmas. When this hero commits a crime, and when by this crime, according to the fixed law of the Divine government, he is involved in serious difficulty, if not lasting misery, the fashionable novelist endeavours to throw the blame on the religious and moral institutions of the world, as narrow, illiberal and unjust. When a woman has surrendered her chastity, and prostituted herself to a vile seducer; and when she suffers in her reputation and her comfort by such base conduct, all this is ascribed to the "wretched state of civilization," to the "deplorable condition of society!" Every opportunity is taken to attack some principle of morality under the title of a "prejudice;" to ridicule the duties of domestic life, as flowing from "contracted" and "slavish" views; to deny the sober pursuits of upright industry as "dull" and "spiritless;" and, in a word, to frame an apology for suicide, adultery, prostitution, and the indulgence of every propensity for which a corrupt heart can plead an inclination.

It only remains to speak of the *one thousandth* part not included in the classes already characterized. Of the greater portion of these the most favourable account that can be given is, that they are *innocent* and *amusing* compositions. But even with regard to a considerable number which have been commonly placed among the good and useful novels, a correct judge would scarcely be willing to pronounce them *innocent* without some qualification. After all these deductions, how small is the number of those which can be said to merit a perusal, or which can be considered as tending, in any tolerable degree, to enlighten the mind, or to promote the interests of virtue and happiness! So small, indeed, that out of the numerous volumes which a simple catalogue of the novels produced in the eighteenth century would fill, a single page would embrace all that could be with propriety recommended to the attention of the youthful mind.

Many novels which contain no licentious principles or indelicate descriptions, are still defective, inasmuch as they are not pictures of nature. When this is the case, though they be not chargeable with making a direct attack on the fortress of virtue, yet they are only fitted to mislead. To fill the mind with unreal and delusive pictures of life, is, in the end, to beguile it from sober duty, and to cheat it of substantial enjoyment. Were all the mischief presented to our view which has been done to thoughtless, unsuspecting minds, by fictitious writings of this character, it would be found to form a mass of crime and misery too great for the ordinary powers of calculation.

But it is not enough that the fiction be true to nature. It may in no case depart from the probable and natural; every line may be drawn with a strict regard to the original character designed to be represented; the most transient beholder may

pronounce the likeness to be perfect; and yet the view may be fitted to corrupt the mind of every one who looks upon it. The truth is, there are many characters which ought never to be drawn in fiction, as there are many which ought never to be contemplated in fact. And he who regards the welfare of a child will be as anxious to withhold from him the view of many natural and lively descriptions of vice, as to keep him from the company of those who are really vicious. "Many writers," says a celebrated critic and moralist,^d "for the sake, as they tell us, of following *nature*, so mingle good and bad qualities in their principal personages, that they are both equally conspicuous; and as we accompany them through their adventures with delight, and are led by degrees to interest ourselves in their favour, we lose the abhorrence of their faults because they do not hinder our pleasure, or perhaps regard them with kindness for being united with so much merit. There have been men, indeed, splendidly wicked, whose endowments threw a brightness on their crimes, and whom scarce any villainy made perfectly detestable, because they never could be wholly divested of their excellences; but such have been, in all ages, the great corruptors of the world; and their resemblance ought no more to be preserved than the art of murdering without pain."^e

Estimating novels, then, not as they *might* be made, but as they *are* in fact, it may be asserted, that there is no species of reading which, promiscuously pursued, has a more direct tendency to

^d Dr. JOHNSON. *Rambler*, vol. i.

^e On this principle it is plain that such a character as *Tom Jones* ought never to have been exhibited by a friend to virtue. And though the characters drawn by RICHARDSON are by no means so liable to censure on this ground as several of those by FIELDING, yet it may be doubted whether the *Lovelace* of the former, taken in all its parts, be a character calculated to make a virtuous impression, especially on the youthful mind.

discourage the acquisition of solid learning, to fill the mind with vain, unnatural, and delusive ideas, and to deprave the moral taste.^f It would, perhaps, be difficult to assign any single cause which has contributed so much to produce that lightness and frivolity which so remarkably characterize the literary taste of the eighteenth century, as the unexampled multiplication, and the astonishing popularity of this class of writings.

The friend of novels will perhaps agree, that the *promiscuous* perusal of them is dangerous, and will plead for a discreet selection. But who is to make this selection? On whom shall devolve the perplexing task of separating the wheat from the chaff, the food from the poison? If amidst the mighty mass, those which are tolerably pure, and especially those which are calculated to be useful, be only now and then to be found, as a few scattered pearls in the ocean, shall the delicate and arduous task of making the choice be committed to minds “unfurnished with ideas, and therefore easily susceptible of impressions; not fixed by principles, and therefore easily following the current of fancy; not informed by experience, and consequently open to every false suggestion, and partial account?” The imminent danger, and almost certain mischief arising from a choice made by such minds cannot be contemplated by those who feel

^f The celebrated Dr. GOLDSMITH, in writing to his brother, respecting the education of a son, expresses himself in the following strong terms, which are the more remarkable, as he had himself written a novel:—“Above all things, never let your son touch a romance or novel; these paint beauty in colours more charming than nature; and describe happiness that man never tastes. How delusive, how destructive are those pictures of consummate bliss! They teach the youthful mind to sigh after beauty and happiness which never existed; to despise the little good which fortune has mixed in our cup, by expecting more than she ever gave; and, in general, take the word of a man who has seen the world, and has studied human nature more by experience than precept; take my word for it, I say, that such books teach us very little of the world.” *Life of GOLDSMITH, prefixed to his Miscellaneous Works.*

an interest in human happiness, without deep anxiety and pain. And to expect a wise choice to be made by parents and instructors, is to suppose, what was never the case in any state of society, that they are generally enlightened and virtuous.

On the whole, the answer of a wise preceptor to the main question respecting the utility of novels, would probably be something like this:—That, wholly to condemn them, and rigidly to forbid the perusal of *any*, in the present state of the literary world, would be an indiscreet and dangerous extreme; that reading a *very few*, therefore, of the *best* is not unadvisable;^g that in selecting these, however, great vigilance and caution should be exercised by those to whom the delicate and difficult task is committed; that the perusal of a *large number*, even of the *better sort*, has a tendency too much to engross the mind, to fill it with artificial views, and to diminish the taste for more solid reading; but that a young person habitually and indiscriminately devoted to novels, is in a fair way to dissipate his mind, to degrade his taste, and to bring on himself intellectual and moral ruin.

^g The author has no hesitation in saying, that, if it were *possible*, he would *wholly* prohibit the reading of novels. Not because there are none worthy of being perused; but because the hope that, out of the polluted and mischievous mass continually presented to the youthful mind, a tolerably wise choice will, in many instances, be made, can scarcely be thought a reasonable hope. As, however, those fictitious productions are strewed around us in such profusion, and will more or less excite the curiosity of youth, the plan of *total exclusion* is seldom practicable. In this case it is, perhaps, the wisest course to endeavour to regulate the curiosity which cannot be prevented, and to exercise the utmost vigilance in making a proper choice for its gratification, and in restraining this gratification within *small bounds*. For it may, with confidence, be pronounced, that NO ONE WAS EVER AN EXTENSIVE AND ESPECIALLY AN HABITUAL READER OF NOVELS, EVEN SUPPOSING THEM ALL TO BE WELL SELECTED, WITHOUT SUFFERING BOTH INTELLECTUAL AND MORAL INJURY, AND OF COURSE INCURRING A DIMINUTION OF HAPPINESS.

CHAPTER XX.

POETRY.

POETRY, in one form or another, has been the growth of every age with the history of which we are acquainted; and the eighteenth century had its full share of those who paid their court to the muses. It may be said with confidence, indeed, that the last age produced a far greater number of poets than any former period of the same extent. But it must be confessed that, of this number, few are entitled to the character of distinguished excellence. The mantle of SHAKSPEARE or of MILTON has not fallen upon any succeeding bard. Since the death of the latter, more than a century has passed away without producing a rival of his great and deserved fame. Still it may be maintained that poets, and poetic excellence, have been produced, of sufficient distinction to do high honour to modern genius, and to merit a respectful consideration.

The poetic diction and versification of several modern languages have been much enriched and refined, during the period under review. Of these improvements it may be proper to take some brief notice, before we proceed to consider the particular specimens of poetic genius which belong to this period.

During the period in question, English versification has been greatly improved. Though DRYDEN, at the close of the preceding century, had done much towards the promotion of this object;

yet the style of English poetry was left by him in an irregular, harsh, and incorrect state. He was succeeded by Mr. POPE, whose successful exertions to polish, refine, and regulate the language of our poetry, are well known. If DRYDEN displayed more vigour of genius, and more sublimity of conception than POPE, the latter undoubtedly exhibits a degree of correctness and elegance of diction, and of harmony and sweetness of numbers, which had never been equalled by any preceding poet, and which have never been exceeded since his time. "New sentiments, and new images," says a great critic, "others may produce; but to attempt any further improvement of versification will be dangerous. Art and diligence have now done their best; and what shall be added, will be the effort of tedious toil, and needless curiosity."^a

English poetry is also indebted to several who have written since Mr. POPE. The names of these, and the nature and amount of the services which they rendered, will be more fully brought to the mind of the intelligent reader in reviewing hereafter the particular works by which they are most honourably known to the public.

About the beginning of the seventeenth century, there was a race of versifiers in Europe, and especially in Great-Britain, who have been called by the critics *metaphysical poets*.ⁱ They were generally men of learning, and many of them endowed with genius; but were either destitute of taste, or possessed only that which was false and perverted. Pedantic, subtle, obscure, and confused, they presented absurd and gross conceits, rather than just images; scholastic refinements, rather than copies of nature; and far-fetched ideas and illustrations,

^a *Life of POPE*, by Dr. JOHNSON.

ⁱ *Life of COWLEY*, by JOHNSON.

to display their reading, rather than that chaste simplicity which delights, and that "noble expanse of thought, which fills the whole mind." This race of poets, if such they may be called, did not become extinct till towards the close of the seventeenth century. COWLEY, WALLER, DENHAM, and many others, were infected with the false taste which they had propagated, and thus extended the mischief. MILTON, though he adopted, in one instance, the manner of these metaphysical versifiers, yet in general disdained it, and contributed much to discourage the unworthy fashion. DRYDEN went still further, in some respects, in rectifying the public taste. But towards the close of the century, a style of poetry which had so long, and on such high authority, maintained its ground, ceased to be popular. The English poetry of the eighteenth century, therefore, is, in general, more delicate in its sentiments, more correct and elegant in its diction, more chaste in its figures and illustrations, more harmonious in its numbers, and, on the whole, more simple and natural in its structure, than that of any preceding age.

The improvements in *French Poetry*, in the century under consideration, though worthy of notice, have been less numerous and remarkable. With the nature of these, however, and the persons to whom the honour of effecting them is chiefly due, the author is not sufficiently acquainted to enable him to speak distinctly. In improving the poetry of *Italy, Spain, and Portugal*, it is believed that still less has been done within the last hundred years; but of this, also, too little is known to warrant an attempt to give any distinct views of the subject.

The poetic character of *Germany* rose to great eminence in the latter half of the eighteenth century. Among the earliest and most successful la-

bourers in attuning the German language to poetry were HALLER, KLOPSTOCK, GESNER, and WIELAND. Before the works of these great literary reformers appeared, this language could scarcely boast of any poems superior to those of GOTTSCHED and SCHOONAIK. A poetic diction was to be formed. Accordingly, Baron HALLER is said to have written his poem on *Reason, Superstition, and Infidelity*, for the express purpose of proving that the German language was capable of an advantageous application to moral and philosophical poetry. It was before remarked, that KLOPSTOCK was eminently successful in improving the versification of his native language. His *Messiah*, on its first appearance, was severely criticised, on account of the novel expressions and combinations which it contained; but these innovations soon gained credit, and were generally adopted; and the author may be said to have formed a new era in German poetry. GESNER and WIELAND carried these improvements still further. Besides these, the writings of GELLERT, LESSING, KLEIST, GLEIM, and several others, have contributed largely to enrich and refine the versification of their country; insomuch that the poetry of Germany, which, half a century ago, was scarcely thought worthy of notice, may be reckoned, at the present day, among the most polished, harmonious, and spirited in the republic of letters.

The poetry of *Sweden* received, during the same period, improvements of a similar nature. About the middle of the century arose DAHLIN, the father of Swedish poetry. He attained high excellence in the Epic, Tragic, and Lyric departments of poetic composition, and contributed much towards establishing the reign of taste in his country. To him many successors have arisen, some of whom have pursued, with honourable success, the same

track. Among these, the most conspicuous are Count DE CREUTZ, Count DE GYLLENBORG, Madame DE NORDENFLYCHT, Count OXENSTIERNA, KELLGREN, LEOPOLD, LIDNER, TORILD, and several others, whose writings abundantly testify, that the Swedish language, notwithstanding its former defects, is capable of exhibiting, under the hand of a master, all that harmony, tenderness, and force, which, when united, render the productions of the poet so interesting. The labours of KELLGREN, in particular, for a number of years past, to polish and refine the versification of his country, are said to have been eminently successful, and highly honourable to his character.^j

The poetry of *Russia* is almost wholly the growth of the eighteenth century. CANTEMIR, ILINSKI, FREDIATOFSKI, and a few others, adventured in this new field at a very early period of the century; but they were rather rhymers than poets. The first respectable poet in the Russian language was LOMONZOF, who wrote about the middle of the century. His compositions are principally of the lyric kind, which, for originality, energy of language, and sublimity of sentiment, deserve much praise. He was followed in this career of improvement by SUMOROKOF, who is represented as the founder of the Russian drama, and one of the most successful refiners of the poetic language of his country. To these succeeded a number of poets, who all contributed something to improve the versification of this language; among the most distinguished of whom are KHERASKOF and KARAMSIN. The *Rossiada* of the former, as it has been greatly admired by the author's countrymen, so its appearance doubtless formed an important era in the progress of their poetic character. The various works

^j See CATTEAU's *View of Sweden*, and ACERBI's *Travels*.

of KARAMSIN are also entitled to respectful notice among the valuable contributions to this branch of literary improvement.

After these preliminary remarks concerning the refinements and riches which have been communicated to the poetic language of several countries of Europe, it may be proper to take a brief review of the principal productions to which the eighteenth century gave birth, in the various departments of poetry; after which the way will be prepared for some general reflections on the poetic character of the age.

EPIC POETRY.

In *Epic* poetry the period of this Retrospect produced few specimens above mediocrity. The *Henriade* of VOLTAIRE stands at the head of the list. This performance, like most of the works of its celebrated author,^k discovers great genius, and has been the subject of high applause, particularly among French critics. For boldness of conception, general felicity of language, and just and noble sentiments, it is entitled to honourable distinction. But from a real or supposed inaptitude of the French language for the majestic character of epic composition; from the indiscreet choice of a modern hero, and a recent train of events in the

^k Few literary men in the eighteenth century rendered themselves more conspicuous than FRANCIS AROUET DE VOLTAIRE. He was born in 1694, at Paris, where he died in 1778. Endowed with an uncommon share of wit, humour, fancy, and taste, he was distinguished as an interesting and entertaining writer for more than half a century. He enjoyed a high reputation, not only as an epic poet, but also as a dramatist, an historian, a novelist, an essayist, and a miscellaneous writer. His talents were so various, that there is scarcely any department of literary labour in which he has not left something, which, taken alone, would show him to have been an eminent man. It is to be lamented that his talents were so much devoted to the cause of impiety and licentiousness; and that he so often betrayed a willingness to set all principle, truth, and decorum at defiance for the purpose of attacking the religion and the character of Christians.

author's own country, as the subject; and from some egregious faults in the incidents and machinery, the best critics have denied to this poem the praise of first-rate excellence.

The *Leonidas* of Mr. GLOVER is one of the most meritorious efforts in the department of epic poetry which English literature presented, during the age under consideration. This work has long maintained a high character among English critics. The *Calvary* of Mr. CUMBERLAND is entitled to the next place; a poem which has been pronounced to be "imbued with the genuine spirit of MILTON, and destined, therefore, most probably, to immortality." Though the author has not, perhaps, given sufficient scope to his imagination, but confined himself too closely to the sacred history, for the full exertion of his poetic strength, yet both the plan and execution of his work do him immortal honour, and afford high pleasure both to the critic and the christian. The *Joan of Arc*, by Mr. SOUTHEY, while it obviously betrays the haste and carelessness with which it was written,¹ discovers, at the same time, the undoubted genius and taste of the author. The sentiments, in general, are noble and generous; the characters introduced are, for the most part, well supported; the imagery is bold and impressive, and the versification, without being always correct, is easy, harmonious, and beautiful. To these may be added *Arthur, or the Northern Enchantment*, by Mr. HOLE, and several other epic poems, which, though not entitled to rank with those above mentioned, yet do credit to the poetic talents of their respective writers.

But, if no poet since the time of MILTON have honoured our language with a work which deserves to be compared with the *Paradise Lost*, yet this period

¹ The *Joan of Arc* probably furnishes the first instance in the history of literature of an epic poem of equal length being written in *six weeks*!

has not passed without two important events. The *Iliad*, that great parent stock of epic productions, has been, in the course of the last century, incorporated with English poetry, by the genius of Mr. POPE; and *Fingal* and *Temora* have been recalled from a long oblivion by the labours of Mr. MACPHERSON. In the former, this age may boast of having produced the noblest translation ever presented to the republic of letters; and in the latter of having recovered a work of true and uncommon genius, which, on several accounts, will probably be read with pleasure for many centuries to come, whatever opinion may be formed with respect to its origin.

The history of German literature, during the eighteenth century, presents us with an epic poem, which some have brought into competition with the *Paradise Lost*. This is the *Messiah* of KLOPSTOCK, a work which has been, perhaps, more read throughout the literary world, and honoured with more general approbation than any other poetic production of the same country. The *Messiah* certainly may be, in some respects, advantageously compared with the *Paradise Lost*. Though the former does not possess the "gigantic sublimity" of the latter, yet it elevates the mind by the grandeur and novelty of its fiction, and displays more tenderness and pathos.^m *The Death of Abel* is not less familiar to every intelligent reader,

^m HERDER, an eloquent German writer, thus compares the *Paradise Lost* and *The Messiah*: "The edifice of MILTON is a steadfast and well-planned building, resting on ancient columns: KLOPSTOCK's is an enchanted dome, echoing with the softest and purest tones of human feeling, hovering between heaven and earth, borne on angels' shoulders. MILTON's muse is masculine: KLOPSTOCK's is a tender woman, dissolving in pious ecstasies, warbling elegies and hymns. When music shall acquire among us the highest powers of her art, whose words will she select to utter but those of KLOPSTOCK?" *Letters on Humanization*. This is quoted from the *Literary Hours* of Dr. DRAKE, who says that "impartial posterity will probably confirm the judgment of HERDER." A good English translation of *The Messiah* is still a desideratum.

and its merits have been generally acknowledged.ⁿ *Oberon*,^o an epic romance, by WIELAND, discovers the bold and vigorous imagination, and the felicity of description, for which the author has been long celebrated.

In the Swedish language we also find, in the century under review, two respectable productions of the epic class. The first is entitled *Swedish Liberty*, and is a performance of DAHLIN, who was before mentioned as the father of poetry in that country. This work, with several essential faults, combines beauties and excellences which render it worthy of attention. The other work, which comes under the same denomination, is *The Passage of the Belt*, by Count DE GYLLENBORG, from which the author has derived considerable reputation among his countrymen. The *Rossiada* of KHERASKOF, a Russian nobleman, was before mentioned as entitled to respectful notice, not only because it possesses considerable merit as a poem; but because it was the first successful attempt to enlist the Russian language in the service of the epic muse, and because its appearance may be considered as forming an important epoch in the history of Russian poetry.

The translations of different epic poems, in the course of this century, were so numerous, that to give a list and character of them all would lead us into a field far too extensive. But it would be unpardonable, even in this short sketch, to omit taking notice of a few besides those which have

ⁿ *The Death of Abel*, like several other works of the same author, is written in a kind of loose poetry, unshackled by rhyme, and a precise, uniform adherence to measure. It has been said that this method of writing is peculiarly suited to the German language. It is to be lamented that this work, as well as the *Messiah*, has never been advantageously presented in English dress.

^o *Oberon* has been translated, by Mr. SOTHEBY, into English, in a style of elegance which does him great honour.

been already mentioned. The celebrated Italian epic poem *Gierusalemme Liberata*, by TASSO, has also been elegantly translated into English, during this period, by Mr. HOOLE. The three first books had been previously presented in an English dress by Mr. BROOKE, on whose work Mr. HOOLE passes the most liberal encomiums. To give a version of the whole was reserved for the latter gentleman, who executed the task with very honourable success. Shortly afterwards the *Lusiad* of CAMOENS, on which the Portuguese rest their claim to epic honours, was translated into English by Mr. MICKLE, which, in spirit and elegance, is considered by some respectable critics, as rivalling the first productions of the kind in our language.

The *Iliad* was translated, for the first time, and with considerable ability, into the Spanish language, about thirteen years ago, by DON GARCIA MALO. The same monument of Grecian genius was also translated, not long since, with high reputation, into the German language, by Voss, a distinguished poet of that country; and into Italian by the Abbé CÆSAROTTI. These several works are said to be considered, by their respective countrymen, as productions of the first class. To these may be added the translation of the *Iliad*, into English blank verse, by Mr. COWPER, which, though a more faithful version than the work of Mr. POPE, falls short of it, with respect to merit as a poem. The *Æneid* has also been translated into German by Voss, before mentioned; into Italian by M. C. BENDI; and into English by Mr. C. PITT. The work of the last named poet, though inferior to DRYDEN's translation in vigour and sprightliness, yet excels it in uniformity, correctness, and splendour of versification. LUCAN's *Pharsalia*, as translated into English by ROWE, is pronounced by an eminent critic to be

one of the greatest productions of English poetry; to exhibit more successfully than almost any other the genius and spirit of the original; and to deserve a much higher degree of approbation than it has generally obtained.^p

DIDACTIC POETRY.

In this species of poetic composition the eighteenth century produced some works of great excellence, some of which may be compared, without disadvantage, with the best specimens of any preceding age. The *Essay on Criticism*, by Mr. POPE, as it was one of his earliest compositions, so it is also one of his best.^q In the opinion of a great critic "it exhibits every mode of excellence that can embellish or dignify didactic composition; selection of matter, novelty of arrangement, justness of precept, splendour of illustration, and propriety of digression." The *Essay on Man*,^r by the same author, though in some respects of inferior excellence, has been incomparably more read, and, in general, more highly applauded. This perform-

^p *Life of ROWE*, by JOHNSON.

^q He produced this work at twenty years of age, and is pronounced by Dr. JOHNSON never afterwards to have excelled it.

^r It has been often said that Lord BOLINGBROKE had some agency in the composition of the *Essay on Man*. The following extract of a letter from the late Reverend Dr. HUGH BLAIR, of Edinburgh, will probably be considered as deciding the fact. "In the year 1763, being at London, I was carried by Dr. JOHN BLAIR, Prebendary of Westminster, to dine at old Lord BATHURST's. The conversation turning on Mr. POPE, Lord BATHURST told us, that the *Essay on Man* was originally composed by Lord BOLINGBROKE, in prose, and that Mr. POPE did no more than put it into verse: that he had read Lord BOLINGBROKE's manuscript in his own hand writing, and remembered well that he was at a loss whether most to admire the elegance of Lord BOLINGBROKE's prose, or the beauty of Mr. POPE's verse. When Lord BATHURST told this, Mr. MALLET bade me attend, and remember this remarkable piece of information; as by the course of nature I might survive his Lordship, and be a witness of his having said so." BOSWELL'S *Life of JOHNSON*, vol. iii. p. 133.

ance is not distinguished by much novelty of sentiment, or felicity of invention; but seldom have common ideas been presented with so much "beauty of embellishment," or so much "sweetness of melody." Seldom have opinions of questionable propriety been more happily disguised, or exhibited with such "dazzling splendour of imagery," and "seductive powers of eloquence." *The Fleece*, by Mr. DYER, notwithstanding the small degree of distinction which it has attained, is pronounced, by good judges, to stand among the most excellent poems of the didactic kind which the moderns have produced. *The Pleasures of the Imagination*, by Dr. AKENSIDE, is also a performance which belongs to this class; and is, doubtless, one of the most beautiful specimens that our language affords. Genius, learning, taste, pure morality, and liberal philosophy shine in every page. Dr. ARMSTRONG, in his celebrated poem on the *Art of Preserving Health*, though he did not aim at so elevated a strain as AKENSIDE, has produced a work of high excellence.^s Never sinking below the dignity of his subject, he is always chaste, correct, instructive, and elegant.

The *English Garden* of Mr. MASON, may also be mentioned as a very finished and interesting specimen of didactic composition. Simple, natural, and interesting in his descriptions, luminous and instructive in his philosophy, and purely moral in his sentiments, he is by no means the least of those authors on whose works the honour of English poetry, for the last fifty years, must rest. In the *Botanic Garden*, by Dr. DARWIN, there is a bold attempt "to enlist imagination under the banner of science," to an extent beyond example. In this at-

^s Lord MONBODDO pronounces this poem to be the best specimen of didactic poetry in the English language, and equal to any, ancient or modern. *Origin and Progress of Language*.

tempt the author has been successful to a degree which does him much honour as a poet. He unites great extent of learning with singular variety and felicity of allusion, and a pleasing harmony and splendour of versification. But it must be acknowledged that there is an uniformity, which at length fatigues, and does not so much interest the reader as many less correct and regular performances.^t The *Minstrel*, by Dr. BEATTIE, which may, without impropriety, be mentioned under this head, besides the most engaging pictures of nature, abounds in the richest sentimental, moral, and poetical beauties. The *Essays on Painting, History, and Epic Poetry*, by Mr. HAYLEY, though partaking of the historical and descriptive, are also didactic in their character, and exhibit a very large share of erudition, correctness, elegance, and poetic taste.

Besides the specimens of didactic poetry above mentioned, English literature furnished a number of others, during the period under consideration, which though not in the first grade of excellence, are yet entitled to respectful notice. The *Chace*, by SOMERVILLE, to a just and intelligent view of its subject, adds felicity and variety of description,

^t It has been suggested that the author of the *Loves of the Plants* was considerably indebted to the *Connubia Florum* of DE LA CROIX, both in the plan and execution of his work. This beautiful Latin poem was first published in France, about the year 1727, and was reprinted at London, with notes and observations by Sir RICHARD CLAYTON, in 1791. If Dr. DARWIN had ever seen DE LA CROIX's work, (which can scarcely be questioned) some deduction must be made from his claim to originality. Still, however, the *Botanic Garden* will be entitled to no small share of applause as a poem. Though many of the opinions of the author must be considered as erroneous; though his poetry evince more taste than genius, more labour than invention, and display more meretricious glare than chaste ornament; and though much of the praise which was bestowed on the work soon after its appearance must be deemed extravagant; yet since the author of the *Pursuits of Literature* pronounced judgment upon it, its poetic character has, perhaps, in the estimation of many, sunk too low. Dr. DARWIN is far from standing at the head of modern poets; but he holds a place greatly above mediocrity.

and elegance of language. The *Infancy* of Dr. DOWNMAN discovers him to have been a good poet, an excellent medical philosopher, and a friend to morality and virtue. The *Mine*, a dramatic poem, by Mr. SARGENT, is considered by good judges as a work of genuine philosophical and poetical merit. And the *English Orator*, by Mr. POLWHELE, displays much excellent sentiment and just precept, in very harmonious verse.

With the didactic poetry produced on the continent of Europe during the last age, the author has but little acquaintance. The *Prædium Rusticum* of Father VANIÈRE, a Jesuit of France, published about the beginning of the century, has been ever since celebrated in the literary world as a specimen of elegant Latin poetry, connected with excellent precepts and just sentiments. The *Connubia Florum* of M. DE LA CROIX, also a Latin poem, and published a few years after the *Prædium Rusticum*, is scarcely less remarkable for the purity, vivacity, and elegance of its diction, the ingenuity of its fable and imagery, and the general soundness of its philosophy. The Abbé DELILLE, in his *Garden*, a didactic and descriptive work, presented his countrymen with a poem, which, though it does not display great invention, has been highly and justly applauded for the beauty of its descriptions, and the excellence of its versification. To these may be added Baron HALLER's poem on *Reason, Superstition, and Infidelity*, before mentioned, and which is worthy of its illustrious author.

MORAL AND DEVOTIONAL POETRY.

The moral poetry of the eighteenth century may, without hesitation, be pronounced superior, in the union of correctness, purity and elegance,

to that of any preceding age. This superiority is so remarkable that it must arrest the attention of the most careless observer, and give pleasure to every friend of human happiness. The age, it is readily admitted, gave birth to much licentious poetry; but it produced, at the same time, much that exhibits a degree of purity and elevation of sentiment to which the history of literature furnishes no parallel.

The *Night Thoughts*, and the *Universal Passion*, by Dr. YOUNG, are entitled to the first place in this list. In these works the celebrated author has employed wonderful sublimity and force of imagination, eloquence and cogency of reasoning, and music of numbers, in conveying the most important truths that can engage the attention of mankind. The *Ethical Epistles*, and some other moral productions of POPE, are models in their kind which have never been excelled. *The Vanity of Human Wishes*, a poem in imitation of the tenth satire of JUVENAL, by Dr. JOHNSON, has been pronounced as high an effort of ethic poetry as any language can show. *The Task*, by Mr. COWPER, is one of the signal honours of the age, in this class of poetic compositions. For purity of sentiment, chasteness of description, simplicity and energy of style, and a vein of original and well directed satire, this work will be admired as long as taste and virtue exist.

The eighteenth century is also distinguished by the *Devotional* poetry which it produced. The difficulty of this species of composition has been found and acknowledged, at all periods in which it was undertaken. Before the commencement of the age under consideration, theological doctrines, and portions of sacred history, had been made the subject of poetry, by a number of distinguished writers. Versions of the *Psalms* had been parti-

cularly attempted by several persons with tolerable success. Among these the version of BRADY and TATE held the first place in the English language. Indeed some parts of their work were so well performed that comparatively few of their successors have attained equal excellence.

But among all the sacred poetry of the eighteenth century, that of Dr. WATTS stands preeminent. His plan of evangelizing the Psalms of David, and accommodating them to the worship of God under the present dispensation, as it was equally new and ingenious, so it has received an unusual degree of approbation, and has, perhaps, been more useful than any other work in this department of composition that was ever presented to the world. Simplicity, smoothness, harmony, and pious elevation remarkably characterize his verse. Next to the sacred poetry of Dr. WATTS, the specimens produced by Mr. ADDISON, Dr. DODDRIDGE, Mr. PITT, Mr. MERRICK, Dr. BLACKLOCK, Mr. LOGAN, and several others, possess a high degree of merit. In this department of poetry it is believed that Great-Britain has excelled all other countries.

Poetical versions of the Psalms made, during this period, on the continent of Europe, were numerous; but of these a very small portion are worthy of notice. The *Hymns* of GELLERT, a celebrated poet of Germany, are said to be entitled to a place in the first class of this kind of writings.

SATIRICAL POETRY.

In this department of poetry the eighteenth century is, on the whole, superior to any preceding age. Two satirical poets of great eminence had flourished in Europe towards the close of the preceding age. BOILEAU and DRYDEN, equal in most

respects to the great Roman satirists, and in some superior to them all, brought modern satire to a very high degree of excellence. DRYDEN was the first who displayed with success the power of the English language in this kind of composition. In the eighteenth century the candidates for satirical fame were numerous; and in variety of manner, correctness of taste, purity of virtue, and, in some instances, in wit, humour, and force of ridicule, may be said to have exceeded all their predecessors.

In this list Mr. POPE is entitled to the first place. His *Satirical Epistles*, his *Imitations* of the ancient satirists, his *Dunciad*,^v and several other performances of a similar kind, have been long admired. In keenness of satire, energy of description, condensation of thought, and vivacity and correctness of style, he is, perhaps, superior to all who went before him. And though the moral tendency of some of his pictures may be questioned, yet he lashes vice with great force and effect." The

^v Some of the images in the *Dunciad* are very gross and disgusting. POPE had too much of that fondness for impure ideas which was so conspicuous, and carried so much further in the writings of SWIFT.

" The author of the *Pursuits of Literature* thus speaks of this great poet : " The sixth and last of this immortal Brotherhood, (the satirists) in the fulness of time, and in the maturity of poetical power, came POPE. All that was wanting to his illustrious predecessor found its consummation in the genius, knowledge, correct sense, and condensation of thought and expression, which distinguished this poet. The tenour of his life was peculiarly favourable to his office. He had *first* cultivated all the flowery grounds of poetry. He had excelled in description, in pastoral, in the pathetic, and in general criticism; and had given an English existence in perpetuity to the father of all poetry. Thus honoured, and with these pretensions, he left them all for that excellence, for which the maturity of his talents and judgment so eminently designed him. Familiar with the great; intimate with the polite; graced by the attentions of *the fair*; admired by the learned; a favourite with the nation; independent in an acquired opulence, the honourable product of his genius and industry; the companion of persons distinguished for birth, high fashion, rank, wit, or virtue; resident in the centre of all public information and intelligence; every avenue to knowledge and every mode of observation were open to his curious prying, piercing, and unwearied intellect. His works are so generally read and studied, that I should not merely fatigue, but I should almost insult you by such a needless disquisition."

Love of Fame the Universal Passion, by Dr. YOUNG, though mentioned under a preceding head, is also entitled to a place among the best satirical productions of the age. The characters are, in general, well selected and ably drawn, the illustrations are happy, the sentiments just, the imagery correct and various, and the satire at once easy, vivacious and moral.

The satirical poetry of Dean SWIFT has various kinds and a high degree of poetic excellence; but *delicacy* is by no means one of its attributes. His wit is often extremely happy, and his ridicule just, lively, and powerful. "His diction is correct, his numbers smooth, and his rhymes exact. There seldom occurs a laboured expression, or a redundant epithet. All his verses exemplify his own definition of a good style; they consist of *proper words in proper places*." But the levity with which he frequently treats the most serious subjects is altogether unpardonable;^w and the unnatural fondness which he manifests for coarse indelicacy, and for images drawn from every source of physical impurity, cannot but fill with disgust the mind of every virtuous reader.*

^w "I know not," says Dr. BEATTIE, "whether this author is not the only human being who ever presumed to speak in ludicrous terms of the last judgment. His profane verses on that tremendous subject were not published, so far as I know, till after his death: for CHESTERFIELD's letter to VOLTAIRE, in which they are inserted, and spoken of with approbation, (which is no more than one could expect from such a critic) and said to be copied from the original in SWIFT's hand-writing, is dated in 1752. But this is no excuse for the author. We can guess at what was in his mind when he wrote them; and at what remained in his mind while he could have destroyed them, and would not. I mean not to insinuate that SWIFT was favourable to infidelity. There is good reason to believe he was not; and that, though many of his levities are inexcuseable, he could occasionally be both serious and pious. In fact, an infidel clergyman would be such a compound of execrable impicity, and contemptible meanness, that I am unwilling to suppose there can be such a monster. The profaneness of this author I impute to his passion for ridicule, and rage of witticism; which, when they settle into a habit, and venture on liberties with what is sacred, never fail to pervert the mind, and harden the heart."

* Instances of this fault are so numerous and offensive in SWIFT's writings, that no further remarks are necessary either to explain or enforce the criticism.

The satires of CHURCHILL display great vigour both of thought and language; and though the boldness of their abuse, and the nature of their subjects were, in some measure, the ground of their popularity, while the author lived; yet they have certainly great strength, and possess no inconsiderable merit in their way. Vicious as was the character of the man, he knew how to expose and correct vice. The *Rosciad*, and the *Prophecy of Famine* may be regarded as the best of his poems. *London*, a poem in imitation of the third satire of JUVENAL, by Dr. JOHNSON, was one of the early displays of that genius which afterwards shone with such distinguished lustre, and filled so large a space in the literature of the age. The *Faust*, of the celebrated GOETHE, of Germany, occupies a high place in the list of modern satirical writings. The *Table Talk*, the *Progress of Error*, and some other satirical pieces, by COWPER, in purity, humour, dignity and force, have seldom been exceeded in any language. The *Baviad* and *Mæviad*, of Mr. GIFFORD, have received much applause from some of the critics of Great-Britain. To these may be added *The Pursuits of Literature*, a satirical poem, published a few years ago, by an anonymous hand. In this work every friend of truth, virtue, and sound learning will find much to approve and admire. A large portion of the literary and moral opinions which it contains are doubtless entitled to the warmest approbation. But the judicious reader will also find much to condemn. The author discovers, on many occasions, a bitterness of prejudice, and a rage for satire, which frequently lead him astray, and which detract greatly both from the dignity and the value of his work. His pedantic fondness for quotation is indulged to a degree which disfigures his pages, and encumbers

and weakens his meaning; and after all, his notes are so much more spirited and valuable than his poetry, that the latter will seldom be read except as an introduction to the former.*

Under the head of *Satire* falls that *mock-heroic* poetry, which is a species of composition almost wholly peculiar to modern times, and of which the last age has been abundantly prolific. Of this kind of poetry *The Rape of the Lock*, by POPE, is a specimen of first-rate excellence. In this work, novelty of imagery, fertility of invention, felicity of wit, and sweetness of versification, are combined in an exquisite degree. *The Triumphs of Temper*, by Mr. HAYLEY, may be considered as belonging to the same class. And though far from being equal to the immortal production of POPE, it displays a degree of genius, taste, and humour highly honourable to the author.

The greater part of the poetry of a certain British satirist, who calls himself PETER PINDAR, also belongs to this class. His writings abound in humour, which, though frequently gross, indicates talents of no common grade; and in wit, which though generally eccentric, and frequently devoted to the worst purposes, manifests extent of learning and force of imagination. Aware that quaint phrases, whimsical allusions, and laughable conceits, when presented unmixed, will soon cease to please, he has taken care to infuse into

y The author of this singular work is still unknown. That he has great learning, and a comprehensive and vigorous mind, cannot be doubted; and that in *prose* he expresses himself with much force, vivacity, and taste, is no less evident. But I must be permitted, on many subjects, to call in question both the candour of his temper, and the rectitude of his judgment; and as a poet, notwithstanding all the applause which has been heaped upon him, I must consider him far below the great masters among whom he affects to take his station, and with whom he has the presumption to compare himself. His work is one of those which derive their chief importance and popularity from the praise and aspersion of *living* characters with which they abound; and which, in a few years, must fall into oblivion.

many of his pieces a considerable portion of sentiment and tenderness, and sometimes to elevate his reader by an unexpected stroke of the sublime.^z

Since the days of BUTLER many specimens of that *burlesque* poetry adopted by him in his *Hudibras*, have been given to the public; but few of them are entitled to the praise of high excellence. Probably the most successful imitations of the *Hudibrastic* manner are to be found in the *Alma* of PRIOR, and the *McFingal* of Mr. TRUMBULL, a respectable poet of our own country. The merit of the former is so great, that Mr. POPE, with all his poetic fame, expressed a wish to have been the author of it; and the latter has been pronounced, by good judges, both in Europe and America, to be nearly equal to its great model.

M. GRESSETT, a French poet of high reputation, has shown, in his *Vert-Vert*, and in his *Chartreuse*, that between the *heroic* and the *burlesque* there is still another species of poetry, partaking in some degree of the characters of both. A kind of composition which, while it displays some of the attributes of moral and serious poetry, at the same time embraces the features of the satiric, the gay, and the refined comic, in a very pleasing degree.

About fifty years before the commencement of the century under review, began the fashion of imitating the great satirists of Rome, or adapting ancient poetry to modern characters and manners. This kind of poetical exercise has continued in vogue to the present day, and the number of those who have made trial of their genius in this way has greatly increased. Of this imitation the sa-

^z The real name of this writer is WALCOTT. While justice is done to his talents, which, in a certain line, are really great, his faults and vices ought not to pass without censure. His blasphemous impiety cannot be viewed by the christian without abhorrence; while the injustice and malignity displayed against private character, in many of his writings, must be regarded with cordial detestation by every honest man.

tires of HORACE, JUVENAL, and PERSIUS, have all been the objects. And among these imitators are found the names of POPE, JOHNSON, GIFFORD, LEWIS, and several other British poets.

DESCRIPTIVE POETRY.

In *Descriptive* poetry the last age may lay claim to the character of distinguished excellence. It not only produced more in *quantity*, but also much of a superior *quality* to that of which any preceding period can boast. The *Tale of the Hermit*, by Dr. PARNELL, deserves high praise for justness of sentiment, and delicacy and liveliness of colouring. The *Windsor Forest* of POPE also belongs to the same class, and for variety and elegance of description, and particularly for a happy interchange of the descriptive, the narrative, and the moral, possesses great merit. But the work entitled to the highest place in this department of poetry, is the *Seasons*, by THOMSON. This writer may be said to have created a new species of poetry. "His mode of thinking and of expressing his thoughts is original. His blank verse is not the blank verse of MILTON, or of any preceding poet. His numbers, his pauses, his diction, are of his own growth, without transcription, without imitation. He thinks in a peculiar strain; and he thinks always as a man of genius. He looks round on nature and life with the eye which nature bestows only on a poet; the eye that distinguishes in every thing presented to its view, whatever there is on which imagination can delight to be detained; and with a mind that at once comprehends the vast, and attends to the minute. He leads us through the appearances of things as they are successively varied by the vicissitudes of the year; and imparts to us so much of his own en-

thusiasm, that our thoughts expand with his imagery, and kindle with his sentiments."^a

KLEIST, of Germany, in the same department of poetic composition, has been compared with THOMSON, and is said, by some of his countrymen, to have attained nearly equal excellence. A similar comparison has also been made between the immortal British bard and DELILLE, of France, who, in his *L'Homme des Champs*, or *Rural Philosopher*, presented his countrymen with a poem of acknowledged merit. Though in this work, as well as in that which was before mentioned, there is but little display of invention; yet for correctness and elegance of versification, it sustains a very high character.

The *Traveller*, and *The Deserted Village*, by GOLDSMITH, are so well known, and have been so generally admired, that a formal and detailed account of their beauties is altogether unnecessary. His versification has been pronounced more sweet and harmonious than that of any other poet; and both his sentiments and imagery display excellence of the first order. The *Wanderer*, by SAVAGE, discovers a large portion of those various and extraordinary powers which distinguished that unfortunate and degraded man.^b It abounds with beautiful imagery, with "strong descriptions of nature, and just observations on life." The *Shipwreck*, by FALCONAR, is well known, and has been universally esteemed, as abounding with the richest beauties. Scarcely, if at all, inferior in de-

^a *Life of THOMSON*, by JOHNSON.

^b It is generally known that this extraordinary man was the son of ANNE, Countess of MACCLESFIELD, by an adulterous connection with Earl RIVERS. His great talents; the unnatural cruelty of his mother; his degrading vices; his accumulated distresses, and his melancholy end, have been so often the subject of mingled astonishment and regret, that to attempt to describe them is as unnecessary as it would be unpleasant. He was born in 1698, and died in 1743, one of the most remarkable instances of unfortunate genius that the age produced.

scriptive excellence to any that have been mentioned, are some of the poems of ROBERT BURNS, the Ayrshire bard. Though his versification is frequently faulty, yet, for ease and vigour of language, for strong descriptive powers, and a vein of rich and exquisite humour, his productions have few rivals. None can read the works of this justly celebrated writer without admiring the genius which, amidst so many difficulties and discouragements, could soar so high; nor without lamenting the misfortunes and the vices which, with such a genius, and amidst so many excitements to virtue, could sink him so low.

Walks in a Forest, and the *Vales of Wever*, by Mr. GISBORNE, display a very honourable share of original and strong descriptive powers. *A Tour through Wales*, by Mr. SOTHEY; *Grove-Hill*, by Mr. MAURICE; *The Sea*, by Mr. BIDLAKE; *The Pleasures of Memory*, by Mr. ROGERS, and the *Pleasures of Hope*, by Mr. CAMPBELL, are all considered by critics as possessing rich and various poetic beauties. The *Farmer's Boy*, by ROBERT BLOOMFIELD, to ease and sweetness of versification, adds descriptions of such original and inimitable excellence, as shows that they were drawn from nature; and it possesses likewise a vein of sentiment and morality of the most elevated kind.

PASTORAL POETRY.

The *Pastoral* poetry of the eighteenth century is also highly honourable to modern genius. A brief review of the principal names which belong to this class of authors will show that the last, with respect to this kind of poetic excellence, may be advantageously compared with any former age.

The pastorals of POPE, though not equal to most of his other works, have yet considerable

merit to recommend them. The pastorals of PHILLIPS, published about the same time, may be considered as occupying nearly the same grade of excellence. In the works of GAY and SHENSTONE are also found some specimens of this kind of composition, which have generally a place assigned them among the pastorals of superior character. The *Shepherd's Week* of the former, and the *Pastoral Ballad* of the latter, are considered among the most meritorious performances of their kind in our language. The *Despairing Shepherd*, of ROWE, is also worthy of high praise; and the various pastoral productions of COLLINS, in richness and strength of description, in justness and simplicity of sentiment, have rarely been excelled. But inferior to none that have been mentioned is the *Gentle Shepherd*, of ALLAN RAMSAY, a work of great and original genius, in which a happy delineation of characters, an affecting exhibition of incidents, and a captivating simplicity and tenderness remarkably prevail.

But among all the pastoral poetry of the eighteenth century, the *Idylls* of GESNER unquestionably hold the first place. He has, indeed, been pronounced the greatest pastoral poet that ever lived, not excepting THEOCRITUS himself, the father of this species of poetry. In the novelty of many of his thoughts; in the judicious choice of subjects; in liveliness of description; and in exquisite pathos and tenderness of sentiment, he is without a rival. The *Idylls*, or *Rural Stories* of Mademoiselle LEVESQUE, a poetess of France, are said by some critics to approach that excellence which distinguishes the productions of GESNER. To these may be added the *Eclogues* of FONTENELLE and DE LA MOTTE, of the same country, which deserve to be mentioned with honour among the pastoral writings of the age.

The late pastoral poets of Great-Britain are numerous; but of these few are worthy of being distinguished. Among such as deserve to be mentioned with particular honour, Dr. BEATTIE and Mr. SOUTHEY stand in the first rank. The *Hermit* of the former, which belongs to this class rather than any other, in ease, in solemn musical expression, in elevation of sentiment, and in pathetic touches, is almost unrivalled, and would be sufficient alone to establish the author's immortality as a poet. And the *Old Mansion House*, the *Ruined Cottage*, and the *Botany-Bay Eclogues* of the latter, display the fine imagination, the graceful simplicity, and the general poetic excellence, for which the author is remarkable.

In pastoral song and ballad, the poets of the last age incontestibly excelled those of all preceding centuries. In this class of poetic compositions Great-Britain has been particularly fruitful; and few names deserve to be mentioned with so much honour as that of ROBERT BURNS, who was noticed in a former section. In the happy union of ease, simplicity, humour, pathos, and energy, he has had few equals in any age.

LYRIC POETRY.

The last age produced some specimens of lyric poetry which deserve the highest praise. It has been asserted, indeed, that in this species of composition modern poets are universally and indisputably inferior to the ancient; but this assertion is made too hastily, and without sufficient qualification. Some of the odes of COLLINS and of GRAY will bear an honourable comparison with the best productions of this kind of any age. Besides these, the lyric compositions of WATTS, THOMSON, MASON, WARTON, COWPER, MRS. BARBAULD,

and several other English poets, will long do honour to the literature of their country.

During the same period, much lyric poetry, of a respectable character, was produced on the continent of Europe. In the French language, the odes of J. B. ROUSSEAU, and of GRESSETT, are considered by the critics of that country as among the most finished productions of their kind. To the odes of ROUSSEAU this character is especially applicable. In the Italian language, the odes of METASTASIO; in the German, those of KLOPSTOCK, WEISSE, and WIELAND; and in the Swedish, those of DAHLIN, and of GYLLENBORG, are all admired among those who understand the languages in which they are respectively written. But it is believed that the best lyric poetry of Great-Britain, during this period, exceeds that of any other country in Europe, and of course in the literary world.

Under the head of lyric poetry, may be placed the species of composition called the *Sonnet*, with many excellent models of which the eighteenth century has remarkably abounded. This kind of poetry is of Italian origin. DANTE, though not the inventor, was the first who succeeded in the composition of it. The first successful attempts to present the Sonnet in our language, were made by DRUMMOND, and afterwards by MILTON. The former excelled in delicacy; the specimens furnished by the latter were chiefly distinguished by strength of expression, and sublimity of thought; but were by no means remarkable for smoothness, harmony, or elegance. In these respects, several writers of Sonnets, since the day of that immortal bard, though greatly inferior in genius, have much excelled him; and, of course, have produced compositions of this kind before unequalled in English literature. Among those who have most distinguished themselves in this department of poetry, are

MISS CHARLOTTE SMITH, MR. BOWLES, and MISS SEWARD. "In sweetness and harmony of versification; in unaffected elegance of style; and in that pleasing melancholy which irresistably steals upon and captivates the heart, they have excelled all other writers of the Sonnet, and have shown how erroneous are the opinions of those who deem this species of composition beneath the attention of genius."

Finally, under the general denomination of lyric poetry fall those various species of poetic compositions called *Songs*, *Ballads*, &c. of which the last age has been eminently fruitful. Never was there a period before in which the number and the poetic merit of these were so great as during that which is under review. In this department of poetry the *Scotch* and *English* have excelled not only their contemporaries, but all preceding writers. But this class of poets is so numerous, and so familiarly known, that no attempt will be made to exhibit even a selection of the best.

ELEGIAC POETRY.

That part of the poetry of the eighteenth century which falls under this head is worthy of particular notice. It may be pronounced greatly superior to all the productions of a similar kind which belong to any preceding age. In this section several of the productions of POPE may be, with propriety, arranged, and must have assigned to them a high place. The elegies of HAMMOND, though scarcely possessing first-rate excellence, have been also celebrated. But the writer who confessedly stands in the first rank of elegiac poets is GRAY. His *Elegy in a Country Church Yard* will be read

with admiration and delight, as possessing beauties of the most rich and exquisite kind, as long as taste and sensibility shall exist.^d Another distinguished name, entitled to an honourable place in this list, is that of SHENSTONE, who produced at least one *Elegy* which will ever command admiration. Nor would it be just to pass in silence the name of Miss SEWARD, who, in this department of poetry, has displayed powers in the pathetic, the elegant, and the beautiful, which bid fair long to render her character conspicuous in the annals of English literature.

The best elegiac poetry of the last age is distinguished above that of all preceding periods, by the union of a number of qualities which never before so conspicuously met in this species of composition. These qualities are regularity, correctness, pathos, elevation of sentiment, and purity of

^d THOMAS GRAY was born in London in 1716, and died in 1771. His character, as drawn by a friend, is as follows: "Perhaps he was the most learned man in Europe. He was equally acquainted with the elegant and the profound parts of science; and that not superficially, but thoroughly. He knew every branch of history, both natural and civil; had read all the original historians of England, France, and Italy; and was a great antiquarian. Criticism, metaphysics, morals, politics, made a principal part of his study. Voyages and travels of all sorts were his favourite amusements; and he had a fine taste in painting, prints, architecture, and gardening. With such a fund of knowledge, his conversation must have been equally instructing and entertaining; but he was also a good man, a man of virtue and humanity." Dr. JOHNSON, in his *Lives of the Poets*, is generally supposed not to have done justice to this celebrated writer. From his *Elegy in the Church Yard*, indeed, that great Critic could not withhold the warmest praise. "In the character of this *Elegy*," says he, "I rejoice to concur with the common reader. It abounds with images which find a mirror in every mind, and with sentiments to which every bosom returns an echo. Had GRAY written often thus, it had been vain to blame, and useless to praise him." After all, it must be acknowledged, that he wrote but little; that only a part of that little is in the style of exquisite excellence; and that his *Elegy* is so greatly superior to every other production of his pen, as to excite a suspicion that it was the result of unwearied polish and elaboration, rather than the spontaneous effusion of a mighty genius. If this view of the subject be admissible, though GRAY will still hold a place in the first rank of lyric and elegiac poets; yet some of the praise which has been bestowed on his genius will be pronounced excessive; and the judgment of Dr. JOHNSON less liable to exception than is commonly supposed.

moral character. Never before were these characters so frequently assembled, so harmoniously united, or so forcibly exhibited, as in some of the elegiac productions of the century under review.

DRAMA.

The *Dramatic Poetry* of the eighteenth century bears, in several respects, a distinguished character.* An obvious circumstance which deserves to be noted, is the great and unprecedented *number* of dramatic productions which have appeared during this period. In almost every civilized and literary nation the press has teemed with the efforts of the tragic and comic muse. Perhaps in no department of literature, if we except Novels, has the taste of the age for multiplying books been more remarkably displayed than in that which is under consideration. In proportion as theatrical amusements have been multiplied and extended, the love of fame, the hope of profit, or a fondness for the employment, have prompted many to appear as candidates for supplying the demands of the public. Of the moral effect of this increase in the taste and demand for theatrical representations some notice will be taken hereafter.

The specimens of *English Tragedy* which belong to the period under review, though numerous, are yet few of them entitled to the praise of first-rate excellence. After the *Mourning Bride*, of CONGREVE, which properly belongs to the preceding age, the *Fair Penitent*, and the *Jane Shore*, of ROWE, with respect to time, hold the first place. These, though of different relative merit, yet, both

* The author is sensible that many dramatic productions cannot with propriety be denominated *poetic*; but to avoid multiplying chapters he has thought proper to throw under one head all those works, whether poetic or not, which belong to the dramatic class.

on account of their plot and language, have deservedly continued to be favourites to the present day.^f If ROWE paint the passions with less force and conformity to nature than SHAKSPEARE and OTWAY, he is free from the barbarisms of the former, and the licentiousness of the latter. The *Cato*, of ADDISON, is generally known; and the public seem now to be agreed in the opinion, that, notwithstanding all the loftiness of sentiment, and beauty of diction with which it abounds, as a Tragedy, it is too “regularly dull,” and unnaturally stiff, for scenic representation. The *Revenge*, by Dr. YOUNG, displays no small share of that sublimity and fire which the illustrious author so remarkably possessed. Of his several Tragedies, this only keeps possession of the stage. The *Grecian Daughter*, and the *Gamester*, of MOORE, will long remain very honourable monuments of the dramatic powers of their author. The *Caractacus*, of MASON, would have done credit to the most favourable periods of ancient literature. *Douglass*, by Mr. HOME, for several reasons, attracted an unusual degree of public attention, when it first appeared; and has ever since maintained a high character.^g Among the Tragedies of THOMSON, *Tancred and Sigismunda* alone merits distinction. This, with regard to

^f In these and the following remarks on *dramatic* poetry, the author takes for granted that no reader will consider him as expressing an opinion favourable to theatrical amusements. He is persuaded that the general character and tendency of such amusements are highly immoral; but in this place, and always when he employs favourable expressions concerning certain dramas, he begs to be understood as merely delivering opinions of a literary kind.

^g Mr. HOME was a clergyman of the church of Scotland. The circumstance of a person of his profession giving encouragement to the stage, by writing for it, gave great and just offence, and made his tragedy an object of much more attention and interest than it would otherwise have been. He wrote several tragedies afterwards; but they were all unsuccessful. It seemed as if his genius had been absorbed by his first production.

plot, sentiment, and style, is entitled to high respect; but, perhaps, scarcely to that degree which might have been expected from the great powers displayed in the *Seasons*. The *Irene*, of Dr. JOHNSON, though it “furnishes a rich store of noble sentiments, fine imagery, and beautiful language, is deficient in plan, pathos, and general impression.” The *Mysterious Mother*, of HORACE WALPOLE, though the subject is shocking, displays great talents, especially in depicting the terrible. Miss HANNAH MORE’S *Percy* is a popular tragic production.^b Her *Sacred Dramas*, though a monument of her piety, and her desire to promote youthful improvement, will scarcely be thought to deserve high praise as works of genius. To these may be added the *Zenobia*, the *Grecian Daughter*, and the *Alzuma*, of Mr. MURPHY, which are considered as respectable in their dramatic character, and pure in their moral tendency, but with a remarkable prevalence of terror in their impression.

In the history of English *Comedy*, the eighteenth century forms an important era. Indeed, the English language scarcely furnished an instance of pure or unmixed comedy prior to the commencement of this period. The comic productions of SHAKSPEARE are well known not to have been of this kind; and those of DRYDEN and SOUTHERN were generally interspersed with too much of the tragic to have a place assigned them in the department of ridicule alone. In the last age a remarkable revolution has taken place in this respect. Specimens of unmixed comedy have become frequent, or rather the most fashionable kind of dramatic composition; and in a few instances the wit and humour of these productions are found

^b *Percy* is said to be a “bad alteration from *Gabrielle de Verger*, by Du BELLOY, a celebrated French Tragedian.” Notwithstanding this charge, however, it has maintained a high degree of popularity.

more correct and refined, and their whole structure more elegant than those of any preceding age.

The English *Comedies* which have attracted attention, and to which great excellence is attributed, are numerous. The *Careless Husband*, of CIBBER, first performed in 1704, is generally ranked among the most respectable of this class, though it can scarcely be said to be perfectly pure in its moral tendency. The *Recruiting Officer*, and the *Beaux Stratagem*, by FARQUHAR, though liable to still greater blame, for the same kind of fault, have long been popular plays. The *Conscious Lovers*, of Sir RICHARD STEELE, for purity and tenderness of sentiment, and chasteness of language, has generally received warm commendation. The *Suspicious Husband*, by HOADLY, also ranks high in this list. The *Jealous Wife*, and the *Clandestine Marriage*, by COLMAN, have had a degree of popularity much beyond ordinary comic productions. The *Good-natured Man*, and *She Stoops to Conquer*, by GOLDSMITH, have generally a place assigned them among the superior works of this class. The *School for Scandal*, by Mr. SHERIDAN, is pronounced, in a literary view, the best comedy of the age; but when measured by a correct moral standard, considerable deduction must be made from its merit. The *West Indian*, and the *Wheel of Fortune*, by Mr. CUMBERLAND, have been much applauded by judges of dramatic excellence. The comic productions of GARRICK, though certainly not deserving of a place in the highest rank, are yet lively and pleasing, and in general free from the charge of immoral tendency. The *Heiress*, of General BURGOYNE, for taste and wit, stands high in the opinion of connoisseurs. The comedies of Mr. HOLCROFT are entitled to considerable praise, as efforts of genius; but the errors of the author's moral and philosophical principles are

too often brought into view. In strong and popular exhibitions of the *vis comica*, Mr. MACKLIN displayed unusual talents. For the construction of musical *Afterpieces*, of delicate and sentimental humour, Mr. DIBDIN rendered himself famous. In *Farce*, few writers of the age discovered more broad humour than FOOTE; but his humour is generally coarse, frequently licentious, and in some instances so grossly impious and immoral, as to disgrace the author in the estimation of every virtuous mind. For taste and wit the dramatic productions of Mrs. COWLEY and Mrs. INCHBALD, deserve to be honourably mentioned. In elegant comedy, Miss LEE has displayed very respectable powers. But it would far exceed our limits to give a full catalogue of those who have sought and received high dramatic honours in the course of the age under consideration.

The various dramatic works of O'KEEFE, KELLY, MORTON, REYNOLDS, and several others, are well known to those who have a tolerable acquaintance with the English drama, and have attained various degrees of respect in the public estimation.

That kind of dramatic composition which is set to music, and is denominated an *Opera*, is well known to be a modern invention. This species of theatrical exhibition was first made in Italy, about the beginning of the seventeenth century; but it was never introduced into England till the beginning of the eighteenth. And in order to avoid the absurdity of dramas, in an unknown tongue (for the first operas performed in Britain were in the Italian language), Mr. ADDISON wrote and published his *Rosamond*. Since that time operas have become more popular in almost every part of Europe, and generally find a place where the theatre is supported. The operas of FONTENELLE, of METASTASIO, and of other celebrated dramatic writers,

are well known. But they are, after all, a kind of composition too unnatural to hold a very high place in the list of dramatic amusements. The first *serious* operas were brought on the English stage by Dr. ARNE, who translated some of the operas of METASTASIO; but this kind of theatrical exhibition gained little ground. The first musical piece which commanded any great success on the English stage was the *Beggars' Opera*, of GAY. Since his time the *comic* opera has been much more popular than the serious.

It would be a culpable omission to conclude our remarks on this department of British poetry, without taking some notice of the unwearied labours of literary men, during the age under consideration, to illustrate the writings of SHAKSPEARE, the great Father of the English drama. For some time after the publication of his works, they were, from the defective taste and negligence of the times, greatly corrupted by various transcribers and editors. The first attempt to remove these corruptions, and to present a corrected edition to the public, was made by Mr. ROWE, in 1709, with considerable success. Some years afterwards, Mr. POPE made his countrymen more fully acquainted than they had ever been before with the corrupt state of SHAKSPEARE's text, and excited high expectations that a more complete reform of it would be effected by his labours. Neither his emendations, nor his commentaries, however, are now considered of much value. Indeed he has been openly charged with corrupting, rather than purifying or elucidating his author. His edition was published in 1725. POPE was followed, in this field for the display of literary taste and enterprise, by Mr. THEOBALD, who, in 1733, gave a new edition; in preparing which for the press he collated many copies, and cor-

rected many errors; but, defective both in taste and learning, he was still far from having done justice to his undertaking. The next in this list of critical editors is Sir THOMAS HANMER, whose edition appeared in 1744. He made many emendations with great judgment, and in a manner which indicated both discernment and erudition; but in others he discovered much caprice, and adopted a large number of the censurable innovations of POPE. In 1747, Dr. WARBURTON made trial of his great critical acumen, and his profound erudition, on the works of the same illustrious dramatist; but though he displayed much sagacity and learning, his work was rather considered as an exhibition of himself, than an elucidation of his author. In 1765 appeared the edition of Dr. JOHNSON. This great critic threw more light on SHAKSPEARE than all who had gone before him. His preface to the edition, his numerous emendations, and his notes on obscure passages, discover a soundness of judgment, a profundity of critical skill, and an elegance of taste, which will do him lasting honour. The editorial labours of Mr. MALONE close the list. His edition appeared in 1789. Having devoted much time and pains to the work, and having the advantage of all that had been done by his predecessors, he may be considered, on the whole, the most complete commentator on SHAKSPEARE that has hitherto appeared.

The dramatic productions of *France*, during the period under consideration, were numerous; and some of them attained, and still hold a high reputation.ⁱ The first class of French *Tragedies* belonging to this age may be slightly noticed. In this list the first place is due to the several tragic productions of VOLTAIRE. The *Zaire*, the *Alzire*,

ⁱ See LA HARPE's *Lectures*, and his *Literary Correspondence*.

the *Merope*, and the *Orphan of China*, by him, are all possessed of distinguished excellence. It is peculiarly worthy of remark, that notwithstanding that celebrated infidel, in almost every page of his prose writings, discloses his hatred of religion, and the profligacy of his principles, nothing can be more pure, in a moral and religious view, than his tragedies. Next to those of VOLTAIRE are the tragic compositions of the elder CREBILLON, which are universally allowed to display great powers, and especially to excel in force of character. His *Rhadamistus* and *Atræus* are always quoted as his best performances. The tragedies of LA MOTTE have also a place assigned them among the great dramatic productions of France, during the last age. Of his several works, the *Ines de Castro* holds the highest rank. The historical and patriotic tragedies of DUBELLOY are much celebrated in the annals of French literature. His *Siege of Calais* attained the greatest degree of celebrity; and afterwards his *Titus* and *Zelmira* commanded considerable attention. The tragedies of M. SAURIN are also honourably mentioned among the critics of the author's own country. Of these, to his *Spartacus* the most liberal praise has been given. M. DIDEROT, among the numerous productions of his pen, gave to the public several tragedies; but they are, like many of his other writings, more conspicuous monuments of his moral depravity than of his genius or taste.

The French *Comedies* which have attracted attention are much more numerous. The comic production of LE SAGE rank high in this list. His *Tuscaret* gained great and general popularity. The *Le Glorieux*, and *Le Philosophe Marie*, of DESTOUCHES, were still more eminently popular. The former, indeed, has been pronounced one of

the best comedies that the age produced. **PIRON** was also a comic writer of great celebrity among his countrymen, and even throughout Europe. His *La Metromanie* is an effort of high dramatic genius; but is liable to exception with respect to its moral tendency. The younger **CREBILLON** displays, in his comedies, a large portion of wit and humour, but they are too much of the licentious kind. **M. SAURIN** is also distinguished as a writer of French Comedy. His *l'Anglomane* is considered as the best production of his pen, in this department of dramatic writing. The comedies of **M. GRESSETT** sustain a still higher character. The *Mechant*, by him, ranks with the first comic works of the age. **M. BOISSY** has displayed considerable talents as a writer of comedy. *L'Homme du Jour*, and *Les dehors Trompeurs*, hold a respectable place in the critic's list. **M. BEAUMARCHAIS** is also entitled to notice as belonging to the same class. Though little can be said in favour of the moral tendency of his *Barbier de Seville*, *Marriage de Figaro*, or *Mere Coupable*; yet they discover so much wit and humour as to command much of the public attention.

To France is ascribed the invention of a new species of drama, called *Comedie Larmoyante*, or *Crying Comedy*. This is a genus between tragedy and comedy of the pure unmixed kind; and also different in its character from the tragi-comedy of **DRYDEN** and **SOUTHERN**. It offers pictures of temporary domestic distresses, which in private life too frequently occur, and which, though attended with no consequences sufficiently fatal for tragedy, are too serious for comic representation. The inventor of this species of drama was **M. LA CHAUSSEE**. In this style of writing he has had several imitators. The domestic and sentimental comedies of **M. DORAT** are considerably cele-

brated; and the moral dramas of MOUVAL and BOUILLY have also a high reputation.

Besides the French comic writers above mentioned, several others have attained distinction, though in an inferior degree. Among these, REGNARD, LA MOTTE, MARIVAUX, MARMONTEL, SEDAINÉ, and SAINT FOIX, deserve particular notice. It is to be lamented that purity of moral character cannot be generally ascribed to their productions.

Though the best English comedies of the eighteenth century are far superior to those of the same language which were produced in the preceding age, we cannot consider the same improvement as belonging to modern French comedy. MOLIERE, who died towards the close of the seventeenth century, in the combined excellences of wit, humour, plot, and character, has never been equalled by any of his successors. It may be questioned, indeed, whether he was ever equalled, in all these respects, by any writer, ancient or modern. His plays have supplied materials for plunder to all other comic writers since his time.

The dramatic works of *Italy*, during the period of this retrospect, were many in number, and some of them highly valued as efforts of genius.^j In *Italian Tragedy*, the various works of MARTELLI, which appeared early in the century, hold an honourable place. His *Perselide*, *Ifigenia*, and *Alceste*, are generally enumerated among the best productions of his pen. To MARTELLI is ascribed the honour of having adopted a structure of poetry which had never before been used in Italy. The tragedies of MARCHESI have also a high character among the critics of that country. Those under the titles of *Crispo* and *Polissena* have particularly attained general celebrity. The *Merope*, of MAF-

^j See WALKER's *Historical Memoir on Italian Tragedy*, 4to. 1799.

FEI, is pronounced by some the best tragedy that was ever written. It is certain that few tragic productions have been more famed, or have served more frequently as models to subsequent writers.^k GRANELLI and BETTINELLI have also a place among the distinguished authors in this species of composition. The *Sedecia*, *Manasse*, and *Dione*, of the former; and the *Gionata*, *Demetrio*, and *Serse*, of the latter, are considered as their ablest productions. MONTI, of the same country, has obtained considerable distinction by his *Manfredi* and *Aristodemo*. To these names may be added those of CÆSAROTTI and ALFIERI, who have both produced tragedies of high reputation; and that of METASTASIO, whose *Operas* and *Sacred Dramas* have been long and advantageously known to the public. He perfected the musical and serious drama of Italy. Rejecting marvellous incidents, and allegorical personages, his productions became more conformed to nature and life than those of his predecessors; and the music of his pieces was so introduced as to be performed by real actors, strongly agitated with passion, and, of course, giving more effect to their performance, than could be done in the chorus of Greek tragedy, which was usually executed by calm observers instead of those who participated in the action of the scene.

Of the Italian writers of *Comedy* the author knows too little to attempt any distinct account. Few, if any, among them are more celebrated than GOLDONI, the most voluminous dramatic writer of the eighteenth century. A large portion of the pieces exhibited on the Italian stage are from his pen. His comedies are so numerous that it would

^k The *Merope*, of MAFFEI, is said to have been the model of VOLTAIRE's tragedy of that name. It is asserted, also, that the work of MAFFEI is the real parent of HOME's *Douglas*.

be difficult to make a selection, and of such acknowledged merit that they need no additional encomium.¹

The dramatic writings of *Germany* first began in the eighteenth century to assume a respectable and interesting aspect. Indeed, till within the last forty years scarcely any specimen had appeared in this department of composition, which could be considered as doing honour to German genius, or which was much known beyond the bounds of that empire. But within this period some writers of high reputation have appeared, and raised the dramatic character of their country to great eminence.

GOETHE stands among the most celebrated German dramatists. His *Sisters*, his *Stella*, and his *Iphigenia* are considered as very honourable monuments of genius. The tragedies of LESSING have a high character among his countrymen, particularly his *Emilia Galotti*, *Philotas*, and *Sarah Sampson*. The tragic productions of BÄBE are also much distinguished. The most remarkable of these are *Otto of Wittlesbach*, *Dagobert*, and *Conscience*. But, perhaps, no tragic writer of Germany has gained a reputation more extensive and commanding than SCHILLER, whose *Robbers* and *Don Carlos* evince powerful talents, and have gained unusual popularity. The various dramatic works of SCHROEDER, VON REITZENSTEIN, and IFFLAND, have also attracted much attention, and received general applause. The last in particular is one of the most liberal contributors to the drama

¹ CHARLES GOLDONI was born at Venice, in 1707, and died at Paris in 1792. He is said to have been equal to the greatest comic poets of modern times, in dramatic talents, and superior to them all in the fertility of his genius. His works were printed at Leghorn, in 1791, in 31 volumes 8vo. He has been generally called the *MOLIERE* of Italy; and VOLTAIRE, in one of his letters to the Marquis ALBERGATI, styles him "the painter of Nature."

of modern times. Towards the close of the century no dramatic writer in the German language was so generally popular as KOTZEBUE, whose principal works are so generally known, that an attempt to enumerate them, or draw their character, is altogether unnecessary.^m

The dramatic writers of the rest of Europe, during the age under consideration, were few, and of these few only a small portion gained any considerable celebrity. With the dramatists of Spain and Portugal the author has no acquaintance. In Sweden, the dramatic works of DAHLIN, GYLLENBORG and KELLGREN; in Denmark, those of Baron HOLBERG;ⁿ and in Russia, those of SOMOROKOF are among the most conspicuous and esteemed.

There are several characteristic features which belong to the dramatic compositions of the eighteenth century, in which they differ from those of any preceding age. It may be proper to take

^m Several of the dramae of KOTZEBUE, as well as those of SCHILLER, and some other German writers, have been the subject of much criticism with respect to their moral tendency. It is impossible, in this place, to enter into a discussion of the merits of this inquiry. It is probable, however, that every sober and reflecting mind will perceive much to censure on this ground, particularly in the writings of the two popular dramatists above mentioned. It is not objected to these writers that their characters are, in general, unnaturally drawn, but that such characters ought never to have been exhibited at all; not that their incidents are impossible or incredible, but that such incidents, whether in fiction or in real life, have always been powerful means of corrupting the principles, and undermining the virtue of those by whom they were frequently contemplated.

ⁿ Baron HOLBERG was one of the most extraordinary characters of the age. He was born in Norway, towards the close of the seventeenth century; was the son of a private sentinel, and learned to read without a master. Being deprived of his father at nine years of age, he persisted in pursuing his studies, travelled from school to school, and begged his learning and his bread. Early in life he made the tour of Europe on foot, and went over to England, where he resided two years at the University of Oxford. Furnished with a large portion of the learning of Europe, he, at length, settled at Copenhagen, where his numerous writings gained him much public notice, and liberal governmental favours. He composed eighteen comedies. Those in his own language are said to excel; and those which have been translated into French are represented as having great merit. He died about the year 1754. GOLDSMITH's *Inquiry into the present State of Polite Learning*.

some notice of a few of these features before bringing this section to a close.

One circumstance in which modern dramas differ from those of former times, is, that they are more *consistent and correct in the structure of their fable*. If they do not surpass or equal some preceding productions of this class in *genius*, they must be allowed to excel in *taste* and *regularity* of plan. Many of the noblest dramas which were given to the world before the eighteenth century, violated every principle of probability and nature. They departed from the most obvious unities of time, place and action. They gave to one country the customs, laws, and general characters of another; and thus, amidst splendid excellences, abounded with manifest absurdities; and while they gratified the taste, also put to a severe test the patience of the critic. With the most of these faults, even the immortal SHAKSPEARE is chargeable. The best dramatists of the eighteenth century may be said, in general, to adhere more closely to probability and nature; to employ a fable more correct and consistent, and less frequently to offend against the just laws of fiction.

A further circumstance in which the dramatic compositions of the last age differ from those of former times, is, that they abound more in *plot* and *action*. The great excellence of SHAKSPEARE is not the artful contrivance of his story, nor the variety and interest of his incidents. Were his plays tried upon ground of this sort, they would doubtless be found inferior to many of smaller name. But his distinguishing merit consists in his knowledge of human nature, in the accurate delineation of his characters, in forcible and natural descriptions, and in the weight and sublimity both of his sentiments and his language. These, notwithstanding numerous defects in the structure of his dramas,

deeply impress the mind, dwell upon the memory, and secure to him a fame unrivalled and immortal. Some of the remarks which have been made on SHAKSPEARE, particularly that which relates to his frequent deficiency in propriety of plot and incident, may be considered as applying to almost all the dramatic writers who went before him. Those of the last age, especially the first class, generally adopted a different method. A more artful contrivance of fable is become fashionable; a more extensive and intricate plot is attempted; more intrigue and action are carried on; our curiosity is more awakened, and more interesting situations arise. This is said, by good critics, to be an improvement. It is contended that it furnishes a more favourable field for the display of passion, and that it renders the entertainment both more animated, and more instructive.^o

It may also be mentioned as a peculiarity in the dramatic writings of the eighteenth century, that they are, in general, more *decent*, and more *moral* in their tendency than those of the age immediately preceding. The comedies of VANBURGH, so justly admired for their humour and native ease of dialogue, are extremely licentious; and, in the greater part of CONGREVE's dramas, amidst the brilliancy of wit, and force of language, which so remarkably characterize them, there are passages which put virtue and decorum entirely out of countenance. In several of the comedies of DRYDEN, the indecency is so palpable and shocking, that we are told, even in the dissolute age in which he lived, they were prohibited from being brought on the stage. It is but justice to say, that in the course of the last age, a more correct taste has arisen and prevailed. It is true, that in some of

the most popular dramatic productions of this period, indelicate scenes sometimes occur, and the general moral tendency of many is highly censurable. But there has doubtless been, for a number of years past, a decency in the public taste, and in that of authors, which has revolted from open and gross obscenity, and, of course, given the dramatic publications of the day a great superiority, in a moral view, over those which were fashionable in the time of OTWAY, CONGREVE, VANBURGH, and DRYDEN. Among the first who signalized themselves by discarding grossly sensual descriptions and indecent expressions from English Tragedy, were Mr. ROWE and Mr. ADDISON; and the like service was rendered to Comedy, by Sir RICHARD STEELE, and some who immediately succeeded him.

But, though the dramatic productions of the eighteenth century are, in general, more *decent*, and much less offensive in the exhibition of *coarse licentiousness*, many of them may be charged with a fault, which, though less obvious, is, perhaps, more mischievous in its tendency. This is the artful interweaving of false principles in religion and morals, with the whole structure of their fable and sentiments. Theatrical exhibitions, as well as Novels, have been employed to insinuate the poison of corrupt opinions, decorated and concealed, into unsuspecting minds. A splendid hero is made to inculcate and recommend the most hateful principles; and an ingeniously contrived series of incidents to prepossess the mind in favour of vice. This, considered as a system deliberately instituted for the purpose of operating on public opinion, it is believed, is peculiar to the eighteenth century. Both Great-Britain and France have given birth to a few dramatic productions formed on this plan; but they have still more abounded in Germany.

Another peculiarity of modern dramatic productions, especially of the *Tragic* kind, is, that they abound more in *love* than the ancient models. In the ancient tragedies this subject was rarely mentioned or alluded to; still more seldom did any of them turn upon it. On the contrary, love is the “main hinge of modern tragedy;” and where this is not the case, the introduction of the subject is considered as in a measure indispensable. This fact may be accounted for in several ways. But, perhaps, the most probable reasons to be assigned for it are the two following. The progress of civilization, by increasing the importance of the female sex, has rendered every thing which concerns them, and particularly the passion of *love*, with its consequences, a more prominent object in society. The appearance of female performers on the stage, which is a modern improvement in the system of theatrical exhibition, probably also contributed to produce the same effect. But whatever may have been the cause, the fact is undeniably true. The unseasonable introduction of love-scenes into the *Cato* of ADDISON, is well known to diminish the consistency and dignity of that celebrated tragedy. The same may be said of many other popular pieces. Still it must be acknowledged, that some modern dramas of great excellence and popularity have been formed without recurring to the aid of this powerful passion. Of this HOME’S *Douglas*, and VOLTAIRE’S *Merope*, are illustrious examples. But such instances are certainly rare.

In recounting the remarkable poetical publications of the age, it would be improper to pass without notice two singular events, which have proved the sources of long-continued and violent

controversies in the literary world, and concerning which much diversity of opinion exists to the present day. The events alluded to are the publication of the poems of CHATTERTON, an extraordinary youth of Bristol, in South-Britain; and the collection and exhibition, in a regular form, of the works of OSSIAN, by Mr. JAMES MACPHERSON, a man who, by the connection of his name with these poems alone, has attained high celebrity in the republic of letters.

In 1760 Mr. JAMES MACPHERSON, of North-Britain, surprised the world by the publication of "*Fragments of Ancient Poetry*, collected in the Highlands of Scotland, and translated from the Gaelic or Erse language." In 1762 he published "*Fingal, an Epic Poem, in six books*, together with several other poems, composed by OSSIAN, the son of FINGAL;" and again in 1763 he produced "*Temora, an Ancient Epic Poem, in eight books*," with several additional poems. These were all ascribed to OSSIAN, an ancient Scottish bard,^p and were declared by the publisher to have been collected, partly from old manuscripts, and partly from oral tradition.

Few of the literary controversies of the age excited more attention than that which immediately arose respecting the authenticity of these poems. By many learned men their antiquity was readily admitted, and their reception, particularly on the continent of Europe, was extremely favourable. There were not wanting enthusiastic admirers, who even placed OSSIAN on the same shelf with HOMER and VIRGIL; who dwelt with rapturous praise on his stupendous merits; and made the most profuse acknowledgments to the man, who

^p This poet is said, by those who believe in the authenticity of the poems in question, to have flourished about the end of the second, and the beginning of the third century.

was supposed to have brought to light such precious remains of ancient genius.^q On the contrary, many judges equally learned and acute have denied the authenticity of the poems ascribed to OSSIAN, and have insisted that they are forgeries by Mr. MACPHERSON himself.^r Though this controversy is far from being terminated, yet the best supported and most probable opinion seems to be, that the poems in dispute are neither wholly the work of any ancient bard, nor entirely forged by MACPHERSON; but that the latter really made large collections of ancient Gaelic poetry, which he modified and connected in his own way, making additions with freedom where he thought proper, and forming an apparently regular work of fragments which were never before united.^s

But whatever may be the origin of the poems which have passed under the name of OSSIAN, they doubtless possess merit of a wonderful kind. Amidst the obscurity which remarkably pervades them, and the frequent, and even disgusting recurrence of the same images, such as the extended heath by the sea-shore; the mountain covered with mist; the torrent rushing through a

^q Among the distinguished characters who have contended for the authenticity of OSSIAN's poems may be mentioned Dr. BLAIR, Lord KAIMS, Dr. HENRY, Mr. WHITAKER, and on the continent of Europe a large number.

^r Dr. JOHNSON not only utterly denied the authenticity of these poems, but also maintained that they had no merit. His opinion on the former point may, with some qualification, be admitted; but, on the character of the work, it is difficult to suppose that so acute and profound a critic could deliver such an unfavourable judgment, without improper bias. Though the poetry of OSSIAN has been extravagantly estimated, it is surely worthy of much praise.

^s On the one hand, it is by no means credible that a man of MACPHERSON's mediocrity of talents could be himself the *author* of the poems which bear the name of OSSIAN; nor can it be supposed that any one, however great his powers, could *completely* forge compositions bearing so many marks of antiquity, both in the style, the sentiments, and the historical facts. On the other hand, it is no less difficult to believe that *manuscript* copies of these poems, in the form in which we now see them, should have existed from very remote antiquity.

solitary valley; the scattered oaks; the tombs of the warriors overgrown with moss; and the melancholy notes resounding from the hall of shells; still these celebrated productions abound with rich beauties; with energy of style, force of description, pathos, tenderness, and in some instances with sublimity of the highest order.

In 1777 were published "Poems supposed to have been written at Bristol, by THOMAS ROWLEY, and others, in the fifteenth century." These poems were first brought to light by THOMAS CHATTERTON, a youth of humble origin, and small advantages of education,* who professed to be only the transcriber, and declared that they were written by ROWLEY, a clergyman of Bristol, more than three centuries before their discovery by him. These poems, consisting chiefly of dramatic, lyric, and pastoral pieces, were pronounced by some persons

* THOMAS CHATTERTON was born in the city of Bristol, November 20th, 1752. His father was the master of a free school in that city, and was too poor to give his son any of the advantages of a liberal education. His acquirements, therefore, were chiefly made up of such an acquaintance with English literature as a mind of wonderful force, ardour, and ambition might be expected to gain under the constant pressure of poverty and other difficulties, and in the short space of less than eighteen years. He began to write poetry about the *eleventh* year of his age; and was but a little more than *sixteen* when he produced the celebrated poems ascribed to ROWLEY. These he constantly affirmed he had copied from manuscripts found in an old church, in his native city; but he never could be persuaded to produce any of the originals, except a few fragments, which he asserted were among the number, the largest of which was not more than eight inches long, and four or five wide. Though the more general and probable opinion at present is, that this remarkable youth was the real author of the poems which have passed under ROWLEY's name; yet some other works, certainly known to have been produced by him, place him high in the ranks of genius. Some of his *elegies* and *satires*, in particular, unquestionably display great talents. He died miserably in London, August 25, 1770. His death is ascribed to poison, which he had swallowed in a fit of criminal impatience and overwhelming despair, with the design to terminate his sufferings. He is said to have imbibed (in the two or three last years of his life) principles of the most licentious kind, and to have been very immoral in his practice. His mind was aspiring and ambitious to a degree almost boundless; and not meeting with that success, or those rewards of his talents which he had fondly hoped, he took refuge in a voluntary death, and left a monument of unfortunate degraded genius, of which a parallel will scarcely be again contemplated.

of distinction in the literary world, to be the real works of ROWLEY, to whom they were attributed; while a greater number of equal discernment and acquaintance with the subject, decided that they were forgeries, and that CHATTERTON himself was the author." After much learned, ingenious, and interesting discussion, the latter opinion seems to be considered as, on the whole, the better supported, and more probable.

The poems in dispute possess a very extraordinary character. The subjects are generally well chosen and interesting; the plot, fable, and machinery, show the author to have had a vigorous and active imagination; the delineation of character, and the luxuriancy of description with which they abound, evince an happy union of taste and genius; and, different from all the poetical productions which were written at the time when these are asserted to have been composed, they are, in general, conspicuous for harmony and elegance of versification." Indeed, good judges have pronounced, that some passages are inferior in none of the essentials of poetry to the most finished works of modern times.

If the poems in question be attributed to ROWLEY, then we are presented with the singular spectacle of one of the first English poets, both in time and merit, sleeping in obscurity for more than three hundred years, and being at last robbed of his just reputation by the most wonderful literary

v Among those who have contended that these poems were written by ROWLEY, Dr. MILLES, Dean of Exeter, and Mr. BRYANT, are the most conspicuous. The principal writers who have contended that CHATTERTON is the real author, are WALPOLE, TYRWHITT, GRAY, WARTON, MASON, CROFT, and MALONE.

u This harmony and elegance of versification appear under all the disadvantages of the antiquated diction adopted by the author. If CHATTERTON was the author of the poems, it was necessary to his purpose to employ this diction; and he is supposed to have become familiar with the language of the fifteenth century, by perusing the works of CHAUCER.

juggler that ever imposed on mankind. If, on the other hand, it be concluded that CHATTERTON was the real author of the poems ascribed to ROWLEY, then the eighteenth century gave birth to the most astonishing genius that ever existed; a genius sublime and universal; and which, considering that all his efforts were made before he reached his eighteenth year, may probably be pronounced with safety to have been an *unique* in the history of man.^w

No poet of reputation had appeared in *America* prior to the eighteenth century. But since the commencement of this period, the western hemisphere, and especially that part of the continent denominated the *United States*, has given birth to several poets of respectable character. Among these the Rev. Dr. DWIGHT, before mentioned, holds a distinguished place. His *Conquest of Canaan*, though a juvenile performance, and labouring under several disadvantages, contains much excellent versification,* and, in general correctness, has not been often exceeded. *Greenfield-Hill*, a moral, didactic, and descriptive poem, by the same author, is also entitled to considerable praise, for exhibiting pure and elevated sentiment, just principles, and beautiful descriptions, in harmonious and excellent verse. The *M'Fingal* of Mr. TRUMBULL was mentioned in a former page, as doing high honour to the talents of its author. *The Vision of Columbus*, and other poems, by Mr. BAR-

^w Mr. WHARTON speaks of CHATTERTON as "a prodigy of genius." Mr. MALONE believes him to have been "the greatest genius that England has produced since the days of SHAKSPEARE." Mr. CROFT says, "no such human being, at any period of life, has ever been known, or possibly can be known."

* This is the opinion of Dr. DARWIN, expressed in a note to his celebrated poem, *The Botanic Garden*.

LOW, are possessed of much poetic merit. To these may be added the various productions of Mr. HUMPHREYS, Mrs. MORTON, Dr. LADD, Mr. FRENEAU, and several others, who, though far from being worthy of a place among the first class of poets, have yet manifested talents honourable to themselves and their country, and have been noticed with respect by foreign as well as domestic critics.

From the statement contained in the last paragraph, it appears that *New-England*, and particularly the state of *Connecticut*, has been more distinguished by the production of poetical genius, than any other part of our country. Of the few poets to which North-America has given birth, several of the most eminent are natives of that State.

But, though the conspicuous poets of America are not numerous, we are by no means to ascribe this circumstance either to the paucity or the barrenness of American genius. Great poetical merit has been rare in all ages, and in all countries; and, that it should be peculiarly rare, in a country where literature has comparatively few votaries, and where those who have any taste for letters have little respite from the toils of professional and active life, is so far from being unaccountable, that the contrary would be wonderful.

After the foregoing details, it may not be improper, before closing this chapter, to offer some general reflections on the peculiar poetic character of the eighteenth century. Having already employed so many pages on this subject, the most brief and general views only will be attempted.

The last age exceeds all preceding periods with respect to the *quantity* of its poetry. It is, per-

haps, not going beyond the truth to say, that a greater amount of poetic composition was published in the course of the eighteenth century, than all former ages together could furnish.

It may also be stated as a general truth, that the poetry of the last age is more distinguished for *taste* than *genius*; more remarkable for polish, smoothness, and harmony, than for invention, strength, and boldness of thought and imagery; and abounds more in those qualities which soothe, amuse, and please, than in those which elevate, astonish, and transport the mind. To some of the names mentioned in the foregoing pages, it is readily acknowledged that exalted genius belonged; but, without staying to perform the task, equally invidious and difficult, of adjusting the different claims of authors on this head, it may certainly be hazarded, as a general remark, that the prevailing character of modern poetry is that of *correctness* and *taste*. While those who were most distinguished in preceding times, for originality and sublimity, were often guilty of the grossest violations of taste; while, in many of their writings, blunders and absurdities were frequently found mixed up, in nearly equal proportions, with beauties and graces, it may be said, to the honour of the first class of poets of the eighteenth century, that if they fall below some of their predecessors in the bold, the original, and the sublime, they as much exceed them in taste, refinement, uniform propriety, and general elegance of versification.

It may further be asserted, that a greater portion of the poetry of the last age is *purely moral*, than was ever before offered to mankind. Most of the distinguished poets of former times were faulty in this respect, and some of them grossly so. When we look particularly into the English poets who lived prior to the eighteenth century, we find them

all, if we except SPENCER, SHAKSPEARE, and MILTON, representing *love* rather as an *appetite* than a chaste and dignified *passion*. Accordingly they were accustomed to put language into the mouths of the most virtuous and delicate females, utterly inconsistent with our ideas of decorum. It has been said that PRIOR's *Henry and Emma* is the first poem in the English language, keeping in view the exception before stated, in which love is treated with the decency and delicacy to which it is entitled.

Among many of the later poets we find a chasteness in the exhibition of characters and manners, a purity of morals, and a delicacy of sentiment, which transcend all former example. The greater part of the moral pieces of POPE may be safely applauded in this view, as more worthy of imitation than those of most of his predecessors. YOUNG has enlisted the sublimity of imagination, and the music of numbers; on the side of virtue and piety; with the most happy success. The muse of THOMSON, while pouring forth the most splendid beauties, dictated

“ Nothing which, dying, he could wish to blot.”

For the same kind of excellence GOLDSMITH and JOHNSON deserve the highest praise. In this respect, also, COWPER is inferior to none. His various performances display beauty of description and vigour of language, blended with dignity of virtue and piety, to a degree which places his character, both as a man and a Christian, in a most honourable point of light. In short, to discard coarse indelicacy from the pictures of poetry; to recal genius from the paths of vice and folly, and enlist her in the service of chaste enthusiasm, and divine morality, are among the shining honours of the last age. And, perhaps, on no ground does its poetic cha-

racter deserve higher eulogium than for the production and the general popularity of such writers as POPE, YOUNG, KLOPSTOCK, GESNER, THOMSON, and COWPER.

Finally, the *discoveries in science* which distinguish the eighteenth century have also conferred some peculiarity on the poetic character of the age, by furnishing the poet with new images, and more just and comprehensive views of nature. It would not be difficult to show that the improvements in every branch of the physical sciences, and particularly in *Natural Philosophy, Chemistry, and Natural History*, have all produced new materials for the labours of poetic genius, enriched the stores both of imagery and diction, and thus contributed to render this kind of composition at once more instructive and more pleasing.

CHAPTER XXI.

LITERARY JOURNALS.

IN the former part of the seventeenth century, "it was a consolation, at least for the unsuccessful writer, that he fell insensibly into oblivion. If he committed the *private* folly of printing what no one would purchase, he had only to settle the matter with his publisher: he was not arraigned at the *public* tribunal as if he had committed a crime of magnitude." But in the latter part of that century, periodical Criticism began to brandish its formidable weapon, and those who undertook

to write for the public were placed in a new situation. Publications, made at stated intervals, giving accounts and abstracts of new books, and announcing new discoveries and improvements in science, then took their rise, and have been ever since continued. The eighteenth century is chiefly remarkable for an increase of their number, for various changes in their form and character, for their more general circulation, and for a corresponding extension of their influence on the taste and opinions of the public.

The first work of this kind ever undertaken, was the *Journal des Scavans*, published at Paris, by M. SALLO,^z in 1665. The original plan of this work comprehended a vast variety of subjects. "It gave an account of all books which appeared in Europe, contained eulogies on deceased celebrated men, and announced whatever had been invented that was useful in art, or curious in science. Experiments in physic and chemistry, celestial and meteorological observations, discoveries in anatomy, the decisions of ecclesiastical and secular tribunals, and the censures of the Sorbonne, were all proposed to be noticed." This attempt of SALLO was so well received, that in the course of a few years it was imitated in almost all the literary countries of Europe, and his work was translated into various languages.

In 1671 appeared the *Acta Medica Hafnensia*, published by M. BARTHOLIN. To this work succeeded *Memoirs des Arts et des Sciences*, established in France, by M. DENNIS, in 1672; the *Acta Eruditorum*, of Leipsic, by MENKENIUS, in 1682; the *Nouvelle de la Republique des Lettres*, by M.

^z DENNIS DE SALLO was an Ecclesiastical Counsellor in the Parliament of Paris. He published his *Journal* in the name of the Sieur DE HEDOUVILLE, his footman; perhaps because he entertained but a faint hope of success; or because he thought the scurrility of criticism might be permitted on account of its supposed author.

BAYLE, in 1684; the *Bibliothèque Universelle, Choisie, et Ancienne, et Moderne*, by LE CLERC, about the same time; the *History of the Works of the Learned*, by M. BASNAGE, in 1686; the *Monathlichen Unterredungen*, of Germany, in 1689; the *Bocckzal van Europe*, by PETER RABBUS, in Holland, in 1692; an *Historical Treatise of the Journals of the Learned*, in Latin, by JUNCKER, the same year; the *Nova Literaria Maris Balthici*, in 1698; together with several others in Germany, France, and Italy. The first work of the kind established in Great-Britain was the *History of the Works of the Learned*, begun in London, in 1699. Such was the state of Europe, with respect to literary journals, at the close of the seventeenth century. It will be observed, that, as they began in France, so they were most numerous and most encouraged in that country for a long time afterwards.

Soon after the commencement of the eighteenth century these publications greatly increased, both in number and in the extent of their circulation. But this increase, for the first forty years of the period we are considering, was chiefly confined to the continent of Europe. The attempts in Great-Britain were few and short-lived. About the beginning of the century M. DE LA ROCHE formed an English Journal, entitled *Memoirs of Literature*. To this succeeded the *Present State of the Republic of Letters*, by REID, the *Censurâ Temporum*, established in 1708, and the *Bibliotheca Curiosa*, about the same time. These, however, were by no means so instructive and interesting as modern *Reviews*. They only gave notices of a few principal publications, and retailed selections from foreign journals; and, together with several others, too unimportant to be named, were soon discontinued.

No establishment of this nature, either permanent, or in any high degree respectable, was made in Great-Britain until 1749, when the *Monthly Review* was commenced, which has been ably supported until the present time. The *Critical Review* was established in 1756, nearly on the same plan. These were the only regular works of the kind in England until 1775, when another was begun, under the title of the *London Review*, by Dr. KENRICK, which, however, lasted but a little while. From that period to the end of the century they increased rapidly in number. They became gradually improved in their form, and were made to present a greater amount of information respecting the several works which they reviewed. Few magazines, or periodical publications of any kind have been undertaken within a few years past, which did not include some kind of Review; insomuch that the literary journals in Britain at present are extremely numerous.

The attempts to establish regular Reviews of new books, and of the progress of letters and science, in the United States, have been few, and generally unsuccessful. The small progress of a literary taste among the mass of our citizens; the scattered state of our population; the rarity of leisure with those who are best entitled to the character of scholars, together with the want of talents, enterprize and capital in the greater number of those who have hitherto undertaken to conduct such works, may be considered as the principal causes of their failure.^a

^a As early as 1741, a kind of Review was attempted by Dr. FRANKLIN, who, in a Magazine which was continued only for a few months, gave notices of new American books, and presented liberal extracts from them. Attempts of a similar kind were made in several successive works a few years afterwards, but with as little encouragement and success. Exertions were made to establish a more regular Review of American publications, about the year 1790, in two periodical works nearly at the same

The Reviews of the eighteenth century are publications of a very different character from the literary Journals of the seventeenth. A great portion of the latter were in the Latin language; and almost all of such a nature as to be intelligible only to the learned. Of course they were seen and perused by few persons, and their influence on public taste and opinion was comparatively small. But the Reviews of the last age, besides being multiplied to an unexampled extent, have received a popular cast, which has enabled them to descend from the closets of philosophers, and from the shelves of polite scholars, to the counting house of the merchant, to the shop of the artizan, to the bower of the husbandman, and, indeed, to every class of the community, excepting the most indigent and laborious. In fact, they have contributed to give a new aspect to the republic of letters, and may be considered as among the most important literary engines that distinguished the period under consideration.

These publications have produced many advantages. They have excited a more general attention to the progress of literature than any former period could boast. They have diffused a knowledge of books, a taste for reading, and a spirit of curiosity and criticism, more widely than was ever before known, and among a portion of mankind which had never before been reached by such a taste. When well conducted, they have served to correct public opinion; to lay a salutary restraint on adventurers

time, the one in *Philadelphia*, and the other in *Boston*. They were, conducted, however, on a very small scale, with little of the boldness and impartiality of true criticism, and commanded little attention from the public. They were, consequently, soon laid aside, as were several other undertakings of a similar kind, for like reasons. In 1799 a more full and formal *Review* was begun in New-York, which has continued to the present time, and which, from the share of public patronage and attention bestowed upon it, bids fair to be longer lived than any of its predecessors.

in literature ; to present a powerful and useful check to the licentiousness of the press, and to furnish rich materials for the history of human knowledge. It is true, these publications, which should be guides of popular opinion, are often partial, and sometimes grossly erroneous. Written by a number of different persons, and, of course, with different abilities, opinions, passions, and prejudices, the judgments they express can seldom be admitted without cautious inquiry and modification. Still, however, though the learned must ultimately judge for themselves, yet even *they* derive benefit from literary journals tolerably conducted ; and their influence upon the great mass of those who occasionally read, is extensive and important. If it be objected that the knowledge they diffuse is superficial, it is what multitudes would never attain, if this means of bringing it within their reach were wanting ; and that it is no better than total ignorance, none will presume to contend.

There is another class of publications nearly allied to literary journals, and by the multiplication of which the eighteenth century is much distinguished, the *Transactions of Academies* and philosophical *Societies*. Publications of this kind appear to have taken their rise near the middle of the seventeenth century ; but, for a considerable time afterwards they were few in number, and were presented to the public at distant and irregular intervals. Since the commencement of the period under consideration, they have greatly increased in number, in the extent of their circulation, and in the practical and useful nature of their contents. Associations for literary and scientific purposes, of various kinds, and under different names, have multiplied in every part of the learned world, and have laid before the public, at stated times, the result of their experiments and inquiries ; insomuch that from

the aggregate of their *transactions* a catalogue might be formed of several thousand volumes, most of which include much matter highly interesting to the philosopher, the artist, and the man of taste, and may be considered as presenting a tolerable history of human knowledge during the period which they embrace.

This mode of recording and announcing the discoveries and labours of science, though productive of much good, is yet not without its disadvantages. To understand the *memoirs* and *acts* which these ponderous volumes contain, usually requires a profound knowledge of the subject. They are addressed by philosophers to philosophers. Hence, though their circulation be more extensive in modern times than formerly, they are, of necessity, even yet read by a chosen few. On this account it is, that while the archives of societies are filled with interesting and instructive memoirs, these labours of the learned are seldom brought forth from their obscure retreat, reduced to systematic arrangement, and exhibited in a popular manner. And for the same obvious reason it happens that the *transactions* of literary societies display a repetition of the same hints, experiments and discoveries, which, for want of being more generally known, are often supposed, at each successive exhibition, to be original. This latter evil, however, begins to be in some measure remedied, by adopting a more popular form for these publications, and also by communicating, from time to time, to the public, the most important portions of their contents, in vehicles of more extensive circulation.

Next to regular *Reviews*, and the formal *Memoirs* and *Transactions* of literary and scientific societies, it is proper to take notice of the numerous periodical works, under the name of *Magazines*, &c. with which the republic of letters has

abounded in modern times. The astonishing number, and the extensive circulation of these works, are certainly among the peculiar characteristics of the age, and mark an important æra in the history of learning.

The first publication ever made under the title of a *Magazine* was in the year 1731, by EDWARD CAVE, of London, who then commenced the *Gentleman's Magazine*, which has been continued to the present time. Several periodical works had before appeared under different names; but they were chiefly confined to political transactions, and to foreign and domestic occurrences of various kinds, without paying much attention to literary objects. Indeed, this was the case with Mr. CAVE's *Magazine* for several years after its commencement. The way, however, was gradually opened for the introduction of literary, moral, and philosophical discussions, and the work proved to be one of the most popular and productive periodical pamphlets ever published.

In the latter half of the eighteenth century, and especially in the last twelve or fifteen years of this period, these monthly miscellanies multiplied to a prodigious amount, and gained a circulation beyond all former example. The taste for works of a similar kind spread rapidly over the continent of Europe, insomuch that their number at the present time is almost too great to be accurately estimated.

In our own country the attempts to establish *Magazines* of different kinds have been very numerous; but, for the want of due encouragement, have generally failed in a short time. It is believed that the first attempt to publish a work of this nature in North-America was about the year 1741, by Dr. BENJAMIN FRANKLIN, then a printer in Philadelphia. His publication, however, under the title of the *General Magazine and Historical*

Chronicle, after a few months was discontinued. Since that time many similar undertakings have solicited the public patronage, and have gained attention and currency for a time, but have seldom protracted their existence beyond four, six, or, at most, eight years.

The influence of these miscellaneous publications has been as remarkable and extensive as their number. This influence has been in many respects advantageous. They have excited a taste for reading in many who could never have endured it under any other form than that of amusement. They have inspired many youthful minds with a spirit of literary ambition and enterprize, which was afterwards productive of the most brilliant and successful exertions. They have recorded a number of facts, hints, observations and discussions, instructive at the time they were made, and invaluable to posterity; but which would inevitably have been lost had they been presented to the public in a more evanescent form. And, finally, they have shed, in a gradual and almost insensible manner, numberless rays of knowledge among all descriptions of persons in the community, even indirectly among millions who never enjoyed the perusal of them, and have thus greatly enlarged the public understanding, and astonishingly increased the sum of popular information.

But the great popularity, and the unexampled circulation of these periodical works, have also been attended with some disadvantages. They have made thousands of light, ostentatious and superficial scholars, and have evidently operated unfavourably to sound and deep erudition. They have led many a self-sufficient pedant to content himself with shining in borrowed plumes, and to indulge in the deceitful expectation of finding short and easy paths to real scholarship. They have dis-

couraged those habits of *connected* reading and of patient *systematic* thinking, which were the glory of the learned in former ages, and enabled them to accomplish those mighty labours which fix their posterity in astonishment. Accordingly it would, perhaps, be no difficult task to show that the general literary features of the period before us remarkably correspond with this unfavourable picture, and that the general diffusion of superficial reading and scraps of knowledge may be said, pre-eminently, to characterize the last age.

But this is not the whole of the evil. Such are the effects which must result from the general circulation of works of this nature, supposing them to be, on the whole, well conducted. Many of them, however, are by no means entitled to this character. They have often given prompt and willing currency to erroneous opinions in morals and religion. They are too frequently found receptacles of such filth, obscenity and impiety, as are fit for the perusal of none but the prostitute, the thief, and the murderer. It is scarcely necessary to add that the effect of such publications on the manners, principles and happiness of society, must be in a high degree pestiferous; and that this is one among the numerous instances in modern times, in which literature, perverted and abused under plausible forms, has been found insidiously to undermine the morals and welfare of man.

Another item in the literary history of the age falls, perhaps, more properly within the design of this chapter than any other part of the present sketch. The mode of addressing the public by short periodical *Essays*, though not wholly peculiar to the eighteenth century, was yet so much extended, and had such a powerful influence in this period, as to entitle it to be ranked among the remarkable circumstances of the age. "To teach

the minuter decencies and inferior duties; to regulate the practice of daily conversation; to correct those depravities which are rather ridiculous than criminal, and remove those grievances which, if they produce no lasting calamities, impress hourly vexation, was first attempted by CASA, in his book of *Manners*, and by CASTIGLIONE, in his *Courtier*,^b two books yet celebrated in Italy for purity and elegance; and which, if they are now less read, are neglected, only, because they have effected that reformation which their authors intended, and their precepts are no longer wanted. Their usefulness to the age in which they were written is sufficiently attested by the translations which almost all the nations of Europe were in haste to obtain. This species of instruction was continued, and, perhaps, advanced by the French, among whom LA BRUYERE's *Manners of the Age*,^c though, as BOILEAU remarked, it is written without connection, certainly deserves great praise for liveliness of description, and justness of observation."^d

The first series of essays devoted to common life in Great-Britain was the *Tatler*; the publication of which began in 1709, by Sir RICHARD STEELE, assisted by ADDISON, TICKEL, and others. It appeared three times a-week. To the *Tatler*, in about three months succeeded the *Spectator*; a series of essays of the same kind, but written with less levity, upon a more regular plan, and published daily. "The *Tatler* and *Spectator*," says Dr. JOHNSON, "adjusted, like CASA, the unsettled practice of daily intercourse by propriety and politeness; and, like LA BRUYERE, exhibited the characters and manners of the age. But to say

^b CASA and CASTIGLIONE were Italian writers, who flourished in the sixteenth century.

^c LA BRUYERE wrote towards the close of the seventeenth century.

^d JOHNSON's *Life of ADDISON*.

that they united the plans of two or three eminent writers, is to give them but a small part of their due praise. They superadded literature and criticism, and sometimes towered far above their predecessors, and taught, with great justness of argument, and dignity of language, the most important duties and sublime truths. All these topics were happily varied with elegant fictions and refined allegories, and illuminated with different changes of style and felicities of invention. It is said by ADDISON, in a subsequent work, that they had a perceptible influence upon the conversation of that time, and taught the frolic and the gay to unite merriment with decency; an effect which they can never wholly lose while they continue to be among the first books, by which both sexes are initiated in the elegances of knowledge.”

The Spectator had not been supported more than eighteen months when it was discontinued. The year after, viz. in 1713, the *Guardian* was undertaken by the same Editor, assisted by the gentlemen before mentioned, as well as by Mr. POPE, Dr. BERKLEY, and others, and continued a little more than six months, with nearly the same respectability and success which had attended its predecessor. It was natural for the excellence and the reputation of those papers to produce many imitations. Accordingly, for a number of years afterwards, periodical papers were continually announced, and pursued for a little while, under different names, and upon various plans; but they were generally feeble when compared with the noble models which had gone before them, and seldom commanded the public attention for any length of time. Among these might be enumerated the *Free-Thinker*, the *Humourist*,

the *Observer*, and a vast multitude of others that rose into view, lived their day, and sunk into forgetfulness. *Cato's Letters*, and the *Craftsman*, were executed with greater ability, and were also better received, being more devoted to political discussion, than the papers which had gone before them. In 1750 the *Rambler* appeared, and for the first time presented a rival to the enchanting productions of ADDISON and his contemporaries. In this work Dr. JOHNSON, the principal writer, carried the composition of moral essays, and instructive narrations, with respect to purity and dignity of sentiment, acuteness of observation, and vigour of style, to a higher degree of perfection than they had ever before reached. Next followed the *Idler*, also by Dr. JOHNSON, but less laboured, and more light and superficial in its character than the *Rambler*. These were succeeded by the *Adventurer*, the *World*, the *Connoisseur*, the *Mirror*, the *Looker-On*, the *Lounger*, the *Observer*, and a number of others which deserve respectful mention, which contain many papers of high merit, and will long be read with pleasure. The numerous unsuccessful attempts which have been made, within a few years past, to revive this mode of writing, seem to indicate that it is nearly exhausted; and that to renew and carry it on requires more diligence, ability and leisure, than commonly fall to the lot of those who adventure in such a field.

From the foregoing details, it appears that the eighteenth century may be emphatically called *the age of periodical publications*. In the number of these it so far transcends all preceding times, as to forbid comparison; and their amusing, popular form constitutes a peculiarity in the literary history of the period under consideration, equally signal. They form the principal means of diffus-

ing knowledge through every part of the civilized world; they convey, in an abridged and agreeable manner, the contents of many ponderous volumes, and frequently supercede the appearance of such volumes; and they record every species of information, from the most sublime investigations of science to the most trifling concerns of amusement. When the future historian shall desire to obtain a correct view of the state of literature and of manners, during this period, he will probably resort to the periodical publications of the day, as presenting the richest sources of information, and forming the most enlightened and infallible guides in his course.

CHAPTER XXII.

POLITICAL JOURNALS.

THE method of announcing political events, and the various articles of foreign and domestic intelligence, which usually engage the attention of the public, by means of *Gazettes* or *Newspapers*, seems to have been first employed in Italy, as early as the year 1536.^f It was in that country that these vehicles of information received the name *Gazetta*,^g which they have ever since retained.^h

^f The first Gazette is said to have been printed at Venice, and to have been published monthly. It was under the direction of the government.

^g The word *Gazetta* is said, by some, to be derived from *Gazerra*, a *Magpie* or *Chatterer*; by others, from the name of a little coin called *Gazetta*; peculiar to the city of Venice, where newspapers were first printed, and which was the common price of these periodical publications; while a third class of critics suppose it to be derived from the Latin word *Gaza*, colloquially lengthened into the diminutive *Gazetta*, and, as applied to a newspaper, signifying a little treasury of news. *Curiosities of Literature*, vol. i. p. 271.

^h Those who first wrote newspapers were called by the Italians *Mc-*

The earliest newspaper printed in Great-Britain was "*The English Mercurie*, by CHRISTOPHER BARKER, her highness's printer," in 1588. But public prints of this kind, after the dispersion of the Spanish Armada, seldom appeared. The first regular weekly newspaper published in that country was by NATHANIEL BUTTER, in August, 1622, entitled "*The certaine Newes of this present Weeke*." Three years afterwards another of a similar kind was established. But, during the civil wars, which took place under the Protectorate of CROMWELL, these channels of public intelligence became more numerous than ever; and were diligently employed by both parties to disseminate their opinions among the people. About that time appeared the *Mercurius Aulicus*, the *Mercurius Rusticus*, and the *Mercurius Civicus*; &c. And, it is said, that "when any title grew popular, it was frequently stolen by some antagonist, who, by this stratagem, obtained access to those who would not have received him, had he not worn the appearance of a friend. These papers soon became a public nuisance. Serving as receptacles of party malice, they set the minds of men more at variance, inflamed their resentments into greater fierceness, and gave a keener and more destructive edge to civil discord. But the convulsions of those unhappy days left few either the leisure, the tranquillity, or the inclination to treasure up occasional or curious compositions; and so much were they neglected that a complete collection is now no where to be found, and little is known respecting them."ⁱ

nanti; because, says VOSSIUS, they intended commonly by these loose papers to spread about defamatory reflections, and were therefore prohibited by GREGORY XIII. by a particular bull, under the name of *Menantes*, from the Latin *minantes*. *Curiosities of Literature*, vol. i. p. 273.

ⁱ JOHNSON'S *Life of ADDISON*.

The earliest British Gazette of which any distinct record remains, was that published in 1663, by Sir ROGER L'ESTRANGE, under the title of the *Public Intelligencer*. This he continued until the year 1665, when a kind of court newspaper was established at Oxford, then the seat of government, and issued every Tuesday. The first number was printed in the month of November of that year, and appears to have superseded Sir ROGER's. Soon after this the court was removed to London, on which the title of the paper was changed to the *London Gazette*, the name which it still bears.

From the middle of the seventeenth century the employment of newspapers as channels of intelligence became more frequent and popular, not only in Great-Britain, but also in several other countries of Europe. Newspapers and pamphlets were prohibited in England by royal proclamation in 1680. At the revolution, in 1688, this prohibition was taken off; but, in a few years afterwards newspapers were made the objects of taxation, and were first stamped for this purpose in 1713. Their number, however, has been constantly increasing from that period till the present time. But since the beginning of the eighteenth century, this increase, particularly in Great-Britain, France, Germany, and America, has been almost incredibly great.

Perhaps in no respect, and certainly in no other enterprizes of a literary kind, have the United States made such rapid progress as in the establishment of political journals. At the beginning

j There was no newspaper in Scotland till after the accession of King WILLIAM and Queen MARY. At the Union there were *three* established in that part of the United Kingdom. In the kingdom of Great-Britain the whole number of newspapers printed in the year 1775, was 12,680,000. In 1782 the number had increased to 15,272,519. At the close of the century they were still more numerous.

of the eighteenth century there was no publication of this kind in the United Colonies: The first newspaper printed in America was the *Boston News-Letter*, begun April 24th, 1704, in the town whose name it bears, by B. GREEN. The second was the *Boston Gazette*, which commenced towards the latter end of the year 1720, by SAMUEL KNEELAND. The next year a third was published under the title of the *New-England Courant*, by JAMES FRANKLIN.^k Between the last mentioned year and 1730, three other newspapers were published in Boston, though some of them appear to have been soon laid aside. As the first printing work done in North-America was executed in Massachusetts, so in that colony the earliest, and, for a number of years, the most vigorous and successful exertions were made for the establishment and circulation of political journals.

The first newspaper printed in *Pennsylvania* was *The American Weekly Mercury*, by ANDREW BRADFORD, the publication of which commenced December 22, 1719. The first printed in New-York, it is believed, was by WILLIAM BRADFORD,^l October 16th, 1725, under the title of *The New-York Gazette*. The first paper published in *Rhode-Island* was the *Rhode-Island Gazette*, by JAMES FRANKLIN, before mentioned, who began the publication in October, 1732. The first in *Connecticut* was by JAMES PARKER, in 1755; and the

^k JAMES FRANKLIN was a brother of BENJAMIN FRANKLIN, who afterwards became so conspicuous as a man of science and a politician. BENJAMIN was at that time employed as an apprentice in his brother's office, and contributed much to render the *Courant* popular.

^l The family of the BRADFORDS deserves to be mentioned in honourable connection with that of the GREENS, in the annals of American printing. The press of SAMUEL GREEN was the first introduced into New-England; and the presses of ANDREW and WILLIAM BRADFORD were, it is believed, the first established in Pennsylvania and New-York. It is remarkable that there has been, for more than a century past, in both these families, a constant and respectable succession of printers.

first in *New-Hampshire*, by DANIEL FOWLE, in 1756. The periods at which *Gazettes* were first introduced into the other States are not certainly known. In 1771 they had increased to the number of *twenty-five*; and in 1801, more than *one hundred and eighty* different newspapers were printed in different parts of the United States.^m

It is worthy of remark that newspapers have almost entirely changed their form and character within the period under review. For a long time after they were first adopted as a medium of communication to the public, they were confined, in general, to the mere statement of *facts*. But they have gradually assumed an office more extensive, and risen to a more important station in society. They have become the vehicles of discussion in which the principles of government, the interests of nations, the spirit and tendency of public measures, and the public and private characters of individuals are all arraigned, tried, and decided. Instead, therefore, of being considered now, as they once were, of small moment in society, they have become immense moral and political engines, closely connected with the welfare of the state, and deeply involving both its peace and prosperity.

^m Of these about *fifteen* are *daily* papers; and supposing 1000 copies of each to be printed, the whole number of copies annually distributed, making due allowance for Sundays, &c. will be about 4,590,000. The number printed *three* times a week is about *nine*. Of these, supposing 800 copies to be on an average stricken off, the amount annually distributed will be 1,080,000. About *twenty-five* are printed *twice* a week. Of these, allowing 800 copies each to be the common number sent abroad, the number annually circulated will be 2,000,000. Finally, about *one hundred and thirty* newspapers are printed *weekly*; and, allowing the number of each published to be 800, the amount of this class annually edited will be 5,408,000. So that the whole number of newspapers annually circulated in the United States may be estimated at *thirteen millions and seventy-eight thousand*. For the sake of being rather below than above the mark, say *twelve millions*. It will be seen, by comparing this with a preceding note, that, while the population of the United States is not more than *one-half* of that of Great-Britain, the number of newspapers circulated in the former country may be estimated at more than *two-thirds* of the number published in the latter.

Newspapers have also become important in a literary view. There are few of them, within the last twenty years, which have not added to their political details some curious and useful information, on the various subjects of literature, science and art. They have thus become the means of conveying to every class in society, innumerable scraps of knowledge, which have at once increased the public intelligence, and extended the taste for perusing periodical publications. The *advertisements*, moreover, which they daily contain, respecting new books, projects, inventions, discoveries and improvements, are well calculated to enlarge and enlighten the public mind, and are worthy of being enumerated among the many methods of awakening and maintaining the popular attention, with which more modern times, beyond all preceding example, abound.

In ancient times, to sow the seeds of civil discord, or to produce a spirit of union and co-operation through an extensive community, required time, patience, and a constant series of exertions. The art of printing being unknown, and many of the modern methods of communicating intelligence to distant places not having come into use, the difficulty of conducting public affairs must have been frequently great and embarrassing. The general circulation of *Gazettes* forms an important æra, not only in the moral and literary, but also in the political world. By means of this powerful instrument impressions on the public mind may be made with a celerity, and to an extent of which our remote ancestors had no conception, and which cannot but give rise to the most important consequences in society. Never was there given to man a political engine of greater power; and never, assuredly, did this engine before operate upon so large a scale as in the eighteenth century.

Our own country in particular, and especially for the last twelve or fifteen years, has exhibited a spectacle never before displayed among men, and even yet without a parallel on earth. It is the spectacle, not of the learned and the wealthy only, but of the great body of the people; even a large portion of that class of the community which is destined to daily labour, having free and constant access to public prints, receiving regular information of every occurrence, attending to the course of political affairs, discussing public measures, and having thus presented to them constant excitements to the acquisition of knowledge, and continual means of obtaining it. Never, it may be safely asserted, was the number of political journals so great in proportion to the population of a country as at present in ours. Never were they, all things considered, so cheap, so universally diffused, and so easy of access." And never were they actually perused by so large a majority of all classes since the art of printing was discovered.

The general effects of this unprecedented multiplication and diffusion of public prints, form a subject of most interesting and complex calculation. On the one hand, when well conducted, they have a tendency to disseminate useful information; to keep the public mind awake and active; to confirm and extend the love of freedom; to correct the mistakes of the ignorant, and the impositions of the crafty; to tear off the mask from corrupt and designing politicians; and, finally, to promote union of spirit and of action among the most distant members of an extended community. But to pursue a path calculated to produce these

ⁿ The extreme cheapness with which newspapers are conveyed by the mail, in the United States, added to the circumstance of their being altogether unincumbered with a stamp duty, or any other public restriction, renders their circulation more convenient and general than in any other country.

effects, the conductors of public prints ought to be men of talents, learning, and virtue. Under the guidance of such characters, every Gazette would be a source of moral and political instruction, and, of course, a public blessing.

On the other hand, when an instrument so potent is committed to the weak, the ignorant, and the vicious, the most baneful consequences must be anticipated. When men of small talents, of little information, and of less virtue, undertake to be (as the editors of public gazettes, however contemptible their character, may in a degree be considered) the directors of public opinion, what must be the result? We may expect to see the frivolities of weakness, the errors and malignity of prejudice, the misrepresentations of party zeal, the most corrupt doctrines in politics and morals, the lacerations of private character, and the polluting language of obscenity and impiety, daily issuing from the press, poisoning the principles, and disturbing the repose of society; giving to the natural and salutary collisions of parties the most brutal violence and ferocity; and, at length, consuming the best feelings and noblest charities of life, in the flame of civil discord.

In the former part of the eighteenth century, talents and learning, at least, if not virtue, were thought necessary in the conductors of political journals.* Few ventured to intrude into this arduous office, but those who had some claims to literature. Towards the close of the century, however, persons of less character, and of humbler qualifications, began, without scruple, to undertake the

* This has not been, generally, so much the case in America as in Europe. From the earliest period too many of our Gazettes have been in the hands of persons who were destitute both of talents and literature. But in later times, the number of editors who fall under this description has become even greater than formerly.

high task of enlightening the public mind. This remark applies, in some degree, to Europe; but it applies with particular force to our own country, where every judicious observer must perceive, that too many of our Gazettes are in the hands of persons, destitute at once of the urbanity of gentlemen, the information of scholars, and the principles of virtue. To this source, rather than to any peculiar depravity of national character; we may ascribe the faults of American newspapers, which have been pronounced by travellers, the most profligate and scurrilous public prints in the civilized world.^p

If the foregoing remarks be just, then the friend of rational freedom, and of social happiness; cannot but contemplate with the utmost solicitude; the future influence of political journals on the welfare of society. As they form one of the great safeguards of free government, so they also form one of its most threatening assailants. And unless public opinion (the best remedy that can be applied) should administer an adequate correction of the growing evil, we may anticipate the arrival of that crisis in which we must yield either to an abridgment of the liberty of the press, or to a disruption of every social bond.

^p These considerations, it is conceived, are abundantly sufficient to account for the disagreeable character of American newspapers. In every country the selfish principle prompts men to defame their personal and political enemies; and where the supposed provocations to this are numerous, and no restraints are imposed on the indulgence of the disposition, an inundation of filth and calumny must be expected. In the United States the frequency of Elections leads to a corresponding frequency of struggle between political parties; these struggles naturally engender mischievous passions, and every species of coarse invective; and, unhappily, too many of the conductors of our public prints have neither the discernment, the firmness, nor the virtue to reject from their pages the foul ebullitions of prejudice and malice. Had they more diligence, or greater talents, they might render their Gazettes interesting, by filling them with materials of a more instructive and dignified kind; but wanting these qualifications, they must give such materials, accompanied with such a seasoning, as circumstances furnish. Of what kind these are no one is ignorant.

CHAPTER XXIII.

LITERARY AND SCIENTIFIC ASSOCIATIONS.

FOR a long time after the revival of learning in Europe, men devoted to letters were, in a great measure, insulated with respect to each other. We read, it is true, of a society of learned men, associated for the purpose of promoting literature and science, as early as the time of CHARLEMAGNE; but the plan appears to have been rude and defective. Several others were instituted in Italy, in the sixteenth century; still, however, they seem to have been, both in their formation and effects, much inferior to many which have flourished since. The most enlarged ideas of literary societies seem to have originated with the great Lord BACON, who, in his *New Atalantis*, delineated a plan of one more liberal and extensive than had ever before existed. But although his project received little encouragement from his contemporaries, it was destined to produce important effects not long afterwards.

In the seventeenth century, the taste for forming scientific and literary societies may be said to have commenced its prevalence, and to have gained considerable ground. It was a little after the middle of that century that the two most conspicuous associations of the kind in Europe, viz. *The Royal Society* of Great-Britain, and *The Royal Academy of Sciences* of France, were formed. The former by Mr. BOYLE, Mr. HOOKE, and a number of others, who, at that time, held a high station in the philosophical world; and the latter by

LOUIS XIV. prompted by the suggestion, and assisted by the counsels of his minister, M. COLBERT. But the eighteenth century is pre-eminently remarkable for multiplying these associations; for a great increase in the number of their publications; and for their unexampled activity and usefulness in the cause of science. By far the greater number of the societies for promoting useful knowledge which now exist in the world, were formed during the period under consideration. Among these the most important and useful are the *Imperial Academy of Sciences at St. Petersburg*; the *Royal Academies of Stockholm, Copenhagen, Berlin, and Lisbon*; the *Royal Society of Edinburgh*, and the *Royal Irish Academy of Dublin*. Besides these, a multitude of others have arisen, under different names, for various purposes, and at different periods of the century, in Great-Britain, France, Italy, Germany, and almost every literary country of Europe. Perhaps in no part of the world have institutions of this kind been so much multiplied as in Italy; and next to her, in the number and activity of similar associations, we may estimate France. In the former there is scarcely a town of any importance without an academy or literary association; and in the latter they are very numerous.

In addition to the societies formed for promoting general literature and science, the eighteenth century is distinguished by the formation of many other associations, for promoting some particular art or branch of science. There were instituted, during this period, academies of *Painting*, of *Sculpture*, of *Music*, of *Inscriptions and Belles Lettres*, of *Law*, of *Medicine*, of *Arts and Manufactures*, of *Agriculture*, &c. and, indeed, for cultivating almost every particular department of human art and knowledge.

It was before remarked that the publications made by these societies and academies, exhibiting the result of their labours, were more numerous, more valuable, and more generally circulated, during the eighteenth century, than in any former period. They amount to many hundred volumes, and hold an important place among the literary and scientific productions of the age.

We had occasion to remark, in a former part of this work, that the discoveries in Geography, and the numerous improvements in Navigation, during the last age, had led to a great and unexampled increase of the *intercourse of men*. The same effect has been produced, in modern times, by the formation of so many learned societies, by their great extent, their frequent meetings, their numerous publications, and by their correspondence and mutual interchange of literary honours. Never, assuredly, at any former period, were learned men so well acquainted with the labours and the characters of each other, so free and mutually instructive in their intercourse, or enabled so far to combine their talents and industry in the pursuit of important investigations.

But this is by no means the only advantage of these associations. They may be reckoned among the principal causes of the superiority of the moderns over the ancients, especially in the physical sciences. They have kindled a spirit of emulation among the learned; they have stimulated into action many useful talents, by holding out literary rewards; and they have suggested objects of inquiry, and methods of experiment, which might otherwise have passed unobserved and forgotten. Such societies, also, have furnished useful repositories for the observations and discoveries of the ingenious, and have thus been enabled to present to the world many valuable productions, which would pro-

bably otherwise have been lost through the modesty, the indolence, or the poverty of authors. Literary and scientific associations, moreover, by extending their honours to distant countries, bind more closely together the members of the republic of letters in different quarters of the globe, and teach them to feel as brethren embarked in the same cause. They may even be said, in some instances, to have a great influence in advancing national prosperity, and promoting a spirit of general improvement. It is true, in accounting for these facts, other causes may be assigned which, beyond doubt, contributed to their production; but it can as little be doubted that the increased intercourse and connection among the learned, by means of the establishment of academies and societies, ought to be considered as holding a place among the most important sources of modern improvements in science.

The formation of literary and scientific associations in the United States began to take place in the latter half of the eighteenth century. Within that period many useful societies have been instituted which deserve some notice. The principal of these are the following—

1. *Societies and Academies of Arts and Sciences.* Of this class there are several. “*The American Philosophical Society*, held at Philadelphia, for promoting useful knowledge,” was instituted in January, 1769. It was formed by the union of two smaller societies, which had for some time existed in that city, and has been ever since continued on a very respectable footing. This society has published four quarto volumes of its *transactions*, containing many ingenious papers on literature, the sciences, and arts, which exhibit American talents and industry in a favourable light. Over this institution have successively presided, BENJAMIN FRANKLIN,

DAVID RITTENHOUSE, and THOMAS JEFFERSON. *The American Academy of Arts and Sciences*, held at Boston, was established in May, 1780, by the council and house of representatives of Massachusetts, "for promoting the knowledge of the antiquities of America, and of the natural history of the country; for determining the uses to which its various natural productions might be applied; for encouraging medicinal discoveries, mathematical disquisitions, philosophical inquiries and experiments, astronomical, meteorological, and geographical observations, and improvements in agriculture, manufactures and commerce; and, in short, for cultivating every art and science which may tend to advance the interest, honour, dignity and happiness of a free, independent, and virtuous people." This Academy has published one quarto volume of its *transactions*, and several parts of a second, which will probably soon be completed. The contents of its respective publications afford a very honourable specimen of learning and diligence in the members, and furnish ground for expectations of still greater utility. The gentlemen who have presided over this association are JAMES BOWDOIN and JOHN ADAMS. *The Connecticut Academy of Arts and Sciences* was formed in 1799, at New-Haven, "for the purpose of encouraging literary and philosophical researches in general, and particularly for investigating the natural history of that State." This society has existed so short a time, that no publication of its proceedings of any extent could yet be reasonably expected. The gentleman first elected president, and who yet remains in that office, is the Rev. Dr. TIMOTHY DWIGHT, president of Yale College.

2. *Historical Society.* The only association of this kind in the United States is in Massachusetts. It was instituted in the beginning of the year 1791,

and the late Rev. Dr. BELKNAP, the honourable Judge TUDOR, and the Rev. Dr. ELIOT, are more entitled to the honour of being called its founders than any other individuals.^p The design of this association is to collect and preserve all documents, either manuscript or printed, which have a tendency to throw light on the natural, civil, ecclesiastical, or literary history of America. It has already made very large and valuable collections, an important portion of which has been laid before the public,^r and it bids fair to be one of the most useful institutions in our country.^s

3. *Medical Societies.* Prior to the revolution, which made the United States free and independent, the physicians of our country afforded little instruction or aid to each other. Scattered over an immense territory; seldom called to confer together and compare opinions, and little habituated to the task of committing their observations to writing, each was compelled to proceed almost

^p Dr. BELKNAP, whose taste for historical researches is well known, and who has rendered such important service to the interests of American history, first urged the adoption of some plan for collecting and preserving the numerous historical documents, relating to our country, and especially to New-England, which were widely scattered, and rapidly falling a prey to the destroying hand of time. He was zealously seconded by Judge TUDOR, who first proposed the formation of a society for this purpose, and by the Rev. Dr. ELIOT, who engaged with ardour in the plan, and has been since one of the most active and useful members of the institution. These gentlemen were soon joined, and ably assisted by the Rev. Drs. THATCHER and FREEMAN, by the honourable Judges SULLIVAN and MINOT, Mr. WINTHROP, and several others, who were members of the association when first organized.

^r The historical documents published by the Society amount to *seven* octavo volumes.

^s By far the greater part of the publications made by this Society relate to the history of New-England. This has arisen, not from any blamable partiality of the *resident* members to the history of their own country; but from the negligence of the *corresponding* members to make communications respecting the several States to which they belong. It is earnestly to be wished, either that gentlemen of a literary character in different parts of the United States would consider the Society in Boston as a national one, and exert themselves to render it more extensively useful; or, without delay, form independent societies for the same purpose, to act in co-operation with the parent society.

unassisted and alone. Soon after the confusion and devastation of war had given way to the arts of peace, attempts began to be made to remedy this serious evil. Associations for the purpose of improving medical science were soon formed, not only in Philadelphia, which had been for some years the seat of a medical school, but in almost every State in the union. Few of these societies have made very large or important publications; but they have produced many lasting advantages to the individuals composing them, and to the interests of the healing art. They have brought physicians to be acquainted with each other. They have collected a large mass of facts, hints, observations and inquiries, which if not always given to the world, constitute a source of improvement to the associates themselves. They have instituted annual orations, which, in various ways, tend to promote their primary object. They have issued prize questions, and bestowed premiums, which awaken dormant powers, and excite a laudable spirit of emulation. In a word, they have contributed to raise the practice of medicine in our country from a selfish and sordid trade, to a liberal, dignified, and enlightened profession.

4. *Agricultural Societies.* Associations for the promotion of agriculture, and the auxiliary arts and sciences, while they have been multiplied in every part of the scientific world, have also, during the latter half of the last century, become numerous in America. There is scarcely a State in the Union in which an institution of this kind has not been established, and in some of the States there are more than one. The most conspicuous and active of these associations are those established in Massachusetts, New-York, and Pennsylvania. That in New-York, denominated the *Society for promoting Agriculture, Arts and Manufactures*, has

been particularly distinguished, and, it is believed, is the only one of this nature in the United States which has made a regular publication of its proceedings, and of the principal memoirs communicated by its members.[†] The useful effects of these institutions are undeniably great, in various parts of our country. They have excited a spirit of inquiry, experiment and diligence in agricultural pursuits, among a considerable portion of our citizens; they have contributed to raise the dignity and importance of agriculture in the popular opinion; they have collected facts and doctrines, from different districts, for more full trial and satisfactory comparison; and if they have encouraged in any cases a disposition for speculative and visionary farming, they have promoted, in a still greater degree, practical and valuable improvements.

The literary and scientific associations of the eighteenth century differed considerably from those which were formed in preceding times. Besides being more numerous, they were also more *extensive* in their plan, and embraced a greater number of distant and foreign associates; they directed more of their attention to the *physical sciences*, and rendered the mode of inquiry by *experiment* more general and more accurate; and, finally, they were more active in their exertions, kept more heads and hands at work, and engaged more of the public attention, than the societies of preceding times.

[†] The *Agricultural Society of Massachusetts* has made, it is believed, several small publications; but the author has not been so fortunate as to see them, or to be particularly informed of their contents.

CHAPTER XXIV.

ENCYCLOPÆDIAS AND SCIENTIFIC DICTIONARIES.

ALMOST all the works of this kind which exist are productions of the last age. The first attempt of which we read, to give a distinct and methodical view of all arts and sciences, in a series of volumes, was that by AVICENNA, the great Arabian philosopher and physician, who flourished in the eleventh century. At the age of twenty-one, as we are told, he conceived the bold design of incorporating into one work all the parts of human knowledge then studied; and, in pursuance of this plan, compiled a real *Encyclopædia*, in twenty volumes, to which he gave the name of *The Utility of Utilities*. The art of printing, however, being yet unknown, it is not to be supposed that his work had any considerable circulation, or that it contributed much to the promotion of knowledge.

The next publication of this kind worthy of notice is the *Margarita Philosophica*, by REISCHIVS, a learned German, printed at Strasburgh, in 1509. About the same time with REISCHIVS flourished ANDREW MATTHEW ACQUAVIVA, Duke of Alti and Teramo, in the kingdom of Naples, who formed a plan of an universal dictionary of arts and sciences, to which he first gave the name of an *Encyclopædia*, which has been since generally employed to designate works of this class. After ACQUAVIVA, no literary labourer seems to have engaged in so hardy an enterprize, until ALSTE-

DIUS, a German protestant divine, who, in the beginning of the seventeenth century, published an *Encyclopædia*, which was highly esteemed, even among catholics. It was printed at Lyons, and had much circulation over a considerable part of the continent of Europe. These appear to have been the most important, if not the whole of the works of this kind which appeared prior to the eighteenth century; for the *Dictionaries* of BAYLE, and MORERI, published towards the close of the preceding age, though works of great labour and learning, yet being chiefly of a biographical and historical nature, can scarcely have a place assigned them, with propriety, in the present list.

About the beginning of the eighteenth century,* Dr. JOHN HARRIS, an English clergyman, of distinguished erudition, published his *Lexicon Technicum*, a work in two volumes folio, embracing a great variety of knowledge, as it then stood, and, at that period, highly instructive and much esteemed. The next compilation of this kind was that produced by Mr. EPHRAIM CHAMBERS, also of Great-Britain, which first appeared in 1728, in two volumes folio, and was doubtless much superior to all that had gone before it. CHAMBERS denominated his work a *Cyclopædia*. It was the result of many years intense application to study, and was received by the public in the most favourable manner. It went through a number of editions in the native country of its author, within a few years after its first appearance; was soon translated into the Italian language, and had many honours heaped upon it by the learned of those times. This work has been since enlarged and printed in four volumes folio, by Dr. REES, and in this improved form is yet much valued.

* It is believed that Dr. HARRIS's work was first published in 1704.

The next in order was a *Dictionary of Arts and Trades*, published by a society in France, and embracing an amount of information on all mechanical subjects; more extensive and curious than had ever before been collected. This was followed by the celebrated French *Encyclopédie*, of which Messrs. D'ALEMBERT and DIDEROT were the principal conductors, aided by a number of their learned countrymen. It is probable that they were prompted to this undertaking by the fame and success of Mr. CHAMBERS's work; and also by a premeditated and systematic design to throw all possible odium on revealed religion. This great compilation was begun in 1752, and brought to a close about fifteen or twenty years afterwards, in thirty-three folio volumes. A leading feature of the *Encyclopédie* is the encouragement which it artfully gives throughout to the most impious infidelity; and though much valuable science is undoubtedly diffused through its pages, yet it is so contaminated with the mixture of licentious principles in morals and religion, that nothing but its great voluminousness prevents it from being one of the most pernicious works that ever issued from the press.

After the appearance of the French *Encyclopédie*, Baron BIELFELD, of Germany, published a work which he called *The Elements of Universal Erudition*. This compilation, however, is comparatively little known, and is certainly inferior to many made both before and since. About the year 1760, a bookseller, by the name of OWEN, published a kind of *Encyclopædia*, in three very large octavo volumes. This work, though less full on many subjects than some that had gone before it, yet contained much useful information, the mode of exhibiting which has been generally applauded. In 1764 appeared *The Complete Dic-*

tionary of Arts and Sciences, in three volumes folio, by the Rev. HENRY TEMPLE CROKER, and others. This work, though, in many respects, worthy of public patronage, attracted but little attention, and gained but a small share of reputation.

About the year 1773 was published, in Edinburgh, the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, in three volumes quarto, of which the principal editor was Mr. COLIN MAC FARQUHAR, assisted by a number of the learned men around him. A second edition of the same work was completed in 1783, enlarged to ten volumes quarto, executed chiefly by the same persons who had compiled the former edition. A third impression, still under the same title, was undertaken in 1789, with the aid of a number of new literary labourers, and completed in 1797, in eighteen quarto volumes. This work deserves to be highly commended on various accounts. The friendly aspect which it bears, in general, towards religion and good morals, is entitled to much approbation. And though, on some subjects, it is far from containing the same depth and extent of scientific research with the French *Encyclopédie*, yet it presents a rich variety of knowledge, and, in the general usefulness of its tendency, far exceeds that celebrated performance.

From the last edition of the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, an American impression has been given by Mr. THOMAS DOBSON, a respectable printer and bookseller of Philadelphia, who, with a degree of zeal and enterprize then altogether unrivalled in the United States, soon after the commencement of the publication in Britain, announced his intention of giving it to the American public through the medium of his own press. His plan has been executed in a manner equally honourable to himself and his patrons; and his edition, on account of many valuable additions and corrections, deserves

to be considered as decidedly superior to that from which the greater part of it was copied."

In 1783 some of the literati of France, not satisfied either with the plan or the execution of the grand *Encyclopédiè*, which had attracted so much of the public attention, commenced a new work under the title of the *Encyclopédiè Methodique*. This has been, with some propriety, called a *Dictionary of Dictionaries*. It is entirely on a new plan, and was lately finished, having reached the wonderful extent of *two hundred volumes* in quarto. It is scarcely necessary to say that this last work, executed by many of the persons who were engaged in the preceding, bears, like that, an anti-religious complexion; and that, while it displays much genius, learning, industry, and perseverance, its general tendency is highly unfavourable to the interests of virtue and piety.

Some years before the close of the eighteenth century, a Dictionary of Arts and Sciences was undertaken by VARRENTRAPP and WENNER, learned and enterprising booksellers at Frankfort, in Germany. This work, under the title of *Allgemeine Encyclopædie, dér Künste und Wissenschaften*, has already reached to a considerable extent, but is not yet completed. It has been said, by persons acquainted with the German language, to be, on the whole, so far as it has gone, the best *Encyclopædia* yet published.

Several other compilations, intended to embrace the circle of arts and sciences, were made in different parts of Europe, in the course of the last century. Some of these were translations or abridgements of those already mentioned, while others had better claims to originality. But too

^u Besides other new matter, Mr. DOBSON's edition contains much important information respecting the United States, not contained in the work, as it came from the British press.

little is known of those which belong to either class, to undertake any detailed account of their characters, or even of their titles.^w

It deserves also to be noticed, that the last age produced an unprecedented number of systematic works on particular sciences, exhibited in the form of *dictionaries*, and having the several parts disposed according to alphabetical arrangement. Of these the number is too great to be recounted. As a specimen, it may be observed, that we have dictionaries of *Agriculture*, by several associations and individuals; of *Gardening*, by MILLER, MAWE, and others; of *Trade and Commerce*, by ROLT, SAVERY, and POSTLETHWAITE; of *Law*, by JACOBS; of *Mathematics*, by HUTTON; of *Chemistry*, by MACQUER and NICHOLSON; of *Mineralogy*, by RINMAN; of *Botany*, by MARTYN; and of *Painting, Music, &c.* by various persons of learning and taste, in different parts of the world.

That these numerous and extensive collections of the different branches of human knowledge have had a considerable influence on the literary and scientific character of the age, will scarcely be questioned. They have contributed to render modern erudition multifarious rather than deep. By abridging the labour of the reader they have diminished his industry. But they have been attended, at the same time, with considerable advantages. To those residing at a distance from large libraries, and other repositories of science, they

^w The *English Encyclopædia*, begun a few years ago by Dr. GREGORY and others, and intended to be comprized in eight or nine volumes 4to. was nearly concluded at the close of the century. The *Encyclopædia Londinensis*, begun near the expiration of the century, by Dr. REES, and other learned men, is now publishing. The *Encyclopædia Perthensis*, which has been for several years printing in the city of Perth, in North-Britain, is also still unfinished; as is an *Encyclopædia* publishing by Mr. JOHN LOW, an enterprizing bookseller in the city of New-York, in which considerable progress is made, and which it is expected will form six quarto volumes.

have furnished a most instructive epitome of knowledge. They have thus contributed to enlarge the mind, and to show the connection between the several objects of study; and though they are far from presenting a sufficiently minute and detailed view of each of the various subjects of which they treat; yet, to general readers, they give more information than would probably have been gained without them; and to readers who wish to investigate subjects more deeply, they serve as an index to more abundant sources of information.

CHAPTER XXV.

EDUCATION.

EDUCATION has always been considered among the most difficult and important of those duties which are intrusted to man. Corresponding with its arduous and interesting nature have been the numerous plans to facilitate its accomplishment, or to improve its methods. Of these plans the eighteenth century was eminently productive, as no age ever so much abounded in learned and ingenious works on this subject; but the real improvements to which the period in question has given birth in the business of education, are by no means of that radical kind which might have been expected by the sanguine, from the progress of society in other arts and sciences. Still, however, the last age produced some events and revolutions, with regard to this subject, which demand our notice in the present brief review.

Of the numerous treatises on the subject of Education, which were presented to the public in

the course of the last age, there are few entitled to particular attention. Among these, perhaps, the celebrated work of ROUSSEAU, under the title of *Emilius*, is most extensively known. This singular production undoubtedly contains some just reasoning, many excellent precepts, and not a few passages of unrivalled eloquence. But it seems to be now generally agreed by sober, reflecting judges, that his system is neither *moral* in its tendency, nor *practicable* in its application. If the author excelled most other men in genius, he certainly had little claim either to *purity* of character, or real *wisdom*.

Besides this work, a few others are worthy of particular notice; some of which, if they have less claim to ingenuity than the celebrated production of ROUSSEAU, are more judicious, practical, and conducive to the happiness of youth. The *Method of studying and teaching the Belles Lettres*, by M. ROLLIN, has received much attention and general applause, and is pre-eminently favourable to the interests of virtue and piety. The *Plan of a Liberal Education*, by Dr. VICESIMUS KNOX, is also the production of a learned and ingenious man, and may be ranked among the best modern treatises on this subject. The *Elementar-Werk*, by BASEDOW, of Germany, is said to be one of the most influential and useful works on education that the age produced. Much praise has also been bestowed on the *Neuen Emil* of Professor FEDER, of Göttingen, which still continues to be held in esteem in the author's own country.* Towards the close of the

* The author has no acquaintance with the works of BASEDOW or FEDER. This account of them is taken from a learned and interesting *Historical Account of the Rise and Progress of Literature in Germany*, published in the German Museum of London, and said to be drawn up by the Rev. Mr. WILL, lately of London, at present minister of the German Calvinist Church in the city of New-York.

century was published a work entitled *Lectures on Education*, by DAVID WILLIAMS, which, though it manifests considerable talents and erudition, is decidedly unfriendly to religion, and consequently to genuine virtue. To these may be added, the *Theatre of Education*, by Madame GENLIS; a treatise on *Practical Education*, by Mr. and Mrs. EDGEWORTH; and smaller works, on the same subject, by Miss WAKEFIELD and Miss HAMILTON, both of Great-Britain; all of which, with various kinds and degrees of merit, have been much read and esteemed.

The eighteenth century produced a remarkable revolution with respect to the *objects of study* in the education of youth. These are now more accommodated to the different employments for which the pupils are intended than in former times. Education, during this period, has been more than ever divested of its scholastic form, and rendered more conducive to the useful purposes of life. The study of the dead languages has been gradually declining throughout the age under review, and scientific and literary pursuits of a more practical nature taking their place. Instead of spending eight or ten years, as formerly, in the acquisition of Latin and Greek words and rules, youth are now more liberally instructed in the physical sciences, in belles lettres, in modern languages, in history, in geography, and generally in those branches of knowledge which are calculated to fit them for action, as well as speculation. Though the change in this respect has been carried to an extreme; though the disposition discovered by many instructors, during the last fifty years, to discard entirely from among the objects of study, the rich stores of ancient literature, may be pronounced unfriendly to true taste and sound learning; yet the

revolution which has been mentioned may be considered, in general, as a real improvement.

Another obvious revolution which the last age has produced in the business of education, is removing a large portion of that *constraint* and *servility*, and of those *monkish habits*, which were formerly connected with the diligent pursuit of knowledge, and considered a necessary part of a system of study. Modern academic discipline is much less rigid than it was a century ago. More scope is given to the natural spirit and tendencies of the youthful mind. The paths of instruction are more diversified, and more strewn with flowers. In a word, the *labour* of youthful study, formerly fashionable, has, in a great measure, ceased to exist. This has arisen from several causes; from the growth of luxury and dissipation, which are always unfavourable to sound erudition; from the multiplication of *helps* and *abridgements*, to be hereafter mentioned, which, while they lessen the toil of the student, deceive him, by promising greater acquisitions than he can gain from them; and especially from the plans of education in modern times being so much extended, and the objects of study so greatly multiplied, as to render the wonted attention to each difficult, if not impossible. Hence the greater number of scholars, at the present day, are more remarkable for *variety* than *depth* of learning; and have generally contented themselves with walking lightly over the fields, and plucking the flowers of literature and science, instead of digging deeply, and with unwearied patience, to gain the recondite treasures of knowledge.^y

^y It has been asserted, by good judges, and probably with truth, that one of the principal reasons to be assigned for the comparative superficiality of modern classical learning, even in the best seminaries, is the increased use of *translations*, particularly within the last sixty or seventy years. It

A further circumstance, in some degree peculiar to modern education, and which, no doubt, produces a considerable effect, is the *early age* at which students are admitted into the higher seminaries of learning, and, as a necessary consequence, their premature entrance into the world. Lord BACON somewhere remarks, that it was a defect in the plans of education, in his day, that students were introduced at too early an age to the more abstruse and grave parts of their philosophic studies. This remark, in the eighteenth century, may be applied to the general period of beginning the academic course. The universities and colleges of modern times, especially in the United States, are filled with *children*, who are unable either suitably to appreciate the privileges they enjoy, or so much to profit by them, as at a more mature period of life. If these higher seminaries be intended, as they commonly are, to complete the education, then to send pupils to them before they have emerged from the state of childhood is altogether unwise. That this circumstance has an unfavourable influence on the dignity and general success of a course of public instruction can scarcely be doubted. That it should co-operate with other causes to render the number of superficial scholars greater than they would otherwise be, seems to be an unavoidable consequence; and that it tends to diminish the subordination and the regularity of modern academic systems, experience abundantly demonstrates.

The last century also produced considerable improvements in the *means* of instruction. These

is certain that helps of this kind, to abridge the toil of the indolent and careless, never before had so general a circulation; and it is proverbially true, that acquisitions made by means of long and patient *labour*, are more deeply impressed on the mind, longer retained, and usually held in higher estimation, than those which cost but little time and pains.

are of various kinds, and deserve our particular attention, in estimating the progress of literature during the period under consideration.

The first circumstance deserving of notice under this head, is the *great multiplication of Seminaries of learning*, in the course of the last age. This is a most interesting feature in the period which we are endeavouring to delineate. Institutions for the purpose of instruction, from universities down to the smallest schools, were never half, perhaps not a tenth part, so numerous as at the close of the eighteenth century. In every portion of the civilized world they have increased to an astonishing amount; they have brought the means of education to almost every door; and, with opportunities, have presented excitements to the acquisition of knowledge before unknown.

Charity Schools, if not first established, were greatly multiplied during this century; and, perhaps, deserve to be considered as one of the most useful plans of public beneficence to which the age gave rise. These have been numerous for many years, in several countries of Europe; but probably in no part of the world have so large a number been established, and on a footing so liberal, as in Great-Britain. Institutions of this kind have also been, for some time, common and highly useful in the United States.

The establishment of *Sunday Schools* deserves to be mentioned as a further improvement of modern times. This is an excellent plan for disseminating the elements of useful knowledge among the more laborious and indigent portions of society; and bids fair to be generally adopted throughout the christian world.

The last age also abounded, beyond all precedent, in *popular works*, for facilitating and improving the education of youth. Of this kind are

the numerous *translations*, *compend*s and *abridgements*, which modern instructors have produced. Scarcely a department of art, science, or taste, can be mentioned in which numerous works of this nature have not been furnished by the friends of youth. To the same class also belong the *moral tales*, the *histories*, *adventures*, and *selections*, of which a few years past have produced an unexampled number and variety. Some of these performances have been planned with great wisdom, and executed with great felicity; and are eminently suited to attract the youthful mind, to direct and strengthen its growing powers, to beget a taste for the sciences, and to cultivate the best principles of the heart. Of many others, indeed, a very different character must be given; but it is certain, that parents and teachers were never before presented with so rich a variety of helps, or so ample a field of choice, in works of this nature, as during the last thirty years of the period under review.

Among the many writers and compilers to whom the public are indebted for their labours in this important field, it is difficult to make a selection of those who are most entitled to praise. Of this number are, Mrs. TRIMMER, Mrs. BARBAULD, Miss C. SMITH, Miss HANNAH MORE, Miss WAKEFIELD, Mr. DAY, and Dr. MAVOR, of Great-Britain; Madame GENLIS, Abbe GAULTIER, M. DE BEAUMONT, and M. BERQUIN, of France; Messrs. BASEDOW, CAMPE, SALZMAN, and VON ROCHOW, of Germany; and Mr. LINDLEY MURRAY, and Mr. NOAH WEBSTER, of our own country. To say that the performances of all these have commanded much attention, and that those of several of them have been eminently and extensively useful, would be to describe their merits in a very imperfect manner.

From this multiplication of the *means* and *facilities* of education we may account for the fact, that during the last century the advantages of education were *more extensively diffused through the different grades of society* than in any former age. It may safely be asserted, that there never was a period in which the elements of useful knowledge were so common and popular as during that which is under review. In all preceding stages of human improvement, knowledge was possessed by few. Before the invention of printing, indeed, the obstacles in the way of a general diffusion of information were numerous, and almost insurmountable; and even with the advantage of that invention, it was, in a great measure, confined to the opulent, until within the last hundred years. During this period, the great increase in the number of seminaries of learning; the wonderful multiplication of circulating and other libraries; the growing practice of divesting the most important parts of knowledge of their scholastic dress, and detaching them from the envelopments of dead languages; with various other considerations, have all conspired to extend the advantages of education, and to render the elements of useful knowledge more cheap and common than ever before.

Towards the close of the eighteenth century, the *physical* education of youth became an object of more particular attention than it was in any former period. The considerations of bodily health and vigour were by no means forgotten in the most ancient systems of education with which we are acquainted. Nay, it may be asserted, that, in *practice*, the ancients succeeded much better than the moderns, in rearing robust and vigorous children. But they attended less to *theory* than *practice*; they attained the *end* without having just philosophical ideas respecting the *means*; and some-

times indeed by methods which neither the habits nor opinions of modern nations would admit. But the eighteenth century gave birth to more speculation and writing on this subject than any former age could boast. The *philosophy* of physical education has been more studied, discussed and understood. And though the luxury, the various premature indulgences, and the general habits of the youth at the present day, may be considered as peculiarly unfriendly to health and long life, yet it is certain, that within a few years past the inquiries on this subject, and the theoretical and practical works in relation to it published, have been more numerous, more enlightened, and more conducive, so far as reduced to practice, to the union of health, delicacy and virtue, than the wisdom of former ages produced.^z

But, perhaps, one of the most striking peculiarities of the eighteenth century, on the score of education, is the change of opinion gradually introduced into society, respecting the importance, capacity, and dignity of the *Female Sex*, and the consequent changes in the objects, mode and extent of their instruction. It is much less than a hundred years since female education was lamentably, and upon principle, neglected, throughout the civilized world. Until the age under review, “no nation, ancient or modern, esteemed it an object of public importance; no philosopher or legislator interwove it with his system of general instruction; nor did any writer deem it a subject worthy of full and serious discussion. Many sys-

^z Some of the methods employed by the ancients, for promoting the expansion, vigour, and longevity of the human body, were by no means consistent with delicacy or virtue, especially in the case of the female sex. In modern times, by more carefully studying, and more generally understanding the philosophy of diet, exercise, air, dress, and general regimen, the improvers of physical education have been enabled to do much in a way altogether consistent both with decorum and pure morals.

tems of instruction have been adopted for the other sex, various as the countries, the government, the religion, the climate, and even as the caprices of the writers, who, at different periods, have undertaken to compose them. But, by a strange fatality, women have been almost wholly omitted in the account, as if they were not gifted with reason and understanding, but were only to be valued for the elegance of their manners, the symmetry of their forms, and the power of their blandishments." In the history of the earliest nations, we occasionally meet, indeed, with accounts of females who had elevated and powerful minds, and who were well informed for the period in which they lived. In the history of Europe, during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, we also find a few instances of distinguished women, some of whom, in talents, learning, and virtue, have, perhaps, never been excelled since that period. But the number of this description was so inconsiderable, the circumstances in which they were placed were so peculiar, and the influence of their character and example so small, that they scarcely form exceptions to the general statement which has been given. The great mass of the sex still remained unacquainted with letters and science; their whole attention being directed either to the allurements of personal decoration, or to the details of domestic economy.

The eighteenth century produced a memorable change of opinion and of practice on this subject. The character and talents of the female sex have become, during this period, more highly estimated; their importance in society better understood, and the means of rendering their influence salutary, more familiarly known and adopted; in short, a revolution radical and unprecedented with respect to their treatment and character, has taken place, and wrought very perceptible effects in

society. Female education has been more an object of attention, and been conducted upon more liberal principles within the last thirty years, in every cultivated part of Europe, and in America, than at any former period. Some of the ablest pens have been employed in prescribing plans for the cultivation of their minds; seminaries of learning, particularly adapted to their advantage, have been instituted; women have, of course, become, in general, better informed; the sex has furnished more instances of learning and talents than ever before; a female of elevated understanding, and of respectable literary acquirements, is no longer a wonderful phenomenon. Corresponding to the increase of cultivation bestowed upon them, they have risen higher in the scale of intellect, and evinced a capacity to vie with the other sex in literature, as well as moral excellence. In a word, at the close of the eighteenth century it had become as rare and disgraceful for a woman to be ignorant, within certain limits, as at the commencement of it such ignorance was common.

As there is no truth more generally admitted, than that every step in the progress of civilization brings new honour to the female sex, and increases their importance in society; so there is, perhaps, no fact which better establishes the claim of the eighteenth century to much progress in knowledge and refinement, than the improvements in female education to which it has given rise. It is a prominent feature in the age, and forms one of its signal honours, that its close found the female sex, through a great part of the civilized world, more generally imbued with the elements of literature and science, than they ever before possessed since the creation.

The learning of the female world, in the period under review, may be considered as bearing some

peculiarity of character. What might have been the nature, or extent of the attainments made by literary women in ancient Egypt, Greece and Rome, we are scarcely qualified to judge; but the learned women of Europe, in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, according to the fashion of the day; entered deeply into the study of ancient languages;^a they chiefly belonged to the higher ranks of life; and as writing and publishing were comparatively rare among all classes, so few females presented themselves before the public in this manner. In the eighteenth century, the character of female learning became materially different. Literary females, during this period, paid more attention to general knowledge, not omitting some of the practical branches of physical science. In studying languages, they devoted themselves more particularly to modern tongues, especially the French, Italian, and German.^b Literature has descended from females of high rank, to those in the middle walks of life; and is, perhaps, on the whole, more frequent among the latter than the former. And while learned women of former times wrote and pub-

^a Lady JANE GRAY, who lived in the sixteenth century, was a proficient in classic literature. "She had attained a familiar knowledge of the Latin and Greek languages, besides modern tongues; had passed most of her time in an application to learning, and expressed a great indifference for other occupations and amusements usual with her sex and station. ROGER ASCHAM having one day paid her a visit, found her employed in reading *Plato*, while the rest of the family were engaged in hunting in the park; and on his admiring the singularity of her choice, she told him that she received more pleasure from that author than the others could reap from all their sport and gaiety." *Hume*. Queen ELIZABETH was no less remarkable for her learning. She is said to have spoken both Greek and Latin with readiness, and to have been familiarly acquainted with the French, Italian, and Spanish languages. Other instances of the same kind might be adduced as belonging to that age.

^b A few females of the eighteenth century distinguished themselves by their profound and accurate acquaintance with the Latin and Greek classics. The names of Madame DACIER, Mrs. GRIERSON, Mrs. CARTER, and a few others, will be remembered with respect as long as the ancient languages are studied. But there was certainly less disposition among the literary females of the eighteenth century to devote themselves to this pursuit than among those of the two preceding centuries.

lished little, those of that sex who have lately gained literary distinction have made numerous and valuable publications,^c some of which will doubtless descend with honour to posterity.

This revolution has been gradually effected, and was produced by a variety of causes. The progress of refinement, while it raised the female character, naturally placed that sex in a situation more favourable to the acquisition of knowledge. The unexampled diffusion of a taste for literature, through the various grades of society, could scarcely fail of increasing the intelligence, and meliorating the education of females among the rest. Added to these considerations, the example and the writings of some celebrated women served to excite emulation, and to produce a thirst for knowledge among many others of their sex; these latter, again, within the sphere of their influence, produced the same good effects on their associates; academies for the particular instruction of females soon became popular; and thus, within the last fifty years, their literary interests have been constantly gaining ground.

Among the numerous females whose names might be mentioned, as having contributed to this revolution, by their example and their writings,

^c "In this country," (England) says Mr. POLEWHELE, in his *Unsex'd Females*, "a female author was formerly esteemed a phenomenon in Literature; and she was sure of a favourable reception among the critics, in consideration of her sex. This species of gallantry, however, conveyed no compliment to her understanding. It implied such an inferiority of women in the scale of intellect as was justly humiliating; and critical forbearance was mortifying to female vanity. At the present day, indeed, our literary women are so numerous, that their judges, waving all complimentary civilities, decide upon their merits with the same rigid impartiality as it seems right to exercise towards the men. The tribunal of criticism is no longer charmed into complacency by the blushes of modest apprehension. It no longer imagines the pleading eye of feminine diffidence that speaks a consciousness of comparative imbecility, or a fearfulness of having offended by intrusion."

particular distinction is due to Mrs. COCKBURN,^d Mrs. CARTER,^e Mrs. BARBAULD, Mrs. LENNOX, Mrs. MONTAGUE,^f Mrs. MACAULAY GRAHAM, Mrs. CHAPONE, Mrs. RADCLIFFE, Miss HANNAH MORE,^g Miss SEWARD, Mrs. D'ARELAY, Miss CHARLOTTE SMITH, Miss HAMILTON, Miss WAKEFIELD, and many others, of Great-Britain; Mrs. GRIERSON,^h and Mrs. EDGEWORTH, of Ireland; Madame DACIER, and Madame CHATELET,ⁱ of France; together with many more,^j equally worthy of respectful notice, and who have long held a high place among literary females.

The extension and improvement of female edu-

^d An acute and celebrated metaphysician of Great-Britain, who died in 1749. Her works have been since printed in two volumes octavo.

^e Miss ELIZABETH CARTER, an English lady of great erudition, and of distinguished talents. Her translation of *Epictetus* is generally known.

^f "It is no trivial praise," says Mr. POLEWHELE, "to say that Mrs. MONTAGUE is the best female critic ever produced in any country." *Unsex'd Females*, p. 42. Note.

^g Miss HANNAH MORE is one of the most illustrious ornaments of her sex that the eighteenth century produced. "To great natural endowments," says a late writer, "she has added the learning of lady JANE GRAY without out the pedantry, and the piety of Mrs. ROWE without the enthusiasm." As no female writer in the English language is more celebrated than Miss MORE, so there is certainly no one to whom the general interests of virtue, and especially the female sex, are more indebted than to her. She has delineated the true honour and happiness of woman more faithfully, perhaps, than any other writer, and has plead her cause with discrimination, with dignity, and with effect.

^h Mrs. CONSTANTIA GRIERSON, descended from very poor and illiterate parents, in the county of Kilkenny, in Ireland. She was born in the year 1706, and died in 1733, in the 27th year of her age. She was profoundly acquainted with Grecian and Roman literature; published editions of *Terence* and *Tacitus*, which are among the best extant; and addressed an elegant Greek epigram to the son of Lord CARTARET, by the influence of which nobleman her husband procured a patent to be the King's printer for Ireland, on condition that the life and character of Mrs. GRIERSON should be inserted in it, as a monument in honour of her learning.

ⁱ The numerous and profound works of Madame DACIER, in classic literature, are well known; as are also the talents and learning of Madame DU CHATELET, the able commentator on NEWTON.

^j To this list may be added the names of the Margravine of ANSPACH, Mrs. DOBSON, Mrs. BROOKE, Mrs. COWLEY, Mrs. YEARSLEY, Mrs. INCHBALD, Mrs. WEST, Miss LEE, Miss WILLIAMS, and several others, distinguished in the walks of polite literature; and also the honourable Mrs. DAMER, Mrs. FRANCIS, and Mrs. THOMAS, celebrated for their acquirements in the ancient languages.

cation has also been promoted by the writings of Archbishop FENELON, Dr. GREGORY, Dr. FORDYCE, Mr. BENNETT, Dr. DARWIN, and some others. Even the celebrated work of ROUSSEAU has contributed to this end, notwithstanding the visionary and erroneous principles with which it abounds.

But while female talents have been more justly appreciated, and more generally improved, especially during the latter half of the eighteenth century, certain extravagant and mischievous doctrines relating to that sex have arisen within this period, and obtained considerable currency. These doctrines are the following, viz. "That there is no difference between the powers and tendencies of the male and female mind; that women are as capable of performing, and as fit to perform, all the duties and offices of life as men; that their education should be the *same* with that of the men; in a word, that, except in the business of *love*, all distinctions of sex should be forgotten and confounded." These opinions, if not wholly new, and peculiar to the last age, have doubtless obtained a currency, within a few years past, which they never before had, and which has produced much interesting discussion, and very sensible effects in society.

The most conspicuous advocate of these opinions is the celebrated MARY WOLLSTONECRAFT,^k whose ingenious vindication of the *Rights of Woman* is universally known; and whose licentious practice renders her memory odious to every friend of virtue. In her principles on this subject she has been followed by several of her own sex, as well as by a few male writers. To the former class belongs MARY HAYS, who, in her *Novels*

^k As this lady is better known by her maiden name than by that which she assumed after becoming the wife of Mr. GODWIN, the former is retained.

and *Philosophical Disquisitions*, has endeavoured, with great art and plausibility, to recommend the principles of this mischievous school.

It cannot be denied that a total mistake concerning the capacity and importance of the female sex, has long held that part of our species under a most degrading thralldom, and obscured the portion of intellectual and moral excellence which they possess. It may also, with truth, be granted, that the idea of an *original* difference between the mental characters and powers of the two sexes has been pushed greatly too far, and been made a source of long-continued and essential injury to women. Females, if it were practicable or proper to give them, in all respects, the same education as that bestowed on men, would probably discover nearly equal talents, and exhibit little difference in their intellectual structure and energies. But is it possible, or consistent with the obvious indications of nature, to give them *precisely* the same education as is given to the male part of our species? That this is neither practicable nor desirable will appear from the following considerations.

First. Women are obviously destined to *different employments and pursuits* from men. This is evident from various considerations. Among all the classes of animals with which we are acquainted, the female is smaller, weaker, and usually more timid than the male. This fact cannot be ascribed to difference of education, to accident, or to perverted systems of living among the inferior animals; for it is uniform, and nearly, if not entirely, universal, applying to all countries, climates, and situations; and if ever we may expect to find nature pure and unperverted, it must be among the brutal tribes. The same fact applies to the human species. The bodies of women, in general, are smaller

and feebler than those of men, and they are commonly more timid. This is not merely the case in the more polished states of society, in which false refinement, or injurious habits, may be supposed to have degraded the female character; but it is nearly, if not equally so among savages, where women, instead of being wholly or chiefly sedentary, are rather the more laborious sex. How shall we account for this fact? Does it not seem to indicate a difference of employment and destination? Is it conceivable that there should be so much difference of structure between beings intended for *precisely the same sphere of action*? No one can suppose this, who believes that the various departments of nature are all formed by a Being of infinite wisdom, and that in the economy of creation and providence, means are adjusted to ends.

Again; the important offices of *gestation* and *parturition* being assigned to women, plainly point out the difference of situation, pursuit, and employment for which we are contending. The various circumstances of infirmity and confinement resulting from these offices, present insurmountable obstacles in the way of that sex engaging in many employments destined for men. If all distinctions, except in the business of love, ought to be confounded, then females ought to be called to sit on the bench of justice, to fill the seats of legislation, to hold the reigns of executive office, and to lead the train of war. But would such a kind of activity as any of these stations suppose, comport with their sexual duties? The slightest reflection, it is presumed, will be sufficient to convince every unprejudiced inquirer, that there is a total incompatibility between them.

Secondly. To make the education and the employments of the two sexes precisely the same, would, if practicable in itself, be productive of the

most *immoral consequences*. Let us suppose young females to mingle promiscuously with the youth of the other sex, in their studies, in their amusements, and in all the means adopted to strengthen the bodies and the minds of each. Let us suppose, that after the elements of knowledge were acquired, the same employments were assigned to each sex. Let us suppose the various stations of civil trust to be filled indifferently by men and women; the places destined for the instruction of lawyers, physicians and surgeons to be occupied by a jumbled crowd of male and female students; the clerkships in counting-houses, and public offices, executed by a joint corps of male and female penmen; and the bands of labourers in manufactories formed without any distinction of sex. What would be the consequences of these arrangements? It would convert society into hordes of seducers and prostitutes. Instead of the regularity, the order, the pleasing charities, and the pure delights of wedded love, a system of universal concubinage would prevail. Seminaries of learning would be changed into nurseries of licentiousness and disease; the proceedings of deliberative assemblies would be perverted or arrested by the wiles of amorous intrigue; the places of commercial or mechanical business would become the haunts of noisy and restless lewdness; and all sober employment would yield to the dominion of brutal appetite.

The far-famed author of the *Rights of Woman*, in the introduction to a book designed for the use of young ladies, does not scruple to say, that “in order to lay the axe at the root of corruption, it would be proper to familiarize the sexes to an unreserved discussion of those topics which are generally avoided in conversation, from a principle of false delicacy; and that it would be right to speak of every part of the body, as freely

as we mention our eyes or our hands." Such are her ideas of the decency and the moral tendency of breaking down all distinctions in the ordinary intercourse of the sexes! It may be pronounced, that all history and experience are directly opposed to this doctrine, and prove, that Miss WOLLSTONECRAFT was as ignorant of human nature, as she was inimical to true virtue. Let us take a retrospect of those countries and ages, in which the intercourse of the sexes, with respect to violations of what are commonly called the laws of decorum, came nearest to the point of freedom here recommended. In the ancient gymnastic exercises, it is well known, that the young women were obliged to run, to wrestle, to throw quoits, &c. and, in these exercises, to appear naked, as well as the men; and at their feasts and sacrifices, they were also obliged to dance, in the same state of perfect nudity, amidst crowds of male spectators. What was the consequence of these proceedings? According to the doctrine of that bold reformer, whose sentiments are under consideration, such freedom in exposing the naked limbs, and those parts of the body which are generally concealed, ought to have "laid the axe at the root of corruption," and rendered the people who indulged in these habits, the most virtuous in the world, with regard to the intercourse of the sexes. But was this really the consequence? Directly the reverse! The exercises in question were converted into occasions of wantonness and libertinism, so gross and flagitious, that they became subjects of universal complaint, and filled even pagans with horror.

The truth is, whenever the intercourse of the sexes has been most guarded, and the fences of delicacy and modesty most carefully kept up, there the highest degree of virtue and order has invariably prevailed. It is so far from being a corrupt

opinion, that throwing off reserve,^l is the best way to "lay the axe at the root of corruption," that uniform experience proves this course to be the most mischievous and corrupting that can be imagined. There is no way of avoiding this consequence, but by maintaining, that many things which Christianity, and those who take their standard of morality from it, pronounce vicious, are really innocent, if not laudable. Accordingly, Miss WOLLSTONECRAFT, and her disciples, seem to believe, that the restraints which marriage imposes ought not to be submitted to; and if we may consider the life of that remarkable woman as a commentary on her doctrines, it is plain that the destruction of chastity is the native fruit of her admired system.^m What could be the effect in society, if every female were to imbibe the sentiments, and act the part of this shameless advocate of lewdness? The essence of domestic bliss would be destroyed; the reign of licentiousness would be universally established; chastity would be banished from the earth; some of the strongest ties which bind society together would be dissolved; and the female sex degraded to the most abject condition.

^l It is not forgotten that Miss WOLLSTONECRAFT speaks much of the importance and efficacy of *reserve*; but it is a reserve to be exercised equally between persons of the same sex as between persons of different sexes. And she, at the same time, inculcates doctrines which are utterly inconsistent with that reserve which the virtuous part of mankind have always considered as indispensably necessary to be maintained between the sexes.

^m See *Memoirs of MARY WOLLSTONECRAFT GODWIN, &c.* by WILLIAM GODWIN. The author forbears to speak of this work in the manner which he thinks it deserves. It is a most instructive commentary on the principles held and published by the singular woman whose life, character and end it exhibits. It is vain to apologize for her crimes and infamy by pleading that she was led astray by a set of delusive opinions, and that she intended no hostility against society. The truth is, the person who is immoral *upon principle* belongs to the most criminal class of offenders. When a woman becomes a prostitute or adulteress, merely from the strength of passion, and in opposition to her convictions, detestable as her character is, she is less to be abhorred than she who deliberately numbers these crimes among the *rights of woman*, and considers them as belonging to the proper dignity and independence of the female sex.

Thirdly. To advocate the system which would confound all distinctions of sex, except in the business of love, is as much *opposed to the spirit of Christianity* as it is inconsistent with the pursuits of the female sex, and immoral in its consequences. Those who are familiar with the scriptures will recollect, that a line of distinction between the sexes is frequently and carefully drawn therein, and an habitual reference to this distinction represented as highly important in the system of human duty. Upon this distinction, considered in several points of view, are founded some of the most interesting conjugal obligations, and all the leading principles of domestic government. The scriptures, indeed, do not exhibit woman as an enslaved and servile being; they represent her as a rational and immortal creature, as the counsellor, companion, and help-mate of men, and teach us, both by precept and example, to consider her as holding a high and respectable station in society. But they exclude her, by direct prohibition, from the office of public religious instructor, and plainly intimate, that several other employments and pursuits are unfit to engage her attention. In short, they distinctly and unequivocally hold up the idea of an appropriate sexual character, and represent a corresponding peculiarity of studies and action, as properly belonging to the male and female.

It is evident, then, from reason, from the uniform course of nature, from experience, and from the word of God, that females are destined for different pursuits and employments from men, and that the sphere of their activity should be different. This, of consequence, will call for a different education, will lead to different habits, and will give rise to distinguishing characteristics. Do not the professional employments of men every day beget observable peculiarities of character and taste? And

is it not perfectly natural, on the same principle, that there should be *sexual* peculiarities? Nor is there any necessity for supposing a radical inferiority of intellectual power in females. It will be readily granted, that with the same *kind*, and the same *degree* of cultivation with men, they would exhibit equal capacity of mind. But the necessary reserve of the female sex, their domestic duties, their sedentary life, the infirmities and confinement resulting from the peculiar sexual offices before alluded to, and the various peculiarities of their situation, are abundantly sufficient to produce in them a different genius and character of mind from those of men, whose active employments, daring enterprises, aspiring ambition, diversified scenes and occupations, familiarity with danger, and unceasing labours to gain fame, wealth, or pleasure, impart to their minds a vigour, a courage, a solidity, a wariness, and a persevering patience in exertion, which are rarely found in women."

" Miss HANNAH MORE, in one of her Essays, seems to admit the idea of an *original inferiority* of mental character in females. She expresses herself in this manner: " Women have generally quicker perceptions; men have juster sentiments. Women consider how things may be prettily said; men, how they may be properly said. Women speak, to shine or please; men, to convince, or confute. Women admire what is brilliant; men, what is solid. Women prefer a sparkling effusion of fancy to the most laborious investigation of facts. In literary composition, women are pleased with antithesis; men, with observation and a just deduction of effects from their causes. In Romance and Novel-writing women cannot be excelled. To amuse, rather than to instruct, or to instruct indirectly, by short inferences drawn from a long concatenation of circumstances, is, at once, the business of this sort of composition, and one of the characteristics of female genius. In short, it appears, that the mind, in each sex, has some natural kind of bias, which constitutes a distinction of character; and that the happiness of both depends, in a great measure, on the preservation and observance of this distinction." Essay, p. 9—13. In the sentiment here expressed I cannot altogether agree with this excellent and illustrious woman. That there is some such difference as she has stated between the sexes, I am ready to allow; but this appears to me to arise not so much from any *original inferiority* in the structure of the female mind, as from a difference of education and employment; from a difference in the circumstances in which women are placed in society, with respect to inducements to action, the nature of their amusements, &c. a difference which is necessary and proper, and which, to set aside, would be to derange the order, and destroy the happiness of society.

What, then, is the conclusion of the matter? It is, that women, as well as men, are rational beings; that they are made not to be the servants, but the companions of men; that, for this purpose, where it is practicable, their minds should be cultivated with care, liberally imbued with knowledge, and so strengthened and polished as to fit them to shine not only in the routine of domestic employments, but also in the social circle, and in the literary conversation. Every man who understands the true interests of society, will desire to see females receive the best education which their circumstances will afford. And every one who considers the importance of enlightening and forming the minds of the young, and who recollects that this task must, for a number of the first years of life, be almost entirely entrusted to mothers, will perceive the propriety of having them more accurately and extensively informed than they commonly are. But when women carry the idea of their equality with the other sex so far as to insist that there should be *no difference* in their education and pursuits; when they contend that every kind of study or occupation is equally fit and desirable for them to pursue as for men;° when they imagine, and act on the presumption, that they have talents as well suited to every species of employment and enterprize, they mistake both their character, their dignity, and their happiness. The God of na-

• It is by no means the intention of the writer to say, that the profound investigations of mathematical or metaphysical science are unfit for *all* females. Where persons of this sex are so situated, with regard to property and employment, as to render investigations of this kind convenient and agreeable, there appears no rational objection to their engaging in them. But when females devote themselves to studies of this nature, to the neglect of religious and moral improvement, which are indispensably necessary for every sex and age; and to the omission also of geography, history, chemistry, and some of the more attractive branches of natural history, if they do not depart from the province of their sex, they certainly have a singular taste as to what is most useful and most ornamental in females, situated as they are in society.

ture has raised everlasting barriers against such wild and mischievous claims. To urge them is to renounce reason; to contradict experience; to trample on the divine authority; and to diminish the usefulness, the respectability, and the real enjoyment of the female sex.

Notwithstanding, however, the falshood and mischievous tendency of the doctrines taught in the Wollstonecraftian school, they have obtained much currency, particularly in Great-Britain, France and Germany; and have concurred with the general progress of luxury and false refinement to corrupt the morals and degrade the character of the female sex, especially towards the close of the period under consideration.^p In proportion as principles of this nature have been received, the becoming modesty and reserve of the sex have been diminished or laid aside; their peculiar duties have been forgotten; and the comforts of domestic life have experienced serious encroachments.

It must also be acknowledged, that the increased intelligence and the taste for reading, which remarkably characterize the female sex of the present day, compared with their condition a century ago, are attended with some circumstances which

^p It is not pretended that the *Amazonian* stile of dress and manners in females was never known previous to the appearance of Miss WOLLSTONECRAFT'S *Rights of Woman*. Whoever looks into the *Spectator*, the *Guardian*, &c. and indeed into some of the essays written long before those celebrated works, will see the unseemly dress and deportment of the women of those days severely lashed; and in language which, with scarcely any alteration, would apply to the close of the eighteenth century. How shall we account for the fact, that indecencies of this kind are continued and extended, notwithstanding the severity of rebuke that has been uniformly directed against them; and notwithstanding the abundant evidence which is constantly presented, that they are viewed with disapprobation, and even with abhorrence, by all the more estimable part of the other sex? It is difficult to find an answer to this question, which would not reflect most severely, either on the understanding or the principles of many modern females, or on both. It is to be lamented, that the evil complained of, instead of declining with the increase of reading and cultivation among the female sex, is increasing with still more rapid progression.

the friends of virtue and happiness cannot contemplate with unmingled pleasure. By far too great a portion of the reading of females is directed to *Novels*, and other productions of light and frivolous character, which, at best, can only amuse, and which often exert a corrupting influence, instead of enlightening the mind, and forming it to a love of wisdom and virtue. Hence the frequent complaint, among the sober and discerning, that modern female education is calculated to make superficial, assuming and dissipated, rather than wise and useful women; and that they have just learning enough to detach them from the peculiar and proper duties of their sex, but not sufficient to expand, enrich, and regulate their minds. This complaint has, doubtless, some foundation.⁹ But instead of proving that a taste for literature is improper or injurious in females, it only serves to admonish us, that their studies should be more extensive and better directed; that an acquaintance with novels only will never make any woman a good housewife, mother, friend, or christian; and that literature in them, as well as the other sex, though, in itself, an invaluable blessing, may be perverted into a heavy curse.

The elegant accomplishments of *music* and *drawing* were also more commonly made a part of female education, at the close of the eighteenth century, than at any former period with the his-

⁹ If the statement given in a former page, respecting the character and destination of the female sex, be just, then engaging in literary pursuits of such a *kind*, or to such a *degree*, as will render them either unfit or indisposed to act in their peculiar domestic sphere, is, in ordinary cases, unwise and mischievous. This remark applies, with particular force, to that kind of reading which has a tendency to consume time, without conferring a single advantage of solid information, or of real wisdom. Those young ladies who, instead of studying theology, morals, grammar, geography, history, chemistry, &c. give all their reading hours to *Novels*, would do well to ask themselves, how far this kind of employment is likely to qualify them to be dignified heads of families, respectable companions of their husbands, or useful members of society?

tory of which we are acquainted. We now see every day, in the houses of those who belong to the middle class of society, instruments of music, and productions of the pencil, which, a century ago, were rarely seen in the houses of the most conspicuous and wealthy. This increase of attention to *music*, as a part of female education, during the last century, is more especially remarkable in Great-Britain and America.

On the subject of *Education*, the century under review has given birth to a doctrine, which, though noticed in a former chapter, is yet too remarkable and too pregnant with mischief to be suffered to pass without more particular consideration in the present. It is, that Education has a kind of intellectual and moral *omnipotence*; that to its different forms are to be ascribed the chief, if not all the differences observable in the genius, talents, and dispositions of men; and that by improving its principles and plan, human nature may, and finally will, reach a state of absolute perfection in this world, or at least go on to a state of unlimited improvement. In short, in the estimation of those who adopt this doctrine, man is the child of circumstances; and by meliorating these, without the aid of religion, his true and highest elevation is to be obtained; and they even go so far as to believe that, by means of the advancement of light and knowledge, all vice, misery and death may finally be banished from the earth. This system, as was before observed, seems to have been first distinctly taught by M. HELVETIUS, a celebrated French author, who wrote about the middle of the age we are considering, and was afterwards adopted and urged with great zeal by many of his countrymen, particularly MIRABAUD and CONDORCET; and also by Mr. GODWIN, and others, of Great-Britain.

This doctrine, of the *omnipotence of education*, and the *perfectibility* of man, seems liable, among many others, to the following strong objections.

First. It is *contrary to the nature and condition of man*. Though every succeeding generation may be said, with respect to literary and scientific acquisitions, to stand on the ground gained by their predecessors, and thus to be continually making progress; yet this is by no means the case with regard to intellectual discipline and moral qualities. Each successive individual, however elevated the genius, and however sublime the virtues of his ancestors, has to perform the task of restraining his own appetites, subduing his own passions, and guarding against the excesses to which his irregular propensities would prompt him. Suppose a BACON, or a NEWTON, after all his intellectual and moral attainments, to have a son. Is this son more wise or more virtuous, on account of the genius and attainments of his parent? By no means. He has the same laborious process to undergo, for the acquisition of knowledge, and the same vigilance and patient self-denial to exercise, for the regulation of his moral character, as if his parent had been the most ignorant and degraded of beings. And this, from the nature and condition of man, must always continue to be the case. If every successive individual of our species must come into the world ignorant, feeble, and helpless; and if the same process for instilling knowledge into the mind, and restraining moral irregularities, must be undergone, *de novo*, in every instance, on what do these sanguine calculators rest their hopes that we shall attain a state of intellectual and moral perfection in the present world? They must suppose either that the propagation of the species, by the intercourse of the sexes, will cease; or that, contrary to every law, man will at length come into

the world with all that maturity of reason, light, and information, which belongs to adult years. But it is presumed neither of these suppositions will be adopted by rational inquirers.

Secondly. Another objection to this doctrine is, that it is *contrary to all experience*. The world has existed near six thousand years, and during this long period, the exertions of intellect and of virtue have been numerous and great. It will even be readily granted, that amidst the mortifying vicissitudes, and the degrading retrocessions which the history of knowledge presents, mankind are now far more enlightened than at any former period. But is it a fact, that real wisdom, moral purity, and true happiness have always kept pace with the improvements in literature and science? Are the most learned and scientific nations, and the most learned and scientific individuals, always the most virtuous? Are luxury, fraud, violence, unprincipled ambition, the vicious intercourse of the sexes, and the various kinds of intemperance, less frequent among the polished and enlightened nations of Europe, than among the untutored natives of America? It is presumed that no reflecting mind will answer these questions in the affirmative. What, then, becomes of the fundamental principle of those who hold the doctrine in question, viz. That the progress of knowledge is alone sufficient to reform, exalt, and finally to render perfect the human race? If this principle were well founded, we should find virtue and happiness, both in individuals and societies, bearing an exact proportion to the advances made in knowledge, which experience attests is far from being the case.

But it will, perhaps, be said, that the principle of *experience* may be pressed too far; that it is not legitimate reasoning to infer, because an event has never yet occurred, that, therefore, it never can

or will take place. But if a certain cause produce a given effect, there must be a *tendency* in that cause to produce this effect. Now, if this *tendency* be real, when the cause is exerted in a certain degree, the effect may generally, if not always be looked for in a corresponding degree. But if it be not *generally* true, that the most enlightened are the most virtuous; if it be not *generally* true, that in proportion as men make progress in intellectual improvement, they make progress in moral excellence; we may with confidence conclude, that these two species of improvement do not necessarily stand in the relation of cause and effect to each other, and, therefore, that from the existence of the former, we cannot legitimately infer the existence of the latter.

Thirdly. A further objection to the doctrine of human *perfectibility* has been drawn, with great force, from the principle of *population*, compared with the *means of subsistence*. It has been asserted by acute and well-informed writers, that the progress of *population*, when unrestrained, is always in a *geometrical ratio*, and that the increase of the means of subsistence is, under the most favourable circumstances, only in an *arithmetical ratio*. If this be the case, it is evident, that the progress of population must continually, unless in extraordinary circumstances, be checked by the want of subsistence; that these two will ever be, from their very nature, contending forces, and will be found more or less, in the most advantageous states of society, to produce want, fraud, violence, irregularity in the sexual intercourse, disease, and various kinds of vice; and, as the natural consequence of these, especially in their combined force, much misery and degradation to man. There seems to be no method of avoiding this conclusion, but by contending, that when knowledge shall have made

a certain degree of progress, both the intercourse of the sexes, and the necessity of food and raiment will cease. But will any one seriously maintain that such events are probable? Do we actually see individuals or communities, as they advance in learning and refinement, discover less propensity to the sexual intercourse, or a greater disposition or ability to do without the means of bodily sustenance? It will not be pretended that either of these is the case. But as long as the propagation of the human species continues to stand on the footing and to depend on the principles which it now does; and as long as food and raiment are necessary as means of subsistence, human society must be doomed to exhibit more or less of ignorance, vice, and misery.¹

Fourthly. It is evident that the doctrine of the unlimited efficacy of education, and the *perfectibility* of man, is wholly inconsistent with the *scripture account of the creation and present state of man*. The sacred volume teaches us that we are fallen and depraved beings; that this depravity is total, and admits of no remedy but by the grace declared in the Gospel; that the most virtuous will never be perfect or completely holy in the present world, and that misery and death are the unavoidable lot of man while under the present dispensation. It is true, the same scriptures speak of a future period of *millennial* happiness and glory, when divine knowledge shall universally abound, and when peace and happiness shall fill the world. But the *Millennium* of the Bible differs essentially, both in its *cause* and *nature*, from the period which the advocates of this *philosophy*, falsely so

¹ See this argument placed in a strong and interesting point of light in an anonymous work, entitled, *An Essay on Population*; a work which, in force of reasoning, and in candour and urbanity of discussion, has rarely if ever been exceeded.

called,^m describe in such glowing colours, and expect with so much confidence. The believers in the former expect it to be produced by the prevalence of that divine illumination, and that evangelical holiness which have already been found so transcendantly efficacious in promoting the virtue and happiness of men, notwithstanding the obstacles which have stood in the way of their benign operation; while HELVETIUS, CONDORCET, GODWIN, and their disciples, expect every thing to be accomplished by the progress of knowledge, which has been so thoroughly tried, and proved so lamentably ineffectual. The Millennium of scripture is represented as a period of knowledge, benevolence, peace, purity, and universal holiness; but the millennium depicted in philosophic dreams, is an absurd portrait of knowledge without real wisdom, of benevolence without piety, and of purity and happiness without genuine virtue.

It will be readily granted, indeed, to the advocates of this delusive system, that education is extremely powerful; that much of the difference we observe in the talents and dispositions of men is to be ascribed to its efficacy; and that the lovers of knowledge may be expected hereafter to make such improvements in literature, such discoveries in science, and such useful reforms in the plans of instruction, as exceedingly to promote the general improvement of man. But before the doctrine of perfectibility can be adopted, the nature of man must be totally changed; his present habits and wants must cease; and he must become a being of an essentially different character from that which his Creator has given him. The husbandman, by skilful and patient culture, may highly improve the

^m It is to be regretted that the word *philosophy*, so noble and elevated in its original and only proper meaning, should be so often prostituted by an application to the reveries of pride, ignorance and vanity.

quality of many species of the vegetable tribes. He may cause that which, in a neglected spot, was small, feeble and unpromising, to become, in more favourable circumstances, vigorous, luxuriant and flourishing: in short, it is not easy to say how far, under enlightened and unwearied cultivation, he may carry the improvement of those objects to which he devotes his attention. But to suppose that there are no limits to this improvement; to suppose that under the wisest management a rose might be so expanded as to cover a field of many acres, or a stalk of wheat so enlarged as to vie with the oak of the forest, would surely be the height of extravagance and folly.

The doctrine of *human perfectibility*, however, is too flattering to the pride of man not to have considerable currency among certain classes of society. Accordingly, the effects of this doctrine may be distinctly traced in many parts of the civilized world, from its influence in seminaries of learning, on the general interests of education, and on many social institutions. That this influence is unfavourable, will not be questioned for a moment by those who consider truth and utility as inseparably and eternally connected.

From the foregoing remarks it appears that education, in the course of the eighteenth century, underwent important revolutions. That so far as respects the extension of its benefits in a greater degree to the female sex, and to almost every grade in society; the multiplication of seminaries of learning, of popular elementary works for the use of youth, and of the various means and excitements to the acquisition of knowledge; and the decline of that despotic reign which the dead languages held for three preceding centuries, we may look back on the period under consideration as a period of honourable improvement: but that in

some other respects, and particularly with respect to the patient, laborious and thorough investigation of the various objects of knowledge; the depth of erudition; the discipline and subordination of academic establishments; and the general moral influence of literary and scientific acquirements, the last age cannot with propriety boast of much progress.

CHAPTER XXVI.

NATIONS LATELY BECOME LITERARY.

THE last century is not only distinguished by numerous discoveries, and by rich additions to the general stock of science; but also by the rise of several nations from obscurity in the republic of letters, to considerable literary and scientific eminence. To attempt to give a full view of the commencement and progress of a taste for literature in those nations, would lead to a minuteness and extent of discussion altogether beyond the limits of our plan. The design of the present chapter, therefore, is only to state some general facts, and to connect with them such names and collateral events as may appear to demand notice, either for the purpose of throwing light on the principal object of inquiry, or of doing honour to meritorious individuals. In the list about to be given of new literary countries, it will not be possible, for various reasons, to include all that might with propriety be mentioned. Passing by several nations, therefore, of inferior character, the most important of those which, in the last century

have become literary, are *Russia*, *Germany*, and the *United States of America*. To each of these some attention will be separately directed.

RUSSIA.

At the beginning of the eighteenth century, *Russia* had scarcely a literary existence. Almost entirely without learned men, and destitute of the means of acquiring knowledge, the whole Empire may be said, with little exception, to have been sunk in ignorance and barbarism. The language of the country was in a miserably confused and chaotic state, without rules, and with scarcely any fixed character; and, of course, no writers of taste in that language had appeared. It is true, the art of printing was introduced into *Russia* as early as the sixteenth century, and some feeble efforts were made, about the same time, to enlighten and civilize the people. Efforts still more vigorous and extensive, to effect the same purpose, were made in the seventeenth century; but they were soon relaxed, and little was done in this way until **PETER** the Great ascended the imperial throne.

The crown devolving on **PETER**, at the close of the seventeenth century, he early formed the design of introducing into his empire, as far as possible, the various arts of civilized life, and that attention to letters and science which he found to be so useful in other nations. For this purpose he travelled into foreign countries; made himself acquainted with their literary and scientific institutions; sent some of the most conspicuous young noblemen in his dominions into different parts of Europe, for the purpose of improving themselves in literature; and invited many foreigners of distinction to settle at his court. He established a printing-office in Petersburg, for publishing books

in the vulgar tongue; and among many other works, caused a large edition of the Bible in that language to be printed and scattered through his dominions. He instituted also, besides schools of less celebrity, in different parts of the empire, a Mathematical school, a Seminary for instruction in navigation, a Museum for the collection of curiosities from all parts of the world, and an Observatory, for the promotion of astronomical science: in short, he endeavoured, as far as possible, to transplant, from all other nations, into his own country, every thing that appeared to him ornamental or useful. By these means he produced a taste for letters and science among some of the higher classes of his subjects, and laid the foundation of that general improvement in his empire, which has since risen to such an honourable height."

The establishment of the *Imperial Academy of Arts and Sciences* forms an important æra in the history of Russian literature. This institution owes its origin to PETER the Great, who, during his travels, observing the advantages of public societies for the promotion of useful knowledge, determined to form an association of this kind in his own country. For this purpose, when in Germany, he consulted LEIBNITZ and WOLF, and availed himself of their learning and experience in the formation of his plan. With their aid he at length completed the constitution of the *Academy*, and signed it on the tenth of February, 1724, but was prevented by his sudden death from putting it into effective operation. His decease, however, did not defeat the laudable and well-formed design. The academy was established by CATHERINE I. on the twenty-

ⁿ For more minute information on the subject of Russian literature than it is convenient to give in the present sketch, see COXE's *Travels*, and TOOKE's *Survey of the Russian Empire*, his *History of Russia*, and his *Life of Catherine II.*

first of December, 1725, and the first meeting took place two days afterwards. This Empress not only favoured the institution, but also exercised great munificence towards it. She made a liberal grant of money for the support of fifteen members eminent for learning and talents, who were pensioned under the title of Professors in the various branches of literature and science. And that nothing might be omitted which could promote her leading object, she invited a number of eminent foreigners to Petersburg, for the purpose of filling the professorial chairs, for which provision had been made. The most distinguished of these foreigners were NICHOLAS and DANIEL BERNOULLI, the two DE LISLES, BULFINGER, WOLF, and EULER, whose profound erudition and scientific industry could not fail of promoting the interests of knowledge wherever they were placed.

Perhaps few institutions of this nature, in modern times, have been more diligent or more successful in pursuing the objects for which it was formed than this Academy. Besides its published *transactions*, which amount, it is believed, to near fifty volumes, and which are full of valuable information both in literature and science; its members have done much, both in their official and private capacities, to diffuse almost every branch of useful knowledge throughout the empire. Perhaps no country can boast of having produced within the space of a few years, such a number of excellent publications on its internal state, its natural history, its topography, and geography, and on the manners, customs, and languages of different nations, as have issued from the press of the Academy.

These exertions of PETER and CATHARINE were aided by some of their native subjects, who began to perceive the importance of literature,

and to form plans for the diffusion of it among the people. It was in the reign of the former, that those improvements in the Russian, or Sclavonian language, commenced, which have since made such honourable progress. To THEOPHANES PROKOPOVITCH,^o Archbishop of Novogorod, a man of learning and taste, and a native of Russia, much honour is due, for labouring to promote among his countrymen a taste for polite literature. He not only cultivated, and endeavoured to extend the influence of learning, during his life, but likewise left a legacy, to be applied to the same object after his decease.

In this laudable zeal for promoting the literary interests of his country, THEOPHANES was followed by LOMONOSOF, who, it was before observed, has been styled the great refiner of the Russian language.^p His labours may be considered as forming an era in the literary progress of his country, and are always mentioned as having been eminently conducive to this progress.

During the short reign of PETER II. the Aca-

^o THEOPHANES PROKOPOVITCH was born in Russia, in 1681, and died Archbishop of Novogorod, in 1736. After receiving as good an education as his country afforded, he went to Rome; where he resided three years, and where his literary and scientific acquirements were greatly extended. He was profoundly learned, not only in Latin, Greek and Hebrew literature, but also in Philosophy and Theology. He was the first Russian divine who published a regular systematic view of the doctrines of his church. His principal work is composed in Latin, under the title of *Christiana Orthodoxa Theologia*. His discourses are deemed classical performances.

^p LOMONOSOF was the son of a fishmonger at Kolmogori, in Russia. He was born in the year 1711, and died in 1764, in the 54th year of his age. He was fortunately taught to read, an accomplishment by no means common among persons of such humble origin in Russia. His genius for poetry was first kindled by the perusal of the *Song of Solomon*, done into verse by POLOTSKY, in a very rude and miserable manner. He fled from his father, who would have compelled him to a disagreeable marriage, and took refuge in a monastery at Moscow, where he had an abundant opportunity of indulging his taste for letters. He was afterwards taken under the patronage of the *Imperial Academy at Petersburg*, and proved one of the most distinguished literary characters of the age. His works were collected after his death, in three volumes octavo.

demy, and the general interests of literature, being neglected by the court, greatly declined. The salaries of the professors were discontinued, and an almost universal disregard to science prevailed. When the Empress ANNE came to the throne, the court again patronized the cause of letters and science. She revived the academy; enlarged the provision which had been made for its most active members; added a seminary for the instruction of youth, under the superintendence of the professors; and did much for the diffusion of liberal knowledge. Both the academy, and the seminary connected with it, flourished for some time, under the direction of Baron KORF; but upon his death, towards the latter end of ANNE's reign, a person without erudition, wisdom or enterprize, being appointed President, many of the most able and useful members quitted Russia in disgust. But at the access of the Empress ELIZABETH, new life and vigour were again restored to this institution; the original plan was still more enlarged and improved; some of the most learned foreigners were again drawn to Petersburg; and, what was considered a most promising omen for the literature of Russia, two natives of the country, LOMONOSOF, before mentioned, and ROMOSKY, another man of genius and learning, were enrolled among the members of the Academy.

But when CATHARINE II. came to the imperial throne, a new and illustrious era commenced. Her exertions for the encouragement of literature were more spirited and liberal than those of any of her predecessors, excepting PETER, and more extended and successful than even his. She fostered the academy with the utmost zeal; provided additional funds for its more ample support; prevailed on a number of learned foreigners to accept of professorships in the academy, and other places

of honour and profit at her court ; caused the geography and natural history of her empire to be carefully explored ; and gave a new spring to the growth of literature and science in every part of her dominions in which they had been planted. But there were two events in the reign of CATHARINE, which deserve to be particularly recorded, and which must be supposed to have had a considerable influence in promoting the diffusion of knowledge among her subjects.

The first is, the order issued, in the year 1768, by the Empress, for *translating a number of standard works*, in various languages, into the Russian language, thereby, at once, improving the national tongue, and extending a knowledge of some of the best publications of taste and science throughout her empire. For defraying the expense of this undertaking she granted an annual sum, and engaged in the work some of her most learned subjects, by whose labours many of the Greek and Latin classics have been presented in a respectable Russian dress ;^g and a number of the most valuable works in the English, French, and German languages, given to the inhabitants of that country in their own dialect. A considerable portion of these translators were natives of Russia, but the greater number were learned foreigners.

The other event, referred to is the establishment of normal *Schools*, by CATHARINE, in every province in her empire. This establishment commenced about the year 1780, when places of in-

^g Among the numerous versions made in consequence of this imperial order, the following are worthy of particular notice. The works of *Plato* have been translated by SIDEROFSKY and PAKHOMOF ; the works of *Hesiod*, by FRYANFYNOFSKY ; *Homer's Iliad*, by YEKIMOF ; the *Æneis* and *Georgics* of *Virgil*, by YEKIMOF, and also by PETROF ; the *Metamorphoses* of *Ovid*, by KOFITZKY ; and the *Odes* of *Horace*, by POPOFSKY. To attempt an enumeration of the English, French, and German classical works which have been naturalized in Russia, would exceed the reasonable limits of a note.

struction were formed, not only for the children of the nobility, but also for those of inferior rank. For this object the Empress did not content herself with making ample pecuniary provision, but also caused elementary books, for the instruction of youth in religion and morals, as well as letters, to be composed or translated, and distributed throughout her dominions. It is scarcely necessary to add, that the influence of these institutions has been benign and extensive.

Besides the seminaries of learning already mentioned, the various sovereigns of Russia, during the last age, and especially CATHARINE II. formed numerous societies for the promotion of *Arts, Manufactures* and *Agriculture*; established *Libraries*, not only in Petersburg, but also in other parts of the empire; made large collections of specimens in the *Fine Arts*, and endeavoured, by other methods, to awaken the attention of an ignorant and barbarous people, to the improvements of civilization, and the importance of knowledge.

Perhaps it is not saying too much to pronounce, that notwithstanding the detestable character of CATHARINE II. considered in a moral view, and notwithstanding the odious despotism which she exercised, no crowned head ever did more, in the same length of time, to raise the character, and promote the general welfare of her subjects. And when it is considered how low she found the greater part of these subjects sunk in ignorance and brutality, at her accession to the throne, it is astonishing that her efforts were attended with so much success.

When this Empress began her reign, little attention had been devoted to *Natural Philosophy*, or *Natural History*, in her dominions: but within a few years past, much has been done in these branches of science, by a number of persons, both

natives and foreigners. Among the former, LEPECHIN, GULDENSTÆDT, OZERETZKOFKY, SOLOKOF, SUYEF, RUMOFKY, and FLORINSKY, deserve to be mentioned with particular respect. Among the latter, PALLAS,* GMELIN, FALK, ÆPINUS, GEORGI, RENOVANTZ, and several others, hold an honourable rank. By the labours and writings of these philosophers, a considerable taste has been excited in Russia, for the inquiries to which they directed their attention.

In *Mathematical Science*, KOTELNIKOF, RUMOF-SKY, and INOKHODZOF, have shown themselves accomplished in a very respectable degree, by their memoirs in the transactions of the Academy. Besides these, KOSELSKY, ANITSCHKOF, GOLOVIN, and SIRETUSCHKIN, have made distinct publications on various branches of the Mathematics, which, besides doing honour to their authors, have contributed to extend the knowledge of this science among their countrymen. For contributions to the science of *Geography*, Russia is still more distinguished. The *Statistical Survey of the Russian Empire*, by PLESCHTSCHYEYEF, is a most instructive and valuable work. In addition to this, the vari-

* PETER SIMON PALLAS was born at Berlin, in the year 1741, and is the son of a distinguished surgeon of that city. After enjoying every advantage to be derived from the Universities of Halle and Göttingen, he travelled into other parts of Germany, spent some time in Holland and in England, and every where directed particular attention to Natural History, besides improving himself in other branches of knowledge. He was, early in life, invited by CATHARINE II. to Petersburg, where he was appointed Professor of Natural History in the Imperial Academy of Sciences, and where he has ever since maintained a growing reputation for talents and learning. Professor PALLAS is probably the most accomplished Naturalist now living. His *Elenchus Zoophytorum*; his *Miscellanea Zoologica*; his *Novæ Species Quadrupedum e Glirium ordine*; his *Enumeratio Plantarum quæ in Horto Procopii, a Demidof Moscuæ vivunt*; his *Neue Nordische Beytrage*; his *Icones Insectorum*, &c. and his *Flora Russica*, are too well known and too highly esteemed among natural historians, to render an account of their respective merits necessary. This great man now resides in Crim Tartary, on an estate granted him by the Empress, where, in the enjoyment of dignified leisure, he devotes himself to his favourite pursuits.

ous publications of SUYEF, IRODIONOF, KOTOFTZOF, and HACKMAN, are all conspicuous and useful.

A little more than thirty years ago, the science of *Medicine* was wholly uncultivated in Russia. It is said, that scarcely three books had been published on this subject in the whole empire, antecedently to the year 1770. Since that period, the progress of medical knowledge has been astonishingly great, and the number of medical publications remarkably increased. To Professor AMBODICK, his countrymen are indebted for valuable publications on anatomy, physiology, materia medica, and obstetrics, besides translations of some important works on different branches of the healing art. The medical works of SCHUMLIANSKY, TICHORSKY, SAMOILOVITCH, and TEREKHOFSKY, both original compositions and translations, are also mentioned with applause by the literary historians of that country. It is, moreover, proper to take notice, that several foreigners of distinction have published, on various medical subjects, in the Russian language. The names of BACHER-ACHT, VIEN, PEKIN, UHDEN, MOHRENHEIM, and ELLISEN, belong to this list, and are represented as holding a respectable station in the public-opinion at Petersburg.

In *Historical* composition, Russia has lately produced some specimens worthy of notice. The *History of Russia*, by SCHTSCHERBATOF, is said to hold the first place in the catalogue. Besides this, the various productions of GOLLIKOF, TUMANSKY, TSCHULKOF, BOGDANOVITCH, and VAGONOF, are generally mentioned among the respectable works of this class. In *Poetry*, it was before observed, that Russia had given birth to works of considerable merit; and also that they were almost wholly the productions of the eighteenth century. The services rendered to this branch of literature by

LOMONOZOF, SUMOROKOF, KHERASHOF, and KARAMSIN, were particularly mentioned in a former chapter. Besides these, KNIÆSHNIN, DERSCHAVEN, PETROF, VAN WISIN, and YELAGHEN, are enumerated, with great respect, among those Russian poets, who are either now living or lately deceased.

Even the *Fine Arts* have not been without some zealous and able cultivators in the empire under review. In *Painting*, LEVITSKY and KOSLOF, besides several foreigners, are much distinguished; the former in portrait, the latter in history. In *Sculpture*, SCHUBIN, MASCHALOF, IVANOF, GARDEYEF, and KHAILOF, are mentioned as respectable artists. And in *Engraving*, SKORODUMOF and SCHLEPPER, besides others, drawn from different countries, afford abundant evidence that, even in the inhospitable climate of Russia, the elegant arts can live and flourish.

The study of *Languages* has been, for a number of years, more cultivated in Russia than could have been expected, considering the infant state of literature in that country. Besides all the attention paid to the cultivation of the vulgar tongue, which was before noticed, and the numerous instances of profound acquaintance with the best writers of Greece and Rome;^s considerable labour has been bestowed, by a number of the literati of that empire, on the study of various living languages. The astonishing monument of learning and industry, in this branch of inquiry, given to the public by Professor PALLAS, was mentioned in a former

^s Among many persons who might be mentioned as having distinguished themselves by their attainments in classic literature, it would be improper not to take some notice of PLATO, Archbishop of Moscow, and EUGENIUS, a naturalized foreigner, Archbishop of Slavensk and Kherson. The former has the character of a profound scholar; but the latter is, perhaps, still more celebrated for his translation of the *Eclogues* and *Georgics* of VIRGIL, into Greek hexameters, which was, a few years since, splendidly printed in folio, at the expense of Prince POTESKIN.

chapter, as doing him great honour. The translator YÆRIG, is supported by the academy, to study the Mongolian language among that people. LEONTIEF, of the college of foreign affairs, has translated a great number of works from the Chinese language, and may be considered among the most accomplished scholars in Chinese literature now living in Europe. And there is no want of works in Russia, for learning a large portion of the modern European languages.

Literary Journals have never had much encouragement or circulation in Russia. Several attempts have been made to establish them, and they have obtained a slender support for a time, but the state of literature in that country is not sufficiently popular to render works of this kind generally sought after and read. *Newspapers* are also few in number, and comparatively confined in their dissemination. The nature of the government conspires with various other disadvantageous circumstances, to impose restraints on their circulation.

During the last four years of the century under review, literature, it is believed, has received much less encouragement from the governing powers in Russia than for a considerable period before. And indeed, after all, it must be acknowledged, that the advantages of education have by no means had that general and equal diffusion in the empire which is to be wished, and might have been expected; and that a large portion of the inhabitants are still sunk in a degree of ignorance and barbarism, which the exertions of another century, and of another succession of enterprizing sovereigns, will perhaps not be more than sufficient to remove.

GERMANY.

It can scarcely be said, with strict propriety, that Germany has lately become literary; for long before the period under consideration, there was much, both of literature and of science, in that empire. Those who have any knowledge of the great contributors to human knowledge, whose names adorn the history of Europe, in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, need not be informed, that of this number, Germany may claim a very respectable portion. But the cultivation of the German language; the publication of dignified and popular works in that language; and especially the commencement of a just taste in German literature, may all, with truth, be ascribed to the eighteenth century.

At the beginning of this period, all works of importance in Germany were written in the Latin language. And it seemed then to be a prevalent opinion among the literati of that country, that the compilation of huge folios, interspersed with innumerable quotations from writers in all known languages, was the most unequivocal proof of literary merit. For this reason, the greater part of German productions, prior to the period under review, were proverbially tedious and dull, and were seldom sought after by the learned of other nations; insomuch, that it was often and seriously questioned, whether genius could grow in a German soil.

The first conspicuous writer who employed the German language, in important scientific publications, was CHRIST. THOMASIVS, the celebrated metaphysician and moral philosopher, who died in 1728. After him WOLF was the next who made use of the vulgar tongue, in treating of philosophical

subjects. This example was soon followed by MOSHEIM, SCHLEGEL, and others, of distinguished reputation in various species of composition.[†]

But though the employment of the German language in philosophical works began thus early in the last century, yet it must be confessed, that in the early part of the century this language was extremely rude, harsh, and disgusting; exhibiting a motly mixture of Latin, French, and Italian words and idioms, incorporated, without judgment or taste with the original Gothic stores.[‡] It is true, much was done, about this time, by several learned men, for regulating the Grammar of their vernacular tongue. K. DUNKELBERG, who died in 1708, was the first conspicuous German who perceived, and publicly insisted on the necessity of regularly instructing the youth of his country in their native language. After him, SCHILTER, LEIBNITZ, VON STADE, STEINBACH, WACHTER, and FRISCH, wrote largely on the German language, and contributed much to its regulation and refinement. Still, however, after all the labours of these philologists, persons of tolerable correctness of taste were much dissatisfied with the corrupt jargon which continued to be in vogue.

About the year 1740, J. C. GOTTSCHED became animated with a laudable zeal for the improvement of his native language, and engaged

[†] For a knowledge of many of the facts and names contained in the following pages, the Author acknowledges himself to be indebted to the *Historical Account*, &c. before quoted, and ascribed to the Rev. Mr. WILL, now of this city.

[‡] In the sixteenth century some specimens of German style were given to the public, much superior to any that appeared in the seventeenth. The works of MARTIN LUTHER, the great reformer, exhibit, we are told, a correctness, variety, and energy of diction, not to be met with in the works of any writer that preceded him, nor indeed of any that immediately followed him. Through the greater part of the seventeenth century this language was in a course of degeneracy; and at the commencement of the eighteenth, was found in a condition which loudly demanded reform.

with ardour in various undertakings for this purpose. And though his own style was far from being a model of that purity and elegance for which he contended; yet his labours were by no means without considerable effect. He wrote several works on the subject, which were extensively useful. He engaged in controversies relating to philological questions, with BODMER, BREITINGER, and others, which also served to throw important light on the German language. And he directed the attention of his countrymen to the English and French classic writers, whose influence in promoting the same object was very sensible. In short, before the death of this indefatigable labourer, which happened in 1766, he had done much to discountenance the wretched models which were before implicitly followed, and to bring into view principles and examples more worthy of imitation.

While GOTTSCHED was engaged in these useful exertions, the great object of his pursuit was aided by the writings of POPOSWITSCH and MEINERS, who both published extensive and important works on the German language, and made contributions towards its improvement which do them much honour. But to no individual now living is this language more indebted than to the celebrated J. C. ADELUNG, who was mentioned in a former chapter. His *Grammar* and *Dictionary of the High-German language*^u are famous throughout Europe, and have probably done more to explore the etymology, to correct the orthography, and to regulate the syntax of that language, than any writer who appeared before him. To the above

^u The language spoken in the middle and southern parts of Germany is called the *High-German*, of which that dialect which prevails in Upper Saxony, especially in Leipsic, Dresden, &c. is reckoned the most pure and elegant. In Lower Saxony and Westphalia the country people speak a language called *Flat-German*, or *Low-Dutch*, but still differing greatly from the *Low-Dutch* of the United Netherlands.

named eminent cultivators of the German language we might add, VOIGHTEL, FULDA, MORITZ, and many more, who have published works on the subject, of various degrees of merit, and who are mentioned with honour among the useful philologists of that country.

But besides the numerous and valuable improvements which the German language owes to the professed writers on the subject, mentioned in the preceding paragraphs, much may be ascribed to the circulation and influence of those specimens of good writing in that language, with which the eighteenth century, and especially the latter half of it, abounded. In this list, the first in chronological order which deserve to be mentioned are the publications of BODMER, BREITINGER, GELLERT, RABENER, CRAMER, and a few others, who furnished examples of regular and polished style decidedly superior to any former models. The period in which these men wrote is represented as the first grand epocha in the progress of German prose. It was in this period that the French classic writers began to be better known in Germany, through the medium of translations, by means of which German style was enriched with many new words, idioms and graces.

The second epocha in German style is represented to be that which was formed by the authors of the *Berlinschen Litteraturbriefen*, and especially by LESSING and MOSES MENDLESHON. About this time the British classic writers began to be studied with much ardour in Germany; and many of them being translated, and considered as models by some of the most respectable authors of that country, gave rise to new and important improvements in their style. The beauties of MILTON, ADDISON, SWIFT, and POPE, began not only to be relished, but also to be copied by the German li-

terati, and were soon afterwards, in a considerable degree, transfused into their own tongue. From this period we are told that German prose became more concise, copious, and energetic, as well as more lofty and bold in its port.

The third and last epocha in the progress of German style is that formed by the writings of a number of eminent men, since the improvements of LESSING and his contemporaries. Among these, KLOPSTOCK, ZIMMERMAN, WIELAND, UNZER, HERDER,^w GARVE, ENGEL, LAVATER, and a number of others, hold a high place. These writers enriched the language in which they wrote with new words and phrases; taught new and improved modes of constructing periods; introduced ornaments of speech more simple, natural, and elegant, than those which had been commonly in use before; and infused a sprightliness and vigour into their pages which scarcely any preceding writers had attained. The German constitution has confined eloquence almost entirely to the *pulpit*. We must therefore look to the Sermons of that country for some of the best specimens of style. MOSHEIM was the first who introduced any kind of refinement and elegance of composition into the sacred desk. He was followed by SPALDING, who is said to have been the first pulpit orator in Germany, who, in a superior degree, united simplicity with elegance, energy, and pathos. ZOLLIKOFER stands in the same high rank, with the addition of a philosophical cast to the elegant and popular form of his discourses. Besides these, the names of STURM, CRAMER, SACK, LESS, SEILER, REINHARD, WURZ, BRAUN, and many others, are considerably distinguished in the annals of sacred eloquence.

^w Of all the German writers it is generally supposed that KLOPSTOCK, LESSING, WIELAND, and HERDER, discover the most profound and intimate acquaintance with their native language.

From all these sources, the German language, within the last fifty years, has drawn improvements so rich and numerous, that it is said to be one of the most copious and energetic languages in Europe. It has gained astonishingly in convenient and sonorous compounds, in elegant idioms, and graceful inversions; insomuch, that the German writer, instead of being cramped, in every step of his progress, by a narrow, confused, and unsettled jargon, as was the case at the beginning of the eighteenth century, has now a language at command, rich, various, of most accommodating pliancy, abundantly adequate to all his wants, and capable of being modified to as great a degree of perspicuity, suavity, and harmony, as almost any modern tongue.

In consequence of these improvements in the German language, it has been adopted, within a few years past, in most of the courts of the empire, instead of the French, which was formerly the court language in almost every part of Germany. Nor is its currency confined to the German empire. It has lately become one of the fashionable languages of Europe, and the acquisition of it is now considered nearly as important a part of polite education, as the acquisition of the French or English.

While the German language was undergoing this radical and important reform, other objects of a literary and scientific nature engaged the attention of the learned men of that country, and were pursued with a degree of diligence and success which does them and the age which gave them birth the highest honour. A few facts and names only, out of the multitude which occur, can be mentioned in this place.

Natural or Mechanical Philosophy was cultivated by a few distinguished Germans in the se-

venteenth century; but in the eighteenth the number of this class of philosophers astonishingly increased in every part of the empire. The names of LEIBNITZ, WOLF, KASTNER, LAMBERT, MAYER, VAN ZACH, HERSCHEL, BOZE, WINCKLER, LUDOLF, RICHTER, WOLTMAN, VON HUMBOLDT, SCHROETER, and BURCKHARDT, are only a small portion of those whose fame has filled the scientific world, as the authors of important discoveries and improvements in philosophy.

In *Natural History* the Germans made wonderful progress in the course of the last age. The amount of what they accomplished in this branch of science during the seventeenth century was comparatively small. Soon after the commencement of the eighteenth century better prospects opened, and since that time have been very honourably realized. No naturalist needs to be reminded of the invaluable service rendered to *Zoology* by Madame MERIAN, ROSEL, KLEIN, LUDWIG, FRISCH, ZIMMERMAN, BLUMENBACH, SOEMMERING, BLOCH, MULLER, LESKE, and FORSTER. Additions, not less important, or less known, have been made, within the same time, to *Botanical Science*, by KNAUT, GÆRTNER, HEDWIG, SCHREBER, JACQUIN, BREIDEL, GMELIN, WILDENOW, SPRENGEL, and many others. While *Mineralogy* has received immense improvements from the hands of HENKEL, WOLTERS DORF, VOGEL, CARTHEUSER, VOIGHT, GELLERT, RASPE, POTT, MARGRAAF, and WERNER.

At the commencement of the period under consideration still less had been done in *Chemistry*, by the German philosophers, than in either of the preceding departments of science. How great an amount of discovery and of useful experiment they have presented to the public since that time, it is unnecessary to state. The labours of STAHL, JUNKER, POTT, MARGRAAF, NEUMAN, KLAPROTH,

CRELL, MEYER, INGENHOUS, JACQUIN, and VON HUMBOLDT, are known and esteemed wherever chemical science is studied. Of distinguished writers on *Medicine*, Germany has been, though not equally, yet very honourably prolific during the period under review. The claims of STAHL, HOFFMAN, VAN SWIETEN, HEISTER, STORCK, VOGEL, and MURRAY, to high honours, are generally acknowledged. And besides these, DE HAEN, MECKEL, WEITBRECHT, SAGAR, HUFELAND, REIL, ROSCHLAUB, REICH, and many others, have contributed to raise the medical character of their country.

But it is chiefly with respect to progress in *literature*, strictly so called, that the eighteenth century gave rise to such remarkable improvements in Germany. In the *Belles Lettres*, and in works of *taste*, generally, that extensive empire furnished nothing worthy of notice anterior to the age under consideration. But within this period, no other part of the literary world has been, on the whole, so abundantly productive of works of this nature.

It was observed in a former chapter, that no *Historical* work, deserving of commendation for its taste or elegance, had appeared in Germany prior to the period under review. Within the latter half of this period, the works of HABERLIN, GEBAUER, SCHMIDT, MULLER, HEINRICH, BECK, MEUSEL, GATTERER, GALLETTI, EBELING, and SCHILLER, afford very honourable monuments of German talents. Of these it is believed the manner of SCHILLER is considered as the most easy, spirited and elegant. But though the historians of that country have made great progress, within a few years past, in cultivating this species of composition, it is believed that none of them have yet reached the high grade of historical excellence for

which ROBERTSON, HUME, and GIBBON, are so generally celebrated.

The Germans exceed all the rest of the world in the number and excellence of their *Statistical* histories. The first work published under this denomination, and in a scientific form, was about the middle of the century, by Professor ACHENWALL; of Göttingen, who is considered as the father of *Statistics*. Since that time many others have made publications of a similar nature, but of superior excellence. Among these WALCH, REINHARD, BAUMAN, TOZE, REMER, MEUSEL, and SPRENGEL, are entitled to particular notice.

But there is no species of composition with respect to which a greater improvement has been made in Germany, during the last age, than in that of *Fictitious History*. The only *Romances* or *Novels* which had appeared in that country, at the beginning of the century, were wretched imitations, which attract attention at present only as monuments of bad taste. About the year 1746, GELLERT made the first attempt to introduce a different and more correct model of fictitious history. The appearance of his *Schwedische Gräfin*, published in that year, forms a new era in this department of German literature. The novels published in Germany, from 1746 to 1754, were, for the most part, translations from the English and French languages. In 1754 GESNER's pastoral romance, entitled *Daphnis*, appeared; excited much attention, and formed a second epocha in the progress of this kind of composition. A few years afterwards the *Teutchen Grandison* of MUSAUS, and the *Agathon* of WIELAND, gave another, and a still more correct turn to the German taste in novel writing. Besides these, the various works of GOETHE, SCHILLER, NICHOLAI, KLINGER, HERDER, RICHTER, and many others, deserve to be enumerated among the

most celebrated fictions of that country.* In no part of Europe, it may be safely affirmed, are so many novels continually produced as in Germany. Several hundreds annually issue from the press, and are circulated with growing zeal in every part of the empire. It must be granted, however, that some of the most popular German novels are highly mischievous in their moral tendency; and that no small number of their mercenary writers are constantly engaged in diffusing, through the medium of fictitious history, the most corrupt and poisonous principles, both in religion and morals.

No less remarkable has been the progress of the German literati in *Poetry*, within the last fifty years. The history of literature in that country presents us with no specimens of poetry to which any high degree of excellence can be ascribed, before those of HAGEDORN and HALLER, who were both born in 1708, and who are justly considered as the founders of the modern poetical school in Germany. Between 1740 and 1750, an association was formed by a set of young poets, possessed of eminent talents; many of whose compositions were published in the *Belustigungen des Verstandes und Witzes*, and in the *Neuen Beyträgen Zum Vergnügen des Verstandes und Witzes*. The most eminent members of this society were CRAMER, GELLERT, GLEIM, KLOPSTOCK and RABNER. Among these, the works of GELLERT and KLOPSTOCK had the most extensive and the most happy influence on the poetic taste of their countrymen. The *Messiah* of the latter,^y introduced a great and most useful reform both in the diction

* The author is too little acquainted with the works of these and other German novelists, to say any thing about the comparative moral tendency of their works. He only means to speak of them as celebrated in a literary view.

^y KLOPSTOCK published the first *Canto* of his *Messiah* in 1748; but it was not completed till the year 1773.

and versification of German poetry. So that the period of their association may be considered as forming a grand epocha in the history of this department of German literature.

Besides the poets already mentioned, a number of others have been long celebrated throughout Europe. Among these are GESNER and WIELAND, distinguished in *epic* poetry; KASTNER, UZ, and DUSCH, in *didactic* poetry; KLEIST, VOSS, and GOETHE, in *descriptive* poetry; SCHLEGEL, HERDER, WEISSE, and RAMLER, in *lyric*; and CANITZ and STOLBERG, in *satirical* poetry: GESNER and VOSS, in *pastoral*; and LICHTWEHR, LESSING, and others, in *fable*. Nor have the *dramatic* poets of Germany, in the last age, been inferior in genius and taste to those of any other country. CRUGER, SCHRÖDER, IFFLAND, GROSSMAN, LESSING, ENGEL, GOETHE, and KOTZEBUE, in *comedy*; and WEISSE, LESSING, LEISEWITZ, KLOPSTOCK, SCHILLER, GOETHE, BABO, and others, in *tragedy*, are well known to have raised the German drama to a very high degree of reputation, if not for moral purity, at least for spirit, force, and natural delineation of characters.

Germany has also abounded, within the last twenty years, beyond any country on earth, in miscellaneous publications on philology, criticism, education, and every branch of polite literature. It ought, further, to be mentioned, to the honour of Germany, that although *classic* literature has much declined in that country, especially since the practice of delivering lectures in Latin, and speaking that language, in many of her seminaries of learning, has been discontinued; yet this kind of knowledge has declined, probably, less in Germany than in any other part of the literary world; and the literati of that empire may be considered as, on the whole, the best classic scholars that now adorn the republic of letters. The names of

KUSTER, REISKE, ERNESTI, HEYNE, RUHNKEN, MATTHÆI, SCHNEIDER, VOSS, HEEREN, F. A. WOLF, BOTTIGER, and HEUSINGER, with a much greater number, of nearly equal eminence, would do the highest honour to any country, or any age.

Oriental literature eminently flourished in Germany during the eighteenth century. It may be questioned whether the oriental learning, and critical skill of the MICHAELISES, EICHHORN, and REISKE, were ever before equalled. To which illustrious names, it would be improper not to add those of REINECIUS, LUDOLF, HEZEL, SCHROEDER, WAHL, HIRT, TYCHSEN, PAULUS, and HASSE, who have rendered important services to the cause of eastern learning, and biblical criticism.

No country has ever produced so great a number of authors within a similar period, as Germany, in the eighteenth century; and there is no country where a taste for reading more generally prevails, especially in the Protestant provinces. Printing is carried to an excess truly wonderful. Almost every man of letters is an author. Books are multiplied to an incredible extent. Between *six and seven thousand* new works are annually published, besides smaller controversial pieces; for no one can become a graduate in their universities unless he has published at least one controversial treatise.

In Germany the authors by profession amount to about fifteen thousand! It is true, the greater part of these are chiefly occupied in translating from other languages, especially the French and English. But their translations are generally accompanied with large bodies of learned notes, which, if well executed, require all the judgment and labour of original composition. It is further to be observed, that, of their prodigious number of books, *Novels* make a considerable part. But they also make a

large annual emission of important works on the most interesting subjects in literature and science.

The book-trade of England and France is almost entirely confined to their capitals, while the other great towns have few booksellers; and even the greater part of these only act as factors or agents to those who reside in the grand centre of business. But the German empire has no capital city, which, like London or Paris, forms a kind of literary vortex, that absorbs the whole produce of the country, and out of which few books are to be found. For this reason literature is more generally diffused in Germany. The residence of many a petty prince is more fertile in literary productions, than some large cities in England or France. Hence the book-trade is more equally distributed through the country; and small towns, otherwise of little importance, are furnished with respectable and independent booksellers, each of whom, perhaps, will carry to the *Leipsic* and *Frankfort Fairs*, a dozen new works published by him, to be distributed not only in his own immediate neighbourhood, but also in every province of the empire.

The mode of disposing of books by resorting to *Fairs* for the purpose, is peculiar to Germany, and has been established in that country for many years. To these great literary marts the booksellers flock in crowds from every part of the country, with bales of books, and with complete catalogues of the works which they have to sell. Here an amount of sales, and especially of barter, is effected, which has no parallel in the world. This plan is attended with many advantages. Booksellers, by having so extensive and ready a sale, are enabled to strike off much larger impressions of good works, and to afford them at a lower price. He who wishes to procure a book in that country, instead of being condemned to a long and tedious

search for what is only sold by one bookseller, has every publication of value brought to his door with the greatest certainty and expedition. And the frequent return of these extensive scenes of sale and exchange, has a tendency to keep up the public attention to literary objects, and to give a degree of life and interest to the commerce in books, which we look for in vain in other countries.

The zeal and enterprize of German booksellers are incredible. They frequently have agents and correspondents in every literary part of Europe, who send them, with the utmost speed, all useful intelligence, and procure for them the proof-sheets of new and important works as they are printing. Whence it often happens that the originals and the German translations are offered for sale at the same time. To this it may be added, that the ready and extensive sales of books which the fairs enable them to effect, give such manifest advantages, that they can more easily afford, and are more cheerfully disposed to pay a liberal price for literary services, than the same class of men in most other countries. It is said that between three and four hundred booksellers regularly attend the literary fairs, and that their number is rapidly increasing.

In Great-Britain and Ireland there are *seven* Universities. In Germany there are *thirty-nine*;^z each of which may be considered as a grand focus from which the rays of light are thrown over the whole adjacent country, thus illuminating the empire, and bringing the means of knowledge to almost every door.

Within a few years past a taste for the acquisition of living languages has remarkably prevailed in Germany. Perhaps the inhabitants of no coun-

^z Six of these Universities were founded during the eighteenth century, viz. those of *Göttingen, Erlangen, Fulda, Bonn, Butzow, and Stutgard.*

try are so much disposed as those of the German empire to learn the languages of other nations. Besides the English and French, which have a very general currency, being read and spoken by a very large portion of their literary men, the Italian, Spanish, and Swedish are taught in many of their seminaries of learning. The great increase of this taste is one of the circumstances which pre-eminently distinguish German literature in the eighteenth century.

The interests of letters and science have seldom received very extensive or permanent governmental aid in Germany. The constitution of the empire prevents any material aid of this kind from being rendered, especially on a large scale. A few of the subordinate princes have distinguished themselves by their efforts for the advancement of knowledge; and though FREDERICK II. of Prussia, was no friend to the German language,^a yet his accession to the throne may be considered as a favourable era to German literature; because, by collecting so many foreigners, and especially Frenchmen, at his court, he excited a spirit of emulation among his native subjects; introduced much of the literature and science of other countries into his dominions; and thus indirectly promoted the general interests of knowledge in Germany.

Public Libraries were greatly enlarged and multiplied in Germany in the course of the eighteenth century. To this circumstance, and also to the great multiplication of literary and scientific *Societies*, may be ascribed no small share of that astonishing progress in literature and science by which every part of the country, and especially the nor-

^a FREDERICK II. among his numerous freaks and errors, was a great enemy to the German language. He ordered the *Transactions* of the *Royal Society of Berlin* to be published in French; by which, as many supposed, he meant to cast undeserved reproach on his native tongue, and to discourage the study and cultivation of it, though it had then become so fashionable.

thern provinces, have for some time been, and are every day becoming more distinguished.

In short, during the eighteenth century Germany has risen from pedantry and dulness to a high character, for genius and refined accomplishments in the literary world. Instead of presenting few and comparatively uninteresting publications, as was the case an hundred years ago, she has become by far the most prolific nation on earth in every species of literary production. She gives birth annually to *double* the number of publications that appear in France, and to nearly *treble* the number that are issued in Great-Britain and Ireland.^b Instead of being despised as she was at the beginning of the century for furnishing scarcely any other than *hewers of wood* and *drawers of water* to the republic of letters, she has produced, within the last fifty years, historians, poets and dramatists, whose writings evince that judgment, acuteness, imagination, elegant taste, and every qualification for fine writing, abound among her people. In fact, she has in several respects pushed her literary progress to a degree hitherto attained by no other nation, and affords a striking example of the influence of literature on national character.

But, while the progress of Germany in liberal knowledge, the industry of her authors, the enter-

^b The whole population of Germany is not supposed to exceed *thirty millions*. In the Austrian dominions the class of peasants are mostly serfs, or predial slaves, of which it is probable few are able to read. In the other provinces, especially Suabia, Westphalia, and the Upper Rhine, the number must be very great of those who, if they have been taught to read at all, never devote any part of their attention to books. Not more than *ten millions* of the thirty are of the reading age; and it is a very liberal calculation to suppose that, of these ten millions, not more than *one-tenth* are in the habit of purchasing and perusing books. Hence, allowing the number of authors by profession to be *fifteen thousand*, which is said by some to be much below the real number, it appears that, for every *sixty-six* readers, there is *one* who lives by the trade of authorship. See New-York Month. Mag. vol. ii. p. 9.

prize of her booksellers, and the growth of taste among her literati, deserve much praise, it may be questioned whether the friend of sound and useful learning can contemplate her literary aspect with unmingled pleasure. Is it not to be feared that the business of book-making is carried in that country to excess? Is it useful to fill a country with a countless number of hastily composed, and of course superficial books, on the most common subjects; thus perplexing and overwhelming the student, and imposing an unnecessary tax on the friends to literature? Above all, are not the moral and theological principles contained in too many of these works, and the practical tendency of a still larger number, such as must fill the virtuous mind with apprehension? There is such a thing as an injurious multiplication of books, even when they are all individually harmless; but where a considerable portion of them bear a corrupt character, every increase of their number will give the friend of human happiness a mixture of pain. There is no country now on earth (unless, perhaps, we must except France) in which literary enterprize is made the medium for conveying so much moral and theological poison as in Germany.

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

The annals of American literature are short and simple. The history of poetry is usually neither very various, nor very interesting. Those who are accustomed to contemplate only the ancient and extensive literary establishments of Europe, and who measure every object by European standards, must look upon all that the Western hemisphere has hitherto presented, especially until within a few years past, as trivial and unworthy of regard.

But those who recollect the origin and progress of the settlements which now form the United States, and who make an impartial estimate of what may be justly expected from a people situated as their inhabitants have been and are, will entertain a more respectful opinion of the small portion of literature which our country contains.*

The original settlers of the American States may be divided into three classes, viz. 1. Emigrants from England, who fled from persecution, and came to enjoy liberty of conscience: Of this class were the first settlers in New-England. 2. Emigrants from the same country, who were prompted chiefly by the hope of temporal emolument: Of this description were the first settlers in Virginia and the Carolinas. 3. Emigrants from Sweden and Holland, who planted themselves in New-York, and certain parts of New-Jersey and Pennsylvania. The English colony established some years afterwards in Pennsylvania by the illustrious WILLIAM PENN, as well as that in Maryland, by Lord BALTIMORE, may be considered as bearing the mixed character of settlements prompted both by religious and worldly motives.

It might have been expected that the colonists of New-England would be most early and zealous in their attention to literature. Their character,

* The Author regrets that his account of the rise and progress of American literature is so much less full and satisfactory than he once hoped to make it. With all his partiality for his native country, he is convinced that its literary history, even if completely drawn out, would not make a very honourable figure. But of the few learned men, and literary events of which we have to boast, it is mortifying that we know so little. The very names of some who, a century ago, were the most conspicuous benefactors to the interests of liberal knowledge in our country, are now almost forgotten; and with respect to the details of their acquirements and services, nothing can be learned. An attempt is made in the following pages, to collect a few of the names and facts which appeared worthy of notice. There is no doubt that more will occur to different readers equally worthy of being mentioned. The author can only say, that he has endeavoured, as impartially as he was able, to exhibit the small portion of information which came within his reach.

both for learning and piety, and the circumstances attending their establishment, were a sufficient pledge of their disposition to promote the interests of knowledge, which they well knew to be one of the most important pillars of the church as well as of the state. Accordingly, during the greater part of the seventeenth century, the literature of the American colonies was in a great measure confined to New-England. There the first *College* in America was instituted;^d there the first *printing press* was established;^e and those who are acquainted with the characters of HOOKER, DAVENPORT, STONE, WARHAM,^f COTTON, DUNSTER, ELIOT, the MATHERS, and other distinguished clergymen; and of WINTHROP, HAYNES, EATON, HOPKINS, WYLLYS, and WOLCOT, eminent civilians of Massachusetts and Connecticut, need not be informed that the number of learned men, at that period in New-England, was by no means small.

The kind of learning most in vogue among such of the clergy and laity of that country as devoted themselves to study, during the seventeenth century, was precisely that kind which was most

^d *Harvard College* was instituted in 1638, a few years after the first settlement of the colony. In the *Additional Notes* to this volume, the reader will find as particular an account of *all* the colleges in the United States, as the author could collect. He therefore forbears to enter into further details in this place.

^e The first printing press established in North-America was by Mr. SAMUEL GREEN, at Cambridge, in Massachusetts, in the year 1638. The first work printed was the *Freeman's Oath*; the next an *Almanack*, made for New-England, by Mr. PIERCE, a mariner; and then the *Psalms of David*, newly turned into *Metre*, &c. There was printing work done in South-America earlier than this. Professor BARTON, of Philadelphia, whose zeal and talents in exploring American antiquities do him the highest honour, lately showed the author a Vocabulary of one of the principal Indian languages of South-America, printed in Mexico, not long after the middle of the sixteenth century.

^f The Rev. JOHN WARHAM, who died at Windsor, in Connecticut, in 1670, is said to have been the first minister in New-England who used *Notes* in preaching.

fashionable in their native country when they left it.^g Accordingly they were generally well, and some of them profoundly, read in the Latin; Greek, and Hebrew languages, in theology, ancient history, metaphysics, and some parts of mathematical and astronomical science. There is good reason to believe that the clergy and other scholars of New-England, for near an hundred years after their first settlement, that is, till after the commencement of the eighteenth century, were more eminent for classical and theological erudition than men of the same profession at this day.^h They were, in particular, much better acquainted with the Latin and Greek writers than their descendants can now boast of being; and many of them were masters of the Hebrew language, which at present is almost entirely neglected.ⁱ

Besides the establishment of a college in Massachusetts, the inhabitants of that colony directed early and particular attention to the erection of subordinate schools in every part of the country. In 1641 the following law was enacted. "If any do not teach their children and apprentices so much

^g The University of Cambridge, in Massachusetts, was formed, as far as circumstances would admit, on the same plan with the Universities in England, and the same course of study was, in substance, pursued. The study of biblical literature and theological science was encouraged by the peculiar spirit of the times, and of the emigrants. And the direction once given was continued by the force of example and habit long afterwards.

^h This appears not only from the *Magnalia Americana*, of the celebrated COTTON MATHER, but also from the few publications made by the clergy and others of that day; from an inspection of the books found in their libraries, and from the quality of early donations in books made to Harvard and Yale Colleges.

ⁱ Many of the distinguished divines of Massachusetts and Connecticut, in the seventeenth and beginning of the eighteenth centuries, were celebrated for their knowledge of the Hebrew language. It is said that the Rev. JOHN DAVENPORT, the second clergyman of that name, and who died minister of the church at Stamford, in Connecticut, about the year 1731, carried into his pulpit a Hebrew Bible only, and made use of no other.

learning as may enable them to read perfectly the English language, to forfeit twenty shillings; and the selectmen of every town are required to know the state of the families, &c.” Not long afterwards a law was made, that when any town increased to the number of one hundred families, they should set up a grammar school, the master thereof being able to instruct youth so far as that they may be fitted for the University, under certain penalties. To these schools, after a few years, academies were added; thus forming a system of general education, which has been from time to time improved, and which in the eighteenth century became one of the distinguished honours of New-England.

It was not till towards the close of the seventeenth century that a seminary of respectable character, for general instruction in literature and science, was established in Virginia. The original settlers of that colony were, in several respects, of a very different description from their countrymen who settled in New-England. But a small portion of them could boast of any considerable acquirements or taste in literature. Actuated chiefly by the love of gain in coming to a rude and uncultivated country, they directed their principal attention to this object, and neglected most other concerns. Besides, not being so much under the influence of religious principles as their eastern brethren,^j nor feeling in so high a degree the necessity of literary institutions for the promotion of ecclesiastical as well as civil prosperity, they might naturally have been expected to be more indifferent about their establishment. And

^j The author does not mean to intimate that the first settlers in Virginia were destitute of Religion; but merely, (what he takes for granted every one will readily admit,) that Religion seems to have been a less prominent object, and to have entered less into their motives and plans in forming the settlement, than in New-England.

to crown all, being formed of members who, though chiefly from one country, were less equal in station, less homogeneous in character, and less united by common sufferings, it was not to be supposed that they would act with the same harmony and zeal, in any pursuit which had public good for its object.

Hence, during a great part of the seventeenth century, the southern colonists paid but little attention to literary institutions. Such as wished to give their sons a liberal education, and could afford the expense, sent them to Europe for this purpose, and generally to some of the universities of Great-Britain. This practice, indeed, was continued by many for a long time afterwards; and accordingly it happened that, until near the middle of the eighteenth century, by far the greater proportion of the young men of the Southern States who were liberally educated, had received their education at European seminaries. Those who could not afford to adopt this plan were obliged to content themselves either with such private tuition as they could command, or with the miserable system of instruction pursued in the few small and ill-conducted schools which had been formed.

Such was the low state of literature in Virginia when the Rev. JAMES BLAIR, who went to that colony as a missionary about the year 1685, observing the great want of seminaries for the religious and moral, as well as literary instruction of the youth; and perceiving among other evils the obstacles which this presented to the success of his missionary labours, formed the design of erecting and endowing a college at Williamsburgh. For this purpose he not only solicited benefactions from the colonists, but also made a voyage to England in 1693, to obtain the patronage of the govern-

ment, and a charter for the proposed institution.^k King WILLIAM and Queen MARY being then on the throne, the application of Mr. BLAIR was favourably received; a patent was immediately made out for erecting and endowing a seminary, under the name of "William and Mary College," agreeably to his request,^l and the plan soon went into operation. He was named in the charter as the first president, and acted in that capacity till the year 1742.^m

This college, though liberally endowed, has not flourished so much as its friends could wish. For more than seventy years after its establishment, it had rarely more than twenty students at any one time. The habit of sending young men to Europe for their education had continued so long, that many of the more wealthy persisted in it after they had a college erected among themselves. Within a few years past the number of students has consi-

^k The laudable exertions of Mr. BLAIR are mentioned with great respect by Bishop BURNET, in his *History of his Own Times*. See vol. iv. p. 174.

^l The object declared in the charter was, "to found and establish a certain place of universal study, or perpetual College, for Divinity, Philosophy, Languages, and other good Arts and Sciences." But neither Theology nor the Hebrew language appear to have been so much studied here as at Cambridge in Massachusetts.

^m The Rev. JAMES BLAIR was born and educated in Scotland, where he obtained a benefice in the Episcopal church. On account of the unsettled state of religion which then existed in that kingdom, he quitted his preferments and went into England, near the end of the reign of CHARLES II. The bishop of London, considering him as well qualified for the office, both as to talents and piety, prevailed on him to go to Virginia as a missionary, where he was highly popular and eminently useful; and in 1689 obtained the appointment of ecclesiastical Commissary for the Province. Though the charter was given for "William and Mary College," about the year 1693, and though he was named therein as the first President, yet he does not appear to have entered on the duties of this office till the year 1729, from which period until 1742, he discharged them with faithfulness. Mr. BLAIR was a learned and exemplary man, respected and useful in his various official stations, and died in a good old age, in 1743. He published four octavo volumes of discourses, under the following title: "Our Saviour's Divine Sermon on the Mount explained; and the Practice of it recommended in divers Sermons and Discourses." London, 1742. This work is spoken of with high approbation by Dr. DODDRIDGE, in his *Family Expositor*.

derably increased, and the prospects of the Institution are becoming much more favourable.

Neither in New-York, New-Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, nor Maryland, had any thing taken place, in favour of literature, worthy of notice, prior to the eighteenth century. The inhabitants of these colonies, struggling with the difficulties of new settlements; not always in a state of perfect harmony among themselves, and, of course, too frequently encumbered with other engagements, did little to advance the interests of knowledge. A few schools were established, but they were on a small scale, were but indifferently conducted, and attracted but few pupils. The more wealthy class in these middle colonies, like their southern brethren, were, at this time, in the habit of sending their sons to Europe for their education; a practice which, though it caused a small portion of the youth in the middle and southern States to be more thoroughly educated than was common in New-England, yet rendered education a much more rare attainment among the former than the latter, and, on the whole, exceedingly retarded the progress of literature in the colonies.

It is to be observed, also, that the advancement of literature in the American colonies, during the seventeenth century, was not only retarded by the general poverty of the colonists, and by the numerous difficulties with which they had to struggle while surrounded with tribes of savages, and an uncultivated desert; but also by the erroneous opinions at that time prevailing concerning the *liberty of the press*. The business of printing was laid under very inconvenient and discouraging restrictions, during a part of this period, in Massachusetts." In

ⁿ In 1662, twenty-four years after a printing press had been established at Cambridge, the General Court of Massachusetts appointed two persons

the province of New-York, for a considerable time, the introduction of a press was entirely prohibited. And it is believed similar restraints took place in some of the other colonies. The influence of such restrictions on the general progress of liberal information could not be otherwise than highly unfavourable.

At the commencement of the eighteenth century, an important seminary of learning rose in Connecticut. A number of the clergy, anxious, more particularly, that means might be adopted for supplying the churches with a succession of learned and able ministers, conceived the design of erecting a College. This was accordingly soon attempted, and with the most happy success. An act of incorporation was obtained from the General Assembly in the year 1701, and the first commencement took place in Saybrook in 1702.^o The course of instruction adopted in this College was, in general, directed towards those objects which were before mentioned as being most in vogue in New-England. Its establishment is an important era in the literary history of Connecticut. From this institution, as well as from the sister college in Cambridge, many sons have been sent, who have done honour to their *Alma Mater*, and proved benefactors to the cause of liberal knowledge.

as Supervisors of the press, and prohibited the publishing any books or papers until after they had been examined and approved by them. In 1668 the Supervisors having allowed the celebrated work of THOMAS A. KEMPIS, *De Imitatione Christi*, to be printed, the Court interposed, alleging that it "had been written by a popish minister, and contained some things less safe to be diffused among the people."

^o The most of those who graduated on this occasion in Yale College, had previously taken their master's degree at Cambridge, in Massachusetts. This accounts for a commencement taking place so soon after the erection of the college, and before students could have been carried regularly through an academic course. It must be acknowledged, however, that the American colleges early began to discover that fondness for dealing out their honours with a liberal hand, which has since so much increased, not only in our own country, but also throughout the literary world.

In 1714, the foundation of a Library was laid in this college. JEREMIAH DUMMER, Esq. of Boston, then an agent in London, presented to it more than eight hundred volumes of very valuable books, part of which were purchased by himself, and the rest obtained from his friends in London. Among the donors, on this occasion, appear the names of some of the most conspicuous literary and philosophical characters then living in Great-Britain.^p These books, together with large additions soon afterwards made by Governor YALE,^q and others, produced immediate and visible effects on the state of learning in the colony. Before their arrival there were scarcely any books in use, but such as had been imported with the first settlers, and, of course, little was known concerning the most important publications, discoveries, and improvements, which had been laid before the public in the course of the preceding century. From these books, the instructors and students of Yale College first learned the philosophy of LOCKE and of NEWTON, as well as the important improvements which had recently taken place in various departments of literature.

It was some years after the establishment of Yale College before the interests of literature began to assume a promising aspect in Pennsylvania. WILLIAM PENN, being himself a learned man, was a friend to the progress of knowledge. We therefore find, that, under his auspices, there was esta-

^p Among the names of the contributors to this collection of books for Yale College, we find those of Sir ISAAC NEWTON, Sir RICHARD BLACKMORE, Sir RICHARD STEELE, Dr. BURNET, Dr. WOODWARD, Dr. HALLEY, Dr. BENTLEY, Dr. KENNET, Dr. CALAMY, Dr. EDWARDS, the Rev. Mr. HENRY, and Mr. WHISTON, who severally presented copies of their own works. *See the account of Yale College in the Appendix to the Rev. Mr. HOLMES's Life of President STILES.*

^q THOMAS YALE, Esq. who had been Governor of Fort St. George, in India: For his repeated acts of generosity to the college the Trustees gave it his name.

blished, as early as 1689, a respectable seminary for the instruction of youth, not only in reading and writing, but also in the learned languages, and in the sciences. This seminary was more particularly in the hands of the *Friends*, and was, no doubt, useful in forming many good scholars, and in producing a considerable degree of taste for the acquisition of knowledge. The celebrated GEORGE KEITH^r was the first teacher in this academy. He continued in the office, however, but one year; and was succeeded by THOMAS MAKIN, who has been followed by a number of good instructors to the present time. But the circumstance of this institution being, in a great measure, confined to one denomination of Christians, rendered it less useful than it might have been on a more extensive and liberal foundation. Among those who were most active in promoting the interests of literature from 1689, until a few years after the commencement of the eighteenth century, we find the names of EDWARD SHIPPEN,^s ANTHONY MORRIS, JONATHAN DICKINSON, ISAAC NORRIS, NICHOLAS WALN, and JAMES LOGAN.^t The greater part of these gen-

^r GEORGE KEITH was a native of Aberdeen, in Scotland. In early life he belonged to the Episcopal church; but afterwards left that communion and became a celebrated preacher among the Friends. In 1692, having manifested a troublesome and disorderly disposition, he was disowned by them, and in a short time returned to the Episcopal church. He was a man of learning and talents; but arrogant, vain, and given to litigation.

^s EDWARD SHIPPEN was early and much distinguished in Pennsylvania. He came from England to Massachusetts to avoid persecution; but belonging to the society of Friends, he met with no better treatment in New-England than in his own country. He therefore removed to Pennsylvania soon after Mr. PENN's arrival, and became conspicuous and useful in the new colony. He was successively speaker of the House of Assembly, member of the Governor's Council, and the first Mayor of the city of Philadelphia. His descendants have continued to be persons of distinction to the present day.

^t JAMES LOGAN, mentioned in a former chapter as a distinguished botanist, was born at Lurgan, in Ireland, in the year 1674. In 1699 he came to Pennsylvania, in company with WILLIAM PENN, under whose patronage he was much employed in public affairs. He held, in succession, the several offices of provincial secretary, commissioner of property, chief justice, and, for near two years, discharged the duties of governor, as presi-

Members were among the founders of the academy above-mentioned, and all of them were, for a number of years afterwards, its zealous and diligent supporters.

About the year 1730 a spring was given to the progress of literature in Pennsylvania, and the adjacent colonies, by the exertions of some Presbyterian clergymen and others, most of whom had a short time before arrived from Europe, and who embarked with a laudable zeal in the promotion of knowledge. The first of these was the Rev. WILLIAM TENNENT, an emigrant from Ireland, who, about the year last mentioned, established at Neshaminy, in the neighbourhood of Philadelphia, an Academy, which was more particularly intended for the education of ministers for the Presbyterian church.^v This institution continued

dent of the council. He died in 1751, at Stenton, his country seat, near Germantown, where he had long enjoyed a dignified retirement, devoted to study, and much employed in corresponding with learned men in the different parts of Europe. He was well versed in both ancient and modern learning; had made considerable proficiency in oriental literature; was a master of the Greek, Latin, French and German languages, and had a very respectable degree of skill in mathematics, natural and moral philosophy, and natural history. His principal works are the following: 1. *Experimenta et Meletemata de Plantarum Generatione*, &c. printed at Leyden in 1739, and afterwards in London, by Dr. FOTHERGILL, in 1747. 2. *Canonum pro inveniendis Refractionum, tum simplicium, tum in lentibus duplicium focis, Demonstrationes Geometricæ*, &c. also printed at Leyden in 1739; and, 3. in his old age he translated CICERO's treatise de *Senectute*, with explanatory notes, which was published with a recommendatory preface by Dr. FRANKLIN, in 1744. Mr. LOGAN had, with great care and pains, collected a *Library* of more than *three thousand volumes*, which, at that time, was by far the largest in Pennsylvania, and particularly rich in works in the Latin and Greek languages, and in the most curious, excellent and rare scientific publications. This valuable collection of books, usually called the *Loganian Library*, was bequeathed by its possessor to the citizens of Philadelphia, and has been since deposited in one of the apartments belonging to the Library company of that city. PROUD's *History of Pennsylvania*, vol. i. p. 478, &c.

^v Mr. WILLIAM TENNENT had been a clergyman in the established church of Ireland before he came to America. Soon after his arrival he renounced his connection with the Episcopal church, and joined the Presbytery of Philadelphia. He was much celebrated for his accurate and profound acquaintance with the Latin and Greek classics, and taught them with great success in his academy on the Neshaminy, which was called at that time his *Log College*, from the edifice in which his instruction was

to flourish for some time, and was the means of forming a number of good scholars, and distinguished professional characters. When it began to decline, the Rev. Mr. ROAN, a learned and able divine, also of the Presbyterian church, erected another academy at Neshaminy, in the vicinity of the former. Mr. ROAN, as well as his predecessor, is entitled to grateful remembrance for his zeal and success in promoting useful knowledge.

About this time also Mr. THEOPHILUS GREW,^u from England, Mr. ANNAN, from Scotland, and Mr. STEVENSON, from Ireland, set up grammar schools in Philadelphia, in which the dead languages were taught with great skill and assiduity. Mr. GREW was the first person in Pennsylvania who undertook to teach the English language grammatically. By the aid of these teachers some of the oldest and most respectable inhabitants of Pennsylvania, now living, were initiated into the elements of English and classical knowledge.

About the year 1740 the Rev. Dr. FRANCIS ALLISON opened an academy for teaching the Latin and Greek classics and the sciences at New-London, in Chester county, Pennsylvania.^w Here he began that course of public instruction, and that

carried on being built of logs. Mr. TENNENT had four sons, GILBERT, WILLIAM, JOHN, and CHARLES, who were all distinguished and useful clergymen, and whose praise has long been in the churches.

^u THEOPHILUS GREW was probably a son or grandson of the celebrated botanist bearing the same name, who, in 1676, first suggested the *sexual doctrine* of vegetables to the Royal Society of London. The former was much distinguished as a mathematician, and was afterwards professor of mathematics in the college of Philadelphia.

^w The Rev. FRANCIS ALLISON, D. D. was born in Ireland, in the year 1705. He received an excellent classical education at an academy in the north of that kingdom, under the particular inspection of the bishop of Raphoe, and afterwards completed his studies at the university of Glasgow. He came to America in 1735, and was the pastor of a Presbyterian church in Chester county, Pennsylvania, until about the year 1753, when he was chosen rector of the academy in Philadelphia. Besides an unusually accurate and profound acquaintance with the Latin and Greek classics, he was well informed in moral philosophy, history, and general literature. He died in 1779, in the seventy-fourth year of his age.

zeal for the diffusion of general knowledge, which ended only with his life, and to which Pennsylvania owes much of that taste for solid learning, and particularly for classic literature, for which many of her eminent characters have been so laudably distinguished. Not long afterwards the Rev. SAMUEL BLAIR opened an academy at Fog's Manor, also in Chester county, on nearly the same plan of education with that which was adopted in Dr. ALLISON's seminary, but with more particular attention to the study of theology as a science. Mr. BLAIR was a man of respectable talents as well as learning,* and was eminently serviceable to that part of the country as a teacher of human knowledge, as well as a minister of the gospel. From this "School of the prophets," as it was frequently called, there issued forth many excellent pupils, who did honour to their instructor both as scholars and Christian ministers.⁷ The next institution of this kind was the academy opened a few years after Mr. BLAIR's, by the Rev. Dr. SAMUEL FINLEY,² at West-Nottingham, in Chester county* in which a number of young persons were instructed in the languages and sciences, and some in particular trained up to usefulness and honour in the Christian church.^a

* The Rev. SAMUEL BLAIR was a native of Ireland. He came to America very early in life, and was one of Mr. TENNENT's pupils, in his academy at Neshaminy. He was considered not only as one of the most learned and able, but also as one of the most venerable, pious, and excellent men of his day.

y Among the distinguished characters who received their classical and theological education at this seminary, were the Rev. SAMUEL DAVIES, afterwards president of the college of New-Jersey; the Rev. Dr. RODGERS, of New-York; the Rev. Messrs. ALEXANDER CUMMINGS, JAMES FINLEY, HUGH HENRY, and a number of other respectable clergymen.

z The Rev. Dr. FINLEY, afterwards president of the college of New-Jersey, was a native of Ireland. He came to America in early life, after having received an excellent education in his native country, and a short time after his arrival was licensed by the Presbytery of New-Brunswick. The eminence which he afterwards attained is well known.

a Some of the facts and names above stated, were received by the author from his venerable colleague, the Rev. Dr. RODGERS, and from Dr. HUGH WILLIAMSON.

* in Chester County but Cecil Co.

Before the institution of these academies, that is, anterior to the year 1730, there was very little taste for classical learning in the middle colonies of America. It is true, the number of respectable divines, physicians and lawyers, was not small, but the greater part of those who had attained to any eminence had received their education in Europe, and almost all the instructors in academies or schools were emigrants from Great-Britain or Ireland. But from this period a new era commenced. Native Americans began to discover a taste for both ancient and modern literature, and the interests of liberal knowledge began to assume a more promising aspect.

It is generally known that the clergy, in all civilized nations, are the chief promoters of the instruction of youth. Accordingly, it is a remarkable fact, that in all those parts of our country in which the clergy are most numerous, pious, and exemplary, literature is most popular; and in reviewing the literary history of the several American States, we find that useful knowledge has been most early and most generally encouraged in those parts of the country in which clergymen of good character were most early and generally settled. This remark was strikingly confirmed and exemplified in Pennsylvania and New-Jersey, at the period of which we are now speaking. The exertions made by some of the clergy of these colonies, at this period, for the promotion of literature, were unwearied and persevering, and deserve the most grateful acknowledgments. The Synod of Philadelphia embarked in this cause with great zeal. They particularly favoured the academies of Dr. ALLISON and Mr. BLAIR, before mentioned. To the former they agreed to pay a certain sum annually, that he might be enabled to render his seminary more extensive in its plan, and especially

to educate for the service of the church, such pious young men as might not be able themselves to bear the expense of an academic course.^b

But the clergy and others of the Presbyterian church, soon finding that the provision heretofore made by them for the encouragement of literature was inadequate, began to form designs of more extensive and permanent utility. In the year 1746 a plan of a college was formed by a few distinguished clergymen of this denomination, in the States of New-York and New-Jersey,^c aided by some gentlemen of literary character and liberal views, of the same religious communion.^d The

^b When Dr. ALLISON, after a few years, removed to Philadelphia, and was appointed Vice-Provost of the College erected there, his Academy at *New-London* was transferred to *New-Ark*, a pleasant village in the State of Delaware, where it was put under the care of the Rev. Mr. M'DOWELL, a respectable Presbyterian clergyman, who had received his education at the university of Edinburgh. This institution continued for a number of years under the patronage of the Presbyterian Church; and was the means of forming a number of excellent scholars, not only for the gospel ministry, but also for the other learned professions.

^c Among these were, 1. The Rev. JONATHAN DICKINSON, a native of Connecticut, and an alumnus of Yale College; a man of learning, of distinguished talents, and much celebrated as a preacher. He was for some years minister of the Presbyterian Church at Elizabeth-Town, in New-Jersey. 2. The Rev. AARON BURR, also a native of Connecticut, and a graduate of Yale College, who was called, in 1742, to take charge of the Presbyterian church at New-Ark, in New-Jersey, and who was so eminent as an able and learned divine, and an accomplished scholar, that he was afterwards unanimously elected President of the college which he was instrumental in founding. He was the father of AARON BURR, Esq. the present Vice-President of the United States. 3. The Rev. EBENEZER PEMBERTON, a native of Massachusetts, and a son of Harvard College, a man of respectable abilities and information. He was, at this time, pastor of the Presbyterian church in the city of New-York, from which he removed to Boston, and died many years afterwards, minister of the Old South church in that town.

^d The most distinguished of the lay gentlemen who aided in the erection of this college, by their councils, property and influence, were the three following: 1. WILLIAM SMITH, Esquire, a native of England, who came to America about the year 1715, and received a liberal education in Yale college. He was bred a lawyer; attained great eminence at the bar, both for erudition and eloquence, and was afterwards one of the Judges of the supreme court of the province. 2. PETER VAN BRUGH LIVINGSTON, Esquire, a native of New-York, and descended from one of the oldest and most respectable families, who migrated thither from Great-Britain. He also received his education at Yale Col-

charter was obtained, and the college commenced its operation in Elizabeth-Town, New-Jersey, in the year above-mentioned, under the Presidency of the Rev. JONATHAN DICKINSON, who was then pastor of the Presbyterian Church in that town. Mr. DICKINSON dying the next year, the College was removed to New-Ark, in the same Province, and the Rev. Mr. BURR^d elected to the office of President; from which place it was finally removed in 1757, to Princeton, which had been agreed upon as its permanent situation.^e The circumstances attending the establishment of this College; the zeal for the promotion of literature, which was indicated by its erection, and which it served afterwards greatly to increase; and the many distinguished characters which it has contributed to form, render it, beyond all doubt, one of the most conspicuous institutions in our country, and one of those whose history and influence are most worthy of being traced.

While these measures for the advancement of literature were proceeding thus favourably, BENJAMIN FRANKLIN^f appeared in Pennsylvania, and

lege; and was long distinguished as a judicious, well informed, and public-spirited man. 3. WILLIAM PEARTREE SMITH, Esquire, also a native of New-York, a man of considerable talents and reading. It is believed he was an alumnus of the same college with the preceding. At the period of which we are speaking he resided in New-York, but afterwards removed to New-Jersey, where, after sustaining a number of public honours, he died a few years ago. Besides these, some other laymen might be mentioned who were animated with a literary spirit, and embarked with zeal in the same cause: but our limits forbid more minute details.

^e It ought not to pass unnoticed, that the middle colonies were much indebted for their progress in literature, at this time, to New-England. The first three presidents of New-Jersey college were born and educated in that country, as were also a considerable number of the other active and enlightened promoters of learning then residing in New-York, New-Jersey, and Pennsylvania.

^f BENJAMIN FRANKLIN was born in Boston, in the year 1706. He first came to Philadelphia in the autumn of 1723, in the character of a journeyman printer; established himself there in this business on his own account in 1729, and soon began to print a newspaper. In 1732 he commenced the publication of *Poor Richard's Almanack*; and from this time till about the year 1752, when he made his grand discoveries in Electricity,

began to distinguish himself by his exertions for promoting useful knowledge. The original genius of this celebrated man; his sound practical understanding; his scientific discoveries; and his zeal and unwearied assiduity in forwarding every pursuit which had for its object the progress of literature, are well known, and have been applauded not only by his countrymen, but also by the learned of all nations.^g North-America in general, and in particular Pennsylvania, owes a large debt of gratitude to this man. He had great influence in awakening and directing the attention of those around him to literature, science, and useful arts of every kind. He was one of the first native Americans who succeeded in cultivating an easy, unaffected and polished style of writing.^h He

was gradually rising in reputation and usefulness. His political character and activity, besides being irrelative to the present subject, are too well known to render any attempt to detail them in this place either necessary or proper.

^g A late writer in the *Monthly Magazine* of London (see the *Supplement* to vol. xiv), among other severe remarks on the state of American literature, affects to speak with great contempt of the character and writings of Dr. FRANKLIN. An essay which discovers so much ignorance, weakness, and inconsistency would not be noticed in this place, did it not afford an opportunity of doing justice to a man to whom our country owes much. That the character and opinions of Dr. FRANKLIN were, in all respects, faultless, is by no means contended. This was far from being the case. But that he had an original genius, a strong mind, and much practical wisdom; that he made many valuable contributions to science and the arts; and that his writings have been much read, translated into various languages, and quoted with respect by the learned of foreign countries, can be questioned by no one who is not as ignorant as he is prejudiced.

^h The anonymous writer above mentioned, after bestowing a number of severe epithets on the American style of writing, some of which are not altogether unmerited, represents our writers as having generally formed their manner after that of Dr. FRANKLIN. It is scarcely possible to conceive of a remark more unfounded, or that discovers a more entire unacquaintance with the subject which he undertakes to discuss. It is generally known to well informed persons, that FRANKLIN, as he tells us himself in his account of his own life, took the style of Mr. ADDISON for his model; and though he was far from attaining a style equal to that of the illustrious British essayist, yet he certainly wrote with an ease, simplicity, sprightliness, purity, and perspicuity, highly respectable, and very different from the affectation, the bombast, and the perpetual use of unauthorized terms and phrases, which characterize too many American writers in later times, and from which some popular writers of Great-Britain are by no means exempted.

was the projector and founder of some of the most useful literary institutions which our country can boast; and may justly be considered as having given an impulse to the public mind, in favour of liberal knowledge, which forms a distinguished era in the history of our country.

Hitherto scarcely any native American had attracted attention among the learned of Europe, or by his writings or discoveries turned their eyes to this new world. The first persons who attained this honour, in any considerable degree, were the Rev. Mr. JONATHAN EDWARDS,ⁱ the celebrated theological and metaphysical writer, and Dr. BENJAMIN FRANKLIN. Though the genius, talents, and general character of no two persons could be more different; yet each in his way gained high and extensive celebrity, and for the first time convinced the literati of foreign countries, that America had given birth to philosophers who were capable of instructing them.

The arrival in America of the Rev. Mr. GEORGE

ⁱ The Rev. JONATHAN EDWARDS was born at Windsor, in Connecticut, October 5, 1703. He received his education at Yale college, where he graduated bachelor of arts in 1720. He early began to preach, and the Presbyterian church of New-York, then in its infancy, had the honour of enjoying his ministrations for eight months, in the year 1723. He afterwards became the pastor of a congregational church in Northampton, in Massachusetts; and in 1757 was chosen president of the college of New Jersey, in which office he continued till his death, which took place March 22, 1758, in the fifty-fifth year of his age. This illustrious man was very respectably learned in the Latin, Greek and Hebrew languages, and also in the mathematics, and natural philosophy; but in theological, moral and metaphysical science, he discovered an acuteness, vigour, and comprehensiveness of mind, which decidedly place him in the very first rank of great men belonging to the age in which he lived. He read Locke's *Essay on Human Understanding* at thirteen years of age, and declared, to an intimate friend a short time before his death, that, at that early age "he was as much engaged, and had more pleasure in studying this work, than the most greedy miser could have in gathering up handfuls of silver or gold from a newly discovered mine." The fruits of this early initiation into metaphysical science were afterwards laid before the public in his *Inquiry into the Freedom of the Will*, &c. a work which has been pronounced "one of the greatest efforts of the human mind," which was received with high approbation in Europe; and which has been, ever since its publication, quoted as a great standard work on the subject of which it treats.

BERKELEY, then dean of Derry, afterwards bishop of Cloyne, deserves to be noticed in the literary history of America, not only as a remarkable event, but also as one which had some influence on the progress of literature, particularly in Rhode-Island and Connecticut. This great man, in 1729, nineteen years after the publication of the celebrated work in which he denied the existence of the material world, came to America with a particular view to the establishment of an Episcopal college, to aid in the missionary cause.^j He landed at Newport, in Rhode-Island, and purchased a country seat and farm in the neighbourhood of that town, where he resided about two years and an half. And though various circumstances discouraged him from prosecuting his original design, and induced him to return to Europe without effecting it; yet his visit was by no means without its utility. The presence and conversation of a

^j Dr. BERKELEY was born in Ireland in the year 1684, and received his education at Trinity college, Dublin. About the year 1724, he was made dean of Derry; and in 1725, published a plan, which he pursued with great zeal, of establishing a College in one of the Bermudas, or Summer Islands, the principal objects of which were, the obtaining a better supply of missionaries for the colonies, and the conversion of the American Indians to Christianity. The plan was favourably received not only by his friends, but also by the government. He obtained a charter for the proposed college, in which he was named as the first President; and also a parliamentary grant of £.20,000 sterling for its support. In the month of February, in the year 1729, he came to America for the purpose of putting his plan into execution, and brought with him his lady, whom he had married but a few months before. Soon after his arrival he became convinced that the plan of establishing the proposed College in the Bermuda isles was by no means an eligible one; he therefore wrote to his friends in England, requesting them to obtain an alteration in the charter, fixing the institution on some part of the American continent (which would probably have been New-York), and soliciting the immediate payment of the sum which had been granted for its establishment. Finding, however, after a delay of two years and an half, that there was no probability of the money being paid, and considering his plan as impracticable, he embarked at Boston, in September, 1731, and returned to England. In 1733 he was promoted to the Bishoprick of Cloyne, and in January, 1753, he died in the city of Oxford, universally respected and lamented. While he resided at Rhode-Island, he composed his *Alciphron*, or *Minute Philosopher*.

man so illustrious for talents, learning, virtue, and social attractions, could not fail of giving a spring to the literary diligence and ambition of many who enjoyed his acquaintance. He visited the various literary institutions which came within his reach, and wrote and spoke in their favour, as opportunities were afforded, and their exigencies required. He exercised particular munificence to Yale College, to which his attention was directed by one of the trustees of the institution with whom he was acquainted, and also by the Rev. Mr. WILLIAMS, then President of the College, with whom he corresponded. Soon after his return to Europe he sent, as a gift to this College, a deed of the farm which he held in Rhode-Island, which he directed to be appropriated to the maintenance of the three best classical scholars who should reside at College at least nine months in a year, in each of the three years, between their first and second degrees;^k and all surplussages of money, arising from accidental vacancies, to be distributed in Greek and Latin books, to such under-graduate students as should make the best composition, or declamation in the Latin tongue, upon such a moral theme as should be given them. This donation is still held by the College, and the distribution of the *Dean's Bounty* is annually and faithfully performed, agreeably to the directions of the donor. While at Newport, the Dean also presented a copy of his own works to the College Library; and after his return to Europe, partly out of his own estate, but principally with monies which

^k The Dean directed, that on the sixth of May annually, or, in case that should be Sunday, on the seventh, the candidates for this bounty should be publicly examined by the President of the College, and the senior Episcopal Missionary within the colony who should then be present, and in case none should be present, then by the President only: And in case the President and senior Missionary should not agree in deciding on the best scholars, that then the case should be decided by lot.

he procured for the purpose, by donation in England, he made an additional present of nearly one thousand volumes to the same Library.^l

In 1748 a public Library was established at Newport, in Rhode-Island, by ABRAHAM REDWOOD, Esq. an opulent gentleman, who wished to encourage literature. It was founded for the use of all denominations of christians indiscriminately; a company was afterwards incorporated by the legislature, for the purpose of holding and superintending it; and large additions were made to it by donations from Europe and elsewhere. This Library afforded to the inhabitants of Rhode-Island means of literary improvement which they had never before enjoyed; and no doubt contributed something to the extension of a taste for letters and science in that colony."^m

The influence of Dr. FRANKLIN's literary zeal and industry soon began to display itself in Pennsylvania. In 1742, an Association, which had been formed at his instance, and by his unwearied exertions some time before, was incorporated, by the name of "The Library Company of Philadelphia." This institution was greatly encouraged by the friends of literature in America and in Great-Britain. Valuable contributions were made to it, not only by FRANKLIN, and his literary friends and countrymen, but also by his correspondent, Mr. COLLINSON, by THOMAS and RICHARD PENN, and others. From that period to the present it has been continually growing; and now, in conjunc-

^l The attention and munificence of the Dean to Yale College, when considered in all its circumstances, reflects much honour on his disinterestedness and liberality. When it is considered that he was warmly attached to the Episcopal Church, and that he came to America for the express purpose of founding an Episcopal College; his catholicism, in patronizing an institution, under the exclusive direction of a different denomination, will appear worthy of high praise.

^m This Library, which bore the name of its founder, was, in a great measure, destroyed during the Revolutionary war.

tion with the *Loganian* Library, forms the largest and best collection of books in the United States."

In 1749 Dr. FRANKLIN drew up the plan of an Academy, to be erected in the city of Philadelphia, which was adopted and liberally encouraged; and the seminary was established in the beginning of the following year. In 1753, through the interposition of his learned and philosophic friend, Mr. COLLINSON,^o of London, a Charter was obtained for this Academy, from the proprietors of the Province, accompanied with a liberal donation towards its funds. In 1755 an additional Charter was granted, extending the plan of the institution, and forming it into a College.^p The first Provost was the Rev. Dr. WILLIAM SMITH,^q whose popu-

ⁿ The *City Library* of Philadelphia contains, at present, between eleven and twelve thousand volumes—say eleven thousand five hundred. The *Loganian* Library consists of about three thousand five hundred, making in the whole a collection of fifteen thousand volumes.

^o PETER COLLINSON, F.R.S. was a native of Westmoreland, in England, and resided the greater part of his life in the city of London. He was much distinguished by his fondness for natural history, and also by his desire and exertions to promote literature and science in the American colonies. He long maintained a friendly correspondence with Lieutenant-Governor COLDEN, of New-York, and with Dr. FRANKLIN, as well as with other American gentlemen. He died in 1768.

^p In the establishment of this seminary on its original plan, and in finally erecting it into a College, Dr. FRANKLIN is said to have been chiefly aided by the counsels and exertions of Chief Justice ALLEN, who was much distinguished as a friend to literature; by THOMAS HOPKINSON, Esq. one of the Governor's Council; by the Rev. RICHARD PETERS, Secretary of the Province; by TENCH FRANCIS, Esquire, Attorney-General; and by Dr. PHINEAS BOND, an eminent physician; all residing in Philadelphia.

^q The Rev. Dr. WILLIAM SMITH was a native of Scotland, and received his education at the University of Aberdeen, where he graduated in March, 1747. The three following years he spent in teaching in one of the parochial schools of that country; and in 1750 was sent up to London, in pursuance of some plan for the better endowment of said schools. In London he was induced to relinquish the employment in which he was engaged, and to embark for America, where he soon afterwards arrived. Here he was employed upwards of two years as a private tutor in the family of Governor MARTIN, on Long-Island, in the province of New-York. In this situation he was invited to take charge of the College in Philadelphia, to which he consented; and, after revisiting England, and receiving regular ordination in the Episcopal Church, (which took place in December, 1753), he returned to America; and in

lar talents, and taste in polite literature, contributed greatly to raise the character of the College. He was principally assisted by the Rev. Dr. FRANCIS ALLISON, who had been called from his Academy, before mentioned, to the office of Vice-Provost in this seminary; and who; perhaps, still more eminently contributed to its reputation for solid learning and useful knowledge.

The effects of this establishment in awakening the attention of the public to the interests of learning, and in exciting a taste for literature in Pennsylvania, were soon visible. The first Commencement took place in a short time after the second Charter was obtained, when the honours of the institution were conferred on six young gentlemen, the most of whom became afterwards both conspicuous and useful literary characters, and were honourable pledges of the benign effects which this College was destined to produce on the literature and science; not only of Pennsylvania, but also of the neighbouring States.

It has already been mentioned, that Dr. FRANKLIN's exertions were eminently useful in promoting the cause of liberal knowledge in Pennsylvania. His experiments on *Electricity* were peculiarly fitted to awaken and stimulate the public mind, and were actually found to produce this effect, in a very remarkable degree, both in Europe

the month of May, 1754, was placed at the head of this infant Seminary. The talents of this gentleman, and his history, from the time of his induction into the office of Provost, until his death, in the month of May, 1803, are generally known. He gave important aid in the formation and establishment of another College in the State of Maryland; and certainly rendered important service to the literary interests of America. It is expected that his *Works*, in several volumes, will soon be laid before the public.

These were, JACOB DUCHE, SAMUEL MAGAW, JAMES LATTA, HUGH WILLIAMSON, FRANCIS HOPKINSON, and ——— HALL. The first three became eminent Clergymen; and two of the others have been long celebrated, in America, for their literary distinction, and their useful services in civil life.

and America. He was soon joined by Mr. THOMAS HOPKINSON, the Rev. EBENEZER KINNERSLEY, Mr. PHILIP SYNG, and others, who also became distinguished by their experiments on the same branch of philosophy. Mr. KINNERSLEY was afterwards appointed a Professor in the College of Philadelphia, and was one of the active promoters of useful knowledge of his day.^s

In the province of New-York the interests of literature had been more than commonly neglected before the middle of the eighteenth century. Few of the first settlers had any literary taste or acquirements; and though now and then an individual came to the province from Europe, who was learned, and disposed to cultivate letters,^t yet the number of these was so small, and the great body of the inhabitants so little willing to second any endeavours which they might make for the advancement of knowledge, that every thing relating to education was in a most deplorable state. Some of the more wealthy inhabitants sent their sons to Holland, or to Great-Britain, to be educated, while a few others, to whom this would have been inconvenient, placed their children in Yale College. From these sources almost all the natives of New-York who, prior to the middle of the eighteenth

^s Mr. KINNERSLEY was bred a Baptist, and was for some time a preacher of that denomination; but afterwards, taking some offence, he left the Baptist communion, laid aside his clerical character, and joined the Episcopal Church.

^t Governor STUYVESANT appears to have been a man of respectable attainments in literature. Out of the small number of Clergymen who came to the province in early times, a few had made considerable acquirements in letters. The ancestors of the RENSSALAER, the BAYARD, the LIVINGSTON, and the MORRIS families, and a few others, who first came to the Colony, had also been liberally educated. Two or three of the Governors, who were sent at different times, were fond of literature, and made some exertions to promote it. Of this character, especially, was Governor BURNET. To these might be added some other names did our limits allow of more minute details. But the influence of these could not be great, when the mass of the people were regardless of every literary object.

century, enjoyed the advantages of a liberal education, had received the elements of knowledge.

In the year 1729 a small Library was sent over to the city of New-York, by the "Society for propagating the Gospel in foreign parts," for the use of the Clergy, and other gentlemen of this and the neighbouring governments of Connecticut, New-Jersey, and Pennsylvania. This was the first public Library that was introduced into the Province; and it doubtless contributed, in some degree, to awaken and extend a taste for reading.

In 1754 a Society was established in the city of New-York, for the purpose of forming a public Library on a larger scale, and upon a more liberal plan. This association soon received the countenance of the public, and immediately began to collect books. The Library, thus begun, has continued to grow to the present time, and now holds the *third* place among the public Libraries of the United States.^v This establishment furnished the first opportunity enjoyed by the citizens of New-York, in general, of obtaining access to a large collection of books.

About this time some of the inhabitants of New-York, the greater part, if not all, belonging to the Episcopal Church, began to form the design of establishing a seminary of learning on a more extensive plan than any which had hitherto been known in the province. Animated by the exertions made to found a College at Philadelphia, they undertook to erect a similar institution in their own city. At the head of the association formed for this purpose was Mr. JAMES

^v The Philadelphia Library, including the *Loganian*, contains about fifteen thousand volumes; the Library belonging to Harvard College, about thirteen thousand; and the Library of New-York, about seven thousand.

DE LANCEY,^u Lieutenant-Governor of the province, who, besides the aid of the Rev. Dr. BARCLAY,^w and other literary gentlemen of New-York, was also assisted by the counsels and co-operation of the Rev. Dr. JOHNSON,^x of Connecticut, and the Rev. Dr. CHANDLER,^y of New-Jersey. In the be-

^u Mr. JAMES DE LANCEY was a native of New-York. His father, Mr. STEPHEN DE LANCEY, came from Normandy, in France, among the Protestants who fled from persecution in that country. The son was sent to England for his education, where, about the year 1725, he entered the University of Cambridge. Here he had the honour of having for his tutor Dr. HERRING, afterwards Archbishop of Canterbury. Soon after his return home, in 1729, he was appointed a member of the Governor's Council; afterwards filled the office of Chief Justice; became Lieutenant-Governor in 1753; and had long an extensive and commanding influence in the province. He died about the year 1760.

^w The Rev. Dr. HENRY BARCLAY was a native of Albany, and received a liberal education at Yale College, where he graduated in the year 1734. Soon after leaving College he went to Great-Britain, where he received orders in the Episcopal Church, and was appointed Missionary to the Mohawk Indians. Having served in this capacity for some years, he was called to the city of New-York, and appointed Rector of Trinity Church. In this respectable situation he continued till his death, which took place in 1765.

^x The Rev. Dr. SAMUEL JOHNSON was born at Guilford, in Connecticut, October 14, 1696. He was educated at Yale College, where he took his first degree, in the year 1714. In 1720 he was ordained, by a council of Congregational Ministers, and installed pastor of a church at West-Haven, in Connecticut. After remaining in this situation a little more than two years, he altered his views concerning the doctrine, worship, and government of the church with which he was connected, and went to England, where he took orders in the Episcopal Church, in the month of March, 1723. From this time till the year 1754, Dr. JOHNSON resided at Stratford, in Connecticut, where he had the pastoral care of an Episcopal Church. In the last mentioned year he removed to New-York, and entered on the duties of his office as President of *King's College*. In this station he continued till February, 1763, when he resigned, returned to Stratford, and there again exercised his ministry till his death, which happened in January, 1772. Dr. JOHNSON was a man of distinguished talents and learning. He was intimately acquainted with Dean BERKELEY, during his residence in Rhode-Island; long maintained a friendly correspondence with him; and became a convert to the peculiar metaphysical opinions of that great man. Besides other smaller works, he published a Compendium of *Logic*, and another of *Ethics*, which were printed together in an octavo volume, in 1752, by Dr. FRANKLIN, then residing in Philadelphia. He also published a *Hebrew Grammar*, in 1767, which evinced an accurate acquaintance with that language. For this account of Dr. JOHNSON, as well as for some other facts and names in the history of American literature, the Author is indebted to a manuscript *Life of Dr. JOHNSON*, drawn up by the Rev. Dr. CHANDLER, mentioned in the following note.

^y The Rev. Dr. THOMAS BRADBURY CHANDLER was a native of

ginning of the year 1753, an Act of Assembly was passed for the establishment of the College, and making some provision, by a succession of lotteries, for its support. In October, 1754, a regular Charter of incorporation was obtained, and the Rev. Dr. JOHNSON named therein as the first President. He entered on the duties of his office in the month of July the same year, and held the first Commencement in June, 1758, when eight young gentlemen, alumni of the College, were admitted to its honours.^z

The Corporation of Trinity Church, in the city of New-York, early countenanced this College, and made a valuable donation to its funds. The institution also received important aid from the Honourable JOSEPH MURRAY,^a one of his Majesty's Council, and Attorney-General for the Province. He was a great friend to literature, and left the whole of his estate, consisting of books, lands, and other property, to the College. The names of some other benefactors, but less conspicuous than these, are to be found on the records of the institution.

From this period we may date the rise of a literary spirit in the province of New-York. It is true, this spirit was possessed, for a long time afterwards, by comparatively few individuals, and

Connecticut, and received his education in Yale College, where he graduated *Master of Arts* in the year 1745. He soon afterwards went to England, and took orders in the Episcopal Church, and settled in the ministry, at Elizabeth-Town, New-Jersey, where he long maintained a high character, both for talents and erudition. He was honoured with the degree of *Doctor of Divinity* by the University of Oxford. His respectable and useful life terminated in the year 1790.

^z The names of these young gentlemen are, SAMUEL VERPLANCK, RUDOLPHUS RITZEMA, PHILIP VAN CORTLANDT, SAMUEL PROVOOST, JOSHUA BLOOMER, JOSEPH REED, JOSIAH OGDEN, and ISAAC OGDEN.

^a JOSEPH MURRAY, Esq. was a native, it is believed, of Great-Britain, and received his education there. The value of the estate which he left to the College amounted to about ten thousand pounds New-York currency, or twenty-five thousand dollars.

produced effects by no means so general or important as the friends of knowledge could wish: but from this time the advantages of liberal education were more frequently enjoyed in the province, and some of those who were destined afterwards to fill the most conspicuous stations began to receive, at home, that instruction which before could only be received in other colonies, or in European seminaries.

The interests of literature were, at this time, going on prosperously in Massachusetts. A few years before, Mr. THOMAS HOLLIS,^b of London, an active friend to literature, as well as to civil and religious liberty, had made several valuable donations to the University of Cambridge. He was followed in this munificence by his nephew, of the same benevolent disposition. To these generous benefactors that institution owes much. They established two Professorships, one of Theology, the other of Mathematics and Natural Philosophy; they presented many valuable books to the University Library;^c and made other donations of considerable value. One of the College buildings, erected in 1762, was called, in memory of these benefactors, HOLLIS-HALL.

While the HOLLIS family exercised this generosity towards the institution, benefactors were not wanting in our own country, to imitate their laudable munificence. THOMAS HANCOCK,^d Esq. of Bos-

^b Different members of the HOLLIS family continued their liberal donations to this College, at different times, from an early period of the century till the commencement of the revolutionary war.

^c The Library of Harvard College took its rise soon after that Institution was founded. In 1764 it consisted of about five thousand volumes. In the winter of that year, the greater part of this Library was destroyed by fire, with one of the College buildings. Since that time it has been gradually growing, and now consists of about thirteen thousand volumes. The chief contributors to this Library were the HOLLIS family, THOMAS HANCOCK, Esq. Governor BOWDOIN, Dr. FRANKLIN, and several others.

^d THOMAS HANCOCK, Esq. was uncle to the Honourable JOHN HANCOCK, President of Congress, and afterwards Governor of Massachusetts. The nephew, as well as the uncle, was also a benefactor to the College.

ton, founded a Professorship of Oriental Languages, and contributed generously to the enlargement of the Library. NOCHOLAS BOYLSTONE, and EDWARD HOPKINS, Esquires, also deserve to be respectively mentioned as among the benefactors of this important seminary, and as enlightened friends to literature and science.

In the former half of the eighteenth century, by far the greater portion of the book-printing done in the American Colonies was executed in Boston. No where did so many original American publications issue from the press; and no where was so much enterprize manifested in republishing European works. These works, it is true, were chiefly on theological subjects, and comparatively few of a literary or scientific nature were circulated among the people, by means of American presses; but still the books which were edited, had a tendency to enlarge the public mind, and to render a taste for reading more general.

In Connecticut, at this time, literature and science were, on the whole, gaining ground. The appointment of the Rev. Dr. CUTLER,^e as President of Yale College, was an auspicious event to that institution. He was a man of profound and

^e The Rev. Dr. TIMOTHY CUTLER received his education at Harvard College, where he graduated in 1701. In 1710 he was ordained and installed minister of a Church in Stratford, according to the Constitution of the Churches in Connecticut. In 1719 he was chosen President of Yale College, and entered on the duties of the office the same year. In 1722 he relinquished the communion of the Congregational Church, and soon afterwards went to England, and received orders in the Episcopal Church. He received the degree of *Doctor in Divinity* from both the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge. He became Rector of Christ Church, in Boston, in the year 1723, where he died in 1765. He is represented to have been a man of strong natural powers, and of extensive learning. He was well acquainted with classic literature, and was one of the best Oriental scholars ever educated in America. The Rev. Dr. STILES says, "he had more knowledge of the Arabic than any man in New-England before him, except President CHAUNCEY, and his disciple, the first Mr. THATCHER." Dr. CUTLER was also well skilled in Logic, Metaphysics, Moral Philosophy, Theology, and Ecclesiastical History.

general learning in the various branches of knowledge cultivated in his day, particularly in Oriental Literature, and presided over the séminary which he was called to superintend, with dignity, usefulness, and general approbation. He was succeeded by the Rev. ELISHA WILLIAMS,^f who was inaugurated in the year 1726. Under his administration also, the College flourished, especially in the study of Classic Literature, Logic, Metaphysics, and Moral Philosophy. The successor of President WILLIAMS was still more illustrious. This was the Rev. THOMAS CLAP,^g who was chosen President in 1739, and formally inducted into office the next year. He appears to have been one of the most profound and accurate scholars ever bred in Connecticut; and during the course of his Presidency, which continued till 1767, he succeeded in producing a greater attention than had been before paid to the abstruse sciences, particularly to Mathematics, Astronomy, and the various branches of Natural Philosophy. This period, indeed, may be considered as forming an era in the literary history of Connecticut.

Passing on to Virginia, a few facts and names appear there about this time which are worthy of

^f Mr. WILLIAMS was a good classical scholar, and well versed in Logic, Metaphysics, and Ethics. The Rev. Dr. DODDRIDGE, who was acquainted with him in England, gave him this comprehensive character. "I look upon Mr. WILLIAMS to be one of the most valuable men upon earth. He has joined to an ardent sense of religion, solid learning, consummate prudence, great candour, and a certain nobleness of soul, capable of contriving and acting the greatest things, without seeming to be conscious of his having done them."

^g The Rev. THOMAS CLAP was born at Scituate, in Massachusetts, in 1703; graduated at Harvard College in 1722; settled in the ministry, at Windham, in Connecticut, in 1726; became President of Yale College in 1739; and died in 1767. He was respectably learned in the Greek, Latin, and Hebrew languages; but in the higher branches of Mathematics, in Astronomy, and in the various departments of Natural Philosophy, he had probably no equal at that time in America, excepting Professor WINTHROP, of Cambridge. He appears also to have been extensively and profoundly read in History, Theology, Moral Philosophy, Canon and Civil Law, and, indeed, in most of the objects of study attended to at that time.

notice.^b The first *printer* introduced in that Colony, was about the year 1726, when WILLIAM PARKS settled there in that capacity. The first work of any consequence printed in the Colony, was the body of *Laws*, in folio, in 1733, by the person above-mentioned. The foundation of a Library in William and Mary College was early laid. This was augmented from time to time, by various means, particularly by private donations, from several friends of literature, until it became a very respectable collection. The additions to it within a few years past have been few and small; hence it abounds more in ancient than modern works.

Nor was Virginia, by any means, even at this early period, without instances of honourable literary enterprize. The *Histories* of the Colony, published respectively by SMITH and BEVERLEY, are generally known. The former was a respectable Clergyman, and President of the College; and though he did not write elegantly, he was a faithful and judicious historian. The latter wrote with less prolixity and tediousness, but, at the same time, with a less satisfactory fulness of information. Several other instances of literary exertion, made at this period in Virginia, might be mentioned, did our limits admit of going into further particulars.

Among the promoters of literature in Virginia, at this time, it will be proper to mention Colonel BYRD, a native of that Colony, who had been liberally educated in Great-Britain, and possessed a very ample estate. Few private persons in America ever collected so large or so valuable a Library

^b Some of the names and facts mentioned in this section, relating to the progress of letters and science in Virginia, were communicated to the author, in a letter from Bishop MADISON, of Williamsburgh. The services rendered to the cause of liberal knowledge in America, and particularly in his own State, by this enlightened Philosopher and Divine, are well known.

as he left. He was a very ardent friend to the diffusion of knowledge, and freely opened his Library for the use of all who sought information. Colonel BYRD died about the middle of the century. He made a few small publications, but they were not of a nature to command much of the public attention at this time.

In North-Carolina and Georgia nothing worthy of notice was done for the promotion of literature, until the latter half of the eighteenth century. In those provinces there was not, until this period, a single seminary of learning worthy of the name; no native citizen had been at all distinguished for his attainments in knowledge. Of the few clergymen then residing in those provinces, the greater part were both illiterate and dissipated; and almost all those of the learned professions, who were tolerably well informed, were either foreigners, or had received their education abroad.

The literary situation of South-Carolina, in the former part of the century under review, was much more respectable.ⁱ At the commencement of this period, all the literary characters in that province were Europeans. The Clergy were few, and not more than one of them had been born in the province. The Physicians were also Europeans, and chiefly persons who had connections with the British army or navy. The same may be affirmed of the Lawyers; these all resided in Charleston, and were from Great-Britain or Ireland. In 1700 a provincial library was established in Charleston, by the munificence of the Lords Proprietors, and of the Rev. Dr. THOMAS BRAY. This introduced a taste for reading among a por-

ⁱ For the greater part of what is here stated respecting South-Carolina, the author is indebted to Dr. DAVID RAMSAY, of Charleston, who, on application, favoured him with a full and instructive communication on the subject.

tion of the inhabitants. In 1712 a Free School was established in that city, for "instructing the youth of the province in Grammar, and other arts and sciences, and useful learning, and also in the Christian Religion."^j In this seminary the Greek and Latin languages were taught, by a succession of able instructors, and some good classical scholars were formed. Besides the free school, several private Academies were also formed a few years afterwards, and had a useful influence. All the teachers in these seminaries were, for a considerable time after their establishment, either from Europe or from the Northern Colonies. The first *printer* appears to have settled in Charleston between the years 1720 and 1730. The first *newspaper* in the Colony was printed in 1730.

The first native of South-Carolina who received a literary degree was Mr. JOSIAH SMITH, who was born in Charleston, in the year 1704, graduated at Cambridge, in Massachusetts, in 1725, and afterwards became a learned and respectable minister of the Presbyterian Church.^k The next instance of a native of South-Carolina receiving academic honours, was that of Mr. WILLIAM BULL, who received the degree of *Doctor of Medicine*, at Leyden, in 1735.^l He was followed by Mr. JOHN MOULTRIE, who received the same degree from

^j In this seminary there were two instructors; a Principal, with a salary of £. 400 sterling *per annum*; and an Usher, with a salary of £. 200, both paid from the public treasury. These were liberal salaries considering the time and the situation of the colonists.

^k Mr. SMITH published a volume of *Sermons* in 1752, and several occasional discourses before and after. He also maintained a learned disputation, in 1739, with the Rev. Mr. FISHER, on the right of private judgment. He closed an useful and honourable life in 1781, in the city of Philadelphia, whither he had been induced to fly during the Revolutionary war.

^l The name of Dr. BULL was mentioned in a former chapter. On occasion of his receiving a medical degree at Leyden, he wrote and defended an inaugural dissertation, *De Colica Pictorum*. He was afterwards Lieutenant-Governor of South-Carolina.

an University in Europe, in 1749.^m Both of these were eminent for literature and medical science.

The literary foreigners who came to South-Carolina, at this early period, were numerous. Dr. JOHN LINING, a native of Scotland, and a man of excellent education, came to that Province as early as 1725 or 1730. He was eminent as a physician and philosopher.ⁿ He corresponded with Dr. FRANKLIN on the subject of Electricity, and was the first person who introduced an Electrical Apparatus into Charleston. Dr. LIONEL CHALMERS, who came to the Colony from Great-Britain in the former part of the century, was also much distinguished for medical science, and for his various and extensive knowledge.^o Dr. ALEXANDER GARDEN, also from Great-Britain, about the same time, was deservedly celebrated as a physician and natural historian. Mr. MARK CATESBY, an English naturalist, came to South-Carolina in the year 1722, and resided four years in the Colony, where he did much for promoting the knowledge of Botany and Zoology.^p To these may be

^m Dr. MOULTRIE wrote and defended a dissertation, *De Febre Flava*. He was afterwards Lieutenant-Governor of East-Florida.

ⁿ In 1740 Dr. LINING prosecuted, and afterwards published, a series of judicious statical experiments. And in 1753 he published a *History of Yellow Fever*, which was the first account of that disease that had been given from the American Continent.

^o Dr. CHALMERS published a valuable work on the *Weather and Diseases of South-Carolina*, London, 1776. But his most respectable and useful work, is an *Essay on Fevers*, published at Charleston, in 1767. Besides these, he made several smaller publications.

^p MARK CATESBY, F.R.S. was born in England, in the year 1679. He had an early and strong propensity to the study of Natural History; and having some relations in *Virginia*, he determined to gratify his taste for inquiries of this nature, by exploring a part of the New World. He, therefore, went to that Colony in 1712, where he staid seven years, admiring and collecting the productions of the country. During this period he made numerous botanical communications to his friends in Great-Britain. He returned to England in 1719; but soon afterwards, encouraged by Sir HANS SLOANE, Dr. SHERARD, and other naturalists, he determined to make another visit to America, and accordingly embarked for South-Carolina, where he arrived in May, 1722. He now remained four years in the country, exploring *Carolina*, *Georgia*, the *Floridas*, and

added the Rev. ISAAC CHANLER, the Rev. ALEXANDER GARDEN, the Rev. HENRY HAYWOOD, and the Rev. RICHARD CLARKE, all from England, who settled in Carolina, as clergymen, and became conspicuous not only by their learning and talents, but also by means of various publications of more or less value, which yet remain to attest the reality of both.⁷

But notwithstanding the literary taste, conversation, and writings of these individuals, the institutions formed for the diffusion of knowledge were few in number, and by no means of respectable character. For the first thirty years of the eighteenth century, the Free School before-mentioned was the *only* grammar school in South-Carolina. For the next forty years there were only *three* in the Province, and all these were in Charleston, or its vicinity. In 1749 an association was formed in Charleston, for the establishment of a public Library; but it was not till towards the close of the century that this institution grew to any high de-

the *Babama* islands. Returning to England in 1726, he employed himself for a number of years in preparing for publication his great work, entitled, *The Natural History of Carolina, Florida, and the Bahama Islands*. The first part of this work appeared in 1730, and it was completed in 1748, in two volumes folio. He died in London, in 1749. GRONOVIUS, of Leyden, called a shrub of the *Tetrandrous* class *Catesbea*, after him.

⁷ The Rev. ISAAC CHANLER was born at Bristol, in England, in 1701, and came to South-Carolina in 1733. He settled, as Pastor of a Baptist Church, on Ashley River, in 1736, where he continued till his death, in 1749. Besides several smaller works, he published, *The Doctrines of Glorious Grace unfolded, defended, and practically improved*, 4to. Boston, 1744. The Rev. ALEXANDER GARDEN was a different person from the physician and naturalist of the same name. He made several publications on theological subjects. The Rev. HENRY HAYWOOD arrived in Charleston, from England, in 1739, from which time, till his death, in 1755, he was minister to the Socinian Baptists in that city. He translated into English, Dr. WHITBY's Treatise on Original Sin; and had prepared for the press a large volume in defence of the Apostolical Constitutions. He published a defence of Dr. WHITBY, against Dr. GILL, and also a Catechism. The Rev. RICHARD CLARKE, from England, was an elegant classical scholar. He published several pieces on the Prophecies, and on Universal Redemption. He was for some time Rector of St. Philip's Church in Charleston.

gree of respectability; so that until the Revolutionary war it was customary for the more wealthy either to employ private tutors of respectable character in their families, or to send their sons to foreign universities. In one or the other of these ways, a large portion of the best scholars, and most eminent public characters in the State, were formed.

While CATESBY and GARDEN were cultivating Natural History in *Carolina*, this noble branch of science was by no means neglected in some of the other Provinces. PAUL DUDLEY, Esquire, of *Massachusetts*, at an early period of the century, made some valuable communications to the Royal Society of London, on zoological and botanical subjects. Lieutenant-Governor COLDEN,^r of *New-York*, before-mentioned, was much devoted to the

^r CADWALLADER COLDEN, Esquire, who has been repeatedly mentioned in former chapters, was born in Scotland, February 17, 1688. He was the son of a clergyman; and after having received the elements of a liberal education under the care of his father, he completed his studies at the University of Edinburgh, in 1705. He afterwards applied himself to the study of Medicine, and Mathematical Science, until the year 1708, when, allured by the fame of WILLIAM PENN's Colony, and by the invitation of a relative, he came over to Pennsylvania. There he engaged in the practice of physic, until the year 1715, when he returned to his native country. He staid, however, but a short time in Scotland; for the next year, after forming a matrimonial connection, he came a second time to America, where he spent the remainder of his days. In 1718 he removed to New-York, but soon afterwards relinquished the practice of Physic, and became, in succession, Surveyor-General of the Province, Master in Chancery, Member of the Council, and Lieutenant-Governor. In 1755 he retired with his family to *Coldingham*, his seat on the Hudson, where he spent the greater portion of his after life. Here he particularly devoted himself to Botanical studies, and to a correspondence with learned men in Europe and America. Both he and his Daughter, (also a great Botanist), corresponded with LINNÆUS, who, in honour of the latter, called a plant of the *Tetrandrous* class, *Coldenea*. This plant Miss COLDEN had first described. Dr. COLDEN died in 1776; his principal publications are, *Plantæ Coldinghamenses*, in the *Acta Upsalensia*, for 1743 and 1744. *Principles of Action in Matter*, &c. 4to. London, Dodsley, 1753. *The History of the Five Indian Nations*, two vols. 12mo. 1747, besides several smaller works on *Yellow Fever*, *On the Cure of the Cancer*, *On the Malignant Sore Throat*, &c. &c. He was undoubtedly a man of various and extensive learning, of respectable talents, and of great literary industry. See HARDIE's *Biography*, vol. ii. p. 131.

study of Botany, and made important contributions towards a knowledge of American plants; especially of that part of America which was in the vicinity of his residence. Mr. JOHN BARTRAM,^s of *Pennsylvania*, was the first native American who conceived and carried into effect the plan of a Botanic Garden,^t for the reception and cultivation of indigenous as well as exotic plants, and of travelling for the purpose of accomplishing this plan. He did much to explore the natural history of his native country. Dr. JOHN MITCHELL,^v

^s Mr. JOHN BARTRAM was born near Darby, in Chester County, Pennsylvania, in the year 1701. His grandfather, of the same name, had come to the Colony in 1682, with the celebrated WILLIAM PENN. This self-taught genius early discovered a great thirst for the acquisition of knowledge, and especially of botanical knowledge. He travelled in pursuit of it with unwearied diligence, in various parts of his native country, from Canada to Florida, and made such proficiency in the study, that LINNÆUS is said to have pronounced him the "greatest natural botanist in the world." He corresponded with many of the most distinguished men of science, both in America and in Europe. He was elected a member of several of the most eminent Societies and Academies abroad; and was, at length, appointed Botanist to his *Britannic Majesty* GEORGE III. He died in 1777, in the seventy-sixth year of his age.

^t It cannot be said, that Mr. BARTRAM formed a *Botanic Garden*, in the scientific sense of the expression; but he made a large and valuable collection of plants, on his farm near Philadelphia, which his sons have kept up to the present day.

^v Dr. JOHN MITCHELL, who was mentioned in a former chapter, as having come from England to Virginia early in the last century, appears to have been a man of observation, acuteness, and enterprize, as well as of learning. His residence in Virginia was chiefly at *Urbanna*, a small town on the Rappahannock, about seventy-three miles from Richmond. He was a great Botanist, and seems to have paid particular attention to the *Hybrid* productions. He wrote an useful work on the general principles of Botany, and containing descriptions of a number of new genera of plants, which was published in 4to. in 1769. He also wrote, in 1743, an "*Essay on the Causes of the different Colours of People in different Climates*," which was sent over to Mr. COLLINSON, and published in the *Philosophical Transactions*, vol. xliii. p. 102—150. Besides these, he published an "*Essay on the Preparations and Uses of the various Kinds of Pot-Ash*," *Philosophical Transactions*, vol. xlv. p. 541—563; and a "*Letter concerning the Force of Electrical Cohesion*," *Philosophical Transactions*, vol. li. p. 390. See *Pulteney's Sketches of the Progress of Botany*, &c. vol. ii. p. 278, &c. It is believed the same man was the author of the *Map of North-America*, published in 1755, which he accompanied with a large Pamphlet, entitled, "*The Contest in America*;" and soon followed by another Pamphlet, entitled, "*The Present State of Great-Britain and North-America*," 1767. See *American Husbandry*, &c. vol. i. p. 285.

who resided some time in *Virginia*, and Dr. JOHN CLAYTON," a native of that country, both rendered important services in investigating the botanical treasures of America. To several of these the lovers of natural history owe a large debt of gratitude; nor can any one take the most superficial view of the progress of science in America without immediately recognizing the extent and the utility of their labours.

The controversy respecting the introduction and support of *Bishops* of the Episcopal Church, in the American Colonies, may be considered as forming an important epocha in the literary history of our country. Every inquiry which induces men of learning and talents to write, and which contributes to form good writers, deserves to be considered as an era in the progress of literature. The controversy above-mentioned was certainly useful in both these respects. It called into action latent talents, and by rousing the public attention, and interesting the feelings of some of the most learned men in the country, it gave rise to a number of publications, and, no doubt, extended the taste for inquiry and reading. In this controversy, the principal writers were Dr. JONATHAN MAYHEW,^w Dr. CHARLES CHAUNCEY,*

^u Dr. JOHN CLAYTON was a native of Virginia, and devoted a long life to the investigation of its botanical riches. He was a private country gentleman, of moderate fortune, and greatly respected by all who knew him. He resided in Gloucester County, about eighteen or twenty miles from the city of Williamsburgh. CLAYTON's work appears to have been first printed under the following title; "*Flora Virginica: Numeri Plantarum in Virginia Observatarum, à JOHANNE CLAYTONO.*" 8vo. 1739—1743. It was afterwards published under this title: JOH. FRED. GRONOVII, *Flora Virginica, exhibens Plantas quas J. CLAYTONUS observavit, collegit et obtulit, &c.* Ludg. Bat. 4to. 1762.

^w Dr. MAYHEW was pastor of the West Church in Boston. He was a man of distinguished learning and talents. His principal work on this subject was written in 1764.

^x Dr. CHARLES CHAUNCEY was born in Boston, in the year 1705, graduated at Harvard College in 1721; was installed pastor of the First Church in Boston in 1727; in which station he continued till 1787; when he was removed by death. Dr. CHAUNCEY was descended from the celebrated man of the same name, who, in the days of Archbishop LAUD,

Mr. EAST APTHORP,^y and Dr HENRY CANER, of Massachusetts; Dr. SAMUEL JOHNSON, Dr. SAMUEL SEABURY,^z Rev. Mr. HOBART, Dr. WELLES,^a and Mr. BEACH, of Connecticut; WILLIAM LIVINGSTON,^b Esq. and Dr. MYLES COOPER,^c of New-

came to New-England, became President of Harvard College, and was much celebrated for his erudition, and especially for his acquaintance with Oriental literature. His descendant, of whom we are speaking, was also a man of strong mind, and extensive learning, and eminently distinguished for his firmness and integrity. Besides several things which he wrote on the American Episcopate, he published a treatise on *The Benevolence of the Deity*. 1784. *Five Dissertations on the Fall and its Consequences*. 1785. And a work, entitled, *The Salvation of all Men*. 1785.

^y The Rev. EAST APTHORP was, for a considerable time, the Rector of an Episcopal Church in Cambridge, near Boston. He left America in the course of the revolutionary war. Besides what he published in his own country, he has made at least one publication since he resided in England, on the deistical controversy, which is an honourable testimony both of his learning and talents.

^z The Rev. SAMUEL SEABURY was Rector of an Episcopal church at New-London, in Connecticut, where he held a station among his clerical brethren of high respectability and influence. He was afterwards Bishop of the Episcopal Church in that State; and was the first of this order that ever resided in America. Besides smaller tracts, he published, during his life, two volumes of *Sermons*, which show him to have possessed a vigorous and well informed mind. A supplementary volume of Sermons, selected from his manuscripts, was published in 1798, two or three years after his death.

^a The Rev. Mr. HOBART, and the Rev. Dr. WELLES, were Congregational ministers of great distinction in Connecticut, the former residing at Fairfield, and the latter at Stamford. They both took an active part in the controversy respecting the American Episcopate, and wrote ably on the subject. The Rev. Mr. BEACH was an Episcopal clergyman, and was considered by those who espoused the cause, in support of which he embarked, as a respectable advocate of his Church.

^b WILLIAM LIVINGSTON, LL. D. was a member of a family which emigrated from North-Britain, and which has, for more than a century, held a respectable and important station in New-York. He was born about the year 1723, and graduated at Yale College in 1741. After sustaining some important offices in New-York, his native State, he removed into New-Jersey, and was the first Governor of that State after the declaration of Independence. He continued to fill this office with great honour to himself, and with great usefulness to the State, till the time of his death in 1790. Mr. LIVINGSTON made a variety of publications, besides those which related to the question of an American Episcopate, all of which indicate genius, taste, and learning. He was possessed of uncommon strength, discrimination, and vivacity of mind. Proposals have been lately made for publishing his works in several volumes.

^c The Rev. MYLES COOPER was a native of England, and received his education at the University of Oxford. He succeeded Dr. SAMUEL JOHNSON, as President of *King's College*, which office he held a number of years. He maintained a literary character of considerable eminence.

York; Dr. CHANDLER, of New-Jersey; Dr. WILLIAM SMITH, of Pennsylvania; and Mr. BOUCHER, of Maryland. From the middle of the century, to the commencement of the revolutionary war, this subject engaged much attention, and employed many pens in the American Colonies.^d

The establishment of the *Medical School* in Philadelphia^e forms an important era in the progress of American science. Before this time, there were no means of completing a regular medical education in the American Colonies, and all who wished to obtain such an education, were under the necessity of going to Europe for the purpose. Hence, when the plan of a medical school was formed in Philadelphia, it became an object of peculiar importance and interest in the view of all who wished well to the improvement of the country. The plan was formed by Dr. WILLIAM SHIPPEN, and Dr. JOHN MORGAN, both natives of Pennsylvania, and began to be executed in the year 1764. In that year Dr. SHIPPEN gave the first course of lectures upon Anatomy that was ever delivered in America. In 1765, Dr. MORGAN began to give a course of public instruction on the Institutes of Medicine. In 1768, Dr. ADAM KUHN, also a native of Pennsylvania, and a favourite pupil of the celebrated LINNÆUS, commenced a system of lectures on Botany and Materia Medica; and in 1769, Dr. BENJAMIN RUSH, who had just returned from the University of Edinburgh, began to lecture on Chemistry. These lectures, which were delivered by the aforesaid gentlemen, as Professors of the College of Philadelphia, were all of them the first attempts of the kind which had been

^d The Rev. Drs. RODGERS, MASON, LAIDLIE, and INGLIS, all of New-York, also wrote and published on the subject of the American Episcopate, but less formally and extensively than the persons mentioned above.

^e See vol. i. p. 320.

made upon any regular plan, on this side of the Atlantic. The medical school, thus formed, soon became an object of public attention; was resorted to by pupils from different parts of the then Colonies; has been since gradually increasing; and, at present, not only holds the first rank among similar institutions in the United States, but will bear a very honourable comparison with some of the best medical seminaries in Europe.

In 1767, an attempt was also made to establish a medical school in *King's College*, in the city of New-York.^f Professors were appointed by the Governors of that institution, to teach the various branches of medical science; and a few courses of lectures were given; but the design was not pursued with so much success as in Pennsylvania; it was wholly set aside by the revolutionary war, and did not revive again to any purpose, until the year 1792, when it was established on a new and better foundation, as was stated in another place, and now holds the second rank among the medical schools of the United States.

The institution of the *Philosophical Society* in Philadelphia, also deserves to be noticed among the events favourable to the progress of knowledge in America, which took place about this time. Dr. BENJAMIN FRANKLIN was the father of this institution; but he was ably assisted and supported in his exertions for its establishment, by the Rev. Drs. EWING and SMITH, by the medical and other Professors of the College of Philadelphia, and by a number of the friends to literature and science, then residing in that city. The Association was organized in 1769; and none who are acquainted with the progress of science in America need to be informed, that it has been

^f See vol. i. p. 321.

signally useful in exciting a thirst for knowledge in our country, in calling into view scientific acquirements which were before hidden; and in producing a laudable emulation, not only among its members, but also among other friends of learning in the remotest parts of the United States.^g

The *Transit of Venus*, as it happened in the year 1769, gave occasion to the exertion and developement of a considerable portion of that mathematical and astronomical skill which existed in our country, but had hitherto been little displayed. This phenomenon attracted much attention in the American Colonies; great preparations were made for observing it; and the observations published by several philosophers on this side the Atlantic, were considered in Europe as highly honourable to themselves, and useful to the cause of science. The talents displayed on this occasion by the Rev. Dr. JOHN EWING,^h Dr. DAVID RIT-

^g This Institution, in 1771, consisted of about two hundred and fifty-five members. Of these, one hundred and fifty-seven were inhabitants of Pennsylvania; ten of Massachusetts; two of Rhode-Island; four of Connecticut; eleven of New-York; eleven of New-Jersey; three of Delaware; five of Maryland; four of Virginia; five of South-Carolina; one of Georgia; ten of the West-India Islands, and twenty-five of Europe.

^h The Rev. JOHN EWING, D. D. was born in East-Nottingham, in Maryland, June 22, 1732. His classical studies were begun under Dr. ALLISON, at New-London. He afterwards went to the College of New-Jersey, where he graduated in 1755. In 1759, he received a call to take the pastoral charge of the first Presbyterian Church in the city of Philadelphia, which he accepted, and remained in this station during the whole of his after life. In 1773 he went to Great-Britain and Ireland, on a mission to solicit benefactions for the Academy at New-Ark, in Delaware, which was before-mentioned. During this visit, he formed an acquaintance with some of the most distinguished characters in those countries, and maintained a correspondence with them long afterwards. In 1779 he was chosen Provost of the University of Pennsylvania, which office, as well as his pastoral charge, he retained till his death. In all the branches of science usually taught in Seminaries of learning, more particularly in Mathematics, Astronomy, and every branch of Natural Philosophy; in the Latin, Greek, and Hebrew languages, and in Logic, Metaphysics, and Moral Philosophy, he was probably one of the most accurate and profound scholars which his country can boast of having reared. He died in 1802, in the seventy-first year of his age, after having held, for near half a century, a distinguished place among the literati of America. Those who wish to receive more particular infor-

TENHOUSE,ⁱ the Rev. Dr. SMITH, Dr. HUGH WILLIAMSON, and several others, of Pennsylvania; by Mr. BENJAMIN WEST, of Rhode-Island; by Professor WINTHROP,^j of Massachusetts; and by some other American Astronomers, are too well known

mation concerning the life, accomplishments, and publications of this great man, will be gratified with the perusal of a *Discourse delivered on occasion of his Death*, by the Rev. JOHN BLAIR LINN, D. D. a comprehensive and eloquent eulogium, which does honour to the Author, as well as to the Object of his panegyric.

ⁱ DAVID RITTENHOUSE, LL. D. F. R. S. was born at Germantown, near Philadelphia, April 8, 1732. He was not favoured with a regular Academic education, but he was endued with a genius which rose above all difficulties, and which soon entitled him to a place among the most distinguished ornaments of his country. He early discovered a fondness for Mathematical and Astronomical inquiries, and was indulged by his parents in learning the trade of a clock and mathematical instrument-maker, in which he was his own instructor. While he resided with his father, in the country, he made himself master of NEWTON's *Principia*, which he read in the translation of Mr. MOTT. Here, likewise, he became acquainted with the science of *Fluxions*, of which sublime invention, he believed himself, for a time, to be the author. The first occasion on which his knowledge of Mathematics and Astronomy was signally displayed, was in observing the *Transit of Venus*, in 1769, when he discovered a mind familiar with the most abstruse and complicated investigations. It was in this retirement, also, that he planned and executed his far-famed *Orrery*, in which he represented the revolutions of the heavenly bodies, in a manner more complete and comprehensive than any former astronomer. After this, his talents were displayed on various public occasions, and were admired and celebrated, not only throughout his own country, but among the philosophers of Europe. Dr. RITTENHOUSE, on account of that modesty for which he was always remarkable, published but little. An *Oration* delivered before the *Philosophical Society* in 1775, and a few *Memoirs* on Mathematical and Astronomical subjects, contained in the first three volumes of the *Transactions* of that body, form the whole list of his publications. He was loaded with honours, both by the State, and by literary and scientific institutions. He was chosen President of the Philosophical Society in 1791; and was annually re-elected to this office till his death in 1796. See Dr. RUSH's *Eulogium*.

^j JOHN WINTHROP, LL. D. F. R. S. was born in Boston, in 1714, and educated at Harvard College, where he received his first degree in 1732. In 1738 he was appointed Hollis Professor of Mathematics and Natural Philosophy in the College in which he was educated. He immediately entered on the duties of this office, which he executed with great ability and reputation till his death in 1779. He was a man of general and profound learning; but particularly so in the branches of science which he undertook to teach. His work, *De Cometis*, does him great honour. That he was known and respected among the philosophers of Europe, is evident from his being elected a member of the *Royal Society*; an honour which had been conferred on a native of Massachusetts only in one instance before, viz. in the case of the celebrated COTTON MATHER. MS. *Letter of the Rev. Dr. ELIOT to the author.*

to render any particular details on the subject necessary here.

In 1769, a College was founded in the town of Hanover, in New-Hampshire. Of this Institution, the Rev. Dr. ELEAZER WHEELOCK was the founder; and the Earl of DARTMOUTH being one of its most liberal benefactors, it was called after him, *Dartmouth College*. Dr. WHEELOCK had been, for some years previous to that above-mentioned, the conductor of a Charity School, at Lebanon, in Connecticut, which was principally intended for the instruction of Indian youth.^k About that time, it being found that the School, on its original narrow establishment, was not sufficient to answer the purposes which its friends had in view, a royal Charter was obtained, constituting a College, and naming Dr. WHEELOCK as the first President, with the privilege of nominating his successor in his last will. The Charity School, together with the newly constituted College, was removed to Hanover, in New-Hampshire, where both have been ever since fixed. And though neither of them flourished during the revolutionary war, which soon succeeded, yet, since the restoration of peace, they have grown considerably; the College, in particular, having become, at the close of the century, a large, respectable, and thriving seminary.^l

^k The first Charity School erected in America for the instruction of the Indians, was at Stockbridge, in Massachusetts, by the Rev. JOHN SERGEANT, between the years 1740 and 1750. He had scarcely gotten his plan into operation, before he was removed by death. The design was revived by the Rev. ELEAZER WHEELOCK, who solicited and obtained donations for the purpose, both in Europe and America; and opened a School at Lebanon, which was called after the name of Mr. JOSHUA MOOR, who was the largest benefactor to the institution. When *Dartmouth College* was founded at Hanover, this School was removed thither, where it has ever since continued, connected with the College, but distinct as to its property, design, and government. Dr. E. WHEELOCK died in 1779, in the sixty-seventh year of his age, and was succeeded by his son, JOHN WHEELOCK, LL. D. who has ever since presided over the institution.

^l Among the benefactors to this institution, besides King GEORGE III. Lord DARTMOUTH, the Countess of HUNTINGDON and several other per-

About this time we may date the establishment of a College at Providence, in Rhode-Island. This institution was erected by certain persons of influence of the Baptist denomination, and, among these, perhaps no individual so well deserves to be considered as its founder, as the Rev. Dr. MANNING,^m the first President. The charter for this College was given in 1764. It was open for the reception of students the next year, at Warren. The first commencement was held in 1769; and in 1770, it was removed to the town of Providence, where a spacious building was erected for the reception of the students, and which is considered as the permanent seat of the institution. The charter of this College makes it necessary, that the President should be a Baptist, and indeed the institution has always been under the immediate government of this denomination of christians.

Between the years 1765 and 1772, a revolution took place in the taste of the students in Yale College. About this time, the study of the Mathematics, and of the Ancient Languages, began to decline, and that of Belles Lettres to be an object of more attention than before. This revolution was chiefly produced by the Rev. Dr. DWIGHT, who has since held so conspicuous a place among the poets and divines of America; by Mr. JOHN TRUMBULL, who also stands in the first rank of our native poets; by the Rev. Mr. HOWE, afterwards a

sons of eminence in Europe, we find the names of Dr. FRANKLIN, JOHN ADAMS, Esquire, late President of the United States, JOHN JAY, Esquire, late Chief Justice of the United States, and Governor of the State of New-York, and the Honourable JOHN PHILLIPS, of Exeter, in New-Hampshire.

^m The Rev. Dr. MANNING was born in New-Jersey, in the year 1738. He was educated at Nassau-Hall, where he was admitted to the first honours of the College in 1762. In 1765 he removed to Warren, in Rhode-Island, and there took charge of the College, to the Presidency of which he had been elected. In 1770 he removed, with that institution, to Providence, and was soon afterwards chosen pastor of the Baptist Church in that town. In this situation he remained till his death, which took place in 1791.

respectable clergyman, and by some others, their contemporaries. These gentlemen, being instructors in the College at this time; and having imbibed a more predominant taste for polite literature than had been common among their predecessors; encouraged among the students, both by precept and example, a new degree of attention to the best writers in their own language, and to the graces of composition. The change, however, was carried to a greater length than its enlightened authors intended or approved. Designing only to raise the study of polite literature to its proper station, it soon began to usurp the place of the more abstruse sciences, and of the ancient languages; which, though still studied with considerable care, have, perhaps, never since regained their former important station in that seminary.

The arrival of Dr. WITHERSPOONⁿ in America, from North-Britain, is entitled to notice among the events which contributed to the advancement of literature and science in our country. It is not to be supposed, that a mind, so vigorous, enlightened, and active as his, and placed in a conspicuous station, could fail of contributing to

ⁿ Dr. JOHN WITHERSPOON was born at Yester, near Edinburgh, February 5, 1722. After being settled in the Gospel ministry, for upwards of twenty years, in North-Britain, he came to America in 1768, and continued to preside over the College of New-Jersey from that time till his death in 1794. Whether we consider Dr. WITHERSPOON as a Divine, a Statesman, or the Head of a literary institution, his talents and usefulness present themselves in a very conspicuous light. Scarcely any man of the age had a more vigorous mind, or a more sound practical understanding; and though many have had more learning, yet a mass of information better selected, or more thoroughly digested, than that which he possessed, is rarely to be found. See an excellent *Sermon* preached on the occasion of his death, by the Rev. Dr. RODGERS, of New-York, which contains a comprehensive and ably drawn character of the deceased. Though the largest and most valuable part of Dr. WITHERSPOON's writings was published before he left Britain, yet he wrote and published much after his removal to America. Mr. W. W. WOODWARD, of Philadelphia, has lately rendered important service to the cause of religion and literature, by collecting the whole of his works, and presenting two editions of them to the American public.

the literary advancement of any community in which he resided. Invited to undertake the office of President of the College of New-Jersey, this great man arrived at Princeton in the year 1768, and immediately entered on the duties of his new station. He produced an important revolution in the system of education adopted in this seminary. He extended the study of Mathematical science, and introduced into the course of instruction on Natural Philosophy, many improvements which had been little known in most of the American Colleges, and particularly in that institution. He placed the plan of instruction in Moral Philosophy on a new and improved basis; and was, it is believed, the first man who taught, in America, the substance of those doctrines of the philosophy of the Human Mind, which Dr. REID afterwards developed with so much success. And finally, under his presidency, more attention began to be paid than before to the principles of taste and composition, and to the study of elegant literature.

About the same time the study of the Physical Sciences received new encouragement in Virginia. Hitherto comparatively small attention had been paid to Natural Philosophy in the College of William and Mary; or not more than reading some common treatise on this subject, with a very inadequate degree of attention or understanding. In 1768 a valuable, though not very extensive Philosophical Apparatus was imported from London, for the use of that institution; and in 1774 the first regular course of lectures on the subject was delivered by the Rev. Dr. MADISON, since President of the College, and Bishop of the Protestant Episcopal Church in Virginia, whose services in the promotion of literature and science in that State are generally known. Since that time, natural philosophy has been almost con-

stantly growing in the number of its votaries, and in the degree of attention which it has received.

The attention which was paid to this College by Lord BOTETOURT, one of the last Governors of Virginia, while a British Colony, deserves to be noticed here, as honourable to himself, and as useful to the institution. His exertions to promote its interests were zealous and unremitted.^o Among other things, he instituted an annual contest among the students, for two elegant gold medals, of the value of five guineas; one for the best Latin oration on a given subject; the other for superiority in Mathematical science. And though the useful effects of his exertions were rendered in a great measure abortive, by the scenes of war and confusion which soon followed, yet they were by no means without their value.

About the year 1774, another College was founded in Virginia. It was for some time nothing more than a respectable Academy; but after a few years assumed the name, and became invested with the powers of a College. The Rev. SAMUEL S. SMITH, now President of the College of New-Jersey, and whose literary eminence is well known, may be considered as the founder of this institution. It is called *Hampden Sidney College*, and has been useful in training up a number of good scholars; but is not now considered as in a very flourishing situation.

But among the various remarkable periods in the progress of American Literature, there are few more worthy of our notice than the American Revolution; a grand struggle, which both awakened

^o Lord BOTETOURT made a point, for a long time, of sanctioning, by his presence, morning and evening prayers in the College. No company, no avocations, prevented his attendance on this service. This nobleman was extremely fond of literary characters. No one of this class, who had the least claims to respect, was ever presented to him whom he did not foster and encourage.

and produced talents; and which, by giving birth to many publications, served to impart new vigour to minds little distinguished before, and to improve the public taste. Hence it is a fact, that the style in which the Petitions and Remonstrances of the American Congress, at that time, and other political writings of the day, were drawn up, excited surprize in Europe, and gave new elevation to the literary character of our country.

Among those who distinguished themselves at this period by their publications, relating to the great political contest which divided America, we may enumerate JAMES OTIS, JOSIAH QUINCY, SAMUEL ADAMS, JOHN ADAMS, and THOMAS HUTCHINSON, of Massachusetts; WILLIAM LIVINGSTON, and JOHN WITHERSPOON, of New-Jersey; JOHN DICKINSON,^p and JOSEPH GALLOWAY,^q of Pennsylvania; DANIEL DULANEY,^r of

^p JOHN DICKINSON, Esq. who is a native of the State of Delaware, and at present resides in that State, received a considerable part of his education in Great-Britain, from which he had returned but a few years when the controversy between the Colonies and the Mother Country commenced. He wrote and published much on this controversy at different periods; but, perhaps, among the numerous and respectable publications which were made at this time, the *Farmer's Letters*, for dignity, eloquence, learning, and permanent reputation, ought to be considered as holding the first place. The eclat with which this work was received, the useful effects which it produced, and the public acknowledgments and honours, which have been since heaped upon the author, are too generally known to render it either necessary or proper to dwell on them here. A handsome edition of the *Works* of this illustrious American, in two volumes octavo, issued in 1801, from the press of Messrs. *Bonsal* and *Niles*, in Wilmington.

^q JOSEPH GALLOWAY, Esq. is a native of the State of Delaware. He received a liberal education; and among other public honours conferred upon him, was a delegate to the American Congress from Pennsylvania, until the declaration of Independence, when he thought it his duty to oppose the measures adopted by that body, and to attach himself to the Friends of the British government. He was a respectable writer in favour of the latter, and at an early period of the revolutionary war, went to England, where he still resides. Mr. GALLOWAY has lately published a work on the subject of the *Prophecies*, which is spoken of with great respect, as indicating talents, learning, and piety.

^r DANIEL DULANEY, Esq. was an eminent counsellor, who resided at Annapolis. He was considered as one of the most learned and accomplished men in his profession, that our country ever produced. He died at an early stage of the revolutionary war.

Maryland; RICHARD BLAND, ARTHUR LEE, ROBERT CARTER NICHOLAS, and THOMAS JEFFERSON, of Virginia; and WILLIAM HENRY DRAYTON,^s of South-Carolina.^t Besides these, a number of writers of smaller name embarked in the same cause, and contributed to the mass of inquiries and publications which the period produced. And though the distresses of the times served to derange and almost to destroy some important literary institutions; yet, during this period, seeds were sown which were destined soon afterwards to spring up and to bring forth fruit highly honourable to our country.

The revolutionary war was no sooner terminated by the peace of 1783, than the friends of literature began to feel more than ever the importance of encouraging institutions for diffusing useful knowledge among the people. Indeed, before the din of arms ceased to be heard, plans began to be formed, and in some instances to be executed, for the promotion of this object. The inhabitants of the American States now not only felt independent, in a political view, but they also began to cherish the wish for greater literary independence than they had heretofore enjoyed. The zeal and

^s WILLIAM HENRY DRAYTON, Esq. a native of South-Carolina, was a political writer of considerable eminence. In 1774 he wrote a pamphlet, addressed to the American Congress, under the signature of *A Freeman*, in which he stated the grievances of America, and drew a bill of American Rights. Several other publications appeared from his pen, explaining the injured rights of his country, and encouraging his fellow-citizens to vindicate them. He also wrote an *History of the American Revolution*, brought down to the year 1779, in three large volumes, which he intended to correct and publish, but was prevented by death. He died in Philadelphia in 1779, while attending his duty in Congress, in the thirty-seventh year of his age.

^t The author regrets, that it is not in his power to give a more complete catalogue of the writers on the American controversy. Many well written pamphlets on both sides of this question, were published anonymously. This was especially the case with those who wrote in favour of the British claims; so that out of the large number who belong to the latter class, only Lieutenant-Governor HUTCHINSON, and Mr. GALLOP-WAY, are sufficiently known to be particularly mentioned.

enterprize which had been directed against the common enemy were now turned towards domestic improvement.

In 1780 an act passed the Legislature of Massachusetts for establishing the *American Academy of Arts and Sciences*.^v Its design was to promote every species of liberal knowledge that might tend to "advance the interest, honour and happiness of a free, independent and virtuous people." This institution soon rose into importance; and, from the character of its members, and of the publications which it has made, may be considered as among the most respectable and useful associations in the United States.

About this time three gentlemen of the name of PHILLIPS,^u one residing at Andover, in Massachusetts, another at Exeter, in New-Hampshire, and a third in Boston, exercised a degree of munificence, which is equally rare, in this country, and honourable to their generosity and love of literature. In 1778 the Honourable SAMUEL PHILLIPS, of Andover, founded and liberally endowed an

^v The Hon. JAMES BOWDOIN, afterwards Governor of the Commonwealth, and a man of taste and science, was the first President of the American Academy. He was also a liberal benefactor to the institution, and continued to preside over it with honour until his death, in 1790. Another conspicuous benefactor to this association was JOSIAH QUINCY, Esquire, a learned and eloquent counsellor, a distinguished patriot, and an able political writer. To these may be added, the Hon. JOHN ADAMS, late President of the United States, and now President of the Academy, and Dr. FRANKLIN, who also made important donations to the institution. But the greater part of the funds of the Academy consist of five thousand dollars, presented to it by our illustrious countryman Count RUMFORD, who, in 1796, made a donation of the above sum, the interest of which is to be applied and given once every second year, as a premium to the author of the most important discovery, or useful improvement, which shall be made known to the public in any part of the Continent of America, or in any of the American islands, during the preceding two years, on *Light* or on *Heat*.

^u The family of PHILLIPS, in Massachusetts and New-Hampshire, has been long distinguished for its great wealth, and also, for its love of religion and literature. A complete history of the munificence exercised towards public institutions at different times, by the members of this family, would probably furnish an amount of benefactions seldom equalled in this country.

Academy in the town in which he resided. In this laudable undertaking he was aided by his brothers, the Honourable JOHN PHILLIPS, LL.D. of Exeter, and WILLIAM PHILLIPS, Esq. of Boston. Not long afterwards the former of these brothers founded, and very richly endowed an Academy at Exeter, the place of his residence. Both these academies are called by the name of the family to whom they owe their existence; both continue to grow in respectability and usefulness, and are likely long to remain monuments of the noble and distinguished public spirit which gave them birth.^w

Immediately on the return of peace, a College was established in the town of Carlisle, in Pennsylvania. This institution received the name of *Dickinson College*, being called after the celebrated statesman and political writer, JOHN DICKINSON, Esq. who was its most liberal benefactor. Doctor RUSH also, and several other gentlemen of distinction in Pennsylvania, were among the most active friends and promoters of this establishment. Soon after the Charter for this College was obtained, the Rev. Dr. CHARLES NISBET, of Montrose, in Scotland, was called to be its President. He accepted the invitation, and in the year 1784 arrived in America. It is scarcely necessary to say, that the eminent talents, and profound and general learning of this gentleman, were considered as an important acquisition to the literary interests of our country, and that he soon contributed to raise the character of the institution. From this period to the close of the century he continued to preside over it with usefulness and honour.

Seminaries of learning began now to multiply rapidly. From the peace of 1783 to the close of 1800,

^w In furnishing instances of individual liberality to public institutions, it is believed that Massachusetts exceeds all the other States.

there were *seventeen* Colleges founded in the United States, viz. two in Massachusetts, one in Vermont, one in New-York, two in Pennsylvania, four in Maryland, one in North-Carolina, three in South-Carolina, one in Georgia, one in Kentucky, and one in Tennessee. Besides these, Academies, during this period, were multiplied almost without number. Indeed, it may be questioned whether seminaries of the higher order have not been made so numerous in many parts of our country, as to produce effects directly the reverse of what were intended. It is as possible to have too many *colleges*, as it is to have too many *laws*, or too many *books*.

The institution of these academies was soon followed by the organization of a new Medical School attached to the University of Cambridge, in Massachusetts. This event took place in 1783, when the first Professors were appointed, and the first system of medical lectures delivered in that Commonwealth. The Governors of the University were enabled to effect this establishment by means of several generous donations, made for this particular purpose, by Dr. EZEKIEL HERSEY, an enlightened and opulent physician of Hingham; by his widow, a few years afterwards; by his brother, Dr. ABNER HERSEY, of Barnstable; by Dr. JOHN CUMMING, of Concord; and by WILLIAM ERVING, Esq. of Boston.* The several Professorships bear the names of their respective founders; and while they exhibit monuments of laudable beneficence,

* Dr. EZEKIAH HERSEY gave £. 1000 Massachusetts currency, to be applied to the support of a Professor of *Anatomy and Surgery*; his widow a like sum, for the same purpose; his brother, Dr. A. HERSEY, £. 500, for the encouragement and support of medical instruction; Dr. CUMMING, a like sum to be applied to the same object; and WILLIAM ERVING, Esq. £. 1000, to be devoted to the support of a Professorship of *Chemistry and Materia Medica*. These several sums, amounting to between 13000 and 14000 dollars, are funded, and their annual proceeds devoted to the objects directed by the donors.

have proved highly useful in the diffusion of science.^y

In 1783 Mr. NOAH WEBSTER, of Connecticut, published the first part of his *Grammatical Institute of the English Language*.^z This was soon followed by two other parts of the same work; by *Dissertations on the English Language*, and by several other publications from the same pen. The influence of this gentleman in promoting a taste for philological inquiries and good writing among his countrymen; the general introduction of his *Institute* into the schools of America; and the extensive utility of his learned labours, are well known, and are worthy of particular notice in tracing the literary history of our country.

The establishment of the Federal Government, in 1789, may be considered as the last grand epocha in the progress of knowledge in America. From this period public tranquillity and confidence began to rest on a foundation more solid than before; wealth flowed in on every side; the extension of our intercourse with Europe, the great seat of civilization, refinement and literature, rendered us every day more familiar with trans-atlantic productions and improvements; and a sense of national dignity and independence becoming gradually more strong and general, all conspired to furnish

^y The author takes pleasure in acknowledging, in this place, his obligations to his friend, the Rev. Dr. ELLIOT, of Boston, for a large portion of the information he is able to give respecting the literature of Massachusetts. From a mind so well stored on the subject of American antiquities, he might have drawn much more ample materials, had application been made early enough to admit of a leisurely attention to the object.

^z This work was begun the autumn of 1782, and published in the spring of 1783, at Hartford. The success which has attended it, notwithstanding so many other Spelling Books and Grammars have solicited public favour since it appeared, at once does honour to the Author, and shows, that education is by no means neglected in America. At the beginning of the year 1801, more than *one million and an half* of copies of this work had been sold.

the means, and to excite an ambition for enriching our own country with the treasures of knowledge.

From this time till the end of the century, literary institutions of various kinds were multiplied with astonishing rapidity in the United States. Besides Colleges, Academies, and subordinate Schools, Scientific Associations were formed; Libraries began to be established in the most remote parts of the country; Printing Presses and Bookstores appeared in great numbers where they were never before known; Newspapers became numerous to a degree beyond all precedent; and the rewards of literary labour, though still too small, were considerably augmented. The establishment of the *Historical Society of Massachusetts*, in 1791; of the *Medical Schools* of New-Hampshire and Kentucky, in 1798; of the *Connecticut Academy of Arts and Sciences*, in 1799; and of the numerous *Medical and Agricultural Societies* in almost every part of the United States, within a few years past, deserve particular notice, and form interesting items in the annals of our literary progress.

At the beginning of the century there were *two* Colleges in the American Colonies. At the close of it there were *twenty-five*; from which it may be estimated that *four hundred* students are annually sent forth, with academic honours. At the beginning of the century the number of Academies was small; and even these were on a comparatively narrow plan, and were ill attended by students; but at the close of it, the number of these institutions had become so great, in almost every State in the Union, especially in the Eastern and Middle States, that it would be difficult to form a tolerably correct estimate of their number. At the commencement of the century there were but *two* public *Libraries* in the American Colonies: these belonged to Harvard College, and to the Province

of South-Carolina, and were very small.^a Since that period the number has increased to *many hundreds*, and is every year becoming still greater.^b Private Libraries have also become numerous and extensive in a still more remarkable degree.

At the commencement of the period under review, there were but *three* or *four* *Printers* in the American Colonies; and these carried on their business upon a very small scale, and in a very coarse, inelegant manner. But at present the number of *Printers* in the United States may be considered as near *three hundred*; and many of these perform their work with a neatness and elegance which are rarely exceeded in Europe. At that time the printing an original American work, even a small pamphlet, was a rare occurrence, and seriously weighed, as an important undertaking; while the reprinting of foreign works was seldom attempted. But now at least *one hundred* American works, some of which are large and respectable, annually issue from our presses; and the republication of foreign books is carried on in almost every part of our country, and particularly in the capital towns, with a degree of enterprize, and to an extent which would not disgrace some of the most cultivated parts of the European world.

Before the revolutionary war the *Booksellers* in the American Colonies were few, and carried on their business on a contracted plan. Since that time their number has increased more than *fifty fold*; and the extent of their annual sales, perhaps,

^a In the seventeenth century, some of the Congregational Churches in Massachusetts began to form *Church Libraries*. These were considerably numerous and useful; and some of them remain till the present day. The use of these Libraries, however, was chiefly confined to the particular congregations whose property they were.

^b The number of incorporated *Libraries* in Massachusetts is said to be about *one hundred*. The number in the other Eastern States is not known; but institutions of this kind are far more numerous in New-England than in any other part of our country.

in a still greater proportion.^c Thirty years ago, he who undertook to dispose of a moderately large edition, even of a Spelling-book, considered himself as engaging in a hazardous enterprize. But in 1790, a single bookseller thought himself warranted in attempting an American edition of the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, in eighteen quarto volumes, and completely succeeded in making it a profitable undertaking.^d And since the last-mentioned year, a number of works extending to many volumes have been carried through American presses, with great ease and readiness.

The first edition of the *Bible* ever printed in America was that by the Rev. JOHN ELIOT, the celebrated *Apostle* of the Indians, in the language of the *Naticks*. This monument of pious labour was first printed at Cambridge, in Massachusetts, in 1664, and a second edition at the same place sixteen years afterwards. From this period till near the close of the revolutionary war, at so low an ebb was the book-trade in our country, that we hear of no attempt to print an edition of the Bible on this side of the Atlantic. About the year 1781, Mr. ROBERT AITKEN, of Philadelphia, undertook to present the American public with a duodecimo edition of the Sacred Scriptures. This laudable undertaking was executed, but with great difficulty, arising from the peculiar situation of the country at that time.^e But within the last eighteen or

^c In 1802, the German plan of disposing of books by means of *Literary Fairs*, was adopted in the United States. The first Book-fair was held in New-York; and it is proposed, in future, to hold them stately in that city. It is believed that Mr. MATHEW CAREY, a well informed and enterprizing bookseller of Philadelphia, was one of the first who suggested the propriety and utility of the undertaking, which has so far happily succeeded, and bids fair to be highly useful, both to the book-trade and to the cause of literature.

^d The person here alluded to is Mr. THOMAS DOBSON, of Philadelphia, an intelligent and respectable bookseller, who has probably contributed as much as any individual in his line to the promotion of American literature.

^e Immediately after the publication of this edition of the Bible, peace

twenty years, undertakings of this kind have become so numerous and so familiar, that the importation of Bibles for the supply of the American market, though not entirely, has in a great measure ceased. The first *quarto* edition of the Bible printed in the United States was in the year 1791, by Mr. ISAAC COLLINS, then residing at Trenton, in New-Jersey. In a few months afterwards, another *quarto* edition was published by Mr. ISAIAH THOMAS, of Worcester, in Massachusetts; who, in the same year, laid before the public the first *folio* edition of the Holy Scriptures that was printed in the United States. Since that time several *folio* editions of the Bible, and a number of *quarto* editions, have been printed in our country, and begin to be considered by our printers and book-sellers as small and easy undertakings.

Those kinds of literary productions which have been most common and most successful in the United States, are *theological* and *political* works, and those intended for the use of *schools*. For the *first* we are indebted to that seriousness and taste for religious inquiry which prevails in New-England, and in a considerable, though less degree, in the Middle and Southern States. The almost universal taste for the *second* class of books we owe to the nature of our government, which is eminently calculated to foster, to bring forward, and to display political talents, and to excite the attention of every class of citizens to political inquiries. And the general encouragement given to productions of the last-mentioned kind arises from that disposition to attend to the education of children, which has long characterized the Eastern

took place, when it was soon found that Bibles could be imported from Great-Britain cheaper than it was possible to print them here. Mr. AITKEN, therefore, not obtaining a ready sale for his edition, which had been carried on with great difficulty, was nearly ruined by the undertaking.

States, and which, during the last ten years of the century under review, rapidly extended itself through every part of the Union.

The *School establishments* of New-England, especially in the States of Massachusetts and Connecticut,^f though they took their rise in the seventeenth century, yet underwent such modifications, and received so many improvements in the eighteenth, that it would be improper to pass them without notice in this retrospect.^g These establishments have been carried to such a degree of perfection, that in New-England, and particularly in the two States above-mentioned, scarcely an individual can be found, of either sex, who has not been instructed in reading, writing and arithmetic, and who does not habitually read more or less in newspapers, and a few of the best books on religion and morality. Attempts have been made in some of the Middle and Southern States to adopt similar plans of general education; but though much has been done, in several of these States, towards rendering the elements of English literature a boon within the reach of all classes in the community, yet, the habits of the people not being so favourable to the diffusion of knowledge, and their characters and manners being less homogeneous, they have made less progress towards maturing and perfecting their school establishments than the Eastern States.

^f The *School* system of Connecticut is generally considered the most perfect in the United States. The parish Schools in that State amount to at least *twelve hundred*, containing, on an average, *forty Scholars* each, or *forty-eight thousand* in the whole. Next to that of Connecticut, in point of excellence, we may place the School system of Massachusetts. The number of Schools in that State is not known to the Author. He presumes, however, that it cannot be less than in Connecticut.

^g The Author takes pleasure in acknowledging his obligation to NOAH WEBSTER, jun. Esquire, for some valuable information respecting the literature of Connecticut during the eighteenth century; and especially for a more satisfactory account of the School establishments in that State than he had before received.

It may not be improper to take notice of some of those branches of science and literature which have been most cultivated in the United States; and also of the names of those who have been principally distinguished by their attention to these objects.

In *Mathematics*, *Astronomy*, and the more abstruse departments of *Mechanical Philosophy*, our country has been distinguished to a degree which, all things considered, is highly honourable to American genius and diligence. The names of GREENWOOD, WINTHROP, BOWDOIN,^h WILLARD, FOBES, and others of Massachusetts; of WEST, of Rhode-Island; of CLAP, and MANSFIELD, of Connecticut; of WILLIAM ALEXANDER, commonly called Lord STIRLING,ⁱ of New-Jersey; of GODFREY, RITTENHOUSE, EWING, WILLIAMSON, PATTERSON, and ELLICOTT, of Pennsylvania; and of MADISON, PAGE, and several more of Virginia, are so well and so respectably known, that it is unnecessary to enlarge on their merits.^j Besides

^h JAMES BOWDOIN, LL. D. F. R. S. was born in Boston, Massachusetts, August 18, 1727. His father was a native of France, and fled among the persecuted Protestants of that country, first to Ireland, and afterwards to New-England, where he arrived in the year 1688. His son James, the object of our present attention, was educated at Harvard College, where he received his first degree in 1745. After filling some important stations in public life, he was chosen Governor of Massachusetts in 1785 and 1786. He died in 1790, greatly and generally respected. Those who have perused the *Memoirs of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences*, will recollect the several papers contained in them, which manifest no common taste and talents in astronomical inquiries.

ⁱ WILLIAM ALEXANDER, Esq. was a native of the city of New-York, but spent a considerable part of his life in New-Jersey. He was considered, by many, as the rightful heir to the title and estate of an *Earldom* in Scotland, of which country his father was a native; and although when he went to North-Britain in pursuit of this inheritance, he failed of obtaining an acknowledgment of his claim by government; yet, among his friends and acquaintances, he received, by courtesy, the title of Lord STIRLING. He discovered an early fondness for the study of Mathematics and Astronomy, and attained great eminence in these sciences.

^j The Author, in this list, has only introduced the names of such Mathematicians, Astronomers, &c. as, by means of some publication or other display of their learning and talents, appeared to him to have made themselves more than usually known. He is sensible that a number of the

the learning and talents of these native citizens, Lieutenant-Governor COLDEN, mentioned in several former chapters, and Professor MINTO,^k both of North-Britain, deserve, among many others, to be mentioned with honour, as having contributed to the cultivation of mathematical and astronomical science in our country.

Chemical Philosophy has also been cultivated in the United States with a zeal and success worthy of respectful notice. The first course of instruction in Chemistry ever attempted in America, was in the year 1769, by Dr. BENJAMIN RUSH, about that time appointed Professor of this branch of science in the College of Philadelphia.—To Dr. SAMUEL L. MITCHILL, of New-York, the honour is due of having first publicly taught, in an American Seminary, the system of Chemistry digested and published by LAVOISIER and his associates. This was in a course of Lectures delivered by him in Columbia College, in the year 1792, as a Professor in that institution: and his various publications and numerous experiments on the subject, from that time to the present, have doubtless contributed to extend the taste for chemical inquiries. Dr. MITCHILL was soon followed by Dr. WOODHOUSE, of Philadelphia, Dr. MACLEAN, of Prince-

Professors of these branches of knowledge in our Colleges, both native citizens and foreigners, stand high in the estimation of all who know them; and though not brought so immediately before the public, yet possess, perhaps, a degree of erudition and skill, little, if at all inferior to those possessed by the persons above named.

^k WALTER MINTO, I.L. D. was a native of Scotland, and received a liberal education in that country. Early in life he visited Italy, and spent a number of years at Pisa, pursuing, with great diligence, his mathematical and astronomical studies. Soon after the close of the revolutionary war, he came to America, and about the year 1787, was appointed Professor of *Mathematics and Natural Philosophy* in the College of New-Jersey. In this situation he was respected and useful. He was, beyond all doubt, a great Mathematician and Astronomer, as appears from his *Researches into some Parts of the Theory of the Planets*, &c. 8vo. London, 1783; and also from his *Oration on the Progress and Importance of the Mathematical Sciences*, &c. 1788. He died about the year 1796.

ton, Dr. DEXTER, of Cambridge, and, in a few years afterwards, by several others, in different parts of the continent. This department of physical science is much more studied in the Middle and Southern States than in New-England.

The arrival of Dr. PRIESTLEY in the United States gave a spring to the study of Chemistry on this side of the Atlantic. This celebrated Philosopher possesses an ardour and activity of mind, which are eminently fitted to influence those with whom he has any intercourse, and to draw the public attention to the objects which he pursues. And although he still adheres to a system of doctrines which a great majority of Chemists consider as erroneous, yet his numerous experiments and publications on the subject since he has resided in the United States, have contributed to excite a spirit of inquiry, and to improve the public taste for chemical philosophy.

The votaries of *Natural History* in the United States, though not numerous, are respectable, and have rendered important services to this branch of science. Besides those of this class whose names were mentioned in preceding pages, a few others are entitled to particular notice. The Rev. Dr. CUTLER, Mr. PECK, and Dr. WATERHOUSE, of Massachusetts; Dr. MITCHILL, of New-York; the Rev. Dr. MUHLENBERG, and Mr. MARSHALL, of Pennsylvania; and Mr. WALTER,¹ of South-Carolina, are all advantageously known by their publications on different branches of Natural History. But, among the natural historians now living in

¹ THOMAS WALTER was a native of England, a man of liberal education, and much devoted to Botany. He settled in South-Carolina, a few miles from the city of Charleston, where he resided a number of years as a planter, and where he died towards the close of the eighteenth century. He published his *Flora Caroliniana* in 1788. He introduced a new species of grass, from which much was expected; but it did not stand the test of time.

the United States, Professor BARTON, of Philadelphia, undoubtedly holds the first rank. His various works evince a closeness of observation, an accuracy of inquiry, an extent of learning, and a vigour and comprehensiveness of mind, which are equally honourable to their possessor, and to his country. Should his life and health be spared, he bids fair to attain a place among the most accomplished scientific naturalists of the nineteenth century.

In the science of *Medicine*, our country has presented specimens of learning and talents of the most honourable kind. It may be questioned whether this science is cultivated more zealously or more successfully in any part of the world than in America; or whether any Medical School in Europe furnishes, on the whole, greater advantages to the student than that of Philadelphia.^m The spring which was given to the study of medicine within the last ten years of the eighteenth century, in the United States, deserves to be noticed as very remarkable. This was effected, not only by the writings of several distinguished American Physicians, among whom Dr. RUSH holds the first place, and to whom Medical Science on this side of the Atlantic owes a large debt of gratitude; but also, and perhaps more especially, by the unprecedented frequency with which our country has been visited, during this time, by *pestilential diseases*, which have roused the attention and called forth the talents of our Physicians, and led to investigations, to

^m It is not contended, that the advantages to be enjoyed in the medical school at Philadelphia are equal to those furnished by the clinical lectures and practice, in the numerous and large *Hospitals* of London, and the still more numerous courses of *Lectures*, delivered by private instructors in that city. It is only meant to be asserted, that no regular medical school, connected with any University of Europe, offers to the student better means of medical instruction than those which may be enjoyed in Philadelphia.

an interchange of opinions, and to a publication of the results of their inquiries, which were never so general before.

In the *Mechanic Arts*, so far as respects the ingenuity of individuals, and the important service rendered by numerous inventions and improvements, America yields to no nation under heaven. Perhaps, considering the amount of our population, and the peculiar circumstances of our people, we have furnished even a greater number of these inventions and improvements than our just proportion. On this subject, as it would be difficult to enter into details without exceeding all convenient limits; so there can be no doubt that a number of instances, abundantly sufficient to support the assertion here made, will readily occur to every reader. The *Quadrant*, by GODFREY; the *Orrery*, by RITTENHOUSE; the *Machinery for manufacturing Cards*, by WHITEMORE; and that for manufacturing *Fire-arms*, by WHITNEY, form but a very small number of the large list that might be presented.

Of talents in the *Fine Arts*, America has been less productive. But we have satisfactory evidence that this arises not so much from the want of native genius, as from the want of cultivation and encouragement of the genius we possess. The names of WEST, TRUMBULL, COPELY, and STUART, are more than sufficient to rescue their country from any imputations of deficiency on this head.

When we pass on to *Theology*, the noblest and most important of all sciences, it will be found, that, on this subject, America may claim high distinction. To omit many names of less note, the theological writings of President EDWARDS, and of the Rev. Dr. HOPKINS, have excited much attention in the religious world. The former, in particular, deserves, perhaps, to be considered as

one of the greatest divines that ever lived. Besides many Tracts of high reputation, on detached points of theology, and which have been well received, not only in America, but also in Europe; a number of volumes of *Sermons* have been produced by our countrymen, which show, that the eloquence of the pulpit is by no means neglected. The first volume of *Sermons* ever published in America, that had any just claim to correctness and elegance of style, was printed in Boston, in the year 1727, by EBENEZER PEMBERTON, pastor of a Church in that town. Since that time, the collections of *Sermons*, by President DAVIES,ⁿ Dr. LATHROP, Dr. SEABURY, President SMITH, Dr. LINN, Dr. STRONG, Dr. CLARKE, Dr. EMMONS, and several others, of different kinds and degrees of merit, have received much public approbation.^o

In the *Philosophy of the Human Mind*, the eighteenth century did not produce a greater effort of genius, than the *Treatise on the Will*, by President

ⁿ Rev. SAMUEL DAVIES was born in the County of Newcastle, in the State of Delaware, November 3, 1724. He received the greater part of his academic and theological education under the care of the Rev. Mr. SAMUEL BLAIR, of Fog's Manor, in Pennsylvania, and was licensed to preach the gospel, by the Presbytery of Newcastle, about the year 1745. Soon after this event, he travelled into Virginia, where he settled in the ministry, in Hanover County, and remained there in an extensive sphere of usefulness, and highly respected for a number of years. In 1753, he was chosen by the Synod of New-York, at the solicitation of the Trustees of New-Jersey College, to accompany the Rev. GILBERT TENNENT on a mission to Great-Britain and Ireland, to solicit benefactions for said College. In 1759, he was elected to succeed Mr. EDWARDS in the Presidency of that institution. In this station he remained but eighteen months, being removed by death in January, 1761, in the thirty-seventh year of his age. The genius, taste, learning, and eminent piety of President DAVIES, have been so much celebrated, that it is unnecessary to dwell on them here. His *Sermons*, in three volumes, were first published in 1765. Their uncommon merit is well known. They have undergone a number of impressions.

^o Besides the more formal volumes of *Sermons* above mentioned, it would be easy to select smaller collections of discourses on particular subjects, which do honour to the genius, learning, and taste of their respective authors; and the single *Sermons* of merit are much more numerous; but it is obviously impossible to indulge such minute details, consistently with the requisite brevity.

EDWARDS. And perhaps it may be asserted, that within the last thirty years a fondness for metaphysical subtleties and refined speculations has remarkably characterized the theological publications, particularly in the Eastern States of America.

In *Classic Literature*, the United States have given birth to little that can be deemed remarkable. The first translation of a classic author ever made and published in America was by JAMES LOGAN, several times before mentioned, who, in 1744, published a version of CICERO's treatise *De Senectute*, with explanatory notes. Since that time several works of a similar kind have been executed in the United States. Among many others who might be mentioned as distinguished for their classic learning and taste, it would be improper to omit the name of CHARLES THOMSON, Esq.^p late Secretary of the American Congress. The erudition and skill of this gentleman, especially in Greek literature, do honour to our country. He has completed a translation of the *Septuagint* version of the Old Testament Scriptures, and of the Original of the New Testament, which the friends of Biblical literature in America hope soon to see published; and which, in the opinion of good judges, will be a valuable acquisition to sacred criticism.

Of *Oriental Literature*, the votaries in America have been few, and of the fruits of their erudition little has been laid before the public. With regard, indeed, both to Classic and Oriental literature, our country has rather lost than gained ground within the last hundred years. For though a greater number of persons now gain a smattering of classic literature than at the beginning of the century; yet of

^p This gentleman received the rudiments of his education at the Academy of Dr. FRANCIS ALLISON, before mentioned, where he was associated in study with Dr. EWING, Governor M'KEAN, and a number of other Americans of literary distinction.

those who pay attention to this study, much fewer are deeply and thoroughly instructed. And with respect to Oriental learning, those who have any tolerable acquaintance with it in the United States are rare indeed. To the names of those Americans mentioned in former parts of this work, who were distinguished by their knowledge of the Hebrew language, that of the Rev. Dr. STILES, President of Yale College, may be added. At the time of his death, he probably left no superior among his countrymen in this branch of literature.⁹

It has been asserted, and probably with truth, that in *Political science*, and in *Parliamentary eloquence*, the United States will bear a very honourable comparison with any nation. Besides the eminent political writers mentioned in a former page, the names of ADAMS, HAMILTON, MADISON, JAY, and several other native citizens, are known and celebrated in Europe. In addition to these, many Counsellors and Juridical characters might be enumerated, who not only hold a high station among ourselves, but who would also be considered as ornaments of the bar and the bench, in the most enlightened countries of Europe.

The *Historians* of America were enumerated

⁹ EZRA STILES, D. D. and LL. D. was born at North-Haven, in Connecticut, December 10, 1727. He was educated at Yale College, where he received the degree of A. B. in the year 1746. He was ordained to the work of the Gospel ministry, and installed Pastor of a Church at Newport, Rhode-Island, in 1755; and was chosen President of the College at which he had received his education in 1777; in which important office he continued till his death, in 1795. Dr. STILES was one of the most learned men that our country ever produced. He had a great amount of general knowledge, but he was particularly attached to Oriental literature. Besides an acquaintance with the Hebrew language more than commonly extensive and profound, very few on this side of the Atlantic ever made so great progress in the knowledge of the Arabic, Chaldaic, Syriac, and Samaritan dialects; and on the Persic and Coptic he had bestowed some attention. He corresponded with learned *Rabbis* in the Hebrew language, and revived the study of it in the College over which he presided. For upwards of thirty years he held a distinguished place among the active friends and promoters of literature in the United States.

in a former chapter, and some references made to their respective merits.^r None of them, indeed, can boast of having attained that elaborate polish, and that exquisite felicity of manner which distinguish the first class of English historians. But the most of them are respectable writers; and several have acquitted themselves in a manner which does credit to their taste in composition, as well as to their fidelity in collecting and communicating information.^s

The respectable *Poets* of America are not numerous. The most conspicuous of these were noticed in a preceding division of this work.^t It is not necessary here to repeat their names, or to attempt a comparative estimate of their merits. Their number is gradually increasing;^v and when that leisure and encouragement shall be afforded to men of genius in this country, which are enjoyed in many parts of Europe, we may expect to produce Poets, who shall vie with the most celebrated of the old world.

But in no respect does the literary enterprize of America appear more conspicuous than in the rapid increase of the number and circulation of *Newspapers*, within the last thirty years. The ratio and amount of this increase were stated in another

^r See page 140, &c. of the present volume.

^s Histories of different American States have been promised by several writers. The public, particularly, look forward with high expectation to the appearance of *The History of North-Carolina*, which has been for some time prepared by Dr. HUGH WILLIAMSON, whose talents and learning are a pledge that it will prove an interesting and instructive work.

^t See pages 230 and 231 of this volume.

^v Since the close of the eighteenth century, another writer has appeared, who, if we may judge by his first production, is destined to hold a high place in the catalogue of native Poets of America. This writer is the Rev. JOHN B. LINN, D. D. of Philadelphia, whose *Powers of Genius*, a didactic and descriptive Poem, published in 1801, displays imagination, taste, and reading. This Poem was so favourably received, that a second edition was called for in less than a year, into which the Author has introduced large and valuable improvements.

place." In this respect we go beyond every other nation. It were well if these vehicles of information had improved as much in purity, intelligence, and instructiveness, as in other respects; but the blindest partiality for American literature must perceive and lament the sad reverse!

It may not be improper to attempt, in a few sentences, a comparative estimate of the extent to which different branches of knowledge are cultivated in different parts of the United States.

That amount of knowledge which is usually acquired at common schools, viz. reading, writing, and arithmetic, is more generally diffused among all classes of the people in New-England, and particularly in Massachusetts and Connecticut, than in any other portion of our country, and indeed than in any other part of the globe. This may be ascribed to the superior excellence of their School establishments; to the number, piety, and diligence of the Clergy; to the regular organization of their towns and parishes; to the honourable point of light in which the instructors of youth are considered;^w and to the general spirit of activity and enterprize which must be admitted to enter into the national character of New-England.

It may also be observed, as another circumstance of discrimination, that in the Eastern States a larger portion of the youth pass through a regular collegiate course of education, than in any other

^u See pages 250 and 251 of the present volume.

^w This circumstance has a most benign influence in New-England. In the Middle, but more especially in the Southern States, the employment of a *Schoolmaster* is considered by many as rather degrading, and has sometimes been used as a ground of reproach. The consequence is, that too many of the instructors of youth in these States are ignorant and vicious adventurers; those who are well qualified rather shunning an office to which so little respect is attached. In the New-England States it is otherwise. Some of their greatest Divines and Statesmen were Schoolmasters in early life. The employment is considered and treated as an honourable one. The consequence is, that the common parish schools are generally under the care of well informed and virtuous men.

part of our country. In New-England, the mass of the people are more generally taught to respect literature, and to make exertions for conferring this advantage on their children. In that part of the Union also, the expense attending an Academic course is rather less than in most of the other American Seminaries. These two circumstances have a natural tendency to fill their Colleges with a greater number of Students than are to be found elsewhere.

The *Classic Literature* of the United States, as was before remarked, is almost every where superficial. It is believed, however, that the learned languages, and especially the Greek language, are rather less studied in the Eastern than in the Middle and Southern States. It is true, many more individuals attend to this branch of learning in the former than in the latter; but they read fewer books, and devote a less portion of time to the object.* For this fact, many reasons might be assigned; but it is not necessary to mention more than two. The one is, that, owing to the superior wealth enjoyed by a number of individuals in the Middle and Southern States, it was more common, during a great part of the eighteenth century, to send young men to Europe for their education from those States, than from New-England. The youth, thus educated, might be expected, of course, to bring back with them to their native country, a larger portion of classic literature than could be easily acquired in American seminaries. Another reason is, that, while almost all the instructors of youth in New-England, and especially

* The Author is aware, that in tracing the literary history of New-England, the names of some classical Scholars of great eminence are found. He means, however, only to speak of the degree of attention generally paid to Classic literature, by those who go through a collegiate course in the Eastern States, and especially within the last twenty or thirty years.

the higher classes of them, during the last hundred years, have been natives; a large portion of the Superintendents of Academies, and of the Presidents and Professors of Colleges, in the Middle and Southern parts of our country, during the same period, were Europeans, and many of them eminently accomplished in classic literature. If, therefore, the knowledge in this branch of learning, acquired in the best seminaries of Europe, were usually more accurate and profound than could ordinarily be obtained from our native citizens, it must follow of course, that those who derived their classical learning from the former of these sources, were, in general, more thoroughly instructed themselves, and consequently more capable of instructing others, than those who had access only to the latter.

In the study of *Oriental Literature*, it is believed that New-England has generally excelled the Middle and Southern States. Certain it is, that we hear of more eminent Orientalists in the former than in the latter; if we except a few foreigners occasionally residing among us. This we may ascribe to the great Oriental learning of several of those distinguished divines who came with the first settlers to New-England, or who soon afterwards followed them thither. The influence of these men has continued, in a degree, to the present day. To this circumstance it may be added, that the University of Cambridge, in Massachusetts, is the only seminary of learning in the United States in which a Professorship for instruction in the Oriental languages has been steadily maintained through the whole of the eighteenth century.

In the cultivation of *Mathematics* and *Natural Philosophy*, it is difficult to say to what part of our country the preference ought to be given. Pro

bably an impartial judge, taking the whole history of the country together, would give the palm, in this respect, to Pennsylvania and Massachusetts.

The Sciences of *Chemistry*, *Natural History*, and *Medicine*, have long been, and continue to be, more successfully cultivated in the Middle and Southern than in the Eastern States. The same reasons apply in this case that were suggested with respect to Classic literature. Comparatively, few young men have been sent, at any period, from the Eastern States to European seminaries to complete their medical education. Besides this consideration, foreigners, even of literary and scientific character, have received less encouragement to settle in those States than in most other parts of the Union. On the other hand, from the Middle and Southern States a number of young men have been, every year, sent to the Medical Schools of Europe, who not only attended the ordinary courses of instruction in *Medicine*, strictly so called, but also the Lectures delivered on *Chemistry* and *Natural History*, as important auxiliary branches of Philosophy. It is further to be observed, that several learned and enterprising foreigners, who visited and resided for some time in New-York, Pennsylvania, Virginia, and South-Carolina, devoted much of their time and attention to Natural History;^y excited some of the native citizens, in their respective neighbourhoods, to engage in this study;^z and thus introduced that

^y There is a particular reference here to CATESBY, GARDEN, and WALTER, who resided in South-Carolina; to MITCHELL, who spent a number of years in Virginia; to Professor KALM, who devoted several years to travelling in the Middle States; to SCHOEPPF and WANGENHEIM, who came to America with the German troops, during the Revolutionary war; to whom may be added, Dr. GOLDEN and Dr. MUHLENBERG, whose talents and zeal in the study of Botany have been before repeatedly mentioned.

^z It was probably owing to the conversation and influence of these, or of some other foreigners visiting the country, that CLAYTON, STARKE,

taste for inquiries of this nature which has ever since existed, in a greater or less degree, in some individuals in those States.

New-England has given birth to the greatest number, and the most eminent of the native *Theological* writers of America. And there is no doubt that by far the larger portion of the *Sermons* printed in the United States, whether in volumes or single discourses, is produced in that part of our country. It may also be asserted, that almost all the valuable disquisitions on the *Philosophy of the human mind*, which have been published on this side of the Atlantic, were written in New-England.

In the literature and science of *Politics*, it is not easy to say which part of our country is most entitled to credit. If we pronounce in favour of those States, which have produced the greatest number of eminent political writers, we must give the first honours to Massachusetts, New-York, Pennsylvania, and Virginia. But there is no subject more generally studied, in every State in the Union, than Political science; none on which our literary men so frequently write; and, of course, none which so constantly calls forth the exertion of talents.

Of *Historical* composition, the Eastern States have produced their full proportion, and rather more. Of respectable *Poets*, they have given birth to a greater number than any other proportional division of the Union. And in *Belles Lettres* generally, there is, without doubt, more cultivation in New-England than in any other part of our country; if we except the larger cities in the Middle and Southern States.

With respect to the *Mechanic Arts*, New-England has furnished her full proportion of those in-

CARY, and GREENWAY, of Virginia; and the BARTRAMS, MARSHALL, and others, of Pennsylvania, were so much devoted to botanical pursuits.

ventions and improvements which do honour to American genius. And with regard to the *Fine Arts*, three out of four of our greatest native *Painters* were born in that division of the country.

It must, however, after all, be acknowledged, that what is called a *liberal education* in the United States, is, in common, less accurate and complete; the erudition of our native citizens, with some exceptions, less extensive and profound; and the works published by American Authors, in general, less learned, instructive, and elegant,^a than are found in Great-Britain, and some of the more enlightened nations on the Eastern continent. These facts, it is apprehended, arise not from any deficiency of talents in our country, nor from any inaptitude in its soil or atmosphere to promote the growth of genius; but from one or another, and, in some cases, from a combination of the following causes.

1. *Defective plans and means of instruction in our Seminaries of learning.* The great majority of our Colleges have very inadequate funds. The consequence is, that in most of them the Professors are few in number, and have assigned to them too large a field of instruction. Hence they can convey but very superficial knowledge of the various branches which it is made their duty to teach, and if well qualified themselves, which is far from being always the case, find it impossible to do justice to the pupils. In some instances, also, the Trustees or Governors of American Colleges, either from their own ignorance, or in compliance with popular prejudice, have so contracted the time re-

^a It is not meant to be denied that a few of the works published in America are as profound and instructive as any on similar subjects published elsewhere. It is simply intended to give a *general* character of American publications, liable to such exceptions as the mind of the well-informed reader will readily supply.

quisite for completing a course of instruction, as to render it necessary wholly to dispense with, or lightly to hurry over, some of the most important branches of knowledge. Accordingly, in some of these institutions, Mathematical Science is unpopular, and the acquisition of as little as possible especially of the higher branches of it, enjoined on the student. In others, Classic literature, and especially the Greek language,^b is in low estimation, and not more studied than is indispensibly necessary to obtaining a *diploma*. If well bred scholars ever issue from such Seminaries, they must be formed by a degree of private and individual application rarely to be met with in youth.

2. *Want of Leisure.* The comparatively equal distribution of property in America, while it produces the most benign political and moral effects, is by no means friendly to great acquisitions in literature and science. In such a state of Society, there can be few persons of leisure. It is necessary that almost all should be engaged in some active pursuit. Accordingly, in the United States, the greater number of those who pass through a course of what is called liberal education, in the hurried manner which has been mentioned, engage, immediately after leaving College, in the study or business to which they propose to devote themselves. Having run over the preliminary steps of instruction in this business, probably in a manner no less hurried and superficial than their academic studies, they instantly commence its practical pursuit; and are, perhaps, during the remainder of life, consigned to a daily toil for support, which precludes them from reading, and especially from gaining much knowledge out of their particular

^b In some American Colleges, we are told that no more knowledge of Greek is required in those who graduate *Bachelor of Arts*, than that which may be derived from the Grammar and the Greek Testament.

profession. Such is the career of ninety-nine out of an hundred of those in our country who belong to the learned professions. When the alternative either lies, or is supposed to lie between erudition and poverty, or comfortable affluence and moderate learning, it is not difficult to conjecture which side will be chosen; nor is it suprising that, in such a state of things, there should be less profound erudition, less elegant accomplishment in literature, than where a considerable number enjoy all the advantages of exemption from laborious duties, and all the accommodations of opulent leisure.

To this circumstance may be ascribed the superficial and unpolished character of many of our native publications. All that their authors, in many cases, want, to render them more replete with instruction, more attractive in manner, and, of course, more worthy of public approbation, is *leisure*. But, able only to redeem a few hasty hours for literary pursuits, from the employments which give them bread, they must necessarily, if they publish at all, send forth productions, from time to time, bearing all the marks of haste and immature reflection.

3. *Want of encouragement to learning.* Men cannot be expected to labour without the hope of some adequate reward. Genius must be nourished by patronage, as well as strengthened by culture. Where substantial emoluments may be derived from literary exertion, there, and there alone, will it be frequently undertaken to any considerable extent. Hence, in those countries where genius and learning are best rewarded, there they are ever found to be most cultivated. In the United States, the rewards of literature are small and uncertain. The people cannot afford to remunerate eminent talents or great acquirements. Booksellers, the great patrons of learning in modern times,

are in America too poor to foster and reward the efforts of genius. There are no rich *Fellowships* in our Universities to excite the ambition of students; no large ecclesiastical benefices to animate the exertions of literary divines.^c Academic chairs are usually connected with such small salaries, that they present little temptation to the scholar; and, finally, the State offers very inconsiderable motives for the acquisition of knowledge, and the exertion of talents. Its rewards are small, and its favour capricious. Can it be wondered, then, that those who have some acquaintance with books, and hold important stations, are more anxious to secure pecuniary advantages, and to place themselves in a situation independent of popular favour, than to make advances in literature, or to do honour to their country by the display of intellectual pre-eminence?

Besides, the spirit of our people is *commercial*. It has been said, and perhaps with some justice, that the *love of gain* peculiarly characterizes the inhabitants of the United States. The tendency of this spirit to discourage literature is obvious. In such a state of Society, men will not only be apt to bend their whole attention to the acquirement of property, and neglect the cultivation of their minds as an affair of secondary moment; but letters and science will seldom be found in high estimation; the amount of wealth will be the principal test of influence; the learned will experience but little reward either of honour or emolument; and, of course, superficial education will be the prevailing character.

^c The Author would by no means be understood to express an opinion, that such immoderately lucrative places, either in Church or in State, are, on the whole, useful, or desirable. He is persuaded that they are much more productive of mischief than of advantage. But that they often excite literary ambition, and afford, in many instances, convenient and useful leisure to literary characters, will scarcely be questioned by those who have paid any attention to the subject.

Nor is it of less importance here to recollect, that the nature of our connection with Great-Britain has operated, and continues to operate unfavourably to the progress of American literature. Long accustomed to a state of colonial dependence on that enlightened and cultivated Nation, we have also been accustomed to derive from her the supplies for our literary wants. And still connected with her by the ties of language, manners, taste, and commercial intercourse, her literature, science and arts may be considered as ours. Being able, therefore, with so much ease, to reap the fruits of her fields, we have not sufficient inducement to cultivate our own. And even when an excellent production of the American soil is offered to the public, it is generally undervalued and neglected. A large portion of our citizens seem to entertain the idea, that nothing worthy of patronage can be produced on this side of the Atlantic. Instead of being prompted to a more liberal encouragement of genius because it is American, their prejudices, on this account, are rather excited against it.^d

4. *Want of Books.* In the capital cities of Europe, the votary of literature is surrounded with immense Libraries, to which he may easily obtain access; and even in many of the smaller towns, books on any subject, and to almost any number, may be easily obtained. It is otherwise in America. Here the student, in addition to all the

^d The writer in the *Monthly Magazine*, whose strictures on American literature were before mentioned, represents the inhabitants of the United States as having strong prejudices in favour of their own productions, and ridicules them for preferring American publications to all others. In this, as well as in most of his assertions, he discovers profound ignorance of the subject. The fact is directly the reverse. Americans are too apt to join with ignorant or fastidious foreigners, in undervaluing and decrying our domestic literature; and this circumstance is one of the numerous obstacles which have operated to discourage literary exertions on this side of the Atlantic, and to impede our literary progress.

other obstacles which lie in his way, has often to spend as much time and thought to obtain a particular book, as the reading it ten times would cost. Our public Libraries are few, and, compared with those of Europe, small. Nor is this defect supplied by large private collections; these are also rare. And to render the evil still more grievous, the number of literary and enterprizing booksellers is yet smaller. It is only within two or three years that we have begun to receive, with any kind of regularity or promptitude, the best British works as they issue from the press.

Such are some of the causes which have hitherto impeded the progress of American Literature. Their influence, however, is gradually declining, and the literary prospects of our country are brightening every day. Letters and science are becoming more important in the public estimation. The number of learned men is becoming rapidly greater. The plans and means of instruction in our Seminaries of learning, though by no means improving in all respects, are, in some, receiving constant melioration. The emulation of founding and sustaining a national character in science and learning begins to be more generally felt, and, from time to time, will doubtless be augmented. A larger proportion of the growing wealth of our country will hereafter be devoted to the improvements of knowledge, and especially to the furtherance of all the means by which scientific discoveries are brought within popular reach, and rendered subservient to practical utility. American publications are every day growing more numerous, and rising in respectability of character. Public and private Libraries are becoming more numerous and extensive. The taste in composition among our writers is making very sensible progress in correctness and refinement. American authors

of merit meet with more liberal encouragement; and when the time shall arrive that we can give to our votaries of literature the same leisure, and the same stimulants to exertion with which they are favoured in Europe, it may be confidently predicted, that letters will flourish as much in America as in any part of the world; and that we shall be able to make some return to our transatlantic brethren, for the rich stores of useful knowledge which they have been pouring upon us for nearly two centuries.

RECAPITULATION,

WE have now made a hasty tour through one of the departments of the subject which we undertook to examine. From the foregoing survey, which, however tedious it may have appeared to the reader, is, in reality, a very rapid one, the eighteenth century appears to bear a singularly distinct and interesting character. In almost every department of knowledge, we find monuments of enterprize, discovery, and improvement; and, in some, these monuments are so numerous, valuable, and splendid, as to stand without parallel in the history of the human mind. There have been periods in which particular studies were more cultivated; but it may be asserted, with confidence, that in no period of the same extent, since the creation, has a mass of improvement so large, diversified and rich been presented to view. In no period have the various branches of science, art and letters, received, at the same time, such liberal accessions of light and refinement, and been made so remarkably to illustrate and enlarge each

other. Never did the inquirer stand at the confluence of so many streams of knowledge as at the close of the eighteenth century.

But, in order to bring more immediately and distinctly into view the leading characteristics of the last age, as deducible from the statements which have been given, an attempt will be made to sum them up in the few following particulars:

1. The last century was pre-eminently an AGE OF FREE INQUIRY. No period in the history of man is so well entitled to this character. Two centuries have not rolled away, since the belief that the earth is globular in its form was punished as a damnable heresy; since men were afraid to avow the plainest and most fundamental principles of philosophy, government, and religion; and since the spirit of liberal inquiry was almost unknown. In the seventeenth century, this spirit began to show itself; but it was reserved for the eighteenth to witness an indulgence and extension of it truly wonderful. Never, probably, was the human mind, all things considered, so much unshackled in its inquiries. Men have learned, in a greater degree than ever before, to make light of precedent, and to throw off the authority of distinguished names. They have learned, with a readiness altogether new, to discard old opinions, to overturn systems which were supposed to rest on everlasting foundations, and to push their inquiries to the utmost extent, awed by no sanctions, restrained by no prescriptions.

This revolution in the human mind has been attended with many advantages, and with many evils. It has led to the developement of much truth, and has contributed greatly to enlarge the bounds of literature, science, and general improvement. It has opened the way to a free communication of all discoveries, real or supposed, and re-

moved various obstacles which long retarded the progress of knowledge. But this spirit of inquiry, like every thing else in the hands of man, has been perverted and abused. It has been carried to the extreme of licentiousness. In too many instances, the love of novelty, and the impatience of all restraint founded on prescription or antiquity, have triumphed over truth and wisdom; and, in the midst of zeal for demolishing old errors, the most sacred principles of virtue and happiness have been rejected or forgotten.

2. The last century may be emphatically called the AGE OF PHYSICAL SCIENCE. It was not till the seventeenth century that the physical sciences began to assume a conspicuous place among the objects of study. Before that period, the learned languages, ancient history, and the metaphysical jargon of the schoolmen, had chiefly engrossed the attention of literary and scientific men. From the time of BACON and KEPLER, a taste for natural philosophy began to extend itself. This taste was cherished and improved by the scientific associations which began to be formed in different parts of Europe about the middle of the seventeenth century. But in the eighteenth, it became far more predominant than at any former period, and may be said to form a prominent feature of the age.

It has been seen, that several branches of *Mechanical Philosophy*, wholly new, were introduced into the popular systems in the course of this period; and that in almost all the branches formerly studied, there were made immense discoveries and improvements. *Chemistry* has been so much improved and extended, both in its principles and application, that it may be pronounced a new science. In *Natural History*, the progress of philosophers, within the last hundred years, has been no less signal and honourable. The amount of what

has been accomplished in various plans of classification, in the corrections of nomenclature, and in additions to the former lists of specimens in natural history, more particularly in zoology, botany, and mineralogy, is too great to be collected or exhibited by any individual. A similar extension of our knowledge has taken place in *Medicine*, in *Agriculture*, in *Geography*, and in the principles, as well as practice of *Mechanic Arts*. All these come under the general denomination of *Physical Science*. It is too evident to admit of a doubt, that there never was a period in which so much enlightened attention was paid to objects of this kind, or any thing like such a sum of improvement introduced as in the eighteenth century.

Some observers of the revolutions and progress of science have divided the century under review into three parts, and considered each part as particularly distinguished by the cultivation of one of the principal physical sciences. From 1700 till 1735, the *Newtonian Philosophy* engaged the largest share of the attention of the learned. How great a portion of the publications and controversies of that day had a respect to this philosophy, the well-informed reader will not be at any loss to recollect. From 1735 till about the year 1765 or 1770, may be called the period of *Natural History*; as the various branches of study included in this general denomination, more especially zoology and botany, were never before, in any comparable degree, so much cultivated. For this prevalence of the study of Natural History we are, perhaps, indebted to the genius, labours and influence of no two individuals so much as to those of LINNÆUS, and the Count DE BUFFON. From 1770 till 1801, may be styled the period of *Chemistry*; that science having given rise to more numerous experiments and publica-

tions during this period than any other. Those who had most influence in bringing into vogue this branch of physical science, and conferring upon it that importance and extent which it has gained, are SCHEELE, KLAPROTH, LAVOISIER, and PRIESTLEY.

Upon a review of the foregoing sheets, it may also be remarked, that the physical sciences, during the period in question, appear to have been cultivated with unusual ardour in particular countries. In *Mechanical* and *Mathematical Philosophy*, it is not easy to say to which of the scientific nations of Europe the palm of superiority ought to be awarded. In *Chemistry*, France is doubtless entitled to the first place. After her, Germany, Great-Britain, &c. follow in comparative merit. In *Natural History*, the different nations may be represented as standing in the following rank. First France, second Germany, third Sweden, fourth Great-Britain, fifth Switzerland, Italy, &c. &c. In *Medicine*, Great-Britain, beyond all doubt, has long held the first place, though it must be acknowledged, that the progress of medical science in France, Germany, and the United States, towards the close of the century, deserves to be noticed as very remarkable and promising. In *Geography*, Great-Britain and France must divide the larger portion of the mass of honours between them. In *Agriculture*, the highest praise is unquestionably due to Great-Britain. And in all those scientific researches which bear upon Arts, Manufactures, and Economy, the last mentioned country must also be pronounced to stand first in order.

3. The eighteenth century may, with propriety, be styled, THE AGE OF ECONOMICAL SCIENCE. In all preceding ages, science, and the economical arts were too generally viewed as unconnected. The philosopher thought it beneath his dignity to

direct his inquiries to the aid of the mechanic, and to the various details of public and domestic economy; and the mechanic and economist had been taught to consider the inquiries of the philosopher as mere curious speculations, with which the practical concerns of life had little to do. The eighteenth century has produced a signal revolution, both in the aspect of scientific investigations, and in the state of public opinion on this subject. Philosophy has assumed a more practical and useful form. The artist and the philosopher have learned to go hand in hand. Many modern discoveries, in different branches of science, and especially in Natural Philosophy and Chemistry, while they gratify liberal curiosity, and give pleasure to the man of speculation, have also rendered essential service to the Mechanic arts, to Agriculture, to Medicine, to domestic economy, and, in general, to the abridgement of labour, and to the more easy and cheap preparation of the various comforts and elegancies of life. It would be easy to give a catalogue of economical philosophers of the eighteenth century, who were never equalled by any of preceding times. To mention no more, our illustrious countryman, Count RUMFORD, at the close of this period, presented to the world an example of practical science, of which we shall perhaps search in vain for a parallel in the history of man.

4. The last century may also, in a peculiar and distinguishing sense, be called THE AGE OF EXPERIMENT. The mode of pursuing knowledge, by observation, experiment, analysis, and an induction of facts, though not absolutely begun by Lord BACON, was, for the first time, employed to any considerable extent by that enlightened philosopher. The influence of his example in this respect, in the sixteenth century, in which he lived, was

comparatively small. In the seventeenth, his plan of philosophizing was more frequently adopted. But in the eighteenth, it obtained an ascendancy and prevalence never before known in the history of science. Never were there so many heads and hands at work, to develop the arcana of nature, to investigate her laws, and to bring former principles, as far as possible, to the test of weight, measurement, and vision. The amount of experiments of different kinds, and instituted for different purposes, laid before the public, within this period, by individuals, and by learned societies, forms a mass of stupendous extent, and presents one of the most prominent features of the age.

These remarks apply almost exclusively to the physical sciences; for there is too much reason to suppose, as will be afterwards shown, that, in the philosophy of the human mind, and especially of human duty, the prevailing character of the age, and particularly of the latter part of it, has been that of *vain speculation* and *fantastic theory*, rather than of principles dictated by sober and enlightened experience. But in the physical sciences, amidst much false theory, such an immense variety and amount of *facts* and experiments have been laid before the public, as eminently to distinguish the eighteenth from all preceding centuries.

5. The last age was remarkably distinguished by REVOLUTIONS IN SCIENCE. Theorists were more numerous than in any former period, their systems more diversified, and revolutions followed each other in more rapid succession. In almost every department of science, changes of fashion, of doctrine, and of authority, have trodden so closely on the heels of each other, that merely to remember and enumerate them would be an arduous task.

The frequency and rapidity of scientific revolutions may be accounted for in various ways. The extraordinary diffusion of knowledge; the

swarms of inquirers and experimenters every where abounding; the unprecedented degree of intercourse which men of science enjoyed; and, of consequence, the thorough and speedy investigation which every new theory was accustomed to receive, all led to the successive erection and demolition of more ingenious and splendid fabrics than ever previously, within the same compass of time, passed before the view of man.

The rapid succession of discoveries, hypotheses, theories and systems, while it has served to keep the scientific world more than ever awake and busy, has done mischief by perplexing the mind with too many objects of attention, and by rendering the labour of the student more extensive, difficult, and tedious. If, in the seventeenth century, the inquirer had reason to complain, that the shifting aspect of science rendered necessary the most unremitting vigilance, and an endless repetition of his toil, this complaint might have been urged with an hundred fold more reason in the eighteenth. The advantages, however, of this state of things may be considered, on the whole, as predominant. The ardour, the competition, and the diligence in the pursuit of knowledge which it has inspired, deserve at once to be recognized as beneficial, and to be noticed as distinguishing characteristics of the age.

6. The last century is pre-eminently entitled to the character of THE AGE OF PRINTING. It is generally known, that this art is but little more than three centuries old. Among the ancients, the difficulty and expense of multiplying copies of works of reputation were so great, that few made the attempt; and the author who wished to submit his compositions to the public, was under the necessity of reciting them at some favourable meeting of the people. The disadvantages attending

this state of things were many and great. It repressed and discouraged talents, and rendered the number of readers extremely small. The invention of *printing* gave a new aspect to literature, and formed one of the most important eras in the history of human affairs. It not only increased the number, and reduced the price of books, but it also furnished authors with the means of laying the fruits of their labours before the public, in the most prompt and extensive manner. Considering this art, moreover, as a great moral and political engine, by which an impression may be made on a large portion of a community at the same time, it assumes a degree of importance highly interesting to the philanthropist, as well as to the scholar.

The extension of this art in the eighteenth century forms one of the leading features of the age. In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, especially in the former, printing presses were few, and, of course, publication was by no means easy. The century under review exhibited an immense extension of the art. This extension was not only general, but so great, that the most moderate estimate presents a result truly stupendous. There was probably a *thousand fold* more printing executed in the course of this century, than in the whole period that had before elapsed since the invention of the art.* The influence of this fact, in increasing the sum of public intelligence, and in keeping the minds of men awake and active, cannot but be noticed by the most superficial observer of the cha-

* This will appear a moderate calculation, when it is considered that there is a prodigious increase, not only in the number of new works annually issued from the press, but also in the extent and number of *editions* constantly demanded by the public. And when to this is added the amount of printing which has been continually going forward, particularly within the last fifty years, in furnishing the whole literary world with such a number and variety of periodical publications, as Reviews, Magazines, Newspapers, &c. the estimate above stated will probably be thought rather to fall below than to exceed the truth.

racter of the period under consideration. Printing presses have not only become numerous in the populous cities, in every literary portion of the world; but also in remote parts of the country these engines for the diffusion of information are found: thus furnishing the good with the means of sowing the seeds of truth and virtue, and the wicked with the means of scattering poison, to an extent never before witnessed in human society.

7. The last century is entitled to distinction above all others, as THE AGE OF BOOKS; an age in which the spirit of *writing*, as well as of *publication*, exceeded all former precedent. Though this is closely connected with the foregoing particular, it deserves a more distinct and pointed notice. Never, assuredly, did the world abound with such a profusion of various works, or produce such an immense harvest of literary fruits. The publication of books, in all former periods of the history of learning, laboured under many difficulties. Readers were comparatively few;^y of course writers met with small encouragement of a pecuniary kind to labour for the instruction of the public.^z Hence, none in preceding centu-

y "To prove the paucity of readers," in the seventeenth century, "it may be sufficient to remark, that the British nation had been satisfied from 1623 to 1664, that is, a period of forty-one years, with only *two* editions of the works of Shakspeare, which probably did not together make one thousand copies." *Life of MILTON*, by JOHNSON.

Whereas, in the eighteenth century, from 1733 to 1778, that is, in forty-five years, *ten* large and splendid editions of the same author were given to the public, and, probably, at least *ten more*, of a less magnificent kind, in various parts of the British dominions. Allowing each of these editions to have consisted of two thousand copies, which, on an average, may be supposed a moderate allowance, the number of copies of one publication called for by the English literary public, in a given period of the eighteenth century, will be found *forty times* greater than the number called for, during a period nearly equal in the seventeenth.

z The advantage now enjoyed by authors, of deriving large profits from the sale of *copy-rights*, is wholly modern. Mr. BARETTI, a friend of Dr. JOHNSON, who resided for some time in England, about half a century ago, told the Doctor, that he was the first man in Italy who received money for the *copy-right* of a book. BOSWELL'S *Life of JOHNSON*, vol. ii. p. 503. Though this practice had been established long be-

ries became authors, but such as were prompted by benevolence, by literary ambition, or by an enthusiastic love of literature. But the eighteenth century exhibited the business of publication under an aspect entirely new. It presented an increase in the number, both of writers and readers, almost incredible. In this century, for the first time AUTHORSHIP BECAME A TRADE. Multitudes of writers toiled, not for the promotion of science, nor even with a governing view to advance their own reputation, but for the market. Swarms of *book-makers by profession* arose, who inquired, not whether the subjects which they undertook to discuss stood in need of further investigation; or whether they were able to do them more ample justice than their predecessors; but whether *more books* might not be palmed upon the public, and made a source of emolument to the authors. Hence, there were probably more books published in the eighteenth century, than in the whole time that had before elapsed since the art of printing was discovered; perhaps more than were ever presented to the public, either in manuscript, or from the press, since the creation.

This unprecedented and wonderful multiplication of books, while it has rendered the means of information more easy of access, and more popular, has also served to perplex the mind of the student, to divide his attention, and to distract his powers. Where there are so many books, there will be less deep, original, and pa-

fore in Great-Britain, yet even there the instances of literary profit were rare, and the amount, in general, extremely small, until the middle, and toward the close of the eighteenth century. MILTON sold his *Paradise Lost* for *five pounds*, on condition of receiving some small subsequent emolument, if the sale should prove ready and extensive. Forty-six years afterwards, Mr. POPE received *two hundred pounds* for each volume of his translation of the *Iliad*, or *twelve hundred pounds* for the whole work. And towards the close of the century, the rewards of literary labour were, in many instances, augmented four, six, and even ten fold.

tient thinking; and each work will be studied with less attention and care. It may further be observed, that the abridgements,^a compilations, epitomes,^b synopses, and selections which are daily pouring from the press in countless numbers, and which make so large a part of modern publications, have a tendency to divert the mind from the treasures of ancient knowledge, and from the volumes of original authors.^c Thus, the multiplicity of new publications, while they would seem at first view, highly favourable to the acquisition of learning, are found, as will be afterwards more fully shown, hostile to deep and sound erudition.

The allurements to authorship which the modern state of literature holds out, also lead to another evil, viz. the *hasty production of books*. The *nonum prematur in annum* of former times, has been too generally disregarded or forgotten by late writers. Authors, instead of holding their works under the polishing hand of criticism for many years, are now tempted prematurely to hasten before the public. We have lately heard of an *Epic Poem*, nearly as long as the *Paradise Lost*, composed in *six weeks*! and of writers on the most important and difficult subjects, running a race with the press. The mischiefs arising from such rapi-

^a Never was there an age in which the *abridgement* of voluminous works was carried to so great and mischievous a length as in the eighteenth century. This mode of treating a prolix writer may, in some cases, be justified; but, in general, it deserves to be reprobated as a practice both presumptuous and unfair. Dr. JOHNSON often spoke of this practice in terms of warm and just indignation. Once, in particular, hearing a friend observe, that "abridging a good book was like presenting a cow with her head and tail cut off," he replied, with equal wit and severity—"No, Sir, it is making a cow to have a calf."

^b "Epitomes are the moths and corruptions of history, that have fretted and corroded the sound bodies of many excellent histories, and wrought them into base and unprofitable dregs." BACON.

^c "It is observed," says Dr. JOHNSON, "that a corrupt society has many laws; I know not whether it is not equally true, that an ignorant age has many books. When compilers and plagiarists are encouraged, the treasures of ancient knowledge will lie unexamined, and original authors will be neglected and forgotten."

dity of composition are many and great. Writers of the most exalted genius and extensive learning, when they proceed in this manner, must throw into their volumes much crude and indigested matter; and when those of ordinary capacity presume to indulge in the same haste, nothing can be expected from them but half-formed conceptions, and useless, if not mischievous productions. Hence, the last age is distinguished above all others, by producing thousands of worthless volumes, which encumber the shelves of libraries, and consume, without profit, the time of unwary readers.

The *spirit of trade*, by which the authors and publishers of books first began, in the eighteenth century, to be actuated in any considerable degree, has produced, and still continues to produce another serious evil. It too often leads men to write, not upon a sober conviction of truth, utility, and duty, but in accommodation to the *public taste*, however depraved, and with a view to the most *advantageous sale*. When pecuniary emolument is the leading motive to publication, books will not only be injuriously multiplied, but they will also be composed on the sordid calculation of obtaining the greatest number of purchasers. Hence, the temptation to sacrifice virtue at the shrine of avarice. Hence, the licentious and seductive character of many of those works which have had the greatest circulation in modern times, and which have produced the greatest emolument to their authors.

From the unprecedented spirit of publication which the eighteenth century exhibited, it has happened, as a natural consequence, that the character of an *author* has become lower in the public estimation, than it generally stood in preceding ages. Every object loses something of its value in the public esteem, in consequence of being cheap

and common. Thus it has fared with the dignity of authorship. Persons of this profession have become so numerous in society; many of those who engage in it discover such a selfish and mercenary spirit; and it is found so easy a task to compile a book, that their importance has suffered a diminution in some degree corresponding with the number and worthlessness of their literary labours.

Another signal revolution in the literary character of the eighteenth century, and closely connected with the multiplication of books, is, that *Booksellers* have become the *great patrons of literature*. In ancient times, authors having no hope of finding a remuneration for their labour in the general sale of their works, were under the necessity of attaching themselves to some private patron, who, to great wealth, united a fondness for literature and literary men. Some of the most accomplished writers of antiquity would have been unable to pursue their studies, or to complete those works which have so long instructed and delighted the world, had they not enjoyed the smiles of certain individuals of opulence and taste, who made it their pride and pleasure to foster literary merit. The same state of things existed, in a degree, for nearly two centuries after the art of printing was discovered. The number of publications and of readers was comparatively so small, that Booksellers were few; and those who engaged in this employment had little business, and, of course, occupied a humble station in society. The eighteenth century exhibited this class of tradesmen under an aspect entirely new. The great increase in the number of readers and purchasers of books, and the corresponding increase in the number of publications, and in the extent of the editions, both of old and new works, have raised the bookselling business to a most important and lucrative employ-

ment. The number of those who engage in this business, is probably increased, taking the literary world at large, more than an *hundred fold*.^d The extent and profits of their trade have grown in a still greater proportion. These circumstances have enabled them to become the patrons of learning; to pay generously for literary labours; and to put it in the power of authors to appear more speedily and advantageously at the bar of the public. Hence the ease of publication. And hence the countless number of volumes, which could never have found their way to the press in a different state of society.

8. The eighteenth century is distinguished for the UNPRECEDENTED DIFFUSION OF KNOWLEDGE. Not only has a greater number of books issued from the press, during this period, than the accumulated product of all preceding ages can display; but these books have had a more general circulation than in any former period. To read, a little more than a century ago, was by no means a general object of attention. At that time, neither the middle classes of society, nor oftentimes persons of high rank, thought ignorance a disgrace. The Female sex seldom resorted to books, either for amusement or instruction; and many respectable habitations scarcely contained a volume excepting the Bible, and one or two devotional books of standard value. In fact, as books of science then rarely appeared, so “those which did appear, containing the accumulated stores of profound research, and extensive reading, were nei-

^d The increase in the number of *Printers* and *Booksellers* in America, during the period in question, was at least in this proportion. And there can be no doubt, that a similar increase has taken place in most other parts of the literary world. In the city of *Paris*, there are said to be four hundred and fifty-five *Booksellers*, and three hundred and forty *Printers*. In *London*, the number, though not so large, is very great. In *Germany*, these classes of tradesmen are probably more numerous, but more scattered through the empire.

ther accessible nor intelligible, but by a few who had leisure, much previous information, and perseverance." It is true, as will be presently acknowledged, that such as, at that time, professed to devote themselves to study, were, in general, at least equally, if not more learned, than those who profess to belong to the same class at the present day. But the number of those at the end of the eighteenth century, who were in the habit of reading a few books, and who possessed a moderate and respectable share of information, was certainly far greater than in former periods of the history of man.

Some modern zealots, indeed, have gone beyond all just bounds, in describing the illumination and refinement of this period. We are not so much wiser than our forefathers, as the sanguine and ignorant would sometimes represent us. But there is surely no extravagance in saying, that there never was an age in which knowledge of various kinds was so *popular* and so *generally diffused*, or in which so many publications were circulated and read. The elements of literature and science have descended from the higher classes of society, and from universities, to the middle, and, in some instances, to the lower orders of men. Speculations which were once, in a great measure, confined to the closets of the curious, have gradually mingled themselves with the most prevailing and familiar doctrines of the day. Many modern females are well informed, and a few extensively learned. The common people read and inquire to a degree that would once have been thought incredible. Seminaries of learning are multiplied beyond all precedent. The number of students which they contain is, in general, much greater than formerly. Modern books, even those on subjects of science, are now divested of their former envelopements of

dead languages, and presented in a plain and popular dress. Booksellers, more rich, active and enterprising than they were a century ago, now find it their interest to scatter books in every direction, and to convey some knowledge of them to every door. Libraries have become far more numerous, and are placed on a more popular footing than formerly. Circulating Libraries^e have been introduced during this period, and have contributed greatly to extend the taste and the means of reading; and, finally, periodical publications, and a variety of other small works, which might be procured at a trifling expense, and understood by moderate capacities, or with little previous information, broke down the large masses of science and learning, presented their component materials in small and convenient portions, and thus fitted them to be received by every mind.

9. But, notwithstanding the wonderful multiplication of books, the last century may, with propriety be styled, THE AGE OF SUPERFICIAL LEARNING. *Erudition*, strictly so called, has been evidently on the decline, from the commencement of this period to its termination. The number of *readers*, indeed, and of those who assume to themselves the title of *literary* men, was doubtless far greater at the close of the century than ever before, since reading was known: but the number of the truly and profoundly learned was perhaps never so small, in proportion to the whole number who rank with men of letters and science. This is probably owing, in a great measure, to the following circumstances.

The artificial, luxurious, and dissolute character

^e *Circulating Libraries*, it is believed, were first instituted in the eighteenth century. The first establishment of this kind in London was commenced by one WRIGHT, a bookseller, about the year 1740. In 1800 the number of these Libraries in Great-Britain was not less than one thousand.

of the age was not favourable to laborious and patient study. Few can be expected to devote themselves habitually to that kind of reading which requires deep reflection, and long continued attention, amidst the solicitations of company and pleasure, and the thousand dissipating attractions which an age of refinement, and of greatly extended intercourse, presents.

Another circumstance which has contributed to characterize the eighteenth century, as an age of superficial learning, is the unprecedented circulation of Magazines, literary Journals, Abridgments, Epitomes, &c. with which the republic of letters has been deluged, particularly within the last forty years. These have distracted the attention of the student, have seduced him from sources of more systematic and comprehensive instruction, and have puffed up multitudes with false ideas of their own acquirements. The mass of new, hastily composed, and superficial works, have engrossed the minds of by far the greater number of readers, crowded out of view the stores of ancient learning, and even many of the best works of the preceding century, and taught too many to be satisfied with the meagerness of modern compends and compilations. It may be safely pronounced, that the eighteenth century, not only with regard to the treasures of Classic literature, but also with respect to a knowledge of the best writers of all the preceding seventeen centuries, was retrograde rather than progressive throughout the whole of its course.

An additional cause, unfavourable to deep and sound erudition, is the nature of those employments which, in modern times, solicit the attention of mankind. In every age, a great majority of men are destined to a laborious and active life. But in the eighteenth century, the wonderful ex-

tension of the commercial spirit; the unprecented multiplication of the objects and means of mercantile speculation; and the numerous temptations to a life of action, rather than of study, have brought more into vogue than formerly, that light, superficial, and miscellaneous reading, which fits men for the compting-house, and the scene of enterprize and emolument, rather than the recondite investigations of the closet.

There is also another cause which prevents individuals from acquiring the same depth of learning which was formerly attained. "The circle of human intelligence, within an hundred years, has been greatly extended: the objects of curious speculation, and of useful pursuit, have multiplied: many new branches of abstract science have been invented: many theories in physical philosophy have been established: the mechanical arts have received great enlargement and improvement: criticism has had its principles rendered more evident, and its application more exact: the analysis of the human mind is now generally an object of inquiry; and modern authors, in voluminous metaphysical treatises, in histories, in poems, and in novels, unfold the seminal principles of virtue and vice, and sound the depths of the heart for the motives of human action. Of these objects of mental occupation, every man who is elevated above the lower orders of society, is obliged to know something, either by the love of novelty, or by the shame of ignorance. But if the objects of inquiry be numerous, each cannot be investigated profoundly; the powers of the human mind are finite, and the union of accuracy and universality of knowledge is a chimera. In this case, therefore, the search will not be for complete and systematic treatises, which examine a subject on all sides, and in its minutest parts, detect it in its most

obscure beginnings, and trace its influence in the remotest consequences ; but for books of less tremendous bulk, which exhibit the subject in its most material points, preserving general outlines, and principal features."^f

To the causes above mentioned may be added one other, derived from the more frequent intercourse of men in advanced civilization. "In this intercourse, a taste for learned and ingenious conversation has arisen, and the natural desire of superiority impels men to excel in it. But in collecting means for acquiring this excellence, the specious rather than the useful are sought. Facts are stored, not for the exercise of rational criticism, nor for the deduction of important truth, but that they may be again distributed."^g Hence the temptation to study many subjects superficially, but to gain the complete mastery of none. Hence those scraps and shreds of knowledge which are daily served up in periodical publications, and scattered through all grades of society, excepting the very lowest, in popular manuals, form a large part of that learning which is daily sported in the social circle, and in the conflicts of disputation.

10. From the details which have been given in the foregoing chapters, it appears that the last century may, with peculiar propriety, be styled, *THE AGE OF TASTE AND REFINEMENT*. In the productions of bold and original genius, though greatly fruitful, it has, perhaps, been exceeded by some former ages;^h but in the general prevalence of taste and refinement, it may be confidently asserted that no age ever equalled the last. This remark might be illustrated at great length, by recurring to the

^f *Monthly Review*, vol. xxix. p. 302, N. S.

^g *Ibid.*

^h "Much has been written in this age," says VOLTAIRE, "but genius belonged to the last."

state of the various branches of human knowledge and art, during the period in question.

In the *physical sciences* it might be shown, that, though great and splendid discoveries have been made in this period, much more has been done in pursuing former discoveries, in extending the limits of principles before established, in forming systems of classification, arrangement, and nomenclature, and in conferring beauty and elegance on every part. In the *Mechanic Arts* also, inventions have been made highly honourable to the genius of the age; but the improvements in simplicity, convenience, accuracy, and exquisite nicety of workmanship, are far more numerous, and more strikingly characteristic of the age.ⁱ But, perhaps, to *Polite Literature* this general remark may be applied with still more confidence, and to a greater extent. The poets and historians of the eighteenth century have the advantage of all their predecessors in no respect so decidedly as in uniform correctness, polish, and taste. In a word, the *Master Builders* in the temple of knowledge, during this period, have been, perhaps, fewer in number than in several preceding centuries; but neither the number nor the success of those who busied themselves in extending, polishing, and adorning the fabric, was ever so great.

This feature of the last age remarkably appears in the state of what may be called the *mechanical* part of literature. The refined, elegant, and expensive manner in which books have been for some time printed and decorated, more especially within

ⁱ It cannot be denied, that some articles of ancient manufacture which have come down to our times, discover an exquisite polish and elegance of workmanship, which we seldom find exceeded, perhaps not equalled at the present day. But that the *Mechanic Arts*, in general, reached a degree of improvement in the eighteenth century, which they could never before boast, particularly in simplicity, convenience and beauty, it is presumed that none will hesitate to admit.

the last ten or fifteen years of the century, as it marks a period of luxury and taste, so we may question whether it has not been carried to an injurious length. If this system of sacrificing the useful to the ornamental be pursued much further, it must contract the circulation of books, and, of course, diminish the number both of authors and of readers. Some have even pronounced, that it must operate to produce a "counter revolution in the republic of letters, and introduce all the misfortunes of a manuscript age."

11. The century under consideration may be denominated THE AGE OF INFIDEL PHILOSOPHY. There have been in every age "profane and vain babblings, and oppositions of science falsely so called." But it may be confidently pronounced, that there never was an age in which so many deliberate and systematic attacks were made on Revealed Religion, through the medium of pretended science, as in the last. A few truly learned and ingenious men made such attacks the main business of their lives; and many others, of humbler name, who vainly aspired to the name of *philosophers*, have directed their puny efforts towards the same object.

The doctrine of *Materialism*, probably, had a greater currency among certain classes of the learned, during this period, than in any former age enlightened with Christian knowledge. It was, indeed, pushed to an atheistical length by some who assumed the name, and gloried in the character of philosophers. *Astronomical records* have been fabricated or misinterpreted for the purpose of discrediting the sacred chronology. The natural history of the *Earth*, of *Man*, and of other animals, has been pursued with unwearied diligence, to find evidence which should militate against the information conveyed in the Scriptures.

The discoveries in *Chemistry* have been tortured to furnish a physical solution of all those phenomena of motion, life, and mind, which are unanimously considered, by more sober inquirers, as teaching the immateriality of the soul, and as proclaiming the existence of a supreme intelligent FIRST CAUSE. Systems of *Moral* and *Political* philosophy have been formed, by which their authors meant to strike at the root of evangelic truth. And all the stores of ancient and modern literature have been ransacked to obtain some pretext for disbelieving the precious Records which God condescended to bestow on our fallen race.

This rage for impious theory, though it had long before existed, began more boldly and extensively to proclaim its views about twenty years before the close of the period under consideration. There is scarcely a single branch of human knowledge to which this scientific and literary perversion has not reached; and scarcely a ridiculous or odious form of error to which it has not given rise. Were these motley and grotesque figures, formed by perverted genius, only intended to traverse the stage, for the temporary purpose of amusement, they might excite less of our attention; but, considering them, as their framers have anxiously desired to make them be considered, as guides to knowledge, and as rules of action, every lover of human happiness will regard them with more serious and indignant feelings. And although their influence has been counteracted by means which will be presently mentioned, they have yet poisoned the principles, and completed the ruin of millions.

Almost every successive age has some peculiarity in the style and manner of its philosophers and writers; some particular *livery*, which serves to distinguish it from other times. The scientific

livery of the last age is, as we have seen, a fantastic patch-work, enriched with many beautiful and precious materials, but deformed by the mixture of many gaudy colours and false ornaments. Among the latter we may reckon that continual prating about the "energies and progress of Mind," the "triumph of Reason," the "omnipotence of Philosophy," the "perfectibility of Man," &c. &c. which was never before so loud and frequent; which has been employed, with particular volubility and success, by infidel philosophers; and which, amidst continual and abundant refutations, is yet clamorous and obtrusive.

12. The period under review may be pronounced THE AGE OF CHRISTIAN SCIENCE. This is by no means inconsistent with the statement in the last particular; for, after all the attacks of infidelity, and of theoretical philosophy, the Religion of Christ, when contemplated through the medium of science, has had a complete and unprecedented triumph during this period. It has been often objected to Christianity, that it is unfavourable to the progress of knowledge; that it discourages scientific enterprize; that it is inimical to free inquiry, and has a tendency to keep the minds of men in blindness and thralldom. The history of the last concurs with that of many preceding centuries, in demonstrating that the very reverse of what the objection states is the truth. *Christian nations*, during the period in question, have been, of all others, most remarkable for favouring the advancement of liberal knowledge. In those countries in which Religion has existed in its greatest *purity*, and has enjoyed the most general *prevalence*, literature and science have been most extensively and successfully cultivated. It is also worthy of remark, that, among all the professions denominated *learned*, the *clerical* profession may

be considered as having furnished as many, if not more authors of distinction than any other. And if we join to the *clergy* those lay-authors who have been no less eminent as *Christians* than as scholars, the predominance of learning and talents on the side of Religion will appear too great to admit of comparison.

But this is not all:—As the last century is remarkable for having furnished an unprecedented number of attacks on Revealed Religion, through the medium of science; so it is also no less remarkable for having derived much support to Revelation, and much valuable illustration of the Sacred Writings, from the inquiries of philosophers and the observations of travellers. Many of the discoveries made in mechanical and chemical philosophy, during this period, have served to elucidate and confirm various parts of the Christian Scriptures. Every sober and well-directed inquiry into the 'natural history of man, and of the globe we inhabit, has been found to corroborate the Mosaic account of the Creation, the Fall, the Deluge, the Dispersion, and other important events recorded in the sacred volume. To which we may add, that the reports of voyagers and travellers, within this period, have no less remarkably served to illustrate the sacred records, and to confirm the faith of Christians. Never was there a period of the same extent in which so much light and evidence in favour of Revelation were drawn from the inquiries of philosophy as in that which is under review: nor was it ever rendered so apparent, that the information and the doctrines contained in the sacred volume perfectly harmonize with the most authentic discoveries, and the soundest principles of science.

13. The last century may be emphatically called THE AGE OF TRANSLATIONS.—“Of almost every

other kind of writing the ancients have left us models which all succeeding ages have laboured to imitate; but Translation may justly be claimed by the moderns as their own."—The *Greeks*, so far as we know, achieved nothing worthy of notice in this department of literary labour. The *Romans*, who confessed themselves the scholars of the *Greeks*, made a few versions of those writings which they followed as models;^j but it does not appear that any of their writers grew eminent by translation; and, indeed, it was probably more frequent to translate for private exercise or amusement than for fame.

For three centuries past the art of translation has been gradually gaining ground throughout the literary world, both in frequency and elegance.^k But the extension of this art, in both these respects, during the period under review, was so great and signal, that it must be considered as forming a remarkable feature of the age.—Translations from every polished language, into every other of this character, have not only become numerous, but have also attained, particularly within

^j Every man in Rome who aspired to the praise of literature thought it necessary to learn *Greek*, and, therefore, stood in little need of translations. Translation, however, was not wholly neglected. Dramatic poems could be understood by the people in no language but their own; and the Romans were sometimes entertained with the tragedies of *EURIPIDES*, and the comedies of *MENANDER*. Other works were sometimes attempted: in an old scholiast there is mention of a *Latin Iliad*, and we have not wholly lost *CICERO*'s version of the poem of *ARATUS*.—*Idler*, ii. No. 68.

^k *CHAUCER*, the father of English poetry, was among the first translators into our language. He left a version of *BOETIUS On the Comforts of Philosophy*, which, though dull, prosaic, and inelegant, held, at that early period, a conspicuous place. Some improvement in the art of translation was made in the reign of *QUEEN ELIZABETH*; but still any thing like freedom and elegance was seldom attained. It was not till towards the close of the seventeenth century that this art began to be generally understood, and its proper principles reduced to practice. It is unnecessary to add, that, since that time many specimens of translation have been presented to the world, which are altogether unequalled in the history of preceding ages.

the last fifty years, a degree of refinement and excellence never before known. Versions of the Greek and Roman *Classics* have especially abounded during the period in question. And though this circumstance has contributed to render some knowledge of those great works of antiquity more popular, it has also been connected with the decline of Classic Literature, which was before mentioned. As elegant versions increased in number and circulation, it was natural that the originals should become gradually more neglected.

The number and excellence of modern translations may be considered as removing one of the impediments which bar the way to science, and as diminishing the inconvenience arising from the multiplicity of languages. But the length to which this practice is now carried will probably be found to discourage the study of languages, to diminish literary industry, and, of course, to render knowledge still more superficial.

14. The last century may further be denominated THE AGE OF LITERARY HONOURS. The practice of conferring the honours of literary institutions on individuals of distinguished erudition, commenced in the twelfth century; when the Emperor LOTHARIUS, having found in Italy a copy of the Roman Civil Law, ordained that it should be publicly expounded in the schools: and that he might give encouragement to the study, he further ordered, that the public Professors of this law should be dignified with the title of *Doctors*.¹ Not long afterwards the practice of creating Doctors was borrowed from the *Lawyers* by *Divines*, who, in their schools, publicly taught divinity, and con-

¹ The first person created a *Doctor*, after this ordinance of the Emperor, was BULGARUS HUGOLINUS, who was greatly distinguished for his learning and literary labour.

ferred *degrees* on those who had made great proficiency in this science.^m

From this period till the beginning of the eighteenth century, the conferring of literary honours was generally conducted by the respectable Universities of Europe, in a cautious, discriminating, and judicious manner. And even in the former half of the century under review, these honours were bestowed with much comparative reserve and deliberation.ⁿ But in the latter half of this period, the practice of literary institutions, in this respect, was materially different. As the students in these institutions became more numerous, and literary characters in general more common, Universities began to bestow their laurels with a more free and incautious hand. Genuine erudition and talents began to be less considered as qualifications, than station, popularity, or wealth. By these means, collegiate honours have become by far more cheap and common, during the period under review, than in any former age; but, as the natural consequence of this, they have also become less valuable and less esteemed.

The same remarks, in substance, apply to membership in literary and scientific Societies. Before the eighteenth century, honours of this kind were conferred on few or none but those who were eminent for learning or talents. But the popular diffusion of knowledge, and the artificial state of society which distinguish the last age, led to a

^m This practice of conferring degrees in *Divinity* was first adopted in the universities of *Bononia*, *Paris* and *Oxford*.—See MATHER'S *Magnalia Christi Americana*, b. iv. p. 134.

ⁿ It is remarkable that the celebrated Dr. SAMUEL JOHNSON, when he had made great proficiency in literature, could not obtain the degree of *Master of Arts* from Trinity College, Dublin, though powerful interest was made in his behalf for this purpose. Instances of the failure of applications of a similar kind, made in favour of characters still more distinguished than JOHNSON was at that period, are also on record.

more unsparing distribution of honours of this kind; so that literary and scientific associations, at the close of the period which is the subject of this retrospect, consisted of a larger number of members than ever before, and more particularly of members of an unqualified and inefficient character.

15. The eighteenth century was pre-eminently THE AGE OF LITERARY AND SCIENTIFIC INTERCOURSE. It has been repeatedly remarked in the foregoing sheets, that the extension of Commerce, the discoveries in Geography, and the improvements in Navigation, in the Mechanic Arts, and in the modes of travelling, have led to a more general intercourse among mankind than in any former period. This remark may be extended to the republic of letters. In all preceding ages, learned men were in a great measure insulated. Those of one country knew little of those of another; and if any one wished to obtain more particular information concerning the treasures of knowledge possessed by an individual, or a nation, he was under the necessity of travelling into the country with which he sought to be acquainted, and of making personal inquiry for this purpose. And even after the art of printing was discovered, the intercourse between different parts of the learned world was so small, for more than two centuries, that some of the greatest benefactors to the cause of knowledge were little known out of their own country, and some but imperfectly even within these limits.

In the eighteenth century it was remarkably otherwise. The great extension of the art of printing in this period, joined with the circumstances above stated, have brought all classes of men in the literary world better acquainted with each other, and especially those who are devoted to the improvement of letters and science. The number

of literary Journals in every part of Europe has greatly increased within the last fifty years, their plans have been much improved, and their circulation prodigiously extended; learned individuals and societies now maintain a more free and friendly correspondence than formerly; the great improvements in Post-office establishments, within this period, have facilitated, to an unparalleled degree, the intercourse between distant parts of the earth;* foreigners of distinction are more frequently elected members of academies and other associations of a similar kind; Commerce, as its channels became multiplied and enlarged, furnished, at once, a convenient medium, and strong incentives to literary intercourse; the great increase in the practice of translating respectable works into all polished languages, has also served to render books of value, and their authors, more generally known:—to all which may be added, that the increased frequency and extent of modern travels, have been decidedly favourable to the correspondence of learned men, and to a knowledge of the works and characters of one another.

Such is an imperfect outline of the literary and scientific character of the century to which we have just bidden adieu. The picture is necessarily extensive and various; and the features, however unskillfully sketched, are presented with sufficient accuracy

* To illustrate this remark, two or three facts will be stated with regard to a single post-office establishment. In 1728 the London post arrived one day at Edinburgh with only one six-penny London letter, and that was addressed to the Post-Master-General on office business. The arrival of the post was then only once a fortnight; now it is six times a week. The post then employed ten days in travelling from London to Edinburgh; now it employs only three. Then the mail produced no revenue or nett profit to government, but was rather a continual charge; but the revenue of the post-office in Scotland, for the year ending in April, 1802, was £85,791 11s. 3d. sterling, or about 500,000 dollars. A corresponding increase in commercial and literary intercourse has taken place in the same period, in almost every cultivated part of the world.

to show that they are striking, and worthy of more minute examination. They are not, indeed, all calculated to give pleasure to the benevolent mind: some are distorted and disgusting, and a few heavy and uninteresting; but a much greater number are at once strong, highly illuminated, and pre-eminently engaging. If these be mingled, as in most pictures that are drawn true to nature, it is presumed that, in the present instance, the agreeable features predominate in a greater degree than in any delineation of a former period of similar extent.

Those, therefore, who have witnessed the close of the century under review, have indeed reason to congratulate themselves as an highly favoured generation. Though they have been pained with the sight of some degrading retrocessions in human knowledge, and almost stunned with the noisy pretensions of false philosophy, they have seen, at the same time, improvements in science, which their fathers, a century ago, would have anticipated with astonishment, or pronounced altogether impossible. They have seen a larger portion of human society enlightened, polished, and comfortable, than ever before greeted the eye of benevolence. They have, in a word, witnessed, on the one hand, the accession of honours to science, which it could boast in no former period; and, on the other, a degree of usefulness reflected from science to economy and art, no less conspicuous and unrivalled. The lapse of another century such as the eighteenth—a century that should bring with it an equal amount of discoveries and improvements, and present an equally rapid increase in the means, and in the diffusion of knowledge, would confer an aspect on systems of science, of which we, at present, are little qualified to judge. Such a century the nineteenth is likely to prove.

But let none indulge the vain dream that all darkness is about to be banished from the earth, and that human nature is rapidly hastening to perfection. "When the philosophers of the seventeenth century were first congregated into the Royal Society, we are told that great expectations were raised of the sudden progress of useful arts. The time was supposed to be near when engines should turn by a perpetual motion, and health be secured by the universal medicine; when learning should be facilitated by a real character, and commerce extended by ships which could reach their ports in defiance of the tempest. But that time never came. The Society met and parted without any visible diminution of the miseries of life. The gout and stone were still painful; the ground that was not ploughed brought forth no harvest; and neither oranges nor grapes could grow upon the hawthorn."^p The same result, it may be confidently predicted, will appear at the close of the century on which we have now entered. The advocates of the *supremacy of Reason* and the *perfectibility of Man*, at every successive retrospect of human affairs, will find themselves refuted and confounded. And though Science, slowly advancing amidst the opposing hosts of prejudice, mistaken facts, and false theories, will reach far beyond its present limits, it must ever fall short of those extravagant expectations which, founded in ignorance of human nature, and discarding the dictates of experience, cannot avoid proceeding in error, and ending in disappointment.

Philosophers of the Nineteenth Century! your predecessors of the past age have bequeathed to you an immeasurable mass both of good and evil. Contemplate the labours and the progress of your

fathers, and be animated in your course ! Mark the mistakes of those deluded and presumptuous spirits who have misled and corrupted their species, and learn caution and wisdom from their errors ! Behold how much has been done by patient inquiry, by faithful observation, by accurate experiment, and by careful analysis and induction ; but how little by fanciful speculation, by the dreams of hypothesis, by vain boasting, or by waging war against Nature's God ! Learn to distinguish that Philosophy which is the friend of truth, the handmaid of virtue, the humble interpreter of JEHOVAH's works, and the ornament of rational minds ; from that *ignis fatuus* which shines but to deceive, and allures but to destroy. Remember that by giving yourselves up to the guidance of the latter, you can gain nothing but disappointment and shame ; but that the sober, diligent, and persevering pursuit of the former is the plain and only road to those discoveries which will yet further enrich the sciences ; to those improvements which will adorn life ; to those practical arts which will add utility to ornament ; and to that substantial advancement in knowledge which the enlightened and benevolent mind anticipates with a glow of delight.

ADDITIONAL NOTES.

NOTES ON CHAPTER XII.

Metaphysical Science not popular. p. 3.

THE disposition to undervalue and neglect metaphysical science is one of the most disgraceful characteristics of the last age. The influence of this disposition is more extensive and more mischievous than is commonly imagined. It is unfavourable to strength and accuracy of reasoning; has a most pernicious effect on morals and religion, and, consequently, on private and public happiness. When a man declares that he has no taste for metaphysical reading and inquiries, he pronounces a satire on his own mind; but when he ridicules those who have such a taste, he attempts to trample on the dignity and the happiness of his species. Such persons surely forget that some of the most important questions that interest us as men, as scholars, and as Christians, can only receive a correct solution by means of metaphysical principles.

DES CARTES. p. 3.

RENES DES CARTES was born at La Haye, in France, in 1596, and educated among the Jesuits. His doctrines concerning the human mind were first published about the year 1633, and soon began to excite much attention among the learned. For a number of years before his death he resided chiefly in Holland. Removing to Stockholm, in consequence of an invitation given to him by the Queen of Sweden, in 1649, he died there in 1650. It is universally known that the opinions taught by this great man long filled an immense space in the philosophical world.

LOCKE. p. 4.

JOHN LOCKE was born at Wrington, near Bristol, in South-Britain, in the year 1632. He was educated at the University of Oxford, which he entered in 1651. After leaving

the university he studied physic, and engaged for a time in the practice of this profession. In 1664 he went to Germany, as secretary to Sir WILLIAM SWAN, English envoy to the Elector of Brandenburg. In 1670 he began to form the plan of his *Essay on the Human Understanding*, which he published in 1690. He died in 1704. Of the vigorous intellect, the profound and extensive views, the great learning, and the excellent character of this celebrated "master builder" in science, it is unnecessary to speak. The above dates are given merely for the convenience of reference.

Errors and Tendency of LOCKE's Philosophy. p. 6.

While ample justice is done to Mr. LOCKE's genius; while the splendid service which he rendered to the philosophy of mind is readily acknowledged; and while his intentions are allowed to have been unexceptionably pure; yet it may be doubted, whether his writings have not done more to promote a spirit of scepticism than those of any other individual since his time. This effect has been produced, not only by some of his doctrines, but also by the general spirit of his philosophy.

In tracing all our ideas to two sources, *sensation* and *reflection*, he imposed on the mind of the inquirer by a plausible, but most deceitful appearance of simplicity. It is no less true in the philosophy of the mind than in that of the physical sciences, that attempts to simplify and generalize may be carried not only further than truth will warrant, but also to a seductive and mischievous length. Mr. LOCKE defines *reflection* to be "the notice which the mind takes of its own operations, and the manner of them." This definition, besides being rather descriptive of *consciousness* than of *reflection*, embraces a more important error. To say that all our ideas are ideas either of sensation or reflection, is to say that we can think of nothing but an object of sense, or an act of our own minds. But is this true? According to this account, what shall we say to the various exercises of memory, of imagination, &c.? This philosopher, also, in representing *ideas*, not as thoughts in the mind, nor yet the external objects of thought; but as intermediate, occult *images*, which alone the mind contemplates, gave countenance to a principle from which the most dangerous and absurd inferences have since been made. The whole controversy about *innate*

ideas, if Mr. LOCKE uniformly employs this phrase in the same sense, is a war of words. If an idea be an object of thought which intervenes between the mind and the thing perceived, none can, or ever did, suppose that ideas are *innate* in this sense. To assert that the mind has *such* innate ideas, would be to represent it as thinking before it thinks, and acting before it acts.—From these and other erroneous principles taught by this great philosopher, it soon became apparent that doctrines from which he would have shrunk with abhorrence must necessarily result; and the history of metaphysical science since his time evinces how mischievous is error, when supported by the authority of such a mind as that which produced the *Essay on the Human Understanding*.

HUME. p. 9.

DAVID HUME, the celebrated metaphysician and historian, was born in Edinburgh, in the year 1711. He was designed for the law by his friends, but having no inclination himself to that profession, he applied to business, and in 1734 became a clerk to a merchant at Bristol. Soon afterwards he went to France, where he wrote his *Treatise of Human Nature*, which was published at London in 1739. Between this period and his death he travelled into Italy, Germany, and again into France. His *Moral Essays* were published in 1742; his *Political Discourses*, and his *Inquiry concerning the Principles of Morals*, in 1752; his *Natural History of Religion* in 1756; and his *History of England* was completed in 1761. He died in 1776.

Philosophy of HUME. p. 9.

Mr. HUME taught that all the perceptions of the human mind resolve themselves into two classes, viz. *impressions* and *ideas*; comprehending under the former all our sensations, passions, and emotions; and under the latter the feint images of these, when we remember or imagine them. Our *ideas*, in the opinion of this philosopher, are all copied from our *impressions*, the former differing from the latter only in being weaker perceptions. “He adopted LOCKE’s account of the origin of our ideas, and from that principle inferred, that we have no idea of substance, corporeal or spiritual; no idea of

power; no other idea of a cause, but that it is something antecedent, and constantly conjoined to that which we call its effects; in a word, that we can have no idea of any thing but our sensations, and the operations of mind of which we are conscious," and that nothing else exists.—REID's *Essays*, II.

But though Mr. HUME's fundamental doctrines were thus extravagant and absurd; and though his philosophy, falsely so called, leads to the most unlimited scepticism, as he doubtless intended it should; yet both he and Bishop BERKELEY rendered important service to metaphysical science. The mode in which they discussed their very errors and absurdities contributed to confer on this branch of philosophy a perspicuity and precision, which are of the utmost importance in studying the human mind.

On the subject of *causation* Mr. HUME has thrown new light. Some of his reasonings, indeed, on this subject, were suggested by MALEBRANCHE, and, even at a still earlier period, by BACON and HOBBS. Ideas, also, similar to some of those which he advanced, were thrown out by BARROW, BUTLER, BERKELEY, and others. But Mr. HUME has the merit of having first clearly shown to philosophers, that our common language, with respect to cause and effect, is merely analogical; and that, if there be any links among physical events, they must for ever remain invisible to us. Nor is the justness of this doctrine to be doubted on account of the sceptical inferences which its author has deduced from it: his error, in this case, does not so much lie in his premises as in the conclusions which he draws from them. In fact, if this part of his system be admitted; and if, at the same time, we admit the authority of that principle of the mind which leads us to refer every event to an efficient cause; his doctrine conducts us to a result more sublime, more favourable to piety, and more consistent with sound philosophy, than the opinion commonly held on this subject.—See STEWART's *Philosophy of Mind*, Notes C and D.

Dr. REID. p. 10.

THOMAS REID, D. D. was born at Strachan, in Kincardineshire, North-Britain, April 26, 1710. He was educated at the University of Aberdeen, and for a number of years held the pastoral charge of the Congregation of New-Machar, in the neighbourhood of that city. He was chosen Professor

of Moral Philosophy in the University of Glasgow in 1763. His *Inquiry into the Human Mind on the Principles of Common Sense*, was published in 1764; his *Essays on the Intellectual Powers of Man*, in 1785; and his *Essays on the Active Powers*, in 1788. He died October 7, 1796, in the 87th year of his age. Few men, since the days of LOCKE, have discovered talents more eminently fitted to explore the regions of mind than this philosopher.

Dr. REID's Philosophy. p. 11.

Besides the doctrine of *perception*, stated in the above-mentioned page, Dr. REID's system is distinguished by a view of the powers of the mind, or of the sources of our ideas, which differs considerably from the systems of his predecessors. Instead of dividing the intellectual powers into *simple apprehension, judgment and reasoning*, as the greater number of metaphysical writers have done since the days of ARISTOTLE, he considers this division as far from embracing all the phenomena of mind. He does not, indeed, attempt a complete enumeration of all the powers of the human understanding; but supposes that there are at least *nine*; viz.

1. The powers we have by means of our external senses.
2. Memory.
3. Conception.
4. The powers of resolving and analysing complex objects, and compounding those which are more simple.
5. Judging.
6. Reasoning.
7. Taste.
8. Moral perception.
9. Consciousness.—Each of these he supposes to be an original and distinct power, not resolvable into any one or more of the rest.

This may be pronounced an important step in the progress of metaphysical science. Incalculable injury has been done to various branches of philosophy by injudicious attempts to reduce numerous facts and principles to one or two classes, when they do not admit of such plausible simplification, and when they can be considered with advantage only in detail. The progress of medical science has been retarded by too close an adherence to systems of nosological arrangement. Chemical philosophy may also be said to have been disserved by premature attempts to form a regular classification of its phenomena. Metaphysicians have fallen into a similar mistake. One writer on the human mind tells us that all its operations may be explained by referring them to *sensation and reflection*. Another would derive all our ideas from *sensation only*; while

a third would account for every intellectual exercise, by ascribing them to *vibrations* of a stronger or weaker kind. Though some of these writers approach much nearer to the true doctrine of mind than others, they are all erroneous; and many of their mistakes arise from aiming at a simplicity of which the subject does not admit. The works of the Author of *Nature* can be contemplated by us only in detail: and the process of generalization, though always pleasing to human pride, and sometimes, in a degree, just and useful; yet, when carried beyond a certain length, is, doubtless, calculated to deceive the inquirer, and to countenance the most mischievous errors.

Dr. REID was enabled to present the improved views of the science of mind, which his works contain, by pursuing a method of inquiry which he first applied to this subject. The inductive plan of investigation, recommended by BACON, had been long before applied to the physical sciences; and a few writers, from the beginning till the middle of the eighteenth century, had suggested the propriety of attempting to explore, on similar principles, the phenomena of the intellectual world. But Dr. REID is asserted to have been the first person "who conceived justly and clearly the analogy between these two different branches of human knowledge; defining with precision the distinct provinces of Observation and of Reflection, in furnishing the *data* of all our reasonings concerning Matter and Mind; and demonstrating the necessity of a careful separation between the phenomena which they respectively exhibit, while we adhere to the same mode of philosophizing in investigating the laws of each."—STEWART's *Life of REID*, p. 48.

Dr. REID's Use of the Phrase Common Sense. p. 12.

"One of the first writers who introduced the phrase *Common Sense* into the technical or appropriate language of Logic, was Father BUFFIER, in a book, entitled, *Traité des Premières Verités*. It has since been adopted by several authors of note in Great-Britain, particularly by Dr. REID, Dr. OSWALD, and Dr. BEATTIE; by all of whom, however, I am afraid, it must be confessed, it has been employed without a due attention to precision. The last of these writers uses it to denote that power by which the mind perceives the truth of any intuitive proposition, whether it be an axiom of ab-

stract science, or a statement of some fact resting on the immediate information of consciousness, of perception, or of memory; or one of those fundamental laws of belief which are implied in the application of our faculties to the ordinary business of life. The same extensive use of the word may, I believe, be found in the other authors just mentioned. But no authority can justify such a laxity in the employment of language in philosophical discussions: for if mathematical axioms be (as they manifestly and indisputably are) a class of propositions essentially distinct from the other kinds of intuitive truths now described, why refer them all indiscriminately to the same principle in our constitution? If this phrase, therefore, be at all retained, precision requires that it should be employed in a more limited acceptation; and accordingly, in the works under our consideration, it is appropriated most frequently, though by no means uniformly, to that class of intuitive truths which I have already called *fundamental laws of belief*. When thus restricted, it conveys a notion unambiguous at least, and definite; and, consequently, the question about its propriety and impropriety turns entirely on the coincidence of this definition with the meaning of the word as employed in ordinary discourse."

"I have said that the question about the propriety of the phrase *Common Sense*, as employed by philosophers, must be decided by an appeal to general practice: for although it be allowable, and even necessary, for a philosopher to limit the acceptation of words which are employed vaguely in common discourse, it is always dangerous to give to a word a scientific meaning essentially different from that in which it is usually understood. It has, at least, the effect of misleading those who do not enter deeply into the subject; and of giving a paradoxical appearance to doctrines which, if expressed in more unexceptionable terms, would be readily admitted."

"It appears to me that this has actually happened in the present instance. The phrase *Common Sense*, as it is generally understood, is nearly synonymous with *Mother-wit*; denoting that degree of sagacity (depending partly on original capacity, and partly on personal experience and observation) which qualifies an individual for those simple and essential occupations which all men are called on to exercise habitually by their common nature. In this acceptation it is opposed to those mental acquirements which are derived from a regular education, and from the study of books; and refers not to the speculative convictions of the understanding, but to that

prudence and discretion which are the foundation of successful conduct. Such is the idea which POPE annexes to the word, when, speaking of good sense, (which means only a more than ordinary share of common sense) he calls it

“ The gift of Heaven,
And though no science, fairly worth the seven.”

“ To speak, accordingly, of appealing from the conclusions of philosophy to common sense, had the appearance, to title-page readers, of appealing from the verdict of the learned to the voice of the multitude; or of attempting to silence free discussion, by a reference to some arbitrary and undefinable standard, distinct from any of the intellectual powers hitherto enumerated by logicians. Whatever countenance may be supposed to have been given by some writers to such an interpretation of this doctrine, I may venture to assert, that none is afforded by the works of Dr. REID. The standard to which he appeals is neither the creed of a particular sect, nor the inward light of enthusiastic presumption; but that constitution of human nature without which all the business of the world would immediately cease; and the substance of his argument amounts merely to this—that those essential laws of belief to which sceptics have objected, when considered in connection with our scientific reasonings, are implied in every step we take as active beings; and, if called in question by any man in his practical concerns, would expose him universally to the charge of insanity.”—STEWART'S *Life of REID*, p. 118—120.

LEIBNITZ. p. 14.

GODFRED WILLIAM LEIBNITZ was born at Leipsic, in Saxony, in the year 1646. He was a prodigy of learning, had an astonishing memory, and possessed great vigour and versatility of talents. His works are very voluminous. His doctrines concerning the mind may be gathered from his *Theodicea*, published towards the close of the seventeenth century. The system of philosophy taught in this work was designed partly in emendation of the Cartesian, and partly in opposition to the Newtonian. LEIBNITZ retained the subtle matter, the universal plenitude, and the vortices of DES CARTES, but differed in some respects from that philosopher. But against Sir ISAAC NEWTON his scientific warfare was principally directed.—He died in the year 1716.

WOLFE. p. 17.

CHRISTIAN WOLFE, a native of Breslau, in Germany, was born in the year 1679. He was a follower of LEIBNITZ, and wrote largely in defence of his philosophical opinions. At the age of 26 WOLFE had acquired so much reputation as to be appointed Professor of Mathematics in the University of Halle, and soon afterwards Professor of Philosophy in general in the same institution. His famous work, entitled, *Thoughts on God, the World, and the Human Soul*, in which his metaphysical doctrines are delivered, was published in 1719. Accused of heresy, on account of his holding the doctrine of *necessity*, and some other obnoxious opinions, he was banished from the Prussian dominions in 1723. For a number of years after this event Germany was filled with disputes concerning his opinions, and the treatment which he had received; and the names of *Wolfians* and *Anti-Wolfians* were every where heard. In 1732, the current of public opinion turning in his favour, he was recalled from his exile, and appointed Vice-Chancellor of the University of Halle. In 1745 he was raised to the office of Chancellor of the University, and created a Baron, by the Elector of Bavaria.—He died in 1754.

STAHL's *Doctrine concerning the Mind*. p. 17.

Contemporary with WOLFE was the celebrated GEORGE ERNEST STAHL, Professor of Medicine in the University of Halle. He was distinguished not so much by any new doctrine concerning the nature and powers of the mind (for it is even uncertain what were the opinions which he held on this subject), as by entertaining the singular idea, that the soul presides over, and governs the whole economy of the body, both in health and disease. To the will he referred all the vital functions, and contended, that if there be instances in which we will an effect, without being able to make it an object of attention, it is possible that what we call vital and involuntary motions may be the consequences of our own thought and volition. He supposed that the influence of the soul is extended to every part of the system by means of the nerves; and that, when their action is impeded or deranged, disease is the unavoidable consequence. These opinions of

STAHL were adopted, particularly by a number of medical philosophers in different parts of Europe; but at the close of the century there were few or none who professed an adherence to them.

HARTLEY's *Philosophy*. p. 17.

It is asserted, in the above-mentioned page, that Dr. HARTLEY derived his doctrine of *vibration* from NEWTON. The truth is, that Dr. WILLIAM BRIGGS, who instructed NEWTON in anatomy, appears to have been the first who taught the doctrine of nervous vibrations. This he did in his *Nova Visionis Theoria*, published in 1682. NEWTON, taking the idea from him, suggests it, not as a fixed opinion, but as a modest query (see 23d query, subjoined to his Optics), whether "vision is effected chiefly by the vibrations of an elastic medium, excited in the bottom of the eye by the rays of light, and propagated along the solid, pellucid, and uniform capillaments of the optic nerve? And whether hearing is effected by the vibrations of the same or of some other medium, excited by the tremor of the air in the auditory nerves, and propagated along the solid, pellucid, and uniform capillaments of those nerves?" And so with regard to the other senses. What was thus suggested by NEWTON became a fundamental principle in HARTLEY's system, and has been considered by him and his followers as placed on the high ground of *demonstration*.

KANT's *Philosophy*.

IMMANUEL KANT was born in 1724, and is still living. His philosophy has excited almost as much attention as that of WOLFE did eighty years ago, and has called forth the talents of many of the most eminent men of Germany, for and against it. Besides those who have been already mentioned as distinguished partizans in this controversy, there are some others worthy of notice. JOH. GOTTH. FUHTE, of Jena; Professor BORN, of Leipsic; Professor BECK, of Rostock; and the Rev. GEO. SAM. MELLIN, of Magdeburg, have written largely and ably in defence of the Kantian doctrine; while FEDER, EBERHARD, Professor TIEDEMANN, and Professor MAAS, have been equally conspicuous, zealous and able in opposition to this far-famed system.

HELVETIUS. p. 28.

CLAUDE ADRIAN HELVETIUS was born in Paris, in the year 1715. In the year 1758 he produced his first work, entitled, *l'Esprit*, which, on account of its *atheistical* principles, was condemned by the Parliament of Paris. The odium which he incurred hereby induced him to visit England in 1764, and from thence he went to Prussia, where he was very favourably received by the king. On his return to France he led a retired life in the country, and died in 1771. His treatise on *Man*, formed on the same principles with his first work, was published a short time before his death. He wrote a poem, in six cantos, entitled, *Le Bonheur*, which was published in 1772. HELVETIUS may be regarded as one of the earliest and most conspicuous of the advocates for that system of *materialism*, and of *atheistical reveries*, usually called the *new philosophy*.

EDWARDS. p. 30.

An ingenious and learned friend, on reading the assertion, in the above-mentioned page, that "President EDWARDS appears to have been the first *Calvinist* who avowed his belief so fully and thoroughly in the doctrine of moral necessity as his book indicates," made the following remarks:

"You have mistaken the fact with reference to President EDWARDS. His great mind was, indeed, nobly exercised in the defence of truth. He appears an original in the invention of arguments against his adversaries, but not in discovering the truths which he states respecting the liberty of the Will. The connection between motives and volitions, the liberty of choice in man, and the necessity of the futurition of human voluntary actions; in short, every part of moral necessity consistent with free agency, was embraced and understood before his day, although not so successfully demonstrated as by him. You should have taken notice of his son, JONATHAN EDWARDS, D. D. late President of Union College, in Schenectady. He was an able metaphysician. Few works in the English language discover more penetration than his book on the *Liberty of the Will*."

On the reputation of these two American divines, the character of our country, with respect to metaphysical science,

may honourably rest. The father, considering the circumstances in which he was educated and spent his life, was truly a prodigy of talents. For acuteness and extent of comprehension, and fervour of piety, he has had but few equals belonging to any age. The son very much resembled his father, in talents, in piety, and in the circumstances of his life.

Materialism. p. 31.

The same friend who was mentioned in the preceding note, communicated the following remarks on the subject of *Materialism*, which I cannot deny myself the pleasure of inserting at length in this place.

“Numerous are the advocates of the material system. In order to enforce our belief in its doctrines, conjecture and ingenuity have done their best. And, after all, great must be the faith, or rather the credulity, of those who can believe it.

“If we are to account for all the varieties of thought upon mechanical principles, it will be necessary to consider the subject in the light of known mechanical laws. Whether we adopt the hypothesis that the nerves are like fiddle-strings, or that they are full of a medullary substance capable of vibrations, the fundamental principle of materialism is one. ‘The vibrations of matter produce thought.’—On this theory it may be observed—

“1. It never has been proved that there *are* such vibrations. It is a mere hypothesis. It may serve for speculation; but to build a system on such a basis is credulity, not philosophy.

“2. Granting, for argument’s sake, the existence of vibrations, there is no necessary connection between vibration and thought. If there is not, there must be another hypothesis introduced, viz. ‘There *may* be a connection between vibrations and thought.’ Upon this hypothesis I should be glad to see Dr. PRIESTLEY or Dr. DARWIN give us a poem or dissertation upon the thoughts of the *Harpsichord* while the strings are vibrating at the touch of a lady’s finger; or upon the grave speculations of a mill-pond while the boys at play are throwing stones into it.

“3. Suppose I again grant, for further argument’s sake, this hypothesis to the materialists. It will be necessary to show that, in vibrations, considered abstractedly, there is such a variety in kind and degree as corresponds exactly with all the varieties of thought.

“ There are at least *ten* distinct intellectual powers. Not one of these can be accounted for by one or more of the others. There are, 1. The powers which we have by means of our five senses. 2. Attention. 3. Memory. 4. Abstraction. 5. Judging. 6. Reasoning. 7. Taste. 8. Powers of moral perception. 9. Consciousness. 10. Conception. Each of these is distinct, and a distinct source of ideas. The active powers, moreover, are numerous; and the mind, so constituted, is capable of a vast variety of thoughts, differing in kind and degree. Do vibrations afford an equal variety? No: it is not possible that there should be any more than two kinds of vibrations in a uniform elastic medium. 1. They may be quick or slow. 2. They may be strong or weak. These kinds admit of various degrees; and this is all the variety of which the laws of matter (however finely organized the machine) will admit. Now, he must certainly be ignorant of his own mental operations, or of the laws of motion in matter, who can be persuaded of an exact correspondence of the one to the other. Certainly credulity never appeared more conspicuous in the devotees of Popish superstition than it does in the advocates and believers of the material system!

“ Shall vibrations in an elastic medium be supposed to account for all the original powers, intellectual and active? Put all these out of the question except one class, viz. *the powers we have by our external senses*, and even then there is a manifest disparity. Had we no sensations but those of *hearing*, this theory would not be so contemptible. There is a correspondence between vibrations and sound. These sensations will themselves appropriate all the varieties of vibrations; and even then it will be necessary to conceive of some sentient being, capable of those sensations, distinct from all the vibrations which produce them.

“ Hearing, however, is but one of our senses; and its sensations are the most simple: they differ only in degree. By each of the other four we have a variety of sensations which differ specifically as well as in degree. Who can name the varieties of colour which we perceive by the eye? Tastes and smells are innumerable. They differ specifically, and each is capable of all degrees of strength and weakness. But how shall we find in vibrations a variety corresponding to the immense variety of sensations which we have from sight, hearing, taste, smell, and touch? And how shall they account for all the ideas which we have from all the other sources and powers of thought, upon mechanical principles? Com-

mon sense, reason and philosophy, are in a lamentable condition when such theories gain ground among men. He who would be a materialist in the nineteenth century, would have been a believer in the doctrine of transubstantiation in the twelfth."

Modern Materialists. p. 33.

The principal materialists of the eighteenth century differed, in some of the details of their opinions, from those philosophers of preceding times who held the same general doctrine. EPICURUS supposed the soul of man to be a material substance, but a *very refined and attenuated kind of matter*. He taught that this substance, notwithstanding the extreme subtlety of its texture, is composed of four distinct parts; *fire*, which causes animal heat; an *ethereal principle*, which is moist vapour; *air*; and a fourth principle, which is the *cause of sensation*. This sentient principle he supposed to differ essentially from the three former, but to be, like the rest, corporeal, because it is capable both of acting and being acted upon by bodies. From the union of the soul, thus constituted, with the body, he believed life and sensation to result. Something like this seems to have been the opinion of almost all the ancient materialists. SPINOZA and HOBBS held a system of materialism quite as gross as any of their predecessors; for they seem to have thought that *every* material atom is, in a greater or less degree, animated or endowed with sensation. Dr. HARTLEY (if he be ranked in this class, and it is not easy to give him any other place) sometimes appears to recognize a sentient principle, which, if not wholly immaterial, differs from any ideas which he seems to have formed of ordinary matter. Dr. PRIESTLEY's opinions on this subject, considered as a connected system, are new. He denies that there is any ground for making a distinction between the soul of man and the body; supposing the whole human constitution to be made up of one homogeneous substance. He denies that we have any evidence that the Deity himself is immaterial, in the commonly received sense of this word; and, finally, by the adoption of Father BOSCOVICH's theory, he so refines and *spiritualizes* matter, as to make it an extremely different thing from that gross and impenetrable substance which it is generally represented to be. He differs from preceding materialists, then, in his views of

the *nature* of matter, and in rejecting the idea entertained by most of them, that the sentient principle is a species of matter *peculiarly refined and attenuated*.

Dr. DARWIN, in his celebrated work, entitled *Zoonomia*, has offered a physiological theory of mind, which, though more seductive, and, consequently, more dangerous than some others, may be said to contain more crude and inconsistent metaphysics than almost any modern system of materialism of equal reputation. The greater part of his opinions on this subject have been borrowed from other writers; so that, as a pneumatologist, he has little claim to originality, excepting in the method of combining and arranging his doctrines. The genius of the author, indeed, has given to his metaphysical errors a popular and plausible aspect; and they will probably lead astray thousands of superficial and inconsiderate readers; but they can scarcely mislead inquirers of a more discerning character.

Dr. DARWIN supposes that the sentient principle, or the mind of man, is a *subtle fluid*, which he denominates *Sensorial Power*, or *spirit of animation*. This Sensorial Power he represents as secreted in the brain, and in the medullary part of the nerves, where it especially resides, and from which it extends to every part of the body, without being cognizable by our senses, except in its effects. He supposes that the *oxygen* which enters into combination with the blood in respiration, affords the material for the production of Sensorial Power; that this fluid is liable to be accumulated or diminished by various circumstances; that it is constantly expended by stimuli, and is probably too fine to be long retained in the nerves after its production in the brain; and, finally, that it is capable of assuming the property of solidity, or divesting itself of this property at pleasure.

This Spirit of animation, or Sensorial Power, according to the theory under review, produces contractions or motions in the animal fibre, and these fibrous motions, thus occasioned, are the immediate cause of all our ideas; an idea being defined "a contraction, or motion, or configuration of the immediate organs of sense." This Spirit has *four* different modes of action; or, in other words, the mind possesses *four* different faculties, which are occasionally exerted, and cause all the contractions of the fibrous parts of the body. These are, 1. The faculty of causing fibrous contractions in consequence of the *irritations* excited by external bodies. 2. The faculty of causing contractions in consequence of the

sensations of pleasure or pain. 3. The faculty of causing contractions in consequence of *volition*. 4. The faculty of causing contractions in consequence of the *associations* of fibrous contractions with other fibrous contractions, which precede or accompany them. These four faculties, during their inactive state, are termed *irritability*, *sensibility*, *voluntariness*, and *associability*; in their active state they are termed *irritation*, *sensation*, *volition*, and *association*. (See chap. iv. of this work.) Upon these principles Dr. DARWIN accounts for all the phenomena of mind. *Memory*, according to this author, embraces a class of ideas arising from volition and association. *Imagination* includes those ideas which were originally excited by irritation, and become, in like manner, more frequently causable by sensations of pleasure or pain. Ideas of *Abstraction* and of *Reflection* are partial repetitions of former perceptions, by the repetition of a certain stimulus. (See *Zoonomia*, vol. i. § 5, 6, 14, 15.)—It will readily be perceived that this theory of mind has not only all the exceptionable characteristics of that of Dr. HARTLEY, but that it is liable to the additional charges of being more complex and less consistent.

As this theory makes an important part of a medical work, which is highly popular, and has an extensive circulation in the United States; and as there is reason to suppose that many superficial thinkers have been seduced into the adoption of its principles by the plausible aspect which it wears, the following remarks are respectfully submitted to the reader, not as containing a full refutation of the *Darwinian* doctrines, but as suggesting some hints worthy of the consideration of those who are disposed to embrace them.

1. Dr. DARWIN sets out with a singular inconsistency. He declares that, by the *Spirit of Animation*, or *Sensorial Power*, he means only that animal life which mankind possess in common with brutes, and, in some degree, even with vegetables; and that he leaves the consideration of the immortal part of us, which is the object of religion, to those who treat of revelation. Yet he afterwards proceeds, in the same work, to show how the Sensorial Power produces ideas of memory, imagination, abstraction, &c. which have always been considered as belonging to the rational and immortal mind of man, by all who believe that such mind exists. Does Dr. DARWIN mean to express an opinion that man possesses the noble powers of reasoning, judgment, imagination, ab-

straction, memory, reflection, &c. in common with brutes? or does he suppose that the soul, the immortal part, possesses intellectual powers of a different kind?

2. It may be observed that this theory embraces a general doctrine, which is gratuitously assumed, and is altogether unphilosophical. Its object is to reduce all the energies of intellectual and animal life to the operation of an invisible fluid secreted by the brain, and existing in every part of the body. But does this fluid exist? It is surely unphilosophical to take for granted the existence of a substance, and then to proceed, on the supposition, to a long train of inferences, the validity of which must all rest on the first assumption. Besides, this supposed fluid gives no real aid to the inquirer when admitted. It explains nothing. The whole business of *causation* is as much in the dark, after all this parade of developement, as ever. Unwilling to confess himself ignorant of any thing, Dr. DARWIN endeavours to amuse his own mind, and the minds of his readers, with *contractions*, *fibrous motions*, *appetencies*, and other apologies for ignorance. But these words convey no distinct ideas to the mind; they enable us to make no real progress in the investigation of truth. In this writer's philosophical works the poet too often appears with all his parade of fictions. Suppositions are assumed for facts; conjecture is brought in aid of hypothesis; and from these materials, with all the formality of legitimate deduction, a system is formed. But when the good old rule of philosophizing—"The causes must be both true and sufficient to explain the phenomena"—is rigidly applied, many of his most important postulates are found either utterly inadmissible, or to possess, if admitted, only a fictitious value. The *sensorial power* of this ingenious theorist, as applied to explain the phenomena of mind, too much resembles the *occult qualities*, the *phantasms*, and the *essential forms* of the schoolmen, to be respectfully viewed by a practical philosopher.

3. Several of the doctrines which enter into this theory are not consistent with themselves. Dr. DARWIN sometimes uses the word *idea* to signify the organic affection, and sometimes the mental affection; or, to use his own language, it sometimes denotes the *fibrous motion*, and at others the *sensorial motion*; that is, it signifies both the *cause* and the *effect*. This inaccurate use of an important metaphysical word is the source of much loose, perplexed, and inconsistent reasoning.

Again; the spirit of animation is said to have the power

of producing certain motions in the animal fibre. But if the power of producing fibrous contractions be inherent in this spirit (and such self-operating power is certainly sometimes ascribed by Dr. DARWIN to the Spirit of Animation, especially in cases of memory, &c.), then that portion of it which is in immediate contact with the fibre must induce contraction before the application of stimuli, unless the power be counteracted. But, in this case, nothing is supposed to counteract its action; and as the effect is not produced, where is the inherent power of this subtle fluid? If we say that the sensorium does not essentially possess the power, but excites motions of the fibres merely by its own motion, we subject the phenomena of life and mind to the principles of mechanics; but it is admitted by Dr. DARWIN that the effects bear no mechanical proportion to their causes.

Further, Dr. DARWIN contends that fibrous motions constitute our notions or ideas of the qualities of external things. To illustrate this an argument is drawn from the luminous appearance in the eye, when it is struck in the dark, or when a corner of the ball is pressed. This effect, he supposes, is occasioned not by the presence of light, but by mere pressure; a supposition which, if admitted, must set aside his theory of ideas. The Sensorial Power in the eye has the same susceptibilities as that in the nerves of touch, and the fibres of both organs are equally contractile. They differ only in the *means* of irritation; the structure of the external organ of the one being peculiarly adapted to the transmission of light. But if pressure can excite the sensation of a flash, this stimulus is not, like that of light, confined to the eye. It must excite similar fibrous motions of the *rete mucosum*, and the sense of touch will thus become a medium of vision. But this, though an unavoidable inference from Dr. DARWIN's principles, is contrary to his conclusions.

Another gross inconsistency appears in the account which this theorist presents of the qualities belonging to Sensorial Power. To say that a substance can assume the property of solidity, and lay it aside; that it can occupy space, and cease to occupy it at pleasure, is to say that it can, at pleasure, exist, and cease to exist. The Sensorial Power is constantly represented as a material substance, at sometimes solid and impenetrable, and at other times not so. Now, if solidity belong to matter at all, it must be essential to it under every variation of form, and can only cease to exist in the destruction of the substance. But this is not the whole of the difficulty:

Dr. DARWIN tells us (vol. ii. *Additional Notes*), that the doctrine of immaterial ideas is a "fanciful hypothesis, like the stories of ghosts and apparitions, which have so long amused the credulous, without any foundation in nature;" yet the Sensorial Power is sometimes disrobed of its materiality. Is this consistent with the other doctrines concerning the Spirit of Animation which this writer teaches? When the Sensorial Power is led to assume spirituality, it is incapable of being acted on by matter, as he expressly declares; consequently it ceases to exist, for it is no longer capable of acting or of being acted upon; and, of course, in all such cases, life is suspended or destroyed. We have not, however, yet exposed, in its full extent, the inconsistency of Dr. DARWIN on this subject. He observes that, although the Sensorial Power may sometimes disrobe itself of solidity; yet, whenever it communicates motion to the fibres, or is itself excited by their motion, it must necessarily be solid or impenetrable; because, as the muscular fibres approach each other in the contraction of a muscle, and as nothing can act where it does not exist, the approach of the particles can be explained only on the supposition of an intermediate agent. But if sensorial power, during its exertion, be solid and impenetrable, like the fibres on which it acts, the supposition of its existence will not render at all more explicable the phenomena of muscular contraction. For the Sensorial Power between the particles of a fibre is in contact with those particles, or it is not. If it be, then the particles of the fibre cannot approximate, because there is no vacant space, and the Sensorial Power is not penetrable. The whole fibre, with its Sensorial Power, forms one connected substance, and is thence incapable of motion. But if the Sensorial Power be not in contact with the particles of the fibre on which it acts, it will be necessary to suppose the existence of another intermediate agent (a *subtle fluid* no doubt), as we are repeatedly assured that nothing can act where it does not exist.

The doctrine of *association* is an important part of Dr. DARWIN's theory; but upon the principles of this theory association is impossible. Association is a particular quality or state of Sensorial Power; but this power, or, which is the same thing, the spirit of animation, is in a perpetual state of flux. It is constantly secreted and expended, being too subtle to remain any length of time in the system. The particles of this spirit, then, cannot form any habitual connections or associations with each other, because, in the very act of

association, they are expended and destroyed. According to any laws of matter with which we are acquainted, they can only be connected by means of repeated simultaneous action; but in their first action, according to this theorist, they expire, and their places are supplied by new particles, which, like them, can only act once and fly off. The fibres, indeed, remain, amidst this continual flux of the vital fluid; but without it they possess no other qualities than those of inanimate matter.

Once more; Dr. DARWIN allows that stimuli sometimes exist in contact with Sensorial Power, without producing corresponding effects. He accounts for this fact by supposing that, from the inconvenience of obeying certain irritations, we learn to suffer the stimulating material to accumulate till it disagreeably affects us, and that the subsequent action is then in consequence of this disagreeable sensation. But this is inconsistent with his other doctrines. Sensations cannot in this manner produce contractions, if we adhere to his theory of the origin of ideas. What does he mean by saying, *we suffer the stimulating material to accumulate?* The sensorial power exists in contact with the requisite stimulus: Is there a third principle, a *presiding mind*, in his creed, which regulates their action?

These are a few of the inconsistencies with which this celebrated work abounds. In no respect, perhaps, does the author display more loose thinking, and more glaring inconsistency, than in the manner in which he speaks of *Sensorial Power*. Though he expressly represents the faculties of the sensorium as different states of the same vital fluid, or spirit, and though this doctrine forms the ground-work of his reasoning; yet he sometimes speaks as if these faculties were different substances. Sensorial power is, with him, at one time solid and impenetrable, and at another spiritual and penetrable. And though he expressly ridicules the idea of an immaterial sentient principle in the mind, yet he frequently speaks in a manner which is altogether unintelligible without supposing some such principle, which is different from the external stimulus, the animal fibre, and the sensorial power, and which regulates their reciprocal actions.

4. This theory is insufficient to account for the phenomena which it is intended to explain; and it is opposed to facts.

The author supposes that the spirit of animation exists in four distinct states, to which he gives four names, as already mentioned. Now, this spirit, as has been repeatedly before

stated, is a material substance, and must, of course, be subject to the laws of matter. But is matter, while it retains its nature, susceptible of these radical and essential changes? Its form may be changed; the relation of its particles may vary; but its essential properties must remain the same. Notwithstanding this, the sentient principle, according to Dr. DARWIN, is continually undergoing changes of the most radical kind. The spirit of animation in *volition* differs from the spirit of animation in *sensation*, not merely in the position of its particles, but in its nature. We are elevated with rapture, or writhe in agony; we revolt with horror from an object, or hasten to meet it with joy; we are alternately actuated by hope and fear, desire and aversion, love and hatred, joy and sorrow; in short, there is a diversity almost endless in the modes of our feelings, and in the characters of our ideas. Can all these different and opposite states of mind be accounted for by any supposable changes in one homogeneous fluid? Or is it possible for that fluid to retain its nature, and all its defined attributes, and yet to be continually undergoing this essential change? Assuredly this cannot be the case, consistently with any physical laws with which we are acquainted.

Again; in defining the difference between irritation, sensation, volition, and association, Dr. DARWIN resolves it all into the *different portion* of the sensorium in which they originate. Thus, "irritation is an exertion or change of some *extreme* parts of the sensorium; sensation is an exertion or change of the *central* parts;" &c. But the Sensorial Power resides in every part of the body, and it is every where the same fluid, secreted by the same gland, endued with the same attributes, and susceptible of the same changes; and, of course, mere difference of *place*, if other circumstances be equal, is not sufficient to account for so great a difference as that between irritation and volition; and so of the rest. This is assigning a cause which is not known to exist; and which, if it do exist, is not sufficient to explain the phenomena.

But further defects in this theory appear.—From what organ of sense do we derive our *abstract ideas*? What *fibrous motions* are excited when we call to mind the ideas of wisdom, benevolence, justice and truth? According to Dr. DARWIN, these general ideas are repetitions of former particular perceptions, obtained through the organs of sense. But can *general* ideas be mere repetitions of *particular* ones? The simple statement of the doctrine is sufficient for its refuta-

tion. The power of abstraction, then, must be given up, or Dr. DARWIN's theory must be totally abandoned. Nor can this writer be considered as satisfactorily replying to this objection, by asking, as he does, in his turn, how else do we acquire abstract ideas, if not as he states? Though we may not be able to find any other solution of the question, it does not follow that the one which he offers is adequate to the purpose.

Memory is also altogether inexplicable on this theory. This too is said to consist in the repetition of former perceptions. But, according to this definition, the former perception must have been attended with an impression of a previous similar sensation, which involves an absurdity; and as this first contraction of the fibre was occasioned by the action of a certain stimulus, it must be granted by the advocates of this theory, that the stimulus might have acted alone, and the idea of memory have been thus produced, without any object of remembrance. Besides, ideas of memory cannot arise from the motion of peculiar fibres, because these ideas belong alike to all our sensations. Nor are fibrous motions even necessary to their immediate production; for the idea of memory is excited as readily by a desire which we have formerly experienced, or by a process of reasoning formerly made out, as by the renewed action of external stimuli. In short, the theory of Dr. DARWIN, at most, can only be considered, by a candid inquirer, as solving the phenomena of one class of ideas, viz. those which we receive immediately from our external senses. Even of some of these it furnishes an inadequate solution; but all the rest, not only those of memory and abstraction, but also those of imagination, taste, moral perception, &c. are left completely in the dark, after all his fanciful attempts at explanation.

It is also worthy of remark, that one of the leading doctrines of this theory is plainly contradicted by fact. Dr. DARWIN teaches that perception is not to be referred, as some have taught, to any common sensorium in the head, but that it takes place in the several organs of sense themselves; that the fibrous motions in these organs constitute our ideas; and that, of course, when any organ of sense is totally destroyed, all the ideas connected with it necessarily perish. But is the man who became deaf in adult years incapable of forming any ideas of sound? Were HOMER and MILTON unable to conceive of visual objects after they became blind? The noble descriptions with which their poems

abound are alone sufficient to refute Dr. DARWIN. He is contradicted by the experience of every day.

5. Finally, this theory is unnecessarily complex, and offends against the best rules of philosophic simplicity. Irritation is an exertion of the sensorial power, or of the spirit of animation, exciting the fibres to contraction. By this contraction no end appears to be gained. It is not the fibre which is sentient, but the sensorial power resident in the fibre. The contraction can, therefore, be of use only by communicating a certain effect to the sensorial power. But the sensorial power, according to this theory, was itself affected, previously to the contraction, and was itself the proximate cause of the contraction. Of what use, then, is this combination of effects? It may, indeed, render error more complicated and perplexing; but it cannot assist us in the developement of truth.

Such are some of the numerous defects and errors of this celebrated system of intellectual physiology. The author falls into the grand mistake adopted by all the materialists, viz. a belief that we are acquainted with the nature of causation. In the physical world we see events connected with each other, with respect to time and place; but we know not the relation which they sustain. At most, a series of *facts* is all that we can determine. The links which bind them together, and the nature of the respective processes by which they succeed to each other—in a word, the nature of causation we can never understand. We are equally unable to understand the nature of causation in the intellectual world. Dr. DARWIN, like a number of ingenious and learned men before him, has attempted to explore this impenetrable region. But in the attempt, instead of enlightening us by the exhibition of facts, he amuses by presenting phantasms of his own creation. To these he ascribes such powers as suit his purpose; and having drawn out in detail a statement of the actions and variations of these fictitious beings, he would persuade us that the phenomena of mind are *explained*. But let none mistake words for ideas, or creatures of the fancy for realities. “The affections of the sentient principle are not rendered in the least degree more intelligible by resolving them into motions of solids or fluids; for the cause of motion is as inexplicable as the cause of the sentient affection. If the science of mind were less sure than that of matter, the systems of materialism might have some claim to our respect; but though they were liable to no

other objection, the material changes can be known to us only by the changes of mind, and must, of consequence, be liable to all their uncertainty. The theory of Dr. DARWIN, therefore, has not made us more acquainted with the mystery of ourselves; and whatever praise it may deserve as ingenious, its principles cannot be adopted as just."

Those who would see a more detailed view of the defects, errors, and gross inconsistencies of the metaphysical theory of this celebrated physician, will do well to consult *Observations on Zoonomia*, by THOMAS BROWN, Esq. Edinburgh. 8vo. 1798; a work which, though it contains, perhaps, some groundless strictures, manifests great acuteness, learning, taste and urbanity.

Controversy respecting the Soul. p. 33.

In 1702 WILLIAM COWARD, an English physician, published a work, entitled, *Thoughts on the Soul*, in which he maintained that it is material and mortal. He was answered by the Rev. THOMAS BROUGHTON, and others, and defended himself with great zeal. The House of Commons at length interfered in the dispute, and ordered his work to be burned by the hand of the common hangman. In 1706 HENRY DODWELL, a learned writer of South-Britain, published a singular work, in which he attempted to prove, from the Scriptures and the early Fathers, that the soul of man is a principle naturally mortal, but actually immortalized by the pleasure of God, by virtue of its union with the divine baptismal Spirit; and that, since the apostles, none have the power of giving this divine immortalizing Spirit excepting the bishops. This publication occasioned a controversy of considerable warmth and interest, in which Dr. CLARKE, Mr. NORRIS, and others, wrote against DODWELL, and in which the subject received much elucidation. After Dr. CLARKE, ANDREW BAXTER, a distinguished writer of North-Britain, undertook, in a large work, to establish the immateriality of the soul. This work is generally considered as among the most able and satisfactory ever written in defence of the truth which it supports.

CLARKE. p. 33.

SAMUEL CLARKE, D. D. was born at Norwich, in South-Britain, in the year 1675. He was educated at the Univer-

sity of Cambridge; and received orders in the Church of England about the year 1698. In 1706 he published his letter to DODWELL, on the immortality of the soul; a philosophical and learned discourse. In 1715 he maintained a controversy with LEIBNITZ, which has been much celebrated; and in 1717 he published remarks upon COLLINS's Philosophical Inquiry concerning Human Liberty. His other works are numerous, and indicate great acuteness, learning, and critical skill. He died in 1729. Dr. CLARKE is certainly entitled to a place among the greatest men of the eighteenth century.

PRICE. p. 33.

RICHARD PRICE, D. D. was born in Wales, about the year 1725. He was an eminent dissenting minister, no less distinguished for the amiableness of his private character than for his great talents, and his laudable exertions in the cause of human happiness. He published his *Review of the principal Questions and Difficulties in Morals*, &c. in 1758; his *Observations on Reversionary Payments*, &c. in 1771; and *A free Discussion of the Doctrines of Materialism and Philosophical Necessity*, with Dr. PRIESTLEY, in 1773. These are his most celebrated works. He died in 1791.

WATTS. p. 33.

ISAAC WATTS, D. D. was born at Southampton, in South-Britain, in 1674. The works of this great and good man are numerous and excellent. His *Treatise on Logic*, his *Treatise on the Improvement of the Mind*, and his *Philosophical Essays*, contain the chief of what he wrote on metaphysical subjects. He entered on the work of the Gospel ministry about the year 1700; received the degree of D. D. from the Universities of Edinburgh and Aberdeen, in 1723; and died in 1741.

Controversy between Nominalists and Realists. p. 33.

This controversy is not properly stated in the note in the above-mentioned page. The following view of the subject is, it is believed, more correct, and will, perhaps, be more intelligible to the reader.—The *Realists* supposed that there are certain *substantial forms* or *essences*, corresponding to ge-

neral terms, and which the mind contemplates in employing such terms. Thus, when the general term *vegetable* is used, they contend that the mind contemplates some *substance* of a very refined nature, or a general *form*, having a positive existence. This substance or form, according to them, does not belong to any particular genus or species of vegetables exclusively, but is a *phantasm*, made up of every thing that is common to different genera or species. It is about this form or general essence that the mind is employed while considering vegetable in the abstract. Both the *Platonists* and the *Aristotelians* were *Realists*, though differing among themselves with regard to some details.

The *Nominalists*, on the other hand, contended that there are no existences in nature corresponding to general terms, and that the objects of our attention, in all our general speculations, are not *essences*, *forms*, or *ideas*, but *words*. Thus they suppose that, in the instance above selected, the word *vegetable* is the proper object of thought. This word, having been adopted as the representative of certain ideas collected from several genera and species, is used, in a manner, analogous to an algebraic character, which we employ throughout a process, without attending to the quantity which it represents. This was the doctrine of ZENO, of the Stoics, of ROSCELINUS, in the eleventh century, and of his successor, ABELARD.

The *Conceptualists* dissent from both of the above-stated opinions. They suppose that words are connected, by common consent, with certain attributes common to a number of genera and species, and abstracted from all peculiarities. By the law of the association of ideas, when the word *vegetable* is pronounced, all these attributes are drawn out of the cabinet of memory, and arranged, by the faculty of *conception*, before the mind. This collection of ideas they suppose to be the object about which the mind is exercised. We lose sight of the *word*, and instantly attend to these *conceptions*.

Metaphysical Improvements of the eighteenth Century.

From a review of the whole of this chapter, it appears that the principal improvements which have been made in metaphysical science, during the last age, may be summarily presented in the following particulars.

1. The *Inductive Method* of inquiry has been introduced

into this branch of science, more fully and with greater success than ever before. In other words, some philosophers of the last age have taught us, for the first time, to study the human mind by ascertaining *facts*, and carefully observing and arranging its *phenomena*, without endeavouring to explain these phenomena by hypotheses and conjectures.

2. The theory of *Perception*, which had, for so many centuries, perplexed and deluded philosophers, was, for the first time, during this period, denied and disproved, and a more rational doctrine introduced in its stead.

3. The enumeration and arrangement of the intellectual powers have been delivered, by metaphysicians of this age, from the false, inadequate, and mischievous simplicity, which were so long and obstinately adhered to by their predecessors. The original powers of the mind have been shown to be more numerous than they were before supposed; and the plan of studying them in detail, rather than through the medium of a set of deceptive systematic rules, exhibited and recommended.

4. The metaphysical writings of the eighteenth century are, in general, more clear, popular and intelligible than those of any former age. To this some of the most erroneous writers of the age have, by their acuteness, contributed. Even BERKELEY and HUME have thus indirectly subverted the interests of metaphysical science.

NOTES ON CHAPTER XIII.

Revival of Classic Literature in Britain. p. 37.

WITHIN the last fifteen or twenty years of the eighteenth century, classic literature, and especially the study of the Greek language, has, in some degree, revived in Great-Britain. From the time in which BARNES, BENTLEY, and CLARKE flourished, till the period above-mentioned, their country could boast of few acquisitions in this department of literature. But towards the close of the century, the labours of BURNEY, WAKEFIELD, PARR, and PORSON, not to mention several others, who might with propriety be introduced into the same list, revived the taste for this kind of learning, and will probably produce still more extensive effects.

State of Classic Literature in America. p. 37.

The statement respecting the low state of classic literature in the greater number of our American colleges, though true in general, is not to be admitted without exception. There are instructors in several colleges in the United States, under whose tuition a youth, who is disposed to do justice to himself, may obtain as accurate and good an introduction to Greek and Latin literature as can be obtained in any European university, without exception. But as nothing more than the foundation of knowledge can be laid at seminaries of learning, at least in the usual course; and as this foundation in classic literature is too seldom built upon, in after life, by the youth in America, we have fewer proficient in this department of learning than our just proportion.

The author has been lately informed, and mentions with great pleasure, that in some parts of the United States there are promising appearances of a revival of classic literature.

Greek and Latin Criticism. p. 46.

Though it is certain that the great proficient in classic literature were much fewer at the close of the eighteenth century than at its commencement, yet, in some respects, these few possessed advantages which none of their predecessors enjoyed. The advantages enjoyed by them in the following particulars are obvious. A spirit of *philosophy* has been introduced, during this period, into historical investigations, which, united with the advantages of unwearied research, has greatly extended our knowledge of ancient manners, and afforded new illustration to ancient writings. The niceties of *conjectural criticism* have been carried, since the time of BENTLEY, to a greater length than was ever before known. The proper excellences of *style* have become lately much better understood than they were at earlier periods of the critical art; and the reign of just taste among classical commentators more generally established. Many *grammatical rules* of the ancient languages, and especially of the Greek language, have been ascertained and laid down, with a degree of precision to which former critics were entire strangers. The *metres of the ancient poets* have been much better understood and illustrated by the commentators of the last century

than those of any preceding age. And, finally, by the *collections of new manuscripts*, new light has been thrown on many passages of classic authors which were before unintelligible or obscure. For these improvements we are chiefly indebted to the critics of Great-Britain, Germany, and Holland.

Editions of the Classics. p. 50.

Almost all the classics had been repeatedly edited prior to the commencement of the eighteenth century. Besides many single works of high reputation which pertain to this class, there are two of a more extensive and celebrated kind, belonging to the seventeenth century, which are worthy of notice. These are the *Variorum* editions, as they are generally called, published in Holland, about the middle of that century, by GRÆVIUS, GRONOVIVS, SCHREVELIVS, and others; and the still more famous editions, *In usum Serenissimi Delphini*, published towards the close of the same century, under the patronage of LOUIS XIV. and chiefly completed by the labours of HUET, BOSSUET, MONTAUSIER, and RUÆUS. But these, notwithstanding all their excellence, have not discouraged subsequent attempts. The editions which have been given to the public, during the period of this retrospect, are chiefly distinguished by their great typographical elegance; their additions to the various readings before collected; the superior taste and delicacy of their conjectural criticism; and their more enlightened and liberal commentaries on the defects, beauties, and meaning of the ancient writers.

The following editions of *Greek* authors, in addition to those before mentioned, are worthy of notice: viz. the works of *Aristotle*, by BUHLE; of *Longinus*, by PEARCE and RUHNKENIVS; of *Demosthenes*, by WOLFIUS and TAYLOR; of *Aristophanes* and *Sophocles*, by BRUNCK; and of *Anacreon*, by BARNES, PAUW, SPALETTI, DEGEN and GAIL.

The following editions of *Latin* authors also deserve to be mentioned: viz. *Cicero*, by BARBOU; *Livy*, by CREVIER; *Justin*, by BARBOU; *Sallust*, by HAVERCAMP, and by Don GABRIEL, of Spain; *Terence*, by Mrs. GRIERSON, by WESTERHOVIUS, and by ZEUNIVS; *Pliny*, sen. by HARDOIN; *Pliny*, jun. by GESNER, and by L'ALLEMAND; *Suetonius* and *Plautus*, by ERNESTUS; and *Propertius*, by BROUKHOUSIVS and BURMANN.

Translations of Classic Authors. p. 52.

To the list of translations of *Greek* classics into the English language, during the late century, add the following:—*Pindar*, by WEST; *Anacreon*, *Bion*, *Moschus*, and *Theocritus*, by FAWKES; and *Anacreon*, by MOORE.

To the catalogue of versions of *Latin* classics into English, during the same period, we may add, the *Bucolics* and *Georgics* of *Virgil*, by Professor MARTYN, of Cambridge; and the *Comedies* of *Plautus* by THORNTON.

The translation of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* of *Homer*, into French, near the beginning of the century, by Madame D'ACIER, is among the numerous monuments of the learning and talents of that distinguished woman.

The works of *Plutarch* were translated into French, early in the century, by M. AMIOT, and, more recently and ably, by M. RICCARD.

The translation of the *Bucolics* and *Georgics* of *Virgil*, into *Greek* hexameters, by EUGENIUS, a Russian Archbishop, is a singular specimen of literary labour. This work was splendidly printed, towards the close of the eighteenth century, under the patronage, and at the expense of Prince POTEMKIN.

NOTES ON CHAPTER XIV.

Hebrew Literature.

AMONG the numerous *Hebrew Grammars* which have solicited public attention during the last age, respectful notice ought to be taken of “*A Plain and Complete Grammar of the Hebrew Language, with and without Points.*” By ANSELM BAYLY, LL. D. 8vo. 1774.

The *Tractatus Stigmologicus* of the Rev. THOMAS BOSTON, a pious and learned clergyman of North-Britain, deserves a distinguished place in the list of those publications which do honour to the eighteenth century, with respect to Hebrew literature. It is too little known, and as it is more read, will be more esteemed.

The *Origines Hebraicæ* of Professor SCHULTENS, of Leyden, do great honour to this period. The *Janua Hebraicæ Linguae*, by REINECIUS; the *Supplementa ad Lexica Hebraica*, by JOHN DAVID MICHAELIS; and the *Institutiones Linguae Hebraicæ*, by SCHROEDER, all of Germany, have been mentioned with much respect by the oriental critics of that country.

The *Apparatus Criticus* of BENDEL is mentioned under this head by mistake. It does not belong to the department of Hebrew literature. It is a critical, learned, and highly valuable work on the New Testament.

It is also erroneous to ascribe a "great *Hebrew Lexicon*" to CALMET. That great man never published such a work. His *Historical, Critical and Chronological Dictionary of the Bible*, in two vols. folio, is a work of high reputation, and contains much important criticism on the Old Testament Scriptures.

Arabic Literature.

Professor REISKE, of Leipsic, who died in 1774, after a life of more than eighty years, was one of the most able and zealous promoters of Arabic literature that the age produced. By his unremitted oral instructions, and by his valuable publications, he contributed to the rearing of a great number of excellent Arabic scholars. His successor in the professorial chair at Leipsic, E. C. ROSENMULLER, is highly distinguished in the same walk of literature. His *Arabisches Elementar*, &c. is represented as a work of much value, and worthy of a place in the library of every student of the Arabic language.

In 1800 Professor WHITE, of the University of Oxford, presented to the lovers of Arabic literature a curious and valuable work, entitled, *Abdollariphi Historiæ Ægypti Compendium Arabice et Latine*. This work was first carried to England by Dr. POCOCKE, the celebrated traveller. His son, a great Orientalist, undertook to translate and publish it, but never completed his undertaking. Professor WHITE, at length, published the original Arabic, with a Latin translation, and learned notes. This has been represented as one of the most curious and valuable specimens of Arabic literature ever imported from the East.

Since the version of SALE, the *Koran* has been translated

into French by M. SAVARY, the celebrated traveller into Egypt. It is published with his *Letters on Egypt and Greece*, in six vols. 8vo.

Persian Literature.

The translation of the History of *Nadir Shah* was undertaken by Sir WILLIAM JONES, at the instance of the King of Denmark. For this honourable monument of learned labour, his royal employer presented him with a snuff-box!

Persian literature has also been enriched, during the last age, with a number of other important translations into the different languages of Europe.

Hindoo Literature.

The principal compiler of the *Lettres Edifiantes et Curieuses*, was Father CHARLES GOBIEN, a Jesuit, of St. Maloes, assisted by DU HALDE, and others, of the same order. These *Letters* are filled with interesting accounts of the Natural History, Geography, Policy, and Literature of the countries visited by the Jesuits. They appeared at an early period of the century, in a number of volumes.

JOHN ZEPHANIAH HOLWELL, Esq. Governor of Bengal, was among the persons confined in the *Black Hole*, at Calcutta, in 1756, of which he published a narrative. He was among the first Europeans who engaged in the study of Hindoo antiquities; and pointed out the path which others have so successfully pursued. He was, however, wholly ignorant of the Sanscrit language, and, on account of this deficiency, laboured under many disadvantages, and made gross mistakes in his investigations.

Mr. HALHED published a *Grammar of the Bengal Language*, in Calcutta, in 1778, and in London in 1780. Considering this language as the sole channel of personal and epistolary communication among the Hindoos, of every occupation and tribe; and considering, also, that, of all the oriental languages, this approaches nearest to the *Sanscrit*, in expression, structure, and character, every attempt to illustrate its principles, and facilitate its acquisition, may be regarded as an important present both to the literary and commercial world.

Mr. COLEBROOKE, towards the close of the century, published a *Digest of Hindoo Law*, in four vols. 8vo. He was induced to undertake this work by the recommendation of Sir WILLIAM JONES. It is, on various accounts, a curious and valuable work.

The Rev. WILLIAM CAREY, a Baptist missionary of distinguished talents and piety, has, by his persevering labours, rendered important service to Hindoo literature. At the close of the eighteenth century he had translated the whole Bible into the Bengalee language, had printed his translation of the New Testament, and distributed a large edition of this portion of the sacred scriptures among the Hindoos. This zealous and unwearied missionary has also formed a *Sanscrit Grammar*, and has begun a *Dictionary* of the same language.

Chinese Literature.

A curious specimen of Chinese literature was given to the world, during the eighteenth century, by JOSEPH MOYRIAC DE MAILLA, a learned French Jesuit. Having made himself acquainted with the Chinese language, this ecclesiastic was sent as a missionary to China in 1703. He was greatly esteemed by the Emperor, KANG-HI, who employed him in making a map of China, and of Chinese Tartary. MAILLA translated the great *Annals of China* into French, part of which translation has been published by the Abbè GROSIER, under the following title: *Histoire General de la Chine*. 13 vols. 4to. Paris. 1777.—MAILLA died at Peking, in the year 1748.

NOTES ON CHAPTER XV.

French Language.

SINCE the publication of RICHELET's Dictionary, a more full and accurate one has been compiled by the Abbè FLAUD.

Italian Language.

During a great part of the seventeenth century the Italian language was in a state of comparative degeneracy. It abounded, to an excess, with metaphor and antithesis, allusion and conceit; so that, instead of the simplicity which had before prevailed, affectation and obscurity became its distinguishing characteristics. This taste was too much countenanced and promoted by the writings of MARINI, TASSO, and CHIABRERA, which, though monuments of great genius, yet gave currency to false principles of composition. During this period the best models of ancient taste fell into neglect; and such only were selected for imitation as favoured the glitter, the bombast, and the pedantry which were then in vogue. Of this the satires of BENEDICT MENZINI, and of SALVATOR ROSA, and the discourses of MORONE, PAOLETTI, and others, afford sufficient proof.

Towards the close of the seventeenth century these perversions of taste began to decline, and the Italian literati assumed a style more simple, unaffected and accurate than that which had been in fashion for more than an hundred years. APOSTOLO ZENO, a distinguished Venetian writer, was one of the first who introduced a natural turn of sentiment and expression into his writings, and recommended this manner to his countrymen. GRAVINA, about the same time, recalled the attention of the learned to the best specimens of Grecian and Roman eloquence. Besides these, the poems of LAZZARINI, the miscellaneous pieces of TAGLIAZUCCHI, the historical writings of MURATORI, the dramatic productions of MARTELLI, MAFFEI, CÆSAROTTI, ALFIERI, and METASTASIO, the various works of the Marquis of BECCARIA, and many others, are entitled to particular notice, as honourable to Italian literature during the eighteenth century, and as having contributed to the progress of its improvement.

By the influence of these and other writers, the Italian language gained, in the eighteenth century, a degree of purity, dignity, and general excellence, unknown even in the age of BEMBO and of CASA. The ancient rules and models of taste resumed, in a considerable degree, their sway; and, what is, perhaps, of little less importance, some of the most classical productions of Great-Britain and of France, by being translated into Italian, and naturalized in that country, have contributed, in no small degree, to meliorate the public taste, and to produce a reform in the literature of that country.

German Language.

About the year 1720, the practice of employing the vernacular tongue in important scientific publications was commenced in Germany. For the introduction of this improvement the honour is chiefly due to THOMASIVS, an eminent metaphysical and moral writer of that country; and to WOLF, distinguished for his labours in the same department of science. Their example was soon followed by others. From that period, therefore, it became necessary for authors to cultivate their own language with greater care; the influence of which soon became visible in their writings. A few years afterwards, that is to say, about the middle of the century, the practice of translating the best French and English books commenced in Germany, and produced very sensible effects in meliorating the style of writing among the German literati. These events were succeeded by the works of several authors, who wrote with a particular view to the introduction of new idioms and graces of language, and whose exertions were productive of the most useful effects.—See the progress of improvement in German style more minutely traced in the 26th chapter of this work.

NOTES ON CHAPTER XVII.

THE principal writers of *Universal History* in Germany are GATTERER, HEINRICH, MULLER, and HABERLIN. The most distinguished writers of particular histories are GEBAUER, SCHMIDT, KRAUSE, WIELAND, GALETTI, and SCHILLER. The greatest *Statistical* historians are ACHENWALL, WALCH, REINHARD, REMER, MEUSEL and SPRENGEL.

The *History of England*, in the form of *Letters from a Nobleman to his Son*, in two vols. 12mo, was ascribed to Lord LYTTLETON, to the Earl of ORRERY, and other noble writers; but was, in reality, written by Dr. GOLDSMITH.

Mrs. MACAULAY, in her *History of England from the Revolution to the present Time*, 4to. 1778, adopts the mode of writing in *Letters*, addressed to the Rev. Dr. WILSON.

Sir JOHN HAWKINS published an *History of Music*, in 1776, in five vols. 4to. This work contains much curious information, and is reputable to its author; but has been superseded by the better work of Dr. BURNEY.

The first *Chart of History* was published, it is believed, in France, about the year 1760, by the Abbè LANGLET DU FRESNOY. A few years afterwards, a similar work, taken from DU FRESNOY's, but much improved, was published in England. Dr. PRIESTLEY's *New Chart of History* was the third attempt of the kind; and is, doubtless, superior to all preceding works of a similar nature.

NOTES ON CHAPTER XVIII.

THE *Eloges* of FONTENELLE, and of D'ALEMBERT, hold a distinguished place among the writings of this class in the last age.

The *American Biography*, by the late Rev. Dr. BELKNAP, of Boston, in two vols. 8vo. is a work honourable to the compiler, and highly useful to the student of American history.

To the list of biographical works given in pages 151 and 152, it is proper to add, *Memoirs of the Life and Administration of Sir Robert Walpole, Earl of Orford*, by COXE.

The *Life of Lorenzo de Medici*, by ROSCOE, is worthy of more particular notice, and of more pointed praise, than are bestowed upon it in the above-mentioned page. It indicates an extent of reading, and an elegance of taste, which will do lasting honour to the author.

The *Life of Linnæus*, by STOEVEER, deserves a place among the valuable biographical works which appeared towards the close of the eighteenth century.

Almost all the *Accounts of distinguished Living Characters*, with which the republic of letters has abounded within a few years past, have been worse than useless. With few exceptions, they have been written in a continued strain of panegyric, which is rather calculated to flatter its immediate objects, and to mislead others, than to gratify curiosity, or to convey instruction. If these works should be perused

a century hence, they will give scarcely any just information concerning the characters of which they treat.

The number of *self-biographers* was much greater in the eighteenth century than in any former period.

NOTES ON CHAPTER XX.

POPE and DRYDEN. p. 181.

A FRIEND of learning and taste, on reading what is said of the comparative merits of these two great English poets, made the following remark: "DRYDEN, in my opinion, did more to improve English versification than POPE. The interval is wider between DRYDEN and the best of his predecessors than between DRYDEN and POPE."

Epic Poetry.

GLOVER wrote a second epic poem, entitled, *The Atheniad*, which has been praised; but is generally considered as inferior to his *Leonidas*.

The Epigoniad, by the Rev. Dr. WILLIAM WILKIE, of North-Britain, is an epic poem of some merit, but far from being entitled to a place in the first class. This writer has been called the "Homer of Scotland." His work was first published in 1757, and reached a second edition in 1759.—He died at St. Andrews in 1772.

In the composition of the *Joan of Arc*, SOUTHEY was assisted by his friend COLERIDGE, a poet of great genius and taste.

COWPER's *Translation of Homer* deserves an honourable place here. Considered as a *translation*, it is certainly superior to POPE's. GILBERT WAKEFIELD observes, that whoever wishes to see Homer in English dress must read COWPER.

Oberon, though the best, is not the only epic poem produced by WIELAND. His *Idris*, his *Neuen Amadis*, and his *Liebe um Liebe*, were prior in time, but inferior in merit.

They have, however, been highly commended, particularly by the critics in the author's own country.

It is the opinion of some good judges that the *Lusiad* of MICKLE is much superior to the *Lusiad* of CAMOENS. The translator has certainly, in some respects, improved on the original, and made many additions.

The Poems of *Ossian*, a little before the close of the century, were translated into Italian, by CÆSAROTTI, with great elegance.

Didactic Poetry.

WIELAND, the celebrated German writer, has written several didactic poems, which have been much commended. His *Die Natur*, his *Anti-Ovid*, and his *Musarion*, are represented as possessing peculiar merit. With their character, however, I have too little acquaintance to speak particularly. Besides these, the didactic poems of HAGEDORN, GIESKE, KASTNER, UZ and DUSCH, also Germans, have been spoken of, by the critics of their own country, with high respect.

The Grave, a didactic poem, by BLAIR, is a work of great excellence, and general popularity.

The following remarks may with propriety be read in connection with the character which is given of the Abbè DELILLE's *Garden*.

“VOLTAIRE, in his discourse pronounced at his reception into the French Academy, gives several reasons why the poets of that country have not succeeded in describing rural scenes and employments. The principal one is, the ideas of meanness, poverty, and wretchedness, which the French are accustomed to associate with the profession of husbandry. The same thing is alluded to by the Abbè DELILLE, in the preliminary discourse prefixed to his translation of the *Georgics*. ‘A translation,’ says he, ‘of this poem, if it had been undertaken by an author of genius, would have been better calculated than any other work for adding to the riches of our language. A version of the *Æneid* itself, however well executed, would, in this respect, be of less utility; inasmuch as the genius of our tongue accommodates itself more easily to the description of heroic achievements, than to the details of natural phenomena, and of the operations of husbandry. To force it to express these with suitable dignity, would have been a real conquest over that false delicacy which it

has contracted from our unfortunate prejudices."—STEWART's *Elements of the Philosophy of Mind*, Part II. chap. v. § 2. second edit.

Moral and Devotional Poetry.

To the list of sacred poets, the immortal name of COWPER ought to be added, as holding a place in the first rank. The orthodoxy of his faith, and the fervour of his piety, joined to his great talents, fitted him pre-eminently for this species of composition.

GELLERT is by no means the only sacred poet of whom Germany boasts. The *Hymns* of KLEIST, CRAMER, KLOPSTOCK, SCHLEGEL, and HERDER, have received high praise.

Descriptive Poetry.

The *Alpen* of Baron HALLER, published in 1729, is a descriptive poem of considerable reputation. The *Frühling* of KLEIST is a poem of still more distinguished excellence. Though not equal to THOMSON, with whom he has been compared, he has certainly painted some of the most beautiful scenes in nature, in just, vivid, and beautiful colours. To these may be added, belonging to the same class, the *Luise* of Voss, and the *Hermann und Dorothea* of GOETHE, which are generally placed, in that country, in the first order of descriptive poetry.

Drama.

A tragedy, entitled, *The Grecian Daughter*, is, by mistake, ascribed to MOORE, in p. 210. He published no dramatic work under that title.

In p. 211 there is an erroneous statement respecting comedy. Several of SHAKSPEARE's comedies are purely comic. His tragedies are rather chargeable with having a mixed character than his comedies.—DRYDEN also wrote several un-mixed comedies.

Towards the close of the eighteenth century, the plays of FARQUHAR, on account of their licentious character, were seldom played, and never without great alterations. They are wholly discontinued on the American stage.

Two comic productions of Mr. SHERIDAN, besides his *School for Scandal*, have been celebrated; viz. *The Rivals*, and *The Critic*. Both these works, and especially the latter, are considered as doing honour to the fertile genius of the author.

The younger COLMAN is entitled to a place among the distinguished comic writers of Great-Britain, at the close of the century under consideration. He is said, by some, to be inferior only to Mr. SHERIDAN. His *Ways and Means*, his *Surrender of Calais*, and his comic opera of *Inkle and Yarico*, have commanded much popular applause. Some of his dramatic pieces, however, are said to be tinctured with mischievous principles, and to have an immoral tendency; but of the nature and extent of these faults I have too little knowledge to be able to speak precisely.

The close of the century was distinguished by the dramatic publications of Miss JOANNA BAILLIE, who is considered by many as having retrieved the declining character of the age with respect to tragic composition. A respectable critic has pronounced, that, "for lofty poetry, sublime sentiment, and true pathos, her tragedies stand unquestionably at the head of every modern effort of the tragic muse."

The three plays of BEAUMARCHAIS, mentioned in page 217, form one story; and in the last of the three, the crimes and follies of the characters are represented as punished.

Besides the German dramatists mentioned in pages 220 and 221, there are several others who deserve respectful notice. SCHLEGEL, WEISSE, LEISEWITZ, and GERSTENBERG, have produced tragedies of high reputation. The tragedies of KLOPSTOCK are also represented as models of sublimity, both in sentiment, language, and action.—In comedy, CRUGER, KLINGER, WETZEL, GROSMANN, and ENGEL, are spoken of as having merit of a very conspicuous and popular kind. But while many of the dramatic productions of Germany, during the period under consideration, stand high on the scale of genius and taste, some of them deserve to be reprobated as replete with erroneous sentiment, and as being most pernicious in their moral tendency.

The character of the drama in America, towards the close of the eighteenth century, began to be more distinct and national than at any former period. Instead of waiting altogether for the productions of the English stage, and continuing to be its servile echo, the American stage has exhibited a considerable number of original pieces, and others adopted

from the French and German. And though the former are not equal to the first class of British productions, and the moral tendency of some of the latter has been questioned; yet they form one step in that literary progress of our country which is more particularly detailed in another place.

In enumerating the peculiar advantages under which poetic compositions were presented during the last age, it would be improper to omit taking notice of the illustration of poetic pictures by *elegant engravings*, and other appropriate ornaments. The *Shakspeare Gallery*, the plates for illustrating *Milton*, *Thomson*, and many other distinguished poets, had certainly no equals in any preceding age.

NOTES ON CHAPTER XXII.

Newspapers in the United States. p. 251.

AFTER taking much pains to ascertain the number of newspapers printed in the United States, the author is enabled to present the following list. He dares not assert that it is accurate or complete; but it is as nearly so as he could make it. It is proper to observe, however, that, as the materials which form it were collected at different times in the years 1801 and 1802, it is not improbable that some of the papers mentioned have been since discontinued, and others established. The real number may certainly, however, be considered, in the gross, as rather greater than smaller than that which is here presented.

IN NEW-HAMPSHIRE there are ten newspapers; viz. three at *Portsmouth*; one at *Concord*; one at *Dover*; one at *Gilmantown*; one at *Amherst*; one at *Keene*; one at *Walpole*; and one at *Dartmouth*. They are all published *once* a week.

IN MASSACHUSETTS there are twenty-six newspapers; viz. five in *Boston*, each published twice a week: two in *Salem*; two in *Newburyport*; two in *Worcester*; one in *Brookfield*; one in *Springfield*; one in *Northampton*; one in *Pittsfield*; one in *Dedham*; one in *Stockbridge*; one in *New-Bedford*; one in *Haverhill*; one in *Leominster*; three in *Portland*;

one in *Augusta*; one in *Castine*; and one in *Greenfield*;—all published *weekly*. The four last mentioned towns are in the *Province of Maine*.

In RHODE-ISLAND the number of gazettes has not been ascertained. It is believed there are four; viz. two in *Providence*, and two in *Newport*, each published *twice* a week.

In CONNECTICUT there are seventeen newspapers; viz. two at *Hartford*; two at *New-Haven*; three at *New-London*; two at *Norwich*; one at *Wyndham*; one at *Stonington*; one at *Litchfield*; one at *Sharon*; one at *Danbury*; one at *Norwalk*; one at *Middletown*; and one at *Newfield*. All these are published *once* a week.

In VERMONT there are eight newspapers; viz. one at *Bennington*; one at *Rutland*; one at *Vergennes*; one at *Brattleborough*; two at *Windsor*; one at *Peacham*; and one at *Randolph*;—all published *weekly*. At the time when this list was communicated to the author (February, 1801), three new gazettes were talked of; viz. one each at *Bennington*, *Burlington*, and *St. Alban's*.

In NEW-YORK there are thirty-eight newspapers; viz. in the city of *New-York* thirteen, seven published *daily*, four *twice* a week, and two *weekly*; three in *Albany*, each published *twice* a week; one at *Brooklyn*; two at *Newburgh*; two at *Poughkeepsie*; two at *Kingston*; one at *Kaatskill*; three at *Hudson*; one at *Troy*; one at *Lansingburgh*; one at *Salem*; one at *Waterford*; one at *Johnstown*; one at *Herkemer*; one at *Cooperstown*; one at *Whitestown*; one at *Rome*; one at *Oswego*; and one at *Canandaigua*;—all printed *weekly*.

In NEW-JERSEY there are eight newspapers; viz. two at *Trenton*; two at *Newark*; one at *Elizabeth-Town*; one at *Brunswick*; one at *Morristown*; and one at *Burlington*. These are all printed *weekly*.

In PENNSYLVANIA the number has not been accurately ascertained. It is believed, however, to be about twenty-eight. Of these five or six are published *daily*; about the same number *twice* a week; and the remainder *weekly*. At least five of the newspapers in Pennsylvania are in the *German* language.

In DELAWARE there are three newspapers; viz. two in *Wilmington*, published *twice* a week; and one in *Dover*, published *weekly*.

In MARYLAND there are fourteen newspapers; viz. three in *Baltimore*, published *daily*; three in *Washington*, of

which two are published *three times* a week, and one *weekly*; two at *Georgetown*, each printed *three times* a week; and one at *Annapolis*; one at *Easton*; two at *Hagar's-Town*; and two at *Frederick-Town*;—all *weekly* papers.

In VIRGINIA there are seventeen newspapers; viz. two at *Alexandria*, published *daily*; three at *Richmond*, each *three times* a week; two at *Norfolk*, *twice* a week; two at *Petersburgh*, *twice* a week; and one at *Fredericksburgh*, also *twice* a week. Besides these, there are, one at *Fincastle*; one at *Lorburg*; one at *Lynchburg*; one at *Staunton*; one at *Martinsburg*; and two at *Winchester*;—all *weekly* papers.

In NORTH-CAROLINA there are eight newspapers; viz. two at *Raleigh*, the seat of government; one at *Edenton*; one at *Newbern*; one at *Wilmington*; one at *Halifax*; one at *Salisbury*; and one at *Lincolnborg*;—all *weekly* papers.

In SOUTH-CAROLINA the number of newspapers could not be ascertained at the time when inquiry was made. There are probably at least six or eight; perhaps a greater number.

In GEORGIA there are six newspapers, viz. two in *Savannah*, one of which is published *twice* a week, and the other *weekly*; two at *Augusta*, each *weekly*; and one *weekly* paper each at *Louisville* and at *Washington*.

In KENTUCKY there are four newspapers; viz. two at *Lexington*; one at *Frankfort*; and one at *Louisville*;—all *weekly* papers.

In TENNESSEE there are two newspapers; viz. one at *Knoxville*, and one at *Nashville*;—both published *weekly*.

In the State of OHIO there is at least *one* newspaper, printed at *Chillicothe*; and probably one or two more.

In the MISSISSIPPI TERRITORY there is one newspaper, printed *weekly* at the city of *Natchez*.

There are, then, in the United States, about 200 newspapers. Of these at least seventeen are printed *daily*, seven *three times* a week, thirty *twice* a week, and one hundred and forty-six *weekly*.

The statement in p. 251 differs, in some respects, from that which is here given. It is believed that the latter is the more correct.

NOTES ON CHAPTER XXIII.

American Philosophical Society. p. 259.

THE following brief notices respecting the rise and progress of this institution, and its situation in 1803, are extracted from a private letter, addressed to the author by a member of the association.

“ In the year 1743 a society was formed in Philadelphia, taking the name of *The American Philosophical Society*. Its most early and active members were, BENJAMIN FRANKLIN, Dr. THOMAS BOND, Rev. Dr. FRANCIS ALISON, Rev. JOHN EWING, Rev. Dr. WILLIAM SMITH, and Mr. DAVID RITTENHOUSE.

“ In the year 1766 another society was formed, under the name of *The American Society for promoting and propagating useful Knowledge in Philadelphia*. Among its most active members appear to have been Messrs. CHARLES THOMPSON, EDMUND PHYSICK, ISAAC PASCHALL, OWEN BIDDLE, MOSES BARTRAM, and ISAAC BARTRAM.

“ The chief business of the former of these societies seems to have been the making and receiving of *communications* on various philosophical subjects; and of the latter, the proposing and discussing of *questions* on a great variety of subjects, chiefly philosophical and political: and among these it is impossible not to discern strong symptoms of that spirit of freedom which was soon to discover itself in the American revolution.

“ In the beginning of the year 1769 these two societies united, under the name of *The American Philosophical Society, held at Philadelphia, for promoting useful Knowledge*. The elder branch, at the time of the union, contained 144 members, including 80 corresponding members; and the younger branch contained 128 members. Several gentlemen, however, were at this time members of both.

“ The society was incorporated, by an act of the Legislature of Pennsylvania, in the year 1780. Aided by the munificence of the State, and liberal donations of individuals, they have now erected, on a lot of ground in the State-House square, a commodious, and not inelegant building, where they keep their museum and library, and hold their meetings,

“The society have published five quarto volumes of their *Transactions*. Their library, chiefly formed by the benevolent donations of similar societies both in Europe and America, and of individuals, now contains upwards of 1300 volumes. Their museum of natural history is not yet very extensive; but, however, contains a number of rare and valuable specimens, chiefly of the fossil or mineral kind. Their philosophical apparatus is still in an infant state, but progressive.

“In the year 1786 Mr. JOHN HYACINTH DE MAGELLAN, of London, made a donation to the society of 200 guineas, to be vested in a permanent fund, to the end that the interest arising therefrom should be annually disposed of in premiums, to be adjudged by the society “to the author of the best discovery, or most useful invention, relating to navigation, astronomy, or natural philosophy (mere natural history only excepted).” A few only of these premiums having been yet awarded, this fund is now considerably accumulated. The society have, from their own proper funds, offered premiums, and invited candidates to make communications of inventions or improvements relative to certain specified objects.

“With respect to the number of the present members of the society I cannot speak with any degree of certainty. It may, perhaps, be about two hundred, of whom about one half may be foreigners, about forty in Philadelphia and its vicinity, and the rest in all parts of the United States.

“The society, I may say with truth, is at present in a pretty flourishing condition. Its meetings are well attended, and every part of its business conducted with regularity. This, in justice, however, is to be ascribed to the zeal and activity of a very few of its members.

“The society have no other funds than those which arise from the annual contribution of two dollars from each of its resident members, and the occasional donations of liberal individuals.”

American Academy of Arts and Sciences. p. 260.

The following extract of a letter from a member of the Academy, written in September, 1801, will give the reader a comprehensive view of the history of this institution, and of its state at that time.

“The American Academy of Arts and Sciences was incor-

porated May 3, 1780. The first meeting was on the 30th of the same month. The late Governor BOWDOIN was elected President; and was annually re-elected until his death, which happened November 6, 1790. In May, 1791, the Hon. JOHN ADAMS, LL. D. was elected President, and has been annually re-elected since. In the year 1785 the Academy published a volume of their Transactions in quarto. The preface to this volume, the incorporating act, and statutes of the Academy, together with Mr. BOWDOIN's inaugural address, which it contains, will give full information of the nature and objects of the society, and of its situation at that time. Though the volume is intrinsically valuable and well executed, and was offered for sale at the moderate price of sixteen shillings, yet it had a very limited sale, and the publication involved the Academy in a debt, which occasioned no small embarrassment. The first part of a second volume was, however, published in 1793, and a sufficient number of papers have been some time past selected to complete the volume. It will soon be published.

“The present funds amount to about 7300 dollars, vested in different descriptions of stocks. Five thousand dollars of this sum arises from a donation made by Count RUMFORD in 1796: the interest of which is, by the terms of the donation, to be ‘applied and given, once every second year, as a premium to the author of the most important discovery or useful improvement which shall be made known to the public in any part of the continent of America, or in any of the American islands, during the preceding two years, on Heat or on Light.’ The Academy have voted, that at their meeting in May next, and afterwards at their meeting in May biennially, they will decide on the discovery or improvement which shall appear to be entitled to the premium. Notice will soon be published of this vote. Count RUMFORD's donation is in three per cent. stock. The residue of the fund arises from a donation of £100, given by Mr. BOWDOIN in his will; the like sum given by JOSIAH QUINCY, Esq. 440 dollars given by the General Court in 1787; and an annual assessment of two dollars on each member. The sum of five dollars is also paid by each member on his admission. In addition to the pecuniary legacy, Governor BOWDOIN gave to the Academy his library, consisting of about twelve hundred volumes, with liberty to sell any part of it, the proceeds to be vested in books. About six hundred volumes were sold under this permission. The library of the Academy now contains about

thirteen hundred volumes, among which are many rare and valuable books. Besides Mr. BOWDOIN, the principal donors are, the present President of the Academy, Dr. FRANKLIN, and M. VERON, who was a surgeon in the squadron of M. DE TERNAY. The number of the original or statute members was sixty-two. One hundred and sixty-one members have been elected since the commencement of the institution. There are now living, of the whole corps, 170; viz.

Resident members, by which is meant those	
who belong to the commonwealth	95
Resident in other States in the union	30
Foreign members	45

Making in the whole	170
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“The Academy meets four times annually; in January and May at *Boston*—in August and September at *Cambridge*. Their meetings at Boston are holden in an apartment lately assigned for their accommodation in the new State-House, where also their library and museum are deposited. A catalogue of the books in the library is in preparation, and will soon be published. It has been sometimes remarked that this society has been, in a degree, languid in its operation, and has not fully satisfied the public expectations. Whatever justice there may be in such a remark, I shall not now attempt to trace the source. There is evidently a want of excitement; and the public ought to have candour enough to take part of the blame to itself. I have the satisfaction, however, to observe, that there appears, of late, a renewed and more lively attention among its members to the concerns of the institution. I ought to have mentioned, among the liberalities of the General Court, the plates of the *map* of the commonwealth, which were given to the Academy and to the Historical Society. The donation has been accepted, and a joint committee of the societies have lately sold the right of impression for seven years for 600 dollars, to be paid to the societies without any deduction.

NOTES ON CHAPTER XXVI.

German Literature. p. 330.

THE pernicious tendency of many modern German publications has been often the subject of remark within a few years past. That works of solid merit, which cannot be too generally known and read, are every year published in that country, is not denied; but that a considerable number daily issue from the German presses, of a very different and most pestiferous character, can as little be doubted. A late writer, in a memoir on this subject, makes the following striking remarks. How far they are just or otherwise is left to be determined by every reader.

“After all, it may not be chimerical to suppose, that the general reception of the *German* writings, the universal prevalence of the German taste, and the love of the wild and gloomy, are not to be accounted for from ordinary causes, and have in them more weight and importance than are usually attached to mere matters of taste and criticism. May not these be among the elements of feverish agitation and mighty change, afloat, by the permission of Providence, for purposes, to us inscrutable, in the moral system? May not this revolution in taste be a prelude to other revolutions—a small skirt of the cloud, *like a man’s hand*, ushering in the blackening tempest? Are not the German writings calculated to generate, in both sexes, a ferocious hardihood, and independence of mind; a dangerous contempt of established forms; a promptitude, to suffer and to dare; an enthusiasm of character, fitting them for seasons of energy, of exertions, of privations, dangers, and calamities? It is natural for human blindness and inattention to overlook the instruments and operations by which Providence prepares and fashions great and surprising events. It is the folly of man to ascribe too little weight and importance to moral causes; while it is the course of Providence (as it were, on purpose to humble human pride) to act by seemingly minute and inefficient causes. Who knows, then, but this preternatural appetite for the irregular, the indecorous, the boisterous, the sanguinary, and the terrific, may be the precursor of some strange moral or political convulsion?”—*Transactions of the Royal Irish Aca-*

demy, vol. viii. *Reflections on the Style and Manner of some late German Writers, and on the Tendency of their Productions.* By WILLIAM PRESTON, Esq. M. R. I. A.

American Episcopate. p. 368.

Among those who signalized themselves as writers in favour of the introduction and support of an *American Episcopate*, the name of Mr. JOHN VARDILL ought not to have been omitted. Mr. VARDILL was born and educated in the city of New-York. In the year 1762 he was admitted into *King's College*, as it was then called; and having passed, with high reputation, through the usual course of academic instruction, he received the degrees of Bachelor and Master of Arts, and remained in the college for the purpose of prosecuting his studies, preparatory to his application for orders in the Episcopal Church.

In the year 1773 he was elected Fellow of the College, and Professor of Natural Law; and, towards the conclusion of that year, went to England for ordination, where he has since remained. In early youth he discovered a very considerable poetical genius; and several of his publications in this way, at different periods of his life, have been received with much applause. He bore a conspicuous part as a writer at the commencement of the contest between this country and Great-Britain; and in the dispute relative to the introduction and establishment of *Bishops* of the Episcopal Church.

Dr. SEABURY. p. 369.

As Dr. SAMUEL SEABURY was the first Episcopal Bishop that ever resided in the United States, it is thought proper to present the following additional information respecting him, which has been communicated to the author since the account in the above-mentioned page was printed.

He was born in 1728, and passed through the regular course of education in *Yale College*, where he graduated in 1751. In 1752 he went to Scotland for the purpose of studying Medicine; but soon afterwards turning his attention to Divinity, he went to London, where he was ordained a Deacon, Dec. 21, 1753, by the Bishop of Lincoln, at the request of THOMAS SHERLOCK, Bishop of London; and a

few days afterwards, Priest, by the Bishop of Carlisle. Besides remaining in Scotland about one year, he spent two or three months at the University of Oxford.

He was first settled in the ministry at *Brunswick*, in New-Jersey. Here he remained about three years. From Brunswick, in the beginning of the year 1757, he removed to *Jamaica*, on Long-Island, where he resided until December, 1766; thence he removed to *Westchester*, in the State of New-York. In this place he remained until the commencement of the revolutionary war, when he went into the city of New-York, and after the termination of this controversy settled in Connecticut. In 1777 he received the degree of *Doctor of Divinity* from the University of Oxford.

Dr. SEABURY went to England, in 1784, to obtain consecration as Bishop of the Episcopal Church in Connecticut. Meeting, in South-Britain, with some obstruction to the accomplishment of his wishes (an obstruction, however, entirely unconnected with personal considerations), he went to Scotland, where, in the month of November in that year, he was consecrated Bishop, by Messrs. ROBERT KILGOUR, ARTHUR PETRIE, and JOHN SKINNER, nonjuring Bishops of Scotland.

He continued for a number of years after this period to reside at New-London, and to discharge, in an exemplary manner, the duties of his office. He was warmly attached to the Episcopal Church, and generally esteemed as one of her most zealous and able defenders in America.—He died in 1796.

American Colleges. p. 385.

The following list of American Colleges has been made out with considerable care. It may, perhaps, be regarded as a record of some value, not only for gratifying present curiosity, but also for future reference.

In MASSACHUSETTS there are three Colleges, viz.

1. *Harvard College*, or the *University of Cambridge*. This is the oldest institution of the kind in North-America. It was founded in 1638.

In 1636 the General Court of Massachusetts gave £400 towards the support of a public school at *Cambridge*, then called *Newtown*. Mr. JOHN HARVARD, an eminent clergyman, dying in 1638, left near £800, being the greater part of his estate, to the same object. In consequence of this

donation, the General Court, the same year, enlarged the plan, and extended the powers of the institution, and gave it the name of *Harvard College*. Degrees were first conferred in the year 1642.

This institution has to acknowledge the munificence of many liberal individuals. In 1699, the Hon. WILLIAM STOUGHTON, Lieutenant-Governor of the province, erected a Hall for the accommodation of students, which was called by his name. *Holden Chapel* was erected in 1745, at the expense of the widow and daughters of SAMUEL HOLDEN, one of the Directors of the Bank of England. *Hollis-hall*, erected in 1762, was so called in honour of THOMAS HOLLIS, of London, who made numerous and large benefactions to the College. Besides these, the donations of THOMAS HANCOCK, Drs. EZEKIEL and ABNER HERSEY, WILLIAM ERVING, Esquire, and several others, were liberal, and have contributed to extend the plan and usefulness of the College. All the Professorships bear the names of the gentlemen who either gave a fund for their support, or contributed towards this object.

The immediate *Officers* of this College are, a President (who is at present the Rev. Dr. JOSEPH WILLARD); HOLLIS *Professor of Divinity*; HANCOCK *Professor of the Hebrew and Oriental Languages*; HOLLIS *Professor of Mathematics and Natural Philosophy*; HERSEY *Professor of Anatomy and Surgery*; HERSEY *Professor of the Theory and Practice of Physic*; ERVING *Professor of Chemistry and Materia Medica*; and four Tutors.

The *Board of Overseers* consists of the Governor, Lieutenant-Governor, the members of the Council and Senate, and the Ministers of the Congregational Churches in Boston, Cambridge, Watertown; Charlestown, Roxbury and Dorchester.

The number of *Students* in this College may be estimated, on an average, from 180 to 200. The greater part of these board in the College. The expenses necessarily arising to each student within the walls, *i. e.* boarding, tuition, room-rent, &c. may be estimated at about 120 dollars *per annum*.

The *course of Instruction* in this College is as follows: *First year*, the Students read *Sallust, Livy, Horace, Terence, Homer, Xenophon*; besides these, they attend to Rhetoric, MILLOT's Elements of Universal History, PIKE's Arithmetic, LOWTH's Grammar, French and Hebrew languages, WATTS's LOGIC, MORSE's Geography, and the use of the globes. *Second*

year, Classics as before; French and Hebrew languages, Logic, Geography, Arithmetic, and History continued; LOCKE on the Understanding, BLAIR's Lectures, Mensuration, and Algebra. *Third* year, the Classics before enumerated; French, Hebrew, History, and LOCKE continued; with the addition of EUCLID's Elements, ENFIELD's Philosophy, Trigonometry, Conic Sections, Mensuration of Heights and Distances, Navigation, English Composition, and Forensic Disputations. *Fourth* year, BURLAMAQUI's Elements of Natural and Political Law, PALEY's Philosophy, Dialling, Spheric Geometry and Trigonometry, FERGUSON's Astronomy, DODDRIDGE's Theological Lectures, English Composition, &c.

The *Library* is the largest excepting one, in the United States. It consists of between 13,000 and 14,000 volumes. The *Philosophical Apparatus* is ample, and generally said to be the best in America. The *Funds* are large, but their precise amount is not known. The annual Commencement is on the last Wednesday in August. At the end of the year 1800, more than 3,600 Students had received the honours of the institution.

2. *Williams' College*. This institution was incorporated as a College in 1793, and is situated in *Williamstown*, in the County of Berkshire. It is named in honour of Col. EPHRAIM WILLIAMS, who died in 1755, and who left a large portion of his estate for the establishment and support of a seminary of learning. This seminary was first incorporated as an Academy in 1785. Its plan was extended, and a Charter, constituting it a College, given in the year before-mentioned.

The College *Buildings* are, two large edifices of brick; one 82 feet long, 42 feet wide, and four stories high; containing 28 rooms for the accommodation of students, and a Chapel: the other 104 feet long, 38 feet wide, and also four stories high; containing 32 rooms, with a bed-room and study adjoining to each. The former of these buildings was erected in 1788, at the expense of 11,700 dollars; the latter, in 1798, at the expense of 12,400 dollars. Besides these, there are a dwelling-house for the President, and a large and elegant Church, to the erection of which the Trustees contributed, on condition that the officers and students of the College should always be accommodated therein on the Lord's days, and have the use of it on public occasions.

The *Funds* of this College are small, consisting of money on interest, amounting to about 3,500 dollars, and a town-

ship of land in the province of Maine, worth, perhaps, from 7,000 to 10,000 dollars. The income, from tuition, room-rent, &c. is about 2,000 dollars annually. The institution has been hitherto supported by Col. WILLIAMS's donation, by subscriptions among the inhabitants of Williamstown and its vicinity, by the product of a lottery, and by a grant of two townships of land in the province of Maine by the Legislature of the State.

The *Officers* of this College are, a President (who is at present the Rev. Dr. EBENEZER FITCH) and four Tutors. The institution is governed by sixteen gentlemen, of whom the President for the time being is one, and always presides at their meetings.

The number of *Students* at the close of the year 1800 was 93. They are boarded in the College, and in private houses in the vicinity. The price of board, tuition, washing, wood, &c. amounts annually to about 100 dollars.

The *Library* consists of about 600 volumes. Two literary societies belonging to the College have a library in common, consisting of 300 volumes more. The *Philosophical Apparatus* is small; but well selected and good, so far as it goes. A good *Telescope*, and some other articles are much wanted to render the collection tolerably complete.

The *Course of Instruction* is nearly similar to that which was detailed as taking place in *Harvard College*. The principal points of difference are the following—There appears to be rather less attention paid to Classic literature here than at Harvard. PRIESTLEY's Lectures on History are studied, by the Junior class, instead of MILLOT's Elements; EDWARDS on the Will, by the Senior class, in addition to LOCKE; and in some instances the Senior class has recited Dr. HOPKINS's System of Theology; in others DODD-RIDGE's Lectures.

The annual Commencement is on the first Wednesday of September; and at the close of the year 1800 about 80 students had received the honours of the College.

3. *Bowdoin College*. This College was instituted in 1794. It is situated at *Brunswick*, in the Province of Maine; and was so called in honour of the late Governor BOWDOIN.

This institution is yet in its infancy. There are a President (who is the Rev. JOSEPH M'KEAN), lately appointed, and a Professor of Languages. With respect to the state of the funds, the number of the students, the course of instruction, &c. no information has been obtained. But as the

College has not been organized more than three or four years; its constitution cannot yet be very complete or mature.

In NEW-HAMPSHIRE there is one College, viz.

Dartmouth College, which was incorporated in 1769. This seminary is situated in Hanover, in the county of Grafton, and derives its name from the Earl of DARTMOUTH, one of its principal benefactors. The Rev. Dr. ELEAZER WHEELOCK was the founder, and the first President. (See p. 374.) The first College buildings were erected in 1770, and a large addition made to them in 1786.

The *Government* of the College is in the hands of twelve trustees, seven of whom make a quorum. By them all laws and appointments are made, and to them the officers are responsible.

The *Officers* are, a President (who is at present JOHN WHEELOCK, LL. D. the son of the first President); a Professor of Mathematics and Natural Philosophy; a Professor of the Latin and Greek Languages; a Professor of Chemistry and Medicine, and two Tutors.

The *Course of Instruction*. Students must be qualified for admission, by a knowledge of the Greek Testament, of Virgil, and Cicero's Orations, and of the principles of Arithmetic; and when admitted, usually continue four years before they receive degrees. The *Freshman* class attend to the Greek and Latin authors, the principles of composition, criticism, rhetoric, &c. The *Sophomore* class to Geography, Logic, and the Mathematics. The *Junior* class to Natural Philosophy, Moral Philosophy, and the higher branches of the Mathematics: the Sophomores and Juniors, both continuing to devote a portion of their time to the Classics. The *Senior* class attend to Metaphysics, the principles of Civil Law, Divinity, Chemistry, and Natural History.

The *Funds* of this College consist chiefly of lands granted by New-Hampshire and Vermont, most of which are still unproductive. Of these lands there are about 40,000 acres.

The College *Library* consists of about 3,000 volumes. The *Philosophical Apparatus* is sufficient for a common course of experimental philosophy.

The number of *Students* in 1801 was 140. The greater part of these are accommodated in the College. The annual expense of each individual, including boarding, tuition, &c. except cloathing and other contingencies, is about 100 dollars.

In 1801 *eight hundred students* had graduated at this College since its establishment.

In RHODE-ISLAND there is *one* College, viz.

Rhode-Island College. The charter for this seminary was obtained in 1764. The Rev. JAMES MANNING, of New-Jersey, had the principal agency in founding it, and was chosen the first President. The College edifice was erected in 1770. It is a spacious building, 150 feet long, 46 feet wide, and four stories high, and contains 56 apartments.

The *Government* of the College is vested in a Board of Trustees. The immediate *Officers* are, a President, Professor of Mathematics and Natural Philosophy, Professor of Law, and three Tutors.

The *Funds* of this institution are small, amounting to little more than eight thousand dollars, chiefly raised by subscription.

The *Philosophical Apparatus* is tolerably complete. It has lately received considerable accessions by the liberality of SAMUEL ELAM, Esq. of New-Port. The *Library* contains about 3000 volumes.

The number of students in 1801 was 107. They are chiefly boarded in the College; and the necessary annual expense of each is about 100 dollars.

There is by no means a general taste for literature in this State. Of the 107 students above mentioned only 12 belonged to the State. The greater part of the rest were from Massachusetts, and a number from the southward, especially from South-Carolina.

In CONNECTICUT there is *one* College, viz.

Yale College, at New-Haven. This institution was incorporated in 1701, and was the third College established in the American Colonies. It received this name in honour of THOMAS YALE, Esq. who had been Governor of Fort St. George, in India, and who was one of its liberal benefactors.

The *Officers* of this College are, a President (now the Rev. Dr. TIMOTHY DWIGHT); a Professor of Divinity; Professor of Mathematics and Natural Philosophy; Professor of Oriental Languages; and three Tutors.

The number of *Students* in this College is believed to be greater than in any other in the United States. In 1801 they amounted to 217; and the number since that time has probably increased. The students are chiefly boarded in the College, and the annual expense attending the accommodation of each is from 120 to 150 dollars.

The College *Buildings* are spacious and elegant. The *Li-*

brary consists of between 3,000 and 4,000 volumes. The *Philosophical Apparatus* is considered among the best in our country. The *Funds* are large, but the amount of them is not known to the writer.

The annual Commencement is on the second Wednesday of September; and the number of students who had graduated at this College, at the end of the year 1800, was about 2,600.

The State of VERMONT has *one* College, viz.

Middlebury College, situated in the town of Middlebury, in Addison County. This seminary was founded in 1800, and is yet in an infant state.

The *Government* of this College is vested in a Board of Trustees, consisting of sixteen gentlemen. The *Officers* in 1801 were, a President (the Rev. Mr. J. ATWATER), and a Tutor. One or more Professors have probably been elected since.

The *Funds* consist chiefly of lands, which, though little productive at present, promise hereafter to afford an ample support to the institution.

The number of *Students* in the College, and Grammar School annexed to it, was, in 1801, about 30. Since that time it is believed they have increased. They are all boarded in private houses. The annual expense of each, including boarding, washing, tuition, &c. is from 80 to 90 dollars.

The *Library* is small, but increasing. The *Philosophical Apparatus* is incomplete; but measures have been adopted to render it less so; and, on the whole, the institution has a prospect of becoming, at no great distance of time, extensively useful.

NEW-YORK has *two* Colleges, viz.

1. *Columbia College*, in the city of New-York. This institution was founded in 1754, under the title of *King's College*, which name, after the Revolution, was exchanged for the one which it now bears. (See p. 355 of this volume.)

This College is under the direction of a Board of Trustees. The immediate officers are, a President (at present the Rev. Dr. BENJAMIN MOORE, Bishop of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the State of New-York); a Professor of Moral Philosophy, Logic, Rhetoric, and Belles Lettres; a Professor of the Greek and Latin Languages, and of Grecian and Roman Antiquities; a Professor of Mathematics, Natural Philo-

sophy, Chronology, and Geography; and a Professor of Chemistry. Besides these, there are in the Medical School attached to the College, a Dean of Faculty; a Professor of Anatomy and Surgery; a Professor of the Institutes of Medicine; a Professor of Obstetrics; and a Professor of Materia Medica and Botany.

To qualify Students for admission into this College, it is necessary that they should be able to read the four Gospels in Greek, together with four books of *Virgil's Æneid*, four books of *Cæsar's Commentaries*, and four Orations of *Cicero* against *Cataline*.

The course of instruction in this College is as follows:

The *first* year, *Sallust*, *Livy*, two books of *Virgil's Georgics*, part of the *New-Testament* in Greek, from 20 to 30 Dialogues of *Lucian*, and two books (generally) of *Xenophon*. To these are added, Arithmetic, Algebra, a small portion of Euclid, and Latin Composition.

The *second* year, *Virgil's Georgics* finished, *Horace's Odes*, and part of his *Satires*, the Orations of *Demosthenes*, an additional portion of *Xenophon*, and two books of *Homer*. With these are mingled, English Grammar, six books of *Euclid*, Modern Geography, Trigonometry, with its various applications to Surveying, Navigation, &c. Latin and English Composition.

The *third* year, *Horace's* Epistles and Art of Poetry, six books of *Homer*, Conic Sections, Spheric Trigonometry, with its application to Astronomical problems, Ancient Geography, Rhetoric, and English Composition.

The *fourth* year, Natural Philosophy, Logic, and Moral Philosophy, *Terence*, *Longinus*, Chemistry, and English Composition. Public speaking once a week through the whole course.

It is believed that there is no other College in the United States, in which the Greek and Latin Languages are studied with so much care, and to such an extent as in this institution.

This College has a *Library*, consisting of about 3000 volumes. Its *Philosophical Apparatus* is among the best in the United States. The number of matriculated Students is about 125. Besides these, there are the Students in the Medical School, and some others, who sustain a less formal connection with the institution.

2. *Union College*, at Schenectady. This College was founded in 1795, and though its growth has not been very rapid, it bids fair to be an useful institution.

The College *Officers* are, a President (now the Rev. Dr. MAXCEY); a Professor of Mathematics and Natural Philosophy; and two Tutors.

The number of *Students* in 1801 was about 43. They were at that time boarded in private families; but are now accommodated in the College edifice, which is spacious and convenient.

The Library consists of 800 volumes. The *Philosophical Apparatus* is a respectably large and good one. The *Funds* of the institution are small.

The State of NEW-JERSEY has one College, viz,

Nassau-Hall, or the *College of New-Jersey*, at Princeton. This College was founded in 1746, at Elizabeth-Town, from which place it was removed in 1747 to New-Ark, and in 1757 to Princeton, where it has since continued. About this time the large College edifice was erected, 180 feet long, 54 feet wide, and four stories high; capable of accommodating a large number of Students. (See Chapter xxvi. p. 345, of this work.)

This building, together with the Library, much of the Philosophical Apparatus, &c. was destroyed by fire in the beginning of the year 1802. Since that time, however, by the aid of liberal benefactions from every part of the United States, it has been rebuilt, and the whole institution placed under new advantages and regulations, which promise a degree of respectability and usefulness greater than it had ever before attained.

The *Government* of this College is vested in twenty-four Trustees, including the President of the College, and the Governor of the State for the time being. The *Officers* of the College are, a President (the Rev. Dr. SAMUEL S. SMITH); a Professor of Languages; a Professor of Divinity; a Professor of Mathematics, Natural Philosophy and Chemistry; and three Tutors.

The *Library* is now small; but measures have been lately taken, which will probably soon render it one of the largest and best College Libraries in the United States. The *Philosophical Apparatus* is a respectable one, and also likely to be improved.

The course of instruction in this Seminary is not accurately known to the writer. It is believed, however, that this is one of the institutions in the United States in which *Classical* learning receives more than usual attention; and in which, be-

sides an advantageous mode of pursuing most of the objects of study, polite literature is cultivated with great success.

The number of Students in this College at the close of the year 1803, amounted to about 150; a greater number than ever before belonged to the institution. They are chiefly boarded in the College edifice. The annual expense of each is not certainly known, but is believed to be from 150 to 170 dollars.

The annual Commencement in this College is on the last Wednesday of September.

In PENNSYLVANIA there are *three* Colleges, viz.

1. The *University of Pennsylvania*, in Philadelphia. This institution was formed in 1791, by the union of the *College of Philadelphia*, founded in 1753, (see page 352) and another institution, formed immediately after the Revolutionary war, under the same title which the united seminaries now bear.

The *Officers* of this institution are, a Provost (this place is now vacant), who is also Professor of Natural Philosophy; a Vice-Provost, who is also Professor of Logic and Moral Philosophy; a Professor of Greek and Latin Languages; a Professor of Mathematics; a Professor of English and Belles Lettres; and a Professor of Oriental Literature. Besides these, the instructors in the *Medical School* are, a Professor of Anatomy; a Professor of the Institutes and Practice of Medicine; a Professor of Materia Medica, Natural History, and Botany; and a Professor of Chemistry. This Medical School is much more frequented by Students than any other in the United States. (See vol. i. p. 320. and vol. ii. p. 393.)

The *Library* of this seminary consists of about 1000 volumes. The *Philosophical Apparatus* is tolerably good. The whole number of *Students* belonging to the institution, at the close of the year 1803, was about 160; but of these only a small portion actually belonged to the classes in College.

2. *Dickinson College*, in Carlisle. This College was founded in the year 1783, and received the name which it bears in honour of JOHN DICKINSON, Esquire, the celebrated political writer, and its most liberal benefactor. (See page 382.)

The *Government* of this College is in the hands of a Board of Trustees. The *Officers* are, a President (now the Rev. Dr. NISBET); Vice-President; and two Professors. The *Library* consists of about 3000 volumes. The *Philosophical Apparatus* is small. The amount of the *Funds* is not known to the writer.

The number of *Students* in this College is believed to be about 45 or 50. They are boarded in private families in the town.

3. *Franklin College*, in Lancaster. This institution was founded in 1787, for the particular accommodation of the *German* inhabitants of Pennsylvania, to enable them to educate their youth in their own language, and in conformity with their own habits. The Principal is a German Lutheran, and the Vice-President a Calvinist. Its present state is not known to the writer; but it is believed not to be in a very flourishing condition.

In *Maryland* there are four Colleges, viz.

1. *St. John's College*, at Annapolis. This College was founded in the year 1784; and, together with the seminary which will be next mentioned, forms the "University of Maryland."

This College is governed by twenty-four Trustees. Its *Officers* are, a President (now JOHN M'DOWELL, Esq.) and two Professors. Its *Funds* are chiefly derived from voluntary subscription, and an annual grant of £1750 from the State, aided by the income from the Students for tuition. Its Library is moderately large; and its *Philosophical Apparatus* only tolerably good.

In 1801 the number of Students in this institution was about 90.

2. *Washington College*, in Chestertown, instituted in 1782, and, like the preceding, placed under the direction of twenty-four Visitors or Trustees. In 1787 a permanent fund was granted to this institution, by a law of the State, of £1250 a year; which has been since continued. No other particulars concerning this College are known to the writer.

3. The *Catholic College*, at Georgetown, on the Potowmac. This institution is under the particular direction of the Roman Catholics, who form a considerable part of the population of Maryland. The writer has not been so happy as to succeed in his attempts to obtain particular information concerning this seminary.

4. *Cokesbury College*, at Abingdon, in Harford county. This College was founded by the Methodist Church in 1785, and intended for the education of youth belonging to that communion. It is so called in honour of the Rev. THOMAS COKE, and the Rev. FRANCIS ASBURY, Bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church. No particulars are known to the writer respecting the Officers, Funds, number of Students, &c.

In *Virginia* there are *two* Colleges, viz.

1. *William and Mary College*, at Williamsburgh. This institution was incorporated in 1693, by King WILLIAM and Queen MARY, whose names it bears. The credit of obtaining the Charter, and of organizing the establishment, is due to the Rev. JAMES BLAIR. (See p. 335.) This was the second College founded in the American Colonies.

The governing powers in this College are vested in a Board of Visitors, not exceeding twenty. The *Officers* are, a President (now the Rev. Dr. MADISON, Bishop of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the State of Virginia), who is also Professor of Moral and Natural Philosophy; a Professor of Mathematics; a Professor of Ancient Languages; a Professor of Modern Languages; a Professor of Law; and a Professor of Chemistry.

In the *Moral School*, in this College, the course consists of, 1. Logic and the Philosophy of the Human Mind. On these subjects, the works of DUNCAN, REID, and Professor STEWART are studied. 2. Rhetoric and Belles Lettres. Here Dr. BLAIR's Lectures are chiefly used. 3. Moral Philosophy. In this department the author studied is PALEY. 4. Natural Law. RUTHERFORTH and BURLAMAQUI, &c. 5. Law of Nations. VATTEL and MARTENS. 6. Politics. LOCKE, MONTESQUIEU, ROUSSEAU, &c. 7. Political Economy. SMITH's *Wealth of Nations*. In *Natural Philosophy* there is a regular course of Lectures, attended with every necessary experiment. In this course, the works generally referred to, and recommended, are those of ROWNING, HELSHAM, MARTIN, DESAGULIERS, MUSCHENBROECK, CAVALLO, ADAMS, LAVOISIER, CHAPTAL, &c.

In the department of *Law*, the Professor takes an extensive view of the general principles of government; comments on the great work of Judge BLACKSTONE; explains the structure and principles of the American governments, and particularly of the government of Virginia. In teaching the ancient and modern *Languages*, the usual course is pursued. Though all the Students are not compelled to attend to the former, yet a competent knowledge of them is necessary in order to the taking of a regular degree.

No particular period of residence at this College is required. All students who are prepared to go through the prescribed examination may receive its honours.

The number of *Students* in this College, in the beginning of the year 1801, was 53. The *Library* contains about 3000 volumes. The *Philosophical Apparatus*, when procured in

1768, was well chosen, and tolerably complete. It cost, at that time, between 2000 and 3000 dollars. Having been in constant use for more than 30 years, it stands in need of repairs, and is less complete than at first.

The *Funds* of this College were much diminished by the Revolution. They now amount to about 4500 dollars *per annum*—derived from the rents of certain lands; a certain proportion of Surveyor's fees; and the interest of monies loaned.

There is probably no College in the United States in which political science is studied with so much ardour, and in which it is considered so pre-eminently a favourite object, as in this.

2. *Hampden Sidney College*, in Prince Edward County. This seminary was founded about the year 1774, chiefly by the exertions of the Rev. SAMUEL S. SMITH, now President of the College of New-Jersey.

This College has scarcely any *Funds*. The *Philosophical Apparatus* is small. Its *Library* consists of about 500 volumes. The number of Students may be estimated, in general, at about 60 or 70.

NORTH-CAROLINA has *one* College, viz.

The *University of North-Carolina*, in Chapel-Hill, Orange County. This institution was incorporated in 1789; and the Legislature of the State, by subsequent acts, made large grants for its support. The College buildings were erected in 1794; and tuition, it is believed, was commenced in 1795.

The *Funds* of the University of North-Carolina are large. They consist of £14,777 in cash, public stock and bonds; of all the property in the State which is, or shall hereafter be escheated; of 94,000 acres of land, in different parts of the State; and of other real property to a considerable amount.

No other particulars concerning this institution are known to the writer.

SOUTH-CAROLINA has *four* Colleges, viz.

1. *Winnesborough College*, in Winnesborough, in Fairfield County. This institution was founded about the year 1795. It is yet in an infant state; the Funds, number of Students, &c. being small.

2. A College in the city of *Charleston*. This was instituted about the same time with the preceding; but has not yet attained any great degree of respectability. The Trustees have, in a few instances, conferred the degree of Bachelor of

Arts ; but have not, it is believed, attempted to bestow literary honours of an higher grade.

3. A College at *Cambridge*, in the district of Ninety-six. This was incorporated at the same time with the two last mentioned seminaries; but it has dwindled into an unimportant school.

4. A College at *Beaufort*, also incorporated about the year 1795. This institution has yet been scarcely organized; but agreeable anticipations are formed of its respectability and usefulness.

The reason why no College in this State has risen to much respectability is, that the Legislature, instead of directing their aid and patronage to *one*, which, under these circumstances, might have flourished, have divided their attentions and grants among *several*. The consequences have been very unfriendly to the progress of literature.

GEORGIA has *one* College, viz.

The *University of Georgia*, founded in 1785. This institution is not yet fully organized. Liberal provision has been made by the State for its support; and when the buildings and other arrangements shall be completed, it bids fair to be an extensively useful seminary.

KENTUCKY has *one* College, viz.

The *Transylvania College, or University*, at Lexington. This seminary was formed by the union of two academies in December, 1798, and styled by the act of union the *Transylvania University*.

The *Government* of this institution is vested in a Board of Trustees. The Officers are, a President (at present the Rev. Mr. MOORE), who is also Professor of Logic, Metaphysics, Moral Philosophy, and Belles Lettres; a Professor of Mathematics, Natural Philosophy, Astronomy, and Geography; a Professor of the Greek and Latin Languages; a Professor of Law; a Professor of Medicine and Surgery; and a Professor of Chemistry.

The *Funds* of this University consist chiefly of lands, and may be considered as amounting to 179,000 dollars. The *Library* consists of more than 1300 volumes; besides a *Law* Library, and a *Medical* Library, for the Students of Law and Medicine. The *Philosophical Apparatus* is respectable, and measures have been taken to render it still more so.

The number of *Students* at this seminary, in 1801, was

about 70. Of these 19 were Students of *Law*, and six of *Medicine*. The annual expense of boarding, tuition, &c. is from 80 to 100 dollars.

TENNESSEE has one College, viz.

Greenville College, founded in the year 1794. The *Funds* of this institution are very small. It has a *Library*, consisting of 2000 volumes; a good *Philosophical Apparatus*, and about 20 *Students*.

The *Officers* of the College are, a President (at present the Rev. HEZEKIAH BALCH), and one other Professor.

American Editions of the Bible. p. 387.

I have lately ascertained that, prior to AITKEN's edition of the Bible, in 1781, there was an excellent edition of the German Bible, in *Quarto*, printed in the year 1776, by CHRISTOPHER SOWER, of Germantown, near Philadelphia. Mr. SOWER was a man of large property, and occasionally a preacher in the German Churches in Pennsylvania. He undertook and executed this work at his own risk, and had the honour of printing the first *Quarto* Bible that ever issued from an American press. It is one of the best specimens of typography that our country has produced.

NOTES ON THE RECAPITULATION.

Reciting, instead of Printing, among the Ancients. p. 417.

IT is well known, that the ancients, being ignorant of the art of printing, were obliged to employ public rehearsals as the best means of publishing new compositions. In early times this was the case with writers of the first class. HERODOTUS recited his history in different portions, at the Olympic Games; and other writers of great reputation did the same.

TACITUS speaks in the following language of the author, who is obliged to employ this method of publishing his works.
 ———“ Cum toto anno, per omnes dies, magnâ nocturnum

parte, unum librum extudit et elucubravit, rogare ultro et ambire cogatur, ut sint, qui dignentur audire: et ne id quidem gratis: nam et domum mutuatur, et auditorium extruit, et subsellia conducit, et libellos dispergit: et ut beatissimus recitationem ejus eventus prosequatur, omnis illa laus intra unum aut alterum diem, velut in herbâ vel flore præcepta, ad nullam certam et solidam pervenit frugem: nec aut amicitiam inde refert, aut clientelam, aut mansurum in animo cujusquam beneficium, sed clamorem vagum, et vocēs inanes, et gaudium volucre.”—*C. Cornelii Taciti Dial. de Oratoribus.* ix.

PLINY, in one of his *Letters*, gives a lively description of the disadvantages which authors had to encounter in this mode of publishing their compositions.

“Magnum proventum poetarum annus hic attulit. Toto mense Aprili nullus fere dies, quo non recitaret aliquis. Tametsi ad audiendum pigre coitur. Plerique in stationibus sedent, tempusque audiendi fabulis conterunt, ac subinde sibi nuntiari jubent, an jam recitator intraverit, an dixerit præfationem, an ex magnâ parte evolverit librum? Tum demum, ac tunc quoque lentè, cunctanterque veniunt, nec tamen remanent, sed ante finem recedunt; alii dissimulanter, ac furtim; alii simpliciter, ac liberè. Sed tanto magis laudandi probandique sunt, quos a scribendi recitandique studio hæc auditorum vel desidia, vel superbia non retardat. Equidem prope nemini defui: his ex causis longius, quam destinaveram, tempus in urbe consumpsi. Possum jam repetere secessum, et scribere aliquid, quod non recitem; ne videar, quorum recitationibus affui, non auditor fuisse, sed creditor. Nam, ut in cæteris rebus, ita in audiendi officio, perit gratia, si reposcatur.” *Plin. lib. i. Ep. 13.*

The poets who could not obtain an audience otherwise, frequented the baths, and other public places, in order to fasten on their friends, and procure an opportunity of reciting their compositions. JUVENAL tells us, that the groves and marble columns of *Julius Fronto* resounded with the vociferations of the reciting poets.

Frontonis platani, convulsaque marmora clamant
Semper, et assiduo ruptæ lectore columnæ.
Exspectes eadem a summo, minimoque poetâ.

Sat. i. ver. 12.

The same satirist suggests, that the poet who wished his works to become known, might borrow an house for the purpose of public reading; and that the person who accom-

modated the writer, might place his friends and freedmen on the back seats, with directions to be liberal in their applause.

————— Et si dulcedine famæ
Succensus recites, Maculonus commodat ædes.
Scit dare libertos extremâ in parte sedentes
Ordinis, et magnas comitum disponere voces.
Nemo dabit regum, quanti subsellia constant.

Sat. vii. ver. 39.

In another place, speaking of STATIUS, a popular poet, he says:

Curritur ad vocem jucundam, et carmen amicæ
Thebaidos, lætam fecit cum Statius urbem,
Promisitque diem; tantâ dulcedine captos
Afficit ille animos, tantaque libidine vulgi
Auditur; sed cum fregit subsellia versu,
Esurit, intactam Paridi nisi vendat Agaven.

Sat. vii. ver. 82.

From a passage in HORACE it would seem that, in his day, writers of the first class disdained to employ this method of obtaining literary fame.

Non recito cuiquam, nisi amicis, idque coactus;
Non ubivis, coramve quibuslibet. In medio qui
Scripta foro recitent, sunt multi; quique lavantes;
Suave locus voci resonat conclusus. Inanes
Hoc juvat, haud illud quærentes, num sine sensu,
Tempore num faciant alieno.

Sat. lib. i. Sat. iv. ver. 73.

Influence of Printing. p. 418.

The following remarks of Professor STEWART, on the probable influence of printing upon the future interests of society, are worthy of attention. Whatever may be thought of the truth or falsehood of the opinions which they express, they afford to the contemplative mind materials for very interesting reflections.

“The influence which printing is likely to have on the future history of the world, has not, I think, been hitherto examined, by philosophers, with the attention which the importance of the subject deserves. One reason for this may, probably, have been, that, as the invention has never been made but once, it has been considered rather as the effect of a fortunate accident, than as the result of those general causes on which the progress of society seems to depend. But it

may be reasonably questioned, how far this idea be just: for, although it should be allowed that the invention of printing was accidental, with respect to the individual who made it, it may, with truth, be considered as the natural result of a state of the world, when a number of great and contiguous nations are all engaged in the study of literature, in the pursuit of science, and in the practice of the arts: insomuch, that I do not think it extravagant to affirm, that, if this invention had not been made by the particular person to whom it is ascribed, the same art, or some analogous art, answering a similar purpose, would have infallibly been invented by some other person, and at no very distant period. The art of printing, therefore, is entitled to be considered as a step in the natural history of man, no less than the art of writing; and they who are sceptical about the future progress of the race, merely in consequence of its past history, reason as unphilosophically as the member of a savage tribe, who, deriving his own acquaintance with former times from oral tradition only, should affect to call in question the efficacy of written records, in accelerating the progress of knowledge and of civilization.

“What will be the particular effects of this invention, (which has been, hitherto, much checked in its operation, by the restraints on the liberty of the press in the greater part of Europe) it is beyond the reach of human sagacity to conjecture; but, in general, we may venture to predict with confidence, that, in every country, it will gradually operate to widen the circle of science and civilization; to distribute more equally, among all the members of the community, the advantages of the political union, and to enlarge the basis of equitable governments, by increasing the number of those who understand their value, and are interested to defend them. The science of legislation, too, with all the other branches of knowledge which are connected with human improvement, may be expected to advance with rapidity; and, in proportion as the opinions and institutions of men approach to truth and to justice, they will be secured against those revolutions to which human affairs have always been hitherto subject. *Opinionum enim commenta delet dies, naturæ judicia confirmat.*”

“Nor must we omit to mention the value which the art of printing communicates to the most limited exertions of literary industry, by treasuring them up as materials for the future examination of more enlightened inquirers. In this respect the press bestows upon the sciences an advantage somewhat ana-

logous to that which the mechanical arts derive from the division of labour. As in these arts, the exertions of an uninformed multitude are united by the comprehensive skill of the artist, in the accomplishment of effects astonishing by their magnitude, and by the complicated ingenuity they display; so, in the sciences, the observations and conjectures of obscure individuals on those subjects which are level to their capacities, and which fall under their own immediate notice, accumulate for a course of years; till at last some philosopher arises, who combines these scattered materials, and exhibits, in his system, not merely the force of a single mind, but the intellectual power of the age in which he lives."—*Elements of the Philosophy of the Human Mind*, Chap. iv. Sect. 8.

I agree with the Professor in thinking, that "the influence which printing is likely to have on the future history of the world, has not been examined, by philosophers, with that attention which the importance of the subject deserves." But he has only presented the fair side of the picture. Experience proves, that this precious art is not devoted to laudable purposes alone; and that in estimating its future influence on human happiness, we must take into the account the abuses to which it is liable, as well as the advantages which it tends to produce.

END OF THE FIRST PART.

ERRATA.

VOL. I.

- Page 47, line 20, for "arial" read aerial.
74, 3, for "eleven" read ten.
100, 9, for "consigns" read assigns.
140, 12, for "tree" read plant.
200, 5, for "KLAHROTH" read KLAPROTH.
344, 25, for "Sierra Leona" read Sierra Leone.
345, 17, dele "FLACOURT."
347, 25, for "GEORGE" read GIORGI.
412, 1, for "VERNIX" read WENIX.
421, 1, for "MORGAN, of Great-Britain," read MORGHEN, of Italy.

VOL. II.

- Page 5, line 8, for "were" read are.
14, 4, for "Glasgow" read Edinburgh.
31, 20, for "was" read is.
51, 11, dele "CASAUBON."
60, 24, for "DANZ" read DANTZ.
101, 24, for "part" read port.
175, 32, for "deny" read decry.
218, 1, for "MOUVAL" read MONVAL.
288, last line, for "corrupt" read correct.
388, note, for "EZEKIAH" read EZEKIEL.