THE

LIFE

OF

ERASMUS:

WITH

HISTORICAL REMARKS

ON THE STATE

OF

LITERATURE

BETWEEN THE TENTH AND SIXTEENTH CENTURIES.

Quare quis tandem me reprehendat, aut quis mihi jure succenseat, si quantum cæteris ad festos dies ludorum celebrandos, quantum ad alias voluptates, et ad ipsam requiem animi et corporis conceditur temporis, quantum alii tempestivis conviviis, quantum aleæ, quantum pilæ, tantum mihi egomet ad hæc studia recolenda sumpsero.

Cicero pro Archia.

Le changement d'etude est toujours un delassement pour moi.

D'Aguesseau.

BY CHARLES BUTLER, ESQ.
OF LINCOLN'S-INN.

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TO

THE REVEREND

JOHN LINGARD, D.D.

AS

A GRATEFUL ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF PERSONAL

OBLIGATIONS;

AND A TESTIMONY OF ADMIRATION OF HIS

LEARNING AND VIRTUES;

THIS WORK

IS

INSCRIBED,

BY

THE AUTHOR.

Stonor Park,
October 1825.

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THE

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OF

ERASMUS.

CHAPTER I.

HISTORICAL REMARKS ON THE STATE OF LITERATURE DURING THE MIDDLE AGES.

1. *Of the Literature of Greece.*
2. *The Literature of Rome.*
3. *The Effects of the invasions of Barbarians on Literature;*
4. *And it's State during the Middle Ages.*

600—1467.

IN considering the character of ERASMUS, we shall find that nothing reflects so much honour upon his memory, as the services which he rendered, by his example and labours, to sacred and profane learning. To appreciate them properly, the state of letters, at the time of his birth,

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should be taken into account. We shall therefore endeavour to present our readers with contracted views,—I. Of the literature of Greece and Rome:—II. Of its state during the Middle Ages; and the effects of the invasions of the Barbarians upon it:—III. And of its gradual revival in Europe during the 10th, 11th, 12th, 13th, 14th, and 15th centuries.

I. 1.

Of the Literature of Greece.

THE first authors of Greece were her poets: the oldest of those, whose works have reached us, is Homer.

His work is a prodigy:—we must suppose either that he was preceded by other writers, who had brought poetry to the perfection, or nearly to the perfection, in which we find it in his writings; or that he himself created the poetry of his own immortal work.

It is observable that Herodotus * seems to declare for the latter opinion: "As for the Gods;"—these are his words,—"whence each "of them was descended, or whether they "were always in being, or under what shape or "form they existed, the Greeks knew nothing "till very lately. Hesiod and Homer were, I

* Ευτερπη.

" believe, about four hundred years older than " myself, and no more; and these are the men, " who *made a theogony* for the Greeks; who " gave the Gods their appellations, defined " their qualities, appointed their honours, and " described their forms. As for the poets, who " are said to have lived before these men, I am " of opinion, they came after them." Thus Herodotus expresses in this passage an opinion, that the Grecian theogony was the invention of Homer and Hesiod; but, whoever reflects on its nature, its complication, contrivance, and countless, but coherent relations and dependences, must be sensible that this was impossible.

Even, if this opinion were admitted, a further difficulty would press upon us. The poetry of Homer is complete; the structure of the hexameter is equalled by no other mode of versification, in any language: the formation of the phrases, the collocation of the words, the figurative diction, the animation of inanimate nature; whatever else distinguishes poetry from prose, is introduced, in its most perfect mode, into the poems of Homer. The universal opinion of all ages has acknowledged these to constitute the true poetical character, and no succeeding age has improved on any of them. Was he, then, the inventor of them? This exceeds human

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power. Was he preceded by other bards, upon whom he refined, and whom he transcendently excelled?—What has become of these antecedent bards?

To solve these difficulties, the writer begs leave to suggest a conjecture, in which he has sometimes indulged himself; —that there existed in central Asia, a civilized and powerful nation, in which the *Sanscrit* language was spoken, and the religion of *Brama* prevailed; that the initiated might reconcile it, by emblematical explanation, with philosophy; but that, in the sense in which it was received by the people at large, it was the rankest idolatry; that, comparing what the writers on India, Siam, China and Japan, relate of a celebrated man, whom they severally call *Budda, Sommonocoddom, Fohi* and *Xaha*, we have reason to suppose that he was the same person, and a reformer of the Sanscrit creed and ceremonial; that his reformed system may be called Buddyism; that this still prevails in Tartary, China, and numerous Islands in the Archipelago, but that Sanscritisim still exists in Hindûstan; — that, either before or after the Buddyistic schism, and not far from the æra usually assigned to the fabulous ages, the Sanscritans spread their doctrines and languages, though not their castes, over the countries which lay on the westward of them; so that,

in the course of time, they became the religious creed and language both of Greece and Italy; that civilization and the arts and sciences flourished, at this period, among the Sanscritans; that those, who introduced them into Greece, were called Pelasgi; that those, who introduced them into Italy, acquired the appellation of Hetruscans; that, by degrees, the Sanscrit was moulded into the Greek language; that, from the Greek it degenerated in Italy, into the Latin; that this state of things continued, in Greece, till the irruption of the Dorians and Heraclidæ into Peloponnesus, about eighty years after the Trojan war; and in Italy, until the period usually assigned for the foundation of Rome, when, from some unknown event, the glories of Hetruria were considerably impaired; that, after the settlement of the Dorians and Heraclidæ in Peloponnesus, but, while the former traditionary learning of Greece was still remembered, Homer wrote; that, in the confusion, which followed this event, the memory of Homer and the preceding and contemporary poets was lost; that the minor poets never revived, but that the super-eminent merit of Homer buoyed up his strains against the overwhelming waves of time, and restored them to celebrity.

This conjecture receives some countenance from the opinion generally entertained by the

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ancients, that Homer acquired his knowledge in Egypt; and the Egyptians theirs, from India; and from the system of Sir William Jones respecting the identity of the Indian, Grecian, and Italian deities. In this resemblance, we should, if we believe Dr. Milne, include the national deities of China. It is also said by Sanscrit scholars, that there are strong marks of affinity between the languages of these nations; and that even something which resembles the Greek and Roman metres, is discoverable in Sanscrit poetry.

But, whatever opinions may be formed on the points, which have been mentioned, no doubt can be entertained of the supreme merit of the Homeric poems.

The fables and traditions of Homer, and the other poets seem to have contained all the religion of Greece, and all the rudiments of her morality; to have fixed her language; and, what is more surprising, to have settled the principles of literary composition for every age. The poetry of the Greeks was generally sung; thus *music* was at once their earliest and their most popular science. Their *historians* followed: then, their *orators*. From the importance and celebrity, which they derived from their harangues, these gave rise to the *rhetoricians*, or those who professed to teach the science of public speaking;

and to the *dialecticians*, the teachers of an humbler rhetoric. But, long before any of their historians or orators of distinction had appeared, their scientific men and moralists,—first, under the appellations of *sophists*, or wise men; and afterwards, under that of *philosophers*, or lovers of wisdom, attracted public notice. The former addicted themselves to the study of nature; those, whose pursuits led them to observe the heavens, were called *astronomers*; the observers of the earth, were called *physicians*; to both, *geometry* was subservient. *Socrates* called the attention of man to himself: to reason and act rightly, were, in his estimate of knowledge, the principal objects of man. For the former, his disciples formed rules of *logic*; for the latter, rules of *morality*. The *painters*, *sculptors* and *architects* of Greece were coeval with her orators. In every art and every science, *grammar* and *arithmetic* necessarily had their part.

I. 2.

The Literature of Rome.

ALL the useful and ornamental knowledge and acquirements of the Greeks were diffused over Asia and Egypt by the Macedonian princes; and, when Greece submitted to the arms of *Rome*, all were transplanted to the territories, which composed her dominions. "Even Britain," Juvenal

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contemptuously exclaims, " now talks of hiring a professor of rhetoric."

But, in addition to these spoils of Greece, the Romans possessed in a high degree of excellence, a science, which, though it conduces more than any to public and private happiness, had been totally disregarded by the Greeks. To them, *Jurisprudence* as a liberal pursuit, was unknown; their legal instruments and forensic proceedings were drawn up by a description of persons in little estimation among them, called *pragmatists*, or practitioners; but the knowledge of the laws of their country was never followed by them, as an occupation conferring importance and celebrity. Among the Romans, jurisprudence was always highly esteemed; it was studied on the most liberal principles, professed by the most distinguished persons, and led to the highest honours of the state.

The practice of *physic* was highly esteemed in Greece, but Dr. Middleton has invincibly shown against Dr. Mead, that, whatever celebrity might be acquired by individuals, the profession of medicine was of no great repute among the Romans.

With the reign of Trajan, the *golden age* of Roman literature expired; its *silver age* continued till the end of the last of the Antonines. This produced several works of elegance and

taste; but, as Mr. Gibbon, whose authority on the subject is certainly great, justly observes,* "if we except the inimitable Lucian, the age "passed away without producing a single writer "of genius who deserved the attention of pos-"terity." This decay of genius among the Romans is usually attributed to the arbitrary power of the emperors, which, it is said, depraved the talents of their subjects; yet, Mr. Gibbon himself observes, that Longinus, who lived at the close of this æra of Roman literature, possessed the spirit of ancient Athens; and that in its *age of brass*, to which we may assign the period between the reign of the last of the Antonines, and the final division of the Roman empire, the poet Claudian acquired the absolute command of the Latin language, soared above his contemporaries, and placed himself, after an interval of 300 years, among the poets of ancient Rome†. In this period also, Ammianus Marcellinus produced a history of an interesting æra of the Roman empire, which, for good sense and impartiality, will not suffer in comparison with any former Greek or Latin historian. With the invasion of the Barbarians, the *iron*, or last age of Roman literature began; with the extinction of the empire of the west, it expired, and was followed by a *base* and *discoloured* age.

* Vol. 1. ch. 2. † Vol. 3. p. 30.

I. 3.

The effects of the Invasion of the Barbarians on Literature.

THE general effect of this irruption into the Roman empire, cannot be described better than it has been by Dr. Robertson, in his introduction to the reign of Charles the Fifth, and in the first pages of his History of America.

The Barbarians assaulted the empire on every side, without distinction between what was sacred and what was profane, and without respect for age or sex, destroyed or ravaged all around them. In this general wreck, the arts, the sciences, all the inventions and discoveries of the Romans disappeared. The knowledge of remote regions was lost, their situations, their conveniences, and almost their names were forgotten.

By degrees the fury of the invaders subsided, but at first this was attended with no advantage; the human mind neglected, enervated and depressed, sunk into the most profound ignorance, and the lamp of science seemed extinguished in every part of the western empire.

I. 4.

State of Learning in the Middle Ages.

YET, after much consideration, the writer is inclined to think, that the ignorance produced by

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the devastations of the Barbarians was at no time so great as is generally supposed; so that, in every part of what are termed the dark ages, there was less ignorance and superstition than is generally represented. It may be added, that there are grounds to suspect that the dispersion of these was earlier, and that sound learning and science began to revive in Europe sooner than is generally imagined.*

We shall shortly state some facts, which may be thought to prove this assertion, as it may be applied to the eleventh, twelfth, thirteenth, fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.

1. *In the tenth century*, and the four centuries which immediately preceded it, there appeared, more particularly in France and Italy, says Simonde de Sismondi, as he is translated by Mr. Roscoe,† "some judicious historians, whose "style possesses considerable vivacity, and who

* Doctor Henry (Book I. ch. iv. s. 1.) observes, that "the darkness of that long night of ignorance which over-"shadowed Europe, from the fall of the western empire to "the revival of learning in the sixteenth century, was not "equally profound at all times and in all places; in Britain, "particularly, some gleam of light appeared at different "times."

† "Historical View of the Literature of the South of "Europe, by J. C. L. Simonde de Sismondi, translated from "the original, with notes, by Thomas Roscoe, Esq." Vol. I. p. 21.

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" have given animated pictures of their times;
" some subtle philosophers, who astonish us
" rather by the fineness of their speculations
" than by the justness of their reasoning;
" some learned theologians, and some poets.
" The names of Paul Warnefrid, of Alcuin, of
" Luitprand and of Eginhard, are even yet uni-
" versally respected. They all, however, wrote
" in Latin. They had all of them, by the
" strength of their intellect, and the happy cir-
" cumstances in which they were placed, learned
" to appreciate the beauty of the models which
" antiquity had left them. They breathed a spi-
" rit of a former age, as they had adopted its
" language; in them we do not find the repre-
" sentatives of their contemporaries; it is im-
" possible to recognize in their style, the times, in
" which they lived; it only betrays the relative
" industry and felicity with which they imitated
" the language and thoughts of a former age.
" They do not belong to modern literature.
" They were the last monuments of civilized
" antiquity; the last of a noble race, which, after
" a long period of degeneracy, became extinct in
" them."*

* Few discerning readers of the passage cited in the text will not admire it; they may think that Dr. Cave should have paused before he denominated the tenth century the " sæculum obscurum."

2. Before *the eleventh century*, the arts and sciences had begun to flourish, under the protection of the Mahometan princes of Persia, Bagdad, Africa and Spain.* In all these countries the studies of medicine, astronomy and dialectic, the science of numbers, poetry, and other branches of polite literature were cultivated with success, and the works of Aristotle and some other authors were translated from the Greek language into the Arabic. Much learning also remained at Constantinople, and in the adjacent provinces. By degrees they attracted the attention, first of the Italians, and afterwards of the northern inhabitants of Europe, and many inquisitive spirits travelled in quest of learning to the Greeks of the eastern empire, or to the Arabians in Bagdad, Spain or Africa, and returned with considerable literary spoil. Of these, Gerbert, who afterwards became Pope, under the name of Sylvester the Second, deserves particular mention. A thirst of knowledge had led him to Cordova; he acquired, in that celebrated seat of Moorish literature, an extensive knowledge of mathematics, geometry and astronomy. On his return to France, he drew the notice of Adalberon, Archbishop of Rheims, and, under his auspices, opened a school in that city. Hugh

* Simonde de Sismondi, Vol. I. ch. 2. The reflections at the end of this chapter are very interesting.

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Capet and several of the principal nobility of France sent their children to it for education. "France," says M. de St. Marc,* "owes to him "her taste for true literature; he was not satis- "fied with advancing it by his lectures and "occasional publications; he also actively pro- "moted it by an extensive epistolary corres- "pondence. By this he communicated his "discoveries to many, both in France and other "states, and strove to kindle in them his own "literary zeal. At a great expense, he collected "a large library of ancient and modern books, "caused numerous copies of them to be made, "and distributed them wherever he thought "they might be useful." It is probable that he first introduced into Europe the Arabic system of notation,—perhaps, the most useful of all discoveries in science.†

3. *The twelfth century* presents a visible increase of literary ardour. Here the scholastics particularly engage our attention. Deserting the method by which religion and philosophy had been formerly taught, these professed to convey

* Abrégé Chronologique de l'Histoire d'Italie, Vol. II. p. 933.

† It is observable that, in the preceding century, Campanus, a mathematician of Lombardy, had translated into Latin the Elements and Data of Euclid; the former was printed at Venice in 1482, the latter at Basle in 1546.

the knowledge of them by the dryest mode of scholastic disputation, conforming throughout, both their principles and their manner of inculcating them, to the philosophy of Aristotle and his system of argumentation. Treading in his steps, and some of them gifted with a large portion of his genius, they often astonish by the subtlety and closeness of their reasoning, and the sublime and curious truths which they elicit; but they are too often chargeable with obscurity, with excess of refinement, and with the want of real importance in the subjects of their investigations.

No preceptors ever had more numerous or zealous disciples: Mr. Berington, in his learned and interesting history of Abeillard and Heloisa, speaking of these times, observes,* that "the "schools, as we know, from the histories of the "age, were not only filled with students, as at "present, but men in years, persons of distinc-"tion, fathers of families, and ministers of state, "after the toils of the day were over, crowded "to them as to a theatre of amusement." The same writer adds, that† "when Abeillard taught "in the convent of St. Denys, more than three "thousand scholars are said, by some authors, "to have attended his lectures. When he left "this convent, and retired to the convent of

* Page 10. † Page 127.

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" Nogent in Champaigne, the lovers of science " pursued and discovered him;" and, " before " the end of the first year, exceeded six hun- " dred. Situated in a forest, exposed to " the inclement seasons, without a single " convenience to smooth the rugged life, " or without one amusement, except what " literary pursuits, scientific conversation, " and their own society could supply;—in " Abeillard they saw the divine Plato; in " themselves, that illustrious groupe of disciples " which had given renown to the academic " walks of Athens." * We may lament that the instruction given them was not more elegant or more useful, but it is impossible to deny the thirst of knowledge, or the mental activity of the scholars;—ignorant—it would be injustice to call them. "In the twelfth century," says Dom Rivet,† " men of letters were most abundantly " multiplied; a prodigious number of writings, " on every subject, and sometimes of a very " interesting nature, appeared."

4. *In the thirteenth century*, the rays of science became brighter and were more generally diffused. The formation of the Italian republics raised, in

* Page 123.

† Histoire Literaire de France, Vol. I. (Etat des Lettres en France durant le cours du douzieme siecle.)

every part of that ample territory, a spirit of mental energy, which equally discovered itself in commerce and the polite arts. Many edifices of the most exquisite gothic architecture were raised: Cimabue, the father of the modern school of painting, adorned them with the efforts of his art; Brunelleschi revived at Florence the forms of ancient architecture; and Danté produced the *divina comedia*.*

In the Netherlands, the elegant arts equally flourished. No one, who has seen the long line of magnificent towns in Belgium, can have surveyed, without admiration, the many public edifices of exquisite and costly architecture, and the numberless works in marble, gold, silver, iron and bronze, which decorate them; many may be traced to the period of which we are speaking.

In the same period, France discovered similar ardour. The church of Notre Dâme at Paris, the façades of the churches of Rheims, and Notre Dâme at Rouen, and the cathedrals of Amiens and Strasbourg show, that in the archi-

* The legacy which William, King of Sicily, who had married Joan, a daughter of Henry the 2d, King of England, left to this monarch, shows both the wealth and progress of art in that period; it consisted of a table of gold, 12 feet in length, and one foot and a half in breadth; a tent of silk sufficiently capacious to hold 2,000 persons; 60,000 measures of wine, 60,000 of wheat, and 60,000 of barley; with 100 gallies equipped and provisioned for two years.—Lingard's History, Vol. II. p. 155.

tecture of the times, France did not yield to Italy.

The number of her schools, or the multitudes by whom they were frequented, make it evident that she possessed an equal taste for general literature. Libraries began now to be formed. The foundations of the Bibliothêque Royâle at Paris, were laid at this time, and Robert, called of Sorbonne, from a village of that name in the diocese of Rheims, in which he was born, founded the university of the Sorbonne, and collected, for the use of it's members, an extensive library. In 1289, it consisted of upwards of a thousand volumes, which were then valued at 3,812 livres, 10 sous, and 8 deniers, about £. 3,000 sterling, according to the present value of money.

In this century also, some biblical undertakings of no ordinary size were set on foot and accomplished. St. Jerom's version of the scriptures having, in consequence of the errors of the copyists, become very corrupt, considerable pains were now taken to restore it to it's primitive integrity. With this view, the persons who engaged in such an undertaking, selected the best manuscript copy which they could procure; collated it with others, compared it with the originals, and consulted the septuagint. Leaving the text of the manuscript untouched, they

noticed its variations from the other copies, from the originals, or from the septuagint, and its omissions and imperfect renderings, by marks, notes, or observations, either in the margins, or under the lines of the selected copy. The manuscripts thus corrected were called *correctoria:* some have been preserved; the most celebrated is in the library of the Dominicans at Paris; it was made by religious of that order, early in the thirteenth century. By a regulation of a general chapter, held in 1236, directions were given, that all the bibles of the order should be conformed to that copy. Similar *correctoria* were made by the Sorbonne and the congregation of Citeaux.*

The literary spirit of the times had been increased by the discovery, in 1137, of a complete copy of the Pandects of Justinian, at Amalfi. The wisdom and justice of it's laws made, in every country throughout Europe, an insensible impression upon the public mind. From the beginning of the thirteenth century, the study of them was pursued, with a kind of enthusiasm. It was introduced into several universities; exercises were performed, lectures read, degrees conferred in this, as in other branches of science; and most of the nations on the Continent adopted the

* Fabrici, des Titres primitives de la Révélation, Tome second, p. 132, Note 2.

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Pandects, if not as the basis, at least as an important portion of their jurisprudence.

If we compare the *state of letters in England* with that of foreign countries, during the tenth, eleventh and thirteenth centuries, she will not suffer by the comparison. William the Conqueror was learned, and a patron of learning; Henry the First, his youngest son, was the most learned prince, and the greatest promoter of learning in his age; this procured for him the name of Beauclerk, or the Fine Scholar; Henry the Second was the most powerful monarch in Europe: beside his sovereignties of England and Ireland, he was master, in right of his father, of his mother and of his wife, of more than a third part of the provinces which then composed the French monarchy. He possessed great abilities, and inherited from his father a taste for literature and the arts. "When he "could enjoy leisure," says Hume, "he re-"created himself in conversation or in reading, "and he cultivated his natural abilities, by study, "above any prince of his time." Throughout his reign, England made great advances in learning and the polite arts. If we were required to name the golden æra of the middle ages, we could not assign any which better deserved this appellation, than the reign of this monarch; it was distinguished by its improvements in architecture,

particularly by an universal increase of dimension, the sharp pointed arch resting on the slender column, and the leafy moulding. These Mr. Miller * mentions among the characteristics of the Norman style of architecture. He supposes it to have flourished from the Norman conquest to the reign of John. At the close of his account of it, he says, "Let us not quit this topic, without paying a due tribute of admiration to the liberality and magnificence of those, whose mighty works we have been endeavouring to characterise. Almost all the cathedrals in England and Wales, a prodigious number of splendid monasteries and parish churches, in every part of the kingdom, were erected by them, in little more than one century." Considering the concomitant learning, which architectural eminence presupposes, it is impossible that there should not have existed, in the times of which we are speaking, a considerable diffusion of art, science, literature, and mental energy.

All the three sons of Henry,—John, Geoffrey and Richard, had a considerable tincture of letters, and all were poets.

In 1091, when the abbey of Croyland was burnt, it possessed an armillary sphere, ac-

* Description of the Cathedral Church of Ely, p. 27.

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cording to the Ptolomean system, which Ingulphus describes in the following terms: "We "then lost a most beautiful and precious table, "fabricated of different kinds of metal, according "to the variety of the stars and other heavenly "signs; Saturn was of copper; Jupiter of gold; "the Sun, of latten; Mercury, of amber; Venus, "of tin; the Moon, of silver. The eyes were "charmed, as well as the mind instructed, by "beholding the colure circles, with the zodiac "and all its signs, formed with wonderful art, "of metals and precious stones, according to "their several natures, forms, figures and colours. "It was the most celebrated and admired nadir "in all England."*

One of the most valuable monuments of the literature of the middle ages,—the correspondence of St. Thomas of Canterbury,—belongs to this reign. The writers express themselves with a conscious elevation of rank and character, with sense and spirit; they discover an extensive knowledge of sacred and profane literature; and their frequent allusions to the classics, show their acquaintance with those precious remains of antiquity. It is surprising that it did not lead them to a purer style. The same may be said of many of the historians of these times. Sir Henry

* Hist. Ingulphi (Oxon. 1685) tom. i. p. 98, as cited and translated by Henry, Vol. III. ch. 4, § 1.

Saville preferred William of Malmesbury to all other historians, with whom he was acquainted, both for judiciousness and fidelity: Bishop Warburton speaks, in terms equally high, of Matthew Paris.

But the wonder of the thirteenth century is *Roger Bacon*. It is a disgrace to his countrymen, that neither a complete collection of his works, nor a full and able account of his life and literary labours, has yet appeared. He first studied at Oxford; thence he removed to Paris, and took the degree of doctor in that university. "After his return to Oxford," says Mr. Chalmers, in his General Biographical Dictionary, "he was considered, by the greatest men in that "university, as one of the ablest and most indefatigable inquirers after knowledge, that the "world ever produced; and therefore, they not "only showed him all due respect, but likewise, "conceiving the greatest hopes from his improvement in the method of study, they generally contributed to his expences; so that he "was enabled to lay out, within the compass of "two years, no less than two thousand pounds, "(an immense sum in those times), in collecting "curious authors, making trials of various kinds, "and in the construction of different instruments, "for the improvement of knowledge." He was

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master of the Latin, Greek and Hebrew languages; deeply versed in all branches of mathematics; in the sciences of optics, geography, astronomy and chemistry. The composition and effects of gunpowder were probably discovered by him; he certainly made great discoveries in chemistry. He had enemies, but he had many powerful friends, and he was patronized by every pope of his time. The encouragement, which he received from his countrymen has been mentioned. A nation, in which there was so much science on one side, and so much patronage and encouragement of science on the other, must have contained a great stock of intelligence. It must be added, that, while Roger Bacon was employed in the manner we have mentioned, John Holywood or Johannes de Sacrobosco, as he is sometimes called, for whose birth, Nithisdale, Yorkshire, Durham, and Dublin contend, was considerably extending the boundaries of science. He acquired from the Moors in Spain, and communicated, both to England and France, the system of circulating decimals, the uttermost extension of pure arithmetic.

5. Throughout *the fourteenth century* the progress of literature was always on the increase. We have noticed *the scholastics:* the fourteenth

century is the æra of their greatest elevation, and is called, upon that account, by Doctor Cave, the "*Sæculum Scholasticum.*"

The sublime doctrines of Plato, on the deity, the immortality of the soul, and the beauty of virtue; the nobleness of his conceptions, the general purity of his morality, and the exquisite beauty of his style, recommended him to the early doctors of the church. To all, except the most profound thinkers, the manner of Aristotle was repulsive; and several of the early enemies of christianity urged some of his principles, or rather the consequences, which they themselves deduced from them, against her. In this they were imitated by the modern manichees, the Jews, and the Saracens of Africa, Asia and Spain. This raised, in the christian teachers and writers, a strong prejudice against the Stagyrite.

In an attentive perusal of the writings of this great man, although in a bad latin translation, St. Thomas of Aquin, one of the sublimest geniuses which the world has produced, saw their prodigious value. He perceived that the principles of Aristotle had been misunderstood and abused; and that, after the utmost allowance of error which could be justly charged upon him, an abundance of what was supremely excellent would remain, and might be made incalculably serviceable to the christian cause. This he showed in

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a multitude of works composed by him upon Aristotelian principles, and in the Aristotelian method. Thus, in his hands, Aristotle, to use the expression of a learned writer,* became orthodox, and furnished new arms against the enemies of the church. From this time, public opinion respecting Aristotle went in an opposite direction, and every Christian, as well as every Saracenic school, was Aristotelian.

But, in *the fourteenth century*, some hardy spirits disturbed Aristotle's reign, by a spirit of free inquiry, which then discovered itself, and has ever since been on the increase. "In all the "Latin provinces," says Mosheim,† "schemes "were laid and carried into execution with con- "siderable success, for promoting the study of "letters, improving taste, and dispelling the "pedantic spirit of the times. This laudable "spirit gave rise to the erection of many schools "and academies, in which all the liberal arts "and sciences, distributed into the same classes "that still subsist in them, were taught with as- "siduity and zeal."——"Pope Clement V. who "was now raised to the papacy, ordered the "Hebrew and the other oriental languages to "be taught in the public schools, that a suf- "ficient number of missionaries might be qua-

* The Rev. Alban Butler's Life of St. Thomas of Aquin.

† Ecclesiastical Hist. Part II. c. 1, § 2, 3.

" lified to dispute with the Jews and Maho-
" metans, and to diffuse the divine light of the
" gospel throughout the east; in consequence of
" which appointment, some eminent proficients
" in those tongues, and especially the Hebrew,
" flourished during this age. The Greek lan-
" guage, which had hitherto been much neg-
" lected, was revived and taught with general
" applause."

This general representation, particularly if we consider by whom it is made, renders any mention of particular writers or particular facts unnecessary. We must however observe, that New College Oxford was expressly founded by William of Wickham, for teaching the three learned languages.*

6. In the middle of *the fifteenth century* learning,—to use the known expression of Milton, in his defence of the liberty of the press,—" as
" an eagle moving in his mighty youth, began to
" kindle an undazzled eye at the full mid-day
" beam, purging and unsealing her long abused
" sight at the fountain of heavenly radiance."—
From this æra therefore the renovation of letters must be dated: It was principally owing to the learned Greeks, who, after the taking of Constantinople by Mahomet I. and also during many previous years, in which that triumph of the

* Knight's Life of Collet, Ox. Ed. 1823, p. 15.

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Mahometan arms had been foreseen, retired into Italy, and taught many of its inhabitants, as Bocace, Politian, Valla, John Picus Mirandola, and Marsilias Ficinus, the Greek literature with success. From this time, classical literature began to flourish: every branch of learning, every science, and every art, found munificent *protectors* in *Nicholas* V. *Sixtus* IV. and many other popes; in *Besarion*, *Lionel* and *Borsus* at Ferrara; in the *Viscontis*, the *Sfortias*, and *Lewis Morus*, at Milan; in *the Dukes of Urbino*, in *Alphonsus of Arragon*, at Naples, in *Mathias Corvinus*, in Hungary; in *Charles* VII. *Lewis* XII. and *Francis* I., in France; in *James* IV. of Scotland, and *Henry* VIII. of England. Before the end of the fifteenth century, *the presses* had been worked in thirty-four towns in France; *Nicholas* V. had founded the library of the Vatican; *Besarion* had given his magnificent collection to Venice; and the old and the young had crowded to the Greek school of *Emanuel Chrysoloras*.* *Many ladies*, in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, were illustrious for learning and science; some even filled chairs of professors in the universities of Italy. During the same centuries, literature flourished so much in *Germany*, that the celebrated *Reuchlin* was accustomed to say, that

* See the Recherches sur les Bibliothèques, pp. 82. 207. 233. & A. H. L. Heerens Geschicte der Kuriste und der Wissenchaften, seit der Weiderstelling derselbern.

" Greece had traversed the Alps, and settled " among his countrymen." Between the years 1403 and 1506 *more than ten universities* had been founded on German soil, and improved courses of literature had been established in Daventer, Kempten, Alkmaar, Munster, Heidleberg, Worms, and various other teutonic towns. Between the years 1455 and 1536, more than TWENTY-TWO MILLIONS NINE HUNDRED AND THIRTY-TWO THOUSAND volumes had issued from various presses.* In all the southern and most of the northern parts of Europe, literature, and all the arts and sciences were cultivated with ardour, and there was an universal tendency to a new and better order of things.

It should be added, that through the whole of the period which we have been considering, the progress of science equalled that of literature; what advances arithmetic, algebra, and geometry had made, before the beginning of the sixteenth century, is shown by the treatises, upon all those subjects, of *Lucas Pacciolus*, or *Lucas de Burgo*, a Franciscan friar, printed in 1470, 1476, 1481, 1487 and 1491; these multiplied impressions show the ardour of the public in those times for scientific lore.

* Recherches sur les Bibliothèques, p. 180.

CHAPTER II.

FROM THE BIRTH OF ERASMUS, TILL HIS FIRST JOURNEY TO PARIS.

1. *Birth of Erasmus.*
2. *Sent to a School at Daventer.*
3. *Professed in a Convent of Austin Friars at Stein.*
4. *Resides with Herman, Bishop of Cambrai,—released by his Superiours from monastic duty and observances, and is ordained Priest.*

1467—1496. *Æt.* 1—29.

HELIAS and CATHERINE, both of respectable families in Tergau near Roterdam, had ten sons; Gerard was the youngest of them except one. He received a good education, and was versed in classical literature; his wit and festive disposition procured for him the appellation of "the facetious Gerard." He fell deeply in love with Margaret, the daughter of a physician of Sevenbergen; and, after a promise of marriage, had by her a son, called Anthony. Two years after this time, Margaret was again with child by Gerard: it gave great concern to his family, particularly as they perceived that Gerard was immoderately attached to her. With a view to

wean him from her, they endeavoured to force him into holy orders. To avoid their importunities he withdrew from Tergau, leaving behind him a letter, in which he bade them a formal farewell, and assured them that, while they should persist in their desire of forcing him into the ecclesiastical state, they should not see his face. After some wanderings, he settled in Rome, and began to gain a decent livelihood by copying books; for, although the art of printing had been discovered some years before this time, printed books were yet so scarce, that the transcription of manuscripts continued to furnish many with employment. He also was engaged, but on a small scale, in the trade of a bookseller: In the midst of his labours, he found time to perfect himself in the Greek and Latin languages.

1. Margaret, on being deserted by Gerard, repaired to Roterdam,* and there gave Erasmus to the world, on the 28th of October, in the year 1467, or about that year; for Erasmus himself did not exactly know the year of his birth. As soon as she recovered from her lying-in, she returned with her child to Tergau; but Catherine

* M. de Burigni, (Vie d' Erasme, Vol. i. p. 8), says, that "in the front of a small house in that town the following "verse is engraved,—*Hæc est parva Domus, Magnus quâ "natus Erasmus.*"

CHAP. II. 1467—1496. Æt. 1—29.

the mother of Gerard took charge of the infant. The brothers of Gerard, having discovered that he was at Rome, and persisting in their views of dissolving the connection between him and Margaret, sent him word that Margaret was dead. He was afflicted at the information, and soon afterwards embraced the ecclesiastical state. At no distant period, he returned to Tergau, and was surprised to find Margaret alive; he did not renew his connection with her, but adhered to his ecclesiastical engagements, and was ordained priest. He provided for the subsistence of Margaret and her two children. In the controversies, in which Erasmus was afterwards engaged, too many of his adversaries disgraced themselves by reproaching him with the circumstance of his birth, and aggravated it's supposed blemish by many fictions. The real fact was never denied by Erasmus; but he justly contended that his illegitimacy, although it might be his misfortune, could not be his crime.

He was first called Gerard. He latinized this name by the word "*Desiderius*," and took the surname of *Erasmus*, to which, from the place of his birth, he added Roterodamus. Critics have observed, that he would with more propriety have styled himself *Roterodamius*, or *Roterodamensis*. He himself intimated, that the idiom of grammar required that he should have

called himself *Erasmius* instead of *Erasmus*; and, in conformity with this notion, he gave the name of *Erasmius* to a son of Froben, the celebrated printer, when he stood godfather to that child. Desiderius may be construed, "*The Desired*;" it answers to the French name *Didier*. The word "Erasmus" is derived from the Greek, and may be construed "The Amiable." All the biographers of Erasmus allow, that from the time of his birth the conduct of his mother was irreproachable. Gerard, his father, put him to a small school at Tergau. It has been said that, at first, so far from discovering a taste for literature or an aptitude for its acquisition, he was thought a dull and heavy boy; the schoolmasters in Holland long held him forth as an example of what perseverance might atchieve, even by capacities apparently most discouraging. He was taught music, and was for some time employed in churches as a chorister. At this period, music was cultivated in no part of the world so much as in the Netherlands, but the manner of teaching it was inconceivably operose: Bayle suggests, on this ground, that the supposed slowness of Erasmus in acquiring learning, must be referred to want of success in his musical exercises. It may, however, be supposed that he obtained some musical reputation, as he was engaged as a singing boy in the cathedral of

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Utrecht, then the most illustrious church in Holland.

2. In these employments Erasmus continued four years; his father then placed him in a *school at Daventer*, and he was followed to it by his affectionate mother. Under the wise protection of the Dukes of Burgundy, Belgium had long flourished in agriculture and commerce; these are always attended by literature, science and art; it abounded in schools, and of these, that which received Erasmus was the most celebrated. It was under the direction of secular priests, who lived in community, but took no vows. About a century before Erasmus entered it, Thomas à Kempis, the author of the best book that ever came from human pen,—for, as Fontenelle, from whom these words are copied, justly observes, the scripture is of divine origin,—was a student in this school. It is impossible not to be pleased with the interesting account which this distinguished person * has left us, of

* *De discipulis Florentii.* In his sermon *Christus scribit in terrâ*, Thomas à Kempis thus expresses himself on the transcription of good works: "To transcribe works, which "Jesus Christ loves; by which the knowledge of him is "diffused, his precepts taught, and the practice of them "inculcated, is a most useful employment. If *he* shall not "lose his reward, who gives a cup of cold water to his thirsty "neighbour, what, will not be the reward of those, who, by

II. 2. Sent to school at Daventer.

the manner in which the inhabitants of this holy and useful precinct spent their time. "Much "was I delighted," these are his words, "with "the devout conversation, the irreproachable "demeanour, and the humility of my brethren. "I had never seen such piety, or such charity. "Taking no concern in what passed beyond "their walls, they remained at home, employed "in prayer and study, or in copying useful "books, and sanctifying all their occupations "by short, but frequent, ejaculatory prayers. "They seemed to have but one heart and one "soul; their dress was homely; their obedience "to their superiors was without reserve; their "prayer continual. By degrees, this uniform "tenor of their lives gained them general good "wills, and they became universally respected "as true disciples of Christ, and true lovers of "their neighbours." Many professors of this school were renowned for learning; some were authors of works, not even now absolutely un-

"putting approved works into the hands of their neighbours, "open to them the fountains of eternal life? Blessed are the "hands of such transcribers? Which of the writings of our "ancestors would now be remembered, if there had been no "pious hand to transcribe them?" Thomas à Kempis was himself an excellent copyist; some of his transcriptions, yet extant, shew his skill in collography, among them are a large bible in 4 volumes, and some extracts from the works of St. Bernard.

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known to the learned. Among these was John Swithein; he paid particular attention to Erasmus. Struck with his proficiency in his studies, he exclaimed on one occasion, "Hail to thy "genius, young man! Proceed as thou hast "begun! thou wilt, before long, reach the highest "pinnacle of literature!"

Alexander Hegius, one of the most learned men of his age, was, at this time, principal of the college; he had been instructed in the Greek and Latin languages, by Rodolphus Agricola, who contributed more, perhaps, than any other individual, to the revival of classical learning, particularly of the study of the Greek language in Italy. An intimacy subsisted between him and Hegius. Accidentally coming into the school room during an examination of the themes of the boys, Agricola perused that of Erasmus, then in his twelfth year; he declared his surprise at the invention, the style, and the various beauties which it displayed; he complimented Erasmus upon them, and assured him, that "if he should "persevere in his diligence, he would become "a great man." Erasmus always remembered with gratitude Agricola's encouragement of his studies.

Under Hegius, Erasmus learned the elements of the Latin and Greek languages, and all the logic and philosophy then usually taught in the

II. 2. Sent to School at Daventer.

schools. His memory was remarkable; he knew by heart all the works of Horace and Terence; the latter was his favourite author. He preferred his style to any other; he strongly recommends, in one of his letters,* the perusal of his comedies, to all who wished to acquire a style of perfect latinity. "Terence," he says, "was read by Quintillian, St. Jerom, St. Austin, and St. Ambrose, both in their youth and "their old age; none but a barbarian can dislike "Terence."

The discipline of the school at Daventer appears to have been severe; on one occasion Erasmus was sharply chastised, without deserving it; this, for a considerable time, broke his spirit, and suspended his ardour for study; his master became sensible of his error, and he endeavoured to compensate it, by the kindest attentions; but it was long before the literary fervour of Erasmus returned. This circumstance made an indelible impression upon him; he inveighs repeatedly, in his works against the merciless severity of masters, and the sufferings of boys under them.†

Erasmus continued, until his twelfth year, in the school we have mentioned. The plague then broke out at Daventer, and deprived him of Margaret, his affectionate mother. Upon this,

* Knight's Life of Erasmus, p. 163, 154, 155.

† Ibid.

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returned to his father, who continued to reside at Tergau. His father was extremely affected at the death of Margaret, grew melancholy, and soon afterwards died. He did not leave great wealth, but what he left would have been sufficient, if properly administered, to have completed the education of his two children in some university. When we reflect on the literary eminence which Erasmus afterwards attained, we must feel some regret, that his parents, who appear to have tenderly loved him, did not live to witness it. He always retained an affectionate regard for their memory: he mentions, with evident pleasure, that, on his return from a visit to England, he found several of his paternal relations living, and that some had attained their ninetieth year.

Gerard appointed three guardians of his children; they sent their wards to an obscure convent of friars at Bois-le-Duc; the plague reached it, and they returned to Tergau. This was a great mortification to their guardians; they had spent all the money of their ward: aware of the consequences to which this exposed them, they endeavoured to induce their wards to enter a monastery at Sion in Delft, conceiving it probable that, by this and some further manœuvres, all inquiries respecting the fortunes of their wards might be stifled. At first, both the youths warmly objected to the measure, but Anthony,

was soon brought over, and entered into a religious order; here, he entirely disappears from history.

II. 3. Professed in a Convent of Austin Friars at Stein.

3. Erasmus was more firm in his opposition, and warm words passed between him and his guardians. While the affair stood thus, he happened to meet, in the garden of a convent of canons-regular at Stein, near Tergau, Cornelius Verdenus, who had been his schoolfellow in the college of Daventer. To him, he unbosomed himself. Verdenus dissuaded him from entering into the college proposed by his guardians, but strongly urged him to enter into the convent at Stein. He laid before him the quiet of a convent; it's regular hours, it's ample leisure, it's large library, and it's conveniences of every kind for study. This was taking Erasmus by his weak side. The religious of the convent also used all their blandishments to perfect the work, which Verdenus had begun. The solicitation succeeded; and Erasmus, not without some unwillingness, took the habit of a Novice, and soon afterwards made his religious profession in the convent.

Fortunately he found in it, Herman of Tergau, a young man of literary ardour equal to his own. They spent their days and nights in study, communicated the result to one another, and each

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profitted by the other's remarks: the friendship thus began subsisted between them through life.

From this convent, the two first letters in the correspondence of Erasmus are dated: they shew that Erasmus had then begun to form his admirable style. It appears that some of his hours of relaxation were employed in painting. It is said, that a cabinet in Holland contains a painted crucifix, with the following inscription, "Despise "not this picture! it was painted by Erasmus, "when he was a religious in the monastery of "Stein." He had other diversions. Le Clerc* relates, that in the garden of the monastery, there was a pear tree, which bore exquisite fruit, and which, on this account, the superior had appropriated for his private table. Erasmus had the same opinion, as his superior, of the excellency of the pears, and occasionally, at an early hour, lessened their number. The theft did not escape the observation of his superior; he therefore rose one morning with the lark, in order to detect the thief. Erasmus ascended the tree, and was feasting at leisure, on the pears, when a noise made by the superior, apprized him that he was watched. He quickly descended, and walked, in a limping pace, towards the convent. The suspicion of the superior imme-

* Bib. Univ. S. 7. p. 141.

diately fell on a limping lay brother. He accused the unfortunate man of the theft, paid no regard to his denials, and punished him severely. How greatly are we interested in the actions of illustrious men, when we read with pleasure, even this trifling story!

II. 3. Professed in a Convent of Austin Friars at Stein.

It appears that, for some time, Erasmus passed his hours very agreeably in the convent at Stein. He composed, during his residence in it, three works; the first, a "Treatise on the Contempt "of the World;" the second, a "Treatise on "the Peace of the Soul;" the third, which has been highly praised, a "Funeral Oration of "Bertha de Heyen," a widow of Tergau, "who," he informs us, "had been his refuge in want, "and his comfort in distress; who had given "him excellent counsel, and had shewn to him "the same regard, which she shewed her chil-"dren." Every man of letters must be grateful to the memory of a person who was kind to one of their greatest benefactors, at a time when kindness was most wanted by him. But it was not long before he began to grow weary of a conventual life; it's fish diet, it's long fasts, it's interruptions of sleep, disagreed with him, and absolutely devoted to study, as he was, it grieved him that so long a proportion of every twenty-four hours of his life was spent in spiritual exercises and religious ceremonial. Still, his conduct appears

to have been irreproachable, and his reputation extended far beyond the precincts of the monastery.

4. *Herman de Bergis, Bishop of Cambray,* meditated at this time, a journey to Rome; he had heard of the learning of Erasmus, of his elegant style, his ready pen, and the decorousness of his manners. Wishing to be accompanied in his intended journey by such a person, the prelate proposed it to Erasmus, and found him in the disposition we have mentioned. Having obtained his consent, he applied to the Bishop of Utrecht, within whose diocese the monastery of Stein was situated, to the General of the order of Canons-regular, and to the Prior of the convent at Stein, for their respective permissions, that Erasmus might quit the convent, and be released from the monastic observances of the order. All gave the required permission and release. Upon this, Erasmus repaired to Cambray; he was then in holy orders; he was ordained priest on the 25th of February 1493, but continued to wear the Augustinean habit.

A cardinal's cap was the object of the bishop's journey to Rome: the journey, for some reason, did not take place; but Erasmus continued at Cambray under the protection of the prelate. He was loved and respected by him, and by all

II. 4. Resides with Bishop of Cambria, released from monastic duties, and ordained Priest

his relations and friends. His thirst for knowledge made him desirous of spending some time in Paris: he applied to the Bishop for his leave: the prelate not only gave it to him, but settled a pension upon him. Erasmus reached Paris in 1496: he was then in his twenty-ninth year. We are sorry to add, that the pension promised him by the bishop of Cambray, was never regularly paid, and that during many years, it was the fate of Erasmus, as it had been that of Dante*, "to experience how bitter is the bread "of others, and how painful it is to tread their "stairs."

* Tu proverari si come sa ai sale
Lo pane altrui, et quanto é duro colle
Lo secendere a salir pur lé altrui scale.
Dante. Paradis, Cant. 16.

The difference between eating one's own bread and eating that of another, is thus pointedly expressed by Mattheus Vendocinensis, who lived about the twelfth century: (Muratorii Antiquitates Italicæ, Tom. III. p. 915)—

"Venditur Arbitrium, dum vivitur ex alieno
"Sumptu. Pane tuo vescere; Liber eris."

CHAPTER III.

RESIDENCE OF ERASMUS IN FRANCE, BRABANT, AND HOLLAND.

1. *General view of Universities and Colleges during the Middle Ages.*
2. *Erasmus in France.*
3. *Patronized by the Marchioness of Vere.*
4. *Frequent excursions; pronounces, at Brussells, the panegyric of Philip the Fair.*

1496. *Æt.* 29.

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1. NOTHING contributed, in the middle ages, to preserve literature from destruction, or afterwards promoted its restoration, so much as the schools, which, in every æra of them, were established in almost every cathedral and monastery. As soon as towns acquired consistency and order, schools were also established in them, and literature and the arts and sciences were taught.

In these schools, the laity were instructed in grammar: those, who were engaged in the church, or professed in a religious order, or who were designed for either; those too, whose dispositions, not frequent in those times, impelled them to literature, were instructed in philosophy

and theology. *Colleges*, were an assemblage of schools; *Universities*, an assemblage of colleges, and generally enjoyed great privileges, particularly a species of internal civil jurisdiction, both over the members of them, and over the scholars by whom they were frequented. The origin of an university is sometimes immemorial: to found a new university has been long considered a royal prerogative; but particular colleges within them, have often been founded by individuals. Sometimes popes founded such schools, or took them under their special protection: these were called "pontifical colleges." By general law, the belles lettres may be taught in every place; divinity and philosophy, only in universities.

1. General view of Universities and Colleges in the Middle Ages.

In the middle ages, the belles lettres comprised grammar, rhetoric, logic, music, arithmetic, geometry, and astronomy. They were originally taught in two courses: the first comprised grammar, music, and arithmetic, and was called the *Trivium*; the second comprised the four remaining sciences, and was called the *Quadrivium*: to the latter, few, without uncommon literary ardour, aspired. A different course of study was introduced by the scholastics in the twelfth century; these divided the circle of science into grammar, logic, metaphysics, physics, morality, politics, law, and theology. All were taught by dictation. Books rendered dictation unnecessary: but, for

CHAP III. Æ. 29. 1469.

a long time after the discovery of printing, documentary dictation was unaccountably persisted in, and it yet prevails in many establishments for education. Such is the force of habit, that mankind are often unwilling to reject antient forms and usages for improvements, however obvious and salutary. The Roman numerals long remained in use, after the introduction of the Arabic: they continued, even in our times, to be used in some departments of the Exchequer; and, perhaps, are not yet altogether disused.

Soon after the revival of letters, the course of science underwent a revolution: It was divided into rudiments, (which included reading and arithmetic), grammar, syntax, poetry, rhetoric, philosophy, and theology; two years were assigned to rudiments; one, to grammar; one, to syntax; one, to poetry; one, to rhetoric; two to philosophy; and four to theology. Thus it required twelve years, to complete, upon this plan, a regular course of study.

2. Such was the ordinary course of instruction, when Erasmus became a student. Foreign writers agree in describing Paris and Boulogn as the most celebrated, at that time, of the universities on the Continent. The former was then particularly renowned at that time, for its schools of philosophy and theology, the latter for its school

of law. As the great wish of Erasmus was to perfect himself in theology, he was naturally led to Paris. A student's place in the college of Montaign in that city, had been obtained for him: he immediately took possession of it. The account, which he gives, of it's dirt, it's foul air, his bad lodging, and unwholesome diet, is disgusting. In consequence of the non-payment of the pension, which the Bishop of Cambray had settled upon him, his pecuniary resources soon failed him; this reduced him to great distress, and, what he thought his greatest misfortune, deprived him of all means of purchasing books. "O! "that I had money!" he exclaims in one of his letters, "I would first buy books; then raiment." His literary endowments however pierced through every cloud which environed him; great offers were made to him, but the terms, in which they were made, were incompatible with his prosecution of his studies. On this account, he rejected them; but to provide for his subsistence, and to enable him to purchase books, he undertook the instruction of several young Englishmen of rank. Some were ungenerous in their remuneration of his tuition of them; some however paid him liberally. Among these, William Lord Mountjoy, whom our subject will often lead us to mention, should be particularly noticed. The celebrity of Erasmus was augmented by public

2. Erasmus in France, &c.

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harangues, which he sometimes made in the university; but an increase of bad health compelled him to return to Cambray.

3. About this time he formed an acquaintance with the *Marchioness of Vere*, the daughter of Wolsard de Borselle, mareçhal of France, and of Charlotte of Bourbon—Montpensier. The Marchioness was then the widow of Philip, the son of Anthony of Burgundy, a natural son of Philip of Burgundy, generally called The Good Duke. She gave Erasmus a pleasing reception; and Erasmus is eloquent in her praise. "I cannot," he says, "describe in adequate terms, the politeness, the goodness, or the liberality of this worthy lady." "A suspicion always attends the amplifications of rhetoricians, particularly when they cultivate oratory; but I exaggerate nothing; for the artifice of eloquence is, upon this occasion, unnecessary; nature never having collected in one person, so much modesty, prudence, candour and goodness." The Marchioness was equally pleased with Erasmus, and settled upon him an annual pension of one hundred florins; we are sorry to be under the necessity of mentioning, that this pension too was seldom regularly paid. Her esteem for Erasmus and her admiration of his literary endowments continued to the last; but she spent much money

on undeserving objects, was otherwise imprudent, and finally disgraced herself by a mes-alliance; hence her purse was generally open, but often empty. Erasmus always mentioned her with respect, and acknowledged with gratitude his obligations to her.

III. 3. Patronized by Marchioness of Vera.

The irregularity of the Bishop and the Marchioness in paying Erasmus the pensions, which they had settled upon him, reduced him to great distress: but Lord Mountjoy came to his aid; he made Erasmus considerable presents, and conferred upon him a pension of one hundred crowns: we never find Erasmus complaining that this pension was in arrear.

He now made his first visit to England; but remained in it a very short time: this, and his two succeeding visits to our island, we shall make the subject of the next chapter.

Returning to Paris, he fell ill. He informs us that, when his illness was at it's height, he had recourse to the interposition of St. Génévieve, the titular saint of Paris, and made a solemn vow that, if he recovered his health, he would celebrate, in poetry, the praises of the saint. His vow, as he informs us, was no sooner made, than the fever left him. His physician said to him,—"You no longer have any occasion "for my assistance! the saint, whom you have "invoked, is more powerful than the whole

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" college of physicians." Erasmus performed his promise to the saint, by a short and elegant ode in her praise. He was highly delighted with his miraculous cure, and mentions it, with evident pleasure, more than once, in his writings.

It does not appear that he bestowed much time, either upon philosophy or theology. As they were then taught in the schools, they could have little attraction for him. Certain philosophic theologists had arisen, under the banners of John Duns Scotus, an English Franciscan friar of surprising acuteness of mind, who attacked, with great vehemence and subtlety, several doctrines maintained by St. Thomas of Aquin, the glory of the Dominican order, and called the " Angel " of the School." These were defended with equal warmth by the Dominican friars; the universities were divided and distracted by these quarrels: Erasmus admired neither system, but inclined to the former: He wisely abstained from entering into the dispute, and often laughs at his own scoticism.

His great object at this time, was to acquire a perfect knowledge of the Greek language; he informs us that he soon found, that whatever knowledge he might acquire of Latin literature, his erudition would be very imperfect without an intimate acquaintance with the best Greek

writers. "The Latins," he used to say, "had "only narrow rivulets; the Greeks had pure "and copious rivers; and their streams were of "gold." It was also his opinion, that it was the height of folly to entertain hopes of acquiring a perfect knowledge of theology, without perusing the Greek fathers, and thoroughly understanding the New Testament in the original. To the study of the Greek language, he therefore addicted himself, with ardour and perseverance, and acquired a knowledge of it, which few have attained. He may be supposed to have devoted to it, the days and nights of twenty years. Thus, the works of the classic authors, both of Greece and Rome, and of the Greek and Latin fathers, became familiar to him: he was also profoundly versed in sacred and profane history, both ancient and modern. We do not discover that he bestowed any time on the study of mathematics, or on any branch of natural philosophy.

III. 3. Applies to the study of the Greek language.

While we consider these great attainments, we should also reflect upon the difficulties, which then attended the acquisition of them; the comparative scarcity of books; the difficulty of procuring antient manuscripts; the want of dictionaries, abridgments, indexes, genealogical and chronological tables, and the absence of the other literary aids, with which we now abound. With all these helps, few now equal Erasmus in sacred

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or profane philology. How indefatigable therefore must have been his industry, how extensive and profound his researches! Doctor Jortin has justly remarked a passage, in which, Erasmus mistook one of the *Herods* for another. We now possess many genealogical tables of the Asmonœan family; by looking into any, a writer might now instantaneously discover the desired Herod: but to find him, when Erasmus wrote, a great proportion of the work of Josephus, in the Greek original, for at that time there was no translation of his writings, must have been examined. Numberless other instances, in which much labour, in the time of Erasmus was necessary, but which in our days is unnecessary or nearly unnecessary, might easily be collected. If we consider this circumstance, our admiration of the industry of Erasmus, and the extent of his learning, must be very great: it will encrease, if we take into account, his humble birth, his necessitous circumstances, his bad health; how much of his time was employed in teaching, how much in travelling, how much in the occasional exertions, which he found necessary to provide for the wants of the day which was passing over him!

A letter written by him about this time to his friend Herman of Tergau, shews that during his stay at Paris, he was unhappy. In his bad state of health, in want of the necessaries of life,

destitute of the means of satisfying the literary craving which preyed upon him, and reduced to the drudgery of teaching for means of subsistence, his unhappiness may be easily imagined.* 3.

4. From Paris, Erasmus made *frequent excursions*. The plague often obliged him to change his residence: wherever he went, his reputation preceded his arrival; it encreased during his stay, and never failed to procure him admirers and friends. When Prince *Philip* returned from Spain to the Low Countries, the States of *Brabant* requested Erasmus to pronounce his panegyric. He undertook it with reluctance. He spoke it in the palace at Brussells, on the 6th of January 1504. The Prince 4. Pronounces the panegyric of Prince Philip.

* It will put the reader in mind of Doctor Johnson's similar circumstances on the death of his father, and how magnanimously he surveyed them! "1732, Julii 15. "*Undecim aureos deposui, quo die quicquid ante matris funus* "*(quod serum sit precor) de paternis bonis sperare licet, viginti* "*scilicet libras, accepi. Usque adeo mihi fortuna fingenda* "*est. Interea, ne paupertate vires animi languescant, nec in* "*flagitia egestas abigat, cavendum.*—I laid by eleven guineas "on this day, when I received twenty pounds, being all that "I have reason to hope for out of my father's effects, previous "to the death of my mother; an event which I pray God "may be very remote. I now therefore see that I must "make my own fortune. Meanwhile, let me take care that "the powers of my mind be not debilitated by poverty, "and that indigence do not force me into any criminal "act." (Boswell's Life of Johnson, 1 Ed. Vol. I. p. 55.)

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and almost all the nobility of the country were present. From such a performance, flattery cannot perhaps be banished altogether; but Erasmus had generally the address to convert the encomiastic strains, which the subject forced upon him, into salutary councils.

To Paris, in which he had acquired so much of his learning, Erasmus was always partial. In his panygeric of Prince Philip, he mentions it in terms of the highest eulogy. Noticing the polite reception, which Lewis the Twelfth of France had given to Philip,—"Paris," he says, "which "witnessed this magnificent spectacle, possesses "three advantages,—one even of which it is "difficult to find in most towns,—a flourishing "clergy, an almost unrivalled school, a senate "as venerable as the Areiopagus; as celebrated "as the Amphyctyonic; and as illustrious as the "ancient senate of Rome. By this happy as-"semblage, the greatest blessings are united in "this city: enlightened religion, profound "learning, and perfect administration of jus-"tice. The clergy is learned; the learned are "pious, and both learning and piety unite in the "senators: we cannot therefore, be surprised "that so many French or even that so many "strangers resort to Paris; she has the appear-"ance of a kingdom; or rather of the queen of "a kingdom, more than that of a mere town."

The panegyric gave great satisfaction. Erasmus received congratulations upon it from every part of Europe. Prince Philip presented him with fifty pieces of gold; and offered him an honourable office in his palace; but the love of independence, which ruled Erasmus through his life, made him decline the offer. The prince died in the following year. Henry the Eighth of England, then Prince of Wales, addressed an elegant letter of condolence to Erasmus upon this event; he assured Erasmus in it, that, since the death of his own royal mother, nothing had given him so much affliction, as the death of Philip. He heaps praises on Erasmus: he tells him his name is known all over the world, and professes his own inability to celebrate him in language equal to his deserts.

4. His partiality to the French nation.

Immediately after the publication of his panegyric on Prince Philip, Erasmus composed his "Complaint of Peace." She herself harangues the public: she enumerates the great blessings, which, so long as she is honoured and respected by mankind, she never fails to confer upon them, but complains that they have ceased to regard her; that the triflers of the schools are allowed to banish her from those seats of learning; and that even religious communities reject her. This treatise was highly popular and added greatly to the celebrity of Erasmus. He made

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some journies to *Holland:* it's air agreed with him, and the inhabitants, having their attentions wholly engrossed by their commercial pursuits, left him to his own concerns. Thus far, he was pleased; but he complains of their long and substantial repasts; their devotion to gain; their want of politeness, their contempt of learning, and their insensibility to literature. "Things "are greatly changed since this time," says Le Clerc, with honest national pride,—and it should be added, with great justice,—"Holland, "from the beginning of the sixteenth century "has been the asylum of literature:—It may "now be said with truth, that no country has "supplied Europe with so many helps for the "acquisition of knowledge."

CHAPTER IV.

THE THREE FIRST VISITS OF ERASMUS TO ENGLAND.

1497—1507. *Æt.* 30—40.

We have mentioned the commencement of the intercourse between Lord Mountjoy and Erasmus. His Lordship was in great favour with Henry VII.: that monarch appointed him page of honour to his son Prince Henry: with that royal youth, his lordship studied geography and history: both the prince and his page were often examined on their proficiency in those studies before the monarch. Lord Mountjoy was uncommonly diligent in his studies: Erasmus, in a letter written to his son, incites him to diligence by mentioning that his father frequently gave the night to literature; and so much injured his health by too great application to it, that his preceptors had often found it necessary to moderate his ardour. Lord Mountjoy was successively Governor of the Castle of Hamme near Calais, and of the city of Tournay: King Henry VII. invested him with the order of the garter.

IV. 1.

The First Visit of Erasmus to England.

1497. *Æt.* 30.

In 1497, Erasmus spent some time with his lordship at Hamme, and afterwards, by his lordship's request, accompanied him to England: his stay in it was short; Lord Mountjoy offered him the use of his house, but his surly steward, whom Erasmus calls Cerberus, frequently prevented his availing himself of the offer. From London, Erasmus went to Oxford, and studied in St. Mary's College, "a place," says Wood, "for canons regular of the order of St. Austin." "He was received in it," says Doctor Knight,* "and accommodated with diet and lodging in "the most courteous manner." Erasmus addressed an elegant ode to the patroness of the house: it was generally read and admired. Sextinus, a native of Friesland, then a student at Oxford, wrote to Erasmus that "his verses "convinced him of what he had not before "suspected; that the German wits were not "inferior to the Italian."

If we compare the state of learning in England with it's progress on the Continent, we shall

* Life of Colet, p. 28.

find that classical literature had made, at this time, greater advances in Italy, and even in France, than in England; as many of the learned exiles from the Greek empire, had, long before this period, established themselves in Italy, and some had even penetrated into France. Several Englishmen however had crossed the Alps, and returned with ample spoils. Among these, was *Grocyn*, the first Greek Professor in Oxford: he was profoundly versed in that language and in the mathematics, liberal in his communications to the learned and students, and so generous in his ordinary habits, as to be obliged, in consequence of it, to pledge his plate to Dr. Young, then Master of the Rolls, as a security for the repayment of a loan of money. Doctor Young, by his will, honourably restored it to him, "I "will," he thus expresses himself, "that Master "Grocyn shall have his plate delivered to him, "which I have now in pledge, without any "manner of redemption."

IV. 1. First visit of Erasmus to England.

Thomas Linacre, another eminent scholar, also resided at Oxford, and taught in it the Greek language. He was perfectly skilled in physic, and practised it professionally with the greatest success. Noticing a severe illness, with which he was afflicted, during his residence at Paris, Erasmus laments that he had not "his "Linacre with him." He always makes the

CHAP. IV. 1497. Æt. 30.

most honourable mention of Linacre; he describes him as one, "whose criticism was not "only exact, but severe." Linacre was a member of both the universities: and founded in each a professorship of the Greek language: he was also one of the chief founders of the college of physicians in Knight-Rider's-street.

General reputation pronounced *Latimer* to be one of the most learned men of his age, both in theology and polite literature; but he left behind him no work which enabled posterity to judge of his proficiency in literature.

While Erasmus remained at Oxford he principally addicted himself to the study of the Greek writers: he repeatedly acknowledges his obligations to these three illustrious scholars, for the assistance which he received from them in his studies, and always speaks of them in terms of affection and praise.

At this time, a strong rivalry subsisted between those, who adhered to scholastic literature, and those, who favoured the revival of the learning of Greece and Rome. In general, all the established institutions advocated the former, and were hostile to the latter. During the stay of Erasmus at Oxford, the parties broke out into open war. In opposition to the new learning, the former assumed the appellation of *Trojans*, and by way of derision called their adversaries,

IV. 1. First visit of Erasmus to England.

Greeks: these gloried in the name. The leaders of each party took the appellations, which Homer gives to his heroes; and combats of words, sometimes ending in blows, were waged with great fierceness between them. To put an end to this disgraceful scene, Sir Thomas More, whose intercourse with Erasmus we shall afterwards notice, addressed a letter to the university. He describes, in strong language, the folly of these unseemly conflicts; and the detriment, which resulted from them both to sacred and to profane literature. He mentions with indignation, that he was present at a sermon of a preacher, who forgot time, place, and duty, so far, as to attack the Greeks from the university pulpit: he notices the very different manner in which polite literature had been received, and then flourished at Cambridge.*

Notwithstanding his devotion to Greek literature, Erasmus did not neglect the Latin. He

* "The Greek language was introduced into the University of Oxford in the last years of the fifteenth century, by "Grocyn, Linacre, and Latimer, who had all studied at "Florence under Demetrius Chalcondyles. See Doctor "Knight's curious life of Erasmus. Although a stout "academical patriot, he is forced to acknowledge, that "Erasmus learned Greek at Oxford, and taught it at Cam-"bridge." Hist. C. LXVI. Note 112. How much is said and insinuated in these few lines! But this was Mr. Gibbon's forte. How greatly is his enmity to Christianity to be lamented!

CHAP. IV. Æt. 30. 1497.

was indebted for some instructions in it, to *Pace*, one of his most particular friends. At first, this eminent man had wholly addicted himself to learning; and with that view, had buried himself in Queen's College, Oxford. Henry VII. took him from it, and employed him in many foreign embassies. In praise of literature, it should be observed that this prince, who was certainly one of the wisest monarchs who have filled a throne, thought so highly of the general talents of those, who distinguished themselves by their proficiency in literature, that, although he himself had no taste for letters, he employed many scholars of eminence in embassies, and other official situations of the greatest moment. Henry VIII. appointed Pace secretary of state, and he appeared to be advancing to the highest pinnacle of court favour; but he unluckily fell under the displeasure of Wolsey, and his fortune was shipwrecked. A warm friendship subsisted between him and Erasmus: it continued during the adversity of Pace, and, notwithstanding the expectations of Erasmus from the great man, by whom Pace was persecuted, Erasmus made in all his writings, the most honourable mention of Pace.

About this time, Erasmus dedicated to Cardinal Wolsey, a translation of a treatise of Plutarch, "on turning adversity to advantage." Wolsey did not then foresee how necessary he

would soon find it, to take that subject into consideration. The dedication of it, is a panegyrick of the Cardinal; but Erasmus intimates in it, that he had not been treated by Henry VII. as well as he had expected. He mentions, in one of his letters, that, while he was employed in preparing this dedication, honours fell so fast upon the Cardinal, that he had, three several times, been forced to alter the title by which he had addressed him. Erasmus afterwards dedicated to Wolsey, his "Translation of the Epistles of St. Peter and "St. Jude;" and praises him for his good intentions in favour of the church, and for his encouragement of young men of talents and rank.

IV. 1. First visit of Erasmus to England.

Erasmus was not so absorbed in study as not to mix occasionally with the world, and to observe life and manners. Towards the close of his first stay in England, he spent some time with his patron Lord Mountjoy at his country house. "You cannot imagine," he writes to Faustus Andrelinus the poet laureat in France, "how greatly Erasmus has improved:—Yes! "your friend Erasmus is become a perfect "horseman; almost a hunter; a tolerable "courtier: he makes a good bow, and smiles "with a good grace:—and all this in spite of "nature. You too, if you are wise, will pro- "ceed to England." Erasmus then describes

CHAP. IV. 1497- Æt. 30.

eloquently and feelingly, the charms of the English ladies. But he shortly afterwards met with natives of England, whom he did not so greatly admire. His friends having neglected to inform him, that persons travelling out of England, were only authorised to take with them a certain amount of the current specie of the realm, the custom-house officers stripped him of almost all he had. His own interest and that of his friends were exerted in vain to procure it's restitution. He therefore found it necessary to apply to their bounty: it appears that the application was not very successful. This made him, as soon as he arrived at Paris, hasten the publication of his "Adagia, or Proverbial Sayings of the Ancients," which we shall afterwards particularly notice. He had previously composed two declamations on matrimony— one, in it's praise—the other, against it. "I like the first of them," said Lord Mountjoy to him, "so well, that I am "determined to marry immediately." "But "you have not," said Erasmus, "read the se- "cond." "No," replied his lordship, "that "I leave to you."

It appears that Erasmus was greatly pleased with his visit to England. "I found," he writes in a letter to Piscator, "a most agreeable and "wholesome climate; so much politeness, and "such profound erudition both in Greek and

IV. 1. First visit of Erasmus to England.

"Latin, that mere curiosity alone takes me to "Italy. When I listen to Colet, I think I hear "Plato. Who must not admire Grocyn's ex- "tensive learning in all the sciences? Who is "more profound, more judicious, more pene- "trating than Linacre? Has nature ever formed "a more engaging or more happy disposition "than More?—I pass over many in silence. "It is surprising how greatly polite literature "flourishes in these parts." At departing from London he saluted the King; and the Bishop of London, who made him no present, though he treated him with magnificent promises. The Bishop of Durham gave him six angels, the Archbishop of Canterbury the same, and the Bishop of Rochester presented him with a piece of gold, which he calls *vere regalem.**

IV. 2.

The Second and Third Visits of Erasmus to England, and his intermediate Residence at Paris.

1498—1508. *Æt.* 31—41.

THE residence of Erasmus on the Continent, after his return to it from his first visit to England was not long. Notwithstanding his sufferings from the English custom-houses at Dover,

* Jortin's Life of Erasmus, p. 58.

CHAP. IV. 1498—1508. Æt. 31.

he again exposed himself to their uncivil searches. He was induced to make this second visit to England, by the pleasure which he had derived from the first, and in consequence of his wish to confer with Doctor Colet, on a subject of great importance to him, as the decision upon it would influence his whole future life.

To the confidence of Erasmus Dr. Colet was fully entitled, by his acknowledged learning, moderation and probity. He was the eldest son of Sir Henry Colet, twice Lord Mayor of London.* Having embraced the ecclesiastical state, he was instructed in all the learning then taught in the schools; but having subsequently acquired a taste for classical literature, he travelled into France and Italy, made himself master of the Greek and Latin languages, and read many of the best works of antiquity. He also studied the mathematics; and attentively perused the works of the poets of his own country; "for the English nation," says Eras-

* After his decease, his widow retired to Stepney. "The "greatest pleasure she enjoyed there, was to have the "company of her son, and to entertain those learned friends "he brought along with him; especially the polite and "facetious Erasmus, whose conversation she delighted in, "and used to talk of him in his absence, with a particular "air of mirth and pleasant freedom of speech. So that son "tells him in a letter from that country house, anno 1516, "Epist. Coleti Erasmo suo. Edit. Basil. 1521, p. 91." Knight's Life of Colet, Ed. Ox. 1823. p. 8.

IV. 2. Second visit of Erasmus to England.

mus,* " has had among them, those, who have " signalized themselves in poetry, as Danté and " Petrarch have done in Italy.† At first, he appeared too much inclined to the gaieties, to which his rank, fortune and endowments invited him; but he soon became sensible of the obligations of his state, and dedicated himself to piety and sacred literature. He was presented, without any solicitation of his own, to several prebends, and ultimately in 1505, to the Deanery of St. Paul. Erasmus had passed his thirtieth year, so that it was full time for him to fix himself in some settled course of regular study, and to devote to it the whole power of his mind.

The advice of Colet, and probably his own inclination, directed Erasmus to theology, not in the scholastic form, in which it was then taught, but on a large and liberal plan which, excluding the subtleties of the schools, comprised all that could serve to explain or illustrate the doctrines or the history of christianity. It may perhaps be doubted, whether the mind of Erasmus was not rather calculated for classical pursuits. If he had addicted himself to these, we should probably have possessed, in addition to his " Adages," his " Praise of Folly," and his " Colloquies," several literary compositions, equal to any of these in erudition, strength and beauty. But should we have possessed the greatest of all his works, his edition of the Greek New Testament,

* Ep. s. l. 5. † Erasmus, Jodveo Jonæ. id. Jun. 1519.

CHAP. IV. 1498—1508. Æt. 31.

and his version of it? or his numerous editions of the works of the Greek and Latin authors? or his translations of so many of the Greek? Should we have possessed the subsequent editions of these works,—improvements, it is true, of Erasmus's editions of them, but which without his editions, would not perhaps have existed?

Erasmus has informed us, that being, during his visit to England, at the country seat of his friend Lord Mountjoy, Mr. Thomas More, then a student in Lincoln's Inn, afterwards the celebrated chancellor, took him to the next town, probably Eltham, in which all the children of Henry VII. except Arthur his eldest son, were then brought up. "All the royal children, except Arthur," says Erasmus in one of his letters, "and several children of Lord Mountjoy's family came into the great hall. Henry, who had then attained the ninth year of his age, stood in the middle, and discovered a royal disposition,—a loftiness of mind, mixed with politeness. His sister Margaret, afterwards married to James IV. of Scotland, then in the ninth year of her age, was upon his right hand; Mary, then in the fourth year of her age, was playing on his left. Edmund was in the arms of his nurse. More put some literary performance of his own composition into the hands of Henry. This, I was not aware of, and I had nothing of my own to offer; but I promised the

" prince, that, at some future period, I would " express my duty to him. In the mean time, " I was somewhat out of humour with my " friend, for not apprizing me of what he " intended doing; and the more so, because " the royal youth, by a short note, which he " had sent me during his dinner, had challenged " my pen, and therefore expected a specimen of " its powers. I went home; and, in despite of " the muses, from whom I had long before " divorced myself, composed, in three days, " a poem in alternate hexametres and jambics, " in which I celebrated the praises of Henry VII. " and his children, and the whole nation, and " thus soothed my shame and sorrow." This poem has reached us: like all the poetical effusions of Erasmus, it exhibits great ingenuity and abounds with poetical imagery and allusions, expressed in classical language. It must have been very acceptable to the prince, to whom it was addressed. It should be added, that Erasmus afterwards performed his promise to the royal youth, by inscribing several works of importance to him, while he filled the throne. After a stay in England of some months, Erasmus returned to the Continent.*

IV. 2. Second visit of Erasmus to England.

* Colet introduced Erasmus to Sir Thomas More: so much was Erasmus pleased with his two friends, that "like many other students he staid at Oxford," says Dr. Knight, " till he had spent his money."

CHAP. IV.
1506.
Æt. 39.

IV. 3.

The Third Visit of Erasmus to England.

1506. *Æt.* 39.

In all his visits to England, Erasmus made many friends. On his third visit, they gave him a flattering reception. In a letter dated the 1st April 1506, he informs Servatius, his correspondent, "that he was then in London, and welcomed by "the greatest and most learned men of the "kingdom;" that "the king himself had pro-"mised him a benefice; but had been prevented "by the arrival of King Philip in England." —Erasmus concludes this letter by avowing "a resolution to give up his whole future life to "piety and Christ."

By his desire, his friend Grocyn introduced him to Wareham Archbishop of Canterbury and Lord High Chancellor of England: he put his Latin translation of the Hecuba of Euripides into the hands of the prelate, and requested his permission to dedicate it to him: the prelate accepted the dedication. "This," says Erasmus, "was the auspicious commencement of our ac-"quaintance. We had some discourse before "dinner, and finding I was not a person of "many words, or of great ambition, he dis-

" coursed with me after dinner in his usual " amicable and unpretending manner, and made " me an honorary present. This, he took care " to put into my hands, while we were alone, " that he might neither wound my modesty, nor " raise the envy of others." On his return home, Grocyn insisted on Erasmus's informing him of the amount of the present; and, hearing it from Erasmus, he pronounced it too small. Erasmus seems to have thought the same. Grocyn intimated that the prelate suspected Erasmus of having previously dedicated his translation to some other person, " a trick," said Grocyn, " often practised by needy writers." This reflection mortified Erasmus; he never made a secret of his poverty, but could not endure that even his most intimate friends should make it the subject of a jest. These feelings he expressed both to Pace and Colet, when he thought them guilty of that indelicacy. It must afflict our readers to find that Erasmus so long continued in these straitened circumstances, and that they rendered unpleasing applications from him to the great and to his friends, too frequently necessary.

IV. 2. Third visit of Erasmus to England.

The poverty of Socrates obliged him, on one occasion, to intimate to his friends his want of a cloak: they instantly procured him one: " They should," remarked Socrates, " have " taken care not to let me want it." Still, the

CHAP. IV. 1506. Æt. 39.

hint was no sooner given, than the cloak was procured. Erasmus was not always so fortunate: A hint was seldom sufficient to excite the liberality of his friends: an absolute exposure of his necessities, an absolute solicitation of relief was often necessary. Sometimes even his distress made him importunate, and sometimes also, his importunities were unheeded.

He mentions, in one of his letters, the story of Socrates and the cloak, to which we have just alluded: he then relates one of "a person, who "seeing a friend poor and sick, and too modest "to make his wants known, put some money "under his pillow, whilst he was asleep. "When "I used to read this in the days of my youth,' "says Erasmus, I was extremely struck with "the modesty of one and the generosity of the "other. But since you talk of begging without "shame, who, I beseech you, can be more sub-"missive and blameless than myself, who live "in England, upon the foot of a public beggar? "I have received so much from the Archbishop, "that it would be scandalous to take any more "of him, though he were to offer it. I asked "N. with sufficient effrontery, and he answered "me with greater impudence. Even our good "friend thinks me too bold, who knowing my "poor state of health, and that I was going "from London, with hardly six angels in my

IV. 2. Third visit of Erasmus to England.

" pocket, and that the winter was coming on, yet " exhorted me most pressingly to spare the " Archbishop and Lord Mountjoy, and advised " me to retrench and bear poverty with patience. " A most friendly counsel! For this reason, " above all, I hate my hard fortune, because she " will not suffer me to be modest. Whilst I had " health and strength, I used to dissemble my " poverty; now I cannot, unless I would risk " my life. But, I am not such a beggar neither, " as to ask all things of all persons. To some " I say nothing, because I would not be refused; " and I have no pretence to solicit you, who do " not superabound in wealth. But since you " seem to approve of impudence, I will end my " letter in the most impudent manner I can; " I have not assurance to ask you for any thing; " and yet I am not so proud, as to reject a pre- " sent if a friend like you should offer it to one in " my circumstances.'"* Yet literary men were never more courted than in his time! But that *best, and almost only real friend of authors*, THE LITERARY PUBLIC, did not then exist. To the honour of the English it may be said that Erasmus found his best friends among them, and that Lord Mountjoy never deserted him.

* Doctor Jortin, whose translation of the passage I have inserted, justly observed, that " one who could talk at this " rate must be reduced to hard necessity."

CHAP. IV. 1506. Æt. 39.

In the fiftieth year of his life, he mentions, that "his chief support was from his English revenues, which alone kept him from starving."* In the last year of his life, he mentions the liberality of the English to him. "Thomas Cromwell, the king's secretary, and the person who is most in his favour, hath sent me," says Erasmus, as he is translated by Doctor Jortin, "I know not why, twenty, the Archbishop of Canterbury (Cranmer) eighteen, and the Bishop of London, fifteen."†

* Ep. 185, c. 1632, cited by Jortin, page 110.

† Jortin, p. 572. I cannot refuse myself, in this place, the pleasure of transcribing, from the *Horæ Biblicæ*, (sect. xvii.) a splendid instance of English munificence. "It has been our lot to be witnesses of the most tremendous revolution that Christian Europe has known; a new race of enemies to the Christian religion has arisen, and shaken every throne, and struck at every altar, from the Atlantic to the Don. One of their first enormities was the murder of a large proportion of their clergy, and the banishment of almost the whole of the remaining part. Some thousands of those respectable exiles found refuge in England. A private subscription of £.33,775. 15*s.* 9½*d.* was immediately made for them. When it was exhausted, a second was collected under the auspices of his Majesty, and produced £.41,304. 12*s.* 6½*d.* Nor is it too much to say, that the beneficence of individuals, whose charities on this occasion were known to God alone, raised for the sufferers a sum much exceeding the amount of the larger of the two subscriptions. When, at length, the wants of the sufferers exceeded the measure of private charity, Government took them under its protection; and though engaged in a war exceeding all former wars in expence, appropri-

IV. a. Third visit of Erasmus to England.

Erasmus, on his return to Paris, published translations both of the *Hecuba* and the *Iphigenia* of Euripides; and dedicated them to Wareham. We shall be called upon to notice other bounties of Wareham to Erasmus; Erasmus's grateful acknowledgment of them, and his eloquent tribute to his benfactor's memory.

If we may believe Doctor Caius or Keys, the renowned historian of Cambridge, Erasmus during this visit to England, read lectures on the Greek language in that university; and had there his grace to be batchelor of divinity. According to the same authority, Erasmus highly praised

" ated, with the approbation of the whole kingdom, a " monthly allowance of about £. 8,000 for their support; an " instance of splendid munificence and systematic libera- " lity, of which the annals of the world do not furnish another " example. The management of the contributions was en- " trusted to a committee, of whom Mr. Wilmot, then one " of the members of Parliament for the city of Coventry, was " president; on him the burthen of the trust almost wholly " fell; and his humanity, judgment, and perseverance in the " discharge of it, did honour to himself and his country.

" It should be observed, that the contributions we have " mentioned are exclusive of those which were granted for " the relief of the lay emigrants.

" So suddenly had the unhappy sufferers been driven from " their country, that few had brought with them any of " those books of religion or devotion, which their clerical " character and habits of prayer had made the companions " of their past life, and which were to become the chief " comfort of their future years. To relieve them from this " misfortune, the University of Oxford, at her sole expence,

CHAP. IV. 1506. Æt. 39.

the erudition of its members, and described the state of it to be so flourishing, that its schools might vie with the best regulated schools of the age, and that it possessed men of such merit, that compared with them, those of antient times appeared as shadows.

Erasmus was succeeded in his professorship by Richard Crooke, who also had been a scholar of Grocyn. In his oration in praise of the Greek language, Crooke mentions Erasmus in the most honourable terms, and speaks of his own inferior merit with great modesty.

" printed for them, at the Clarendon Press, 2,000 copies of " the Latin Vulgate of the New Testament, from an edition " of Barbou; but this number not being deemed sufficient to " satisfy their demand, 2,000 copies more were added at the " expence of the Marquis of Buckingham. Few will forget " the piety, the blameless demeanour, the long patient suffer- " ing of these respectable men. Thrown on a sudden into a " foreign country, differing from theirs in religion, language, " manners and habits, the uniform tenor of their pious and " unoffending lives procured them universal respect and " good will. The country that received them has been " favoured. In the midst of the public and private calamity, " which almost every other nation has experienced, Provi- " dence has crowned *her* with glory and honour; peace has " dwelt in her palaces, plenty within her walls; every cli- " mate has been tributary to her commerce, every sea has " been witness of her victories."

CHAPTER V.

ERASMUS IN ITALY.

1 *Great ardour for Literature in the beginning of the Fifteenth Century.*

2 *The Medici.*

3. *The Presses of Italy.*

4. *The Journey of Erasmus to Italy: His "Julius "Exclusus."*

5. *He is appointed Preceptor to Alexander, the illegitimate Son of James IV. of Scotland.*

6. *Honourable reception of Erasmus in Italy.*

1506—1510. *Æt.* 39—43.

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1. In the introductory chapter of this work, we attempted to present to our readers, a view of the gradual advance of literature in Europe, from the settlement of the barbarians till *the commencement of the fifteenth* century. At this period, Italy discovered a general ardour for the revival of science, and the restoration of the fine arts. Antient manuscripts were sought for; long and arduous voyages were undertaken to procure them; they were attentively examined, collated,

CHAP. V. 1506—1510. Æt. 39—43.

copied, and circulated; ample libraries were opened to the public: Chairs were founded for professors, who should instruct the lovers of literature in the Greek and Latin languages, and learned men were invited by liberal salaries to fill them. The calamities of the provinces of Greece, forced her men of letters and her artists, into Italy; the kindness, with which they were received, made them almost forget their misfortunes; the names of Plato, Homer, and Demosthenes, of Virgil, Cicero, and Livy, became generally known: the languages in which they wrote, were rendered familiar to numbers. Academies were formed, in which the learned met and discussed useful and elegant topics of knowledge: inscriptions, statues, and medals were collected: Plautus and Terence were again heard; a taste for the literature and arts of Greece and Rome found their way into almost every society: Mathematics threw out new light, astronomy became more exact: instructed by her, Italian mariners discovered the new world: Medicine, jurisprudence, and almost every other science and art, beamed with fresh splendour: Sovereigns, princes, and their ministers, magistrates, generals, the nobility, the gentry, the clergy, both favoured and cultivated literature; Princes felt that something was wanting in their courts—the nobles, that something was wanting in

their palaces, if learned men were not seen in them; printing was discovered in Germany; Italy seized it, and, in a few years, every Italian town of the first order had its presses: All the fine arts accompanied literature in her expansion and elevation, and insensibly reached their antient splendour. Thus the soil of Italy, long dry and uncultivated, suddenly assumed a new aspect; some places yet retained their sterility, but the greatest part was cultivated; good seed was sown every where; in most places it germinated and promised an abundant harvest. *

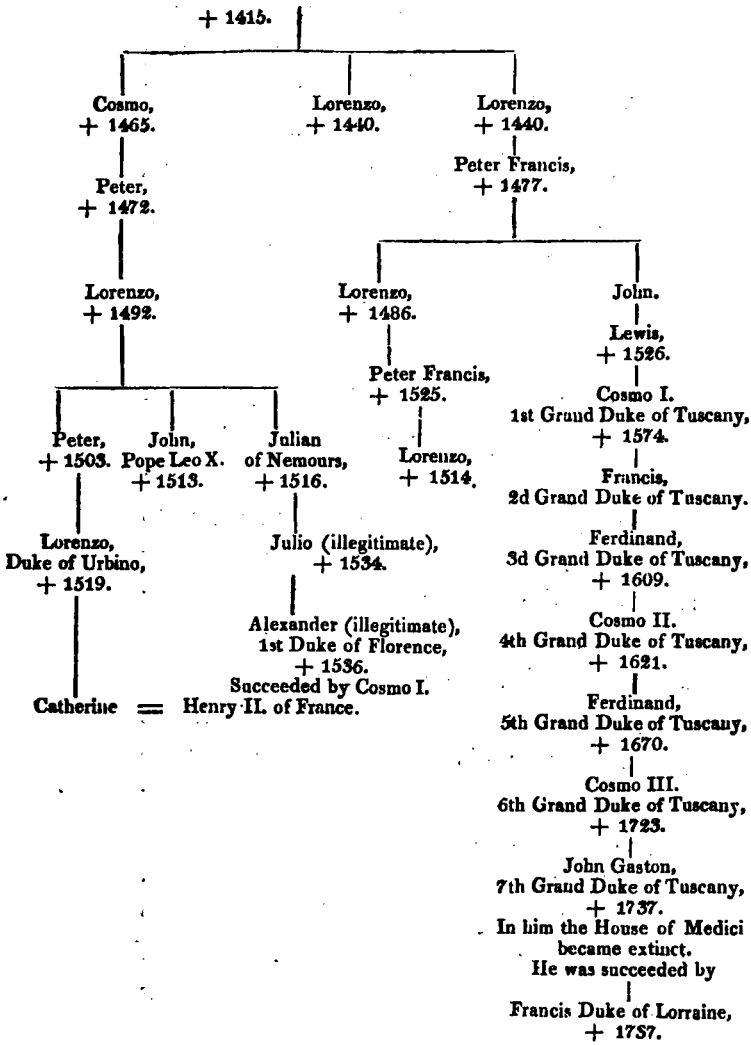
V. 1. Great ardour for literature.

2. *The family of the Medici*, who, without affecting the titles or ornamental distinctions appropriated to sovereign princes, so long exercised all the powers and prerogatives of sovereignty in Florence, devoted themselves, about this time to the cause of letters. It is universally admitted that the revival of the arts in Italy was principally owing to their protection and fostering care.

Cosmo de Medici, surnamed the Father of his Country, laid the foundations of this illustrious house; he gave to his descendants an example of royal patronage of the polite arts, which they generally followed. Scarcely a person eminent in any branch of science then existed in Italy, with whom Cosmo was not acquainted, and who did not partake of his liberality. He himself was

* *See next page.*—THE, &c.

* THE following GENEALOGICAL TABLE, of a family which has deserved so well of letters and the polite arts, may not be unacceptable to some of our readers: it is taken from "Lord Corke's Letters from Italy." 8vo.



V. 2. The Medici.

was learned in history, and the platonic philosophy, and excelled both in Latin and Italian poetry. *Peter de Medici*, his son, degenerated from him; but the glory of the family was revived and augmented by *Lorenzo the Magnificent*, the son of Peter. Under his direction,

"Charles Earl of Middlesex (afterwards Duke of Dorset), "being at Florence, in the year 1737, when the House of "Medici became extinct, composed on that occasion the "celebrated elegiac ballad called Arno's Vale, which, by "having the good fortune to be set by the late Mr. Holcombe, "with a plaintive sweetness that does honour to his taste "and justice to the subject, is as well known to our "musicians as it is to our poets. However, as it cannot be "more properly introduced, the reader will not be dis-"pleased with my inserting it."

I.

"When here, LUCINDA, first we came,
"Where ARNO rolls his silver stream,
"How brisk the nymphs, the swains how gay!
"Content inspired each rural lay:
"The birds in livelier concerts sung,
"The grapes in thicker clusters hung;
"All looked as joy could never fail,
"Among the sweets of ARNO'S VALE.

II.

"But now, since good PALEMON * died
"The chief of shepherds and the pride,
"Old Arno's sons must all give place
"To Northern swains †, an iron race!
"The taste of pleasure now is o'er;
"Thy notes, LUCINDA, charm no more;
"The Muses droop, the Goths prevail;—
"Adieu! the sweets of ARNO'S VALE."

* John Gaston, the last male of the House of Medici.

† Alluding to the Lorraine family, who then succeeded to the Dutchy; and whose iron hand now desolates the country.

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Florence became the Athens of Italy. The present is not the place to dwell on his skill in government, his military talents, or the high marks of esteem, which he received from every sovereign in Europe: but his patronage of literature deserves particular mention. The libraries which he enriched, the monuments of ancient art, which he collected, the universities which he established, the schools which he founded, the academies which he protected, the learned men and artists whom he encouraged, have been themes of frequent praise; but have been described and celebrated by none better than Mr. Roscoe, and by few so well. Lorenzo, as is elegantly related in this writer's excellent biography of him, was the benefactor of almost every man of letters, and artist in Italy. *Marcillus Ficinus* and *Angelus Politianus* were his confidential friends. From his grandfather, he inherited a love of Plato's doctrines, and of Greek and Roman literature; he was also highly skilled in architecture and music.

Other sovereigns of Italy, without equal means, patronized literature with equal zeal. In this wise and magnificent patronage of learning, the illustrious persons who filled the pontifical throne, were eminently distinguished.

The unfortunate schism, by which all Europe was divided, did not allow any time to the rival

popes to think of literature; and the attention of Martin V, by whom the schism was terminated, and of Eugenius IV, his immediate successor, was wholly engrossed by the political and theological controversies of the times; but Nicholas IV, the successor of Eugenius, was no sooner elected pope, than his erudition and known love of sacred and profane literature, attracted a multitude of the learned and the accomplished to Rome. He encouraged all, pensioned many, suggested subjects for the employment of their talents, and watched, with kind and encouraging attention, the progress of their works. His liberality was so great, that it sometimes even excited the surprise of those whom he rewarded. "Take," he used to say to them, "take, without "scruple, what I offer you! You will not "always have a Nicholas among you!" He was particularly partial to the Greek writers. He caused translations to be made of the Cyropedia of Xenophon, of the Histories of Diodorus Siculus, Polybius, Thucidides, Herodotus, Appian of Alexandria, of the Iliad, of Strabo, of many of the works of Plato, Ptolemy, and Theophrastus, and the Greek fathers. Our readers will read with surprise, that the pontiff, to whom we owe these literary achievements, filled the chair of St. Peter only during ten years. After him, Nicholas V, Calixtus II, Pius II,

V. 2. The Medici.

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and Paul IV, were successively elected popes: Sixtus IV, the successor of Paul, founded the library of the Vatican: he was succeeded by Innocent VIII: Alexander VI, was the successor of Innocent. Into *his* cares, the protection of literature never entered; but Mr. Roscoe seems to have proved, that he was not quite such a monster of wickedness, as he has been described. Voltaire had previously remarked, that his crimes had been greatly exaggerated: he was succeeded by Julius II, a pope fonder of war than of the arts of peace.

We now reach the æra,—when

> A *Raphael* painted and a *Vida* sung.
>
> POPE.

Leo X, from whom it received its appellation, was the second son of Lorenzo the Magnificent. From the reign of Augustus, Rome never had been so happy, or filled with men of such eminence as during his pontificate. Immediately after his election, he appointed Bembo and Sadolet, the purest Latin writers in Europe, to be his secretaries. He filled the sacred college with men of learning; drew to his court every literary person within his reach, and, by his praises and liberality, made several learned foreigners sensible of his regard. He employed many persons in Europe, and many in Asia, to discover manuscripts, with directions to purchase

V. 2. The Medici.

them at any price. They were no sooner purchased than presented to the public through the press. *The Annals of Tacitus* were bought for him for 500 golden ducats.

He was a great lover and protector of architecture, painting, and music. We owe to his liberality the immortal works of Titian, Raphael and the Buonarotti. He was a passionate admirer of poetry: His court was full of poets: sometimes, to relieve himself from the cares of government, plays were performed in his palace, and entertainments given in his gardens, to which the wits of the court were invited. Thus, to use the expression of an Italian writer, Apollo and the Muses seemed to be on a visit to the Vatican.

Leo was succeeded by *Adrian VI.* He and Erasmus had been schoolfellows at Daventer: but Erasmus had not communicated to him any of his love of the classics: the pontiff's dislike of them was so visible and so strongly pronounced, that, soon after his election, the muses fled from Rome. Cardinal *Julius de Medici* succeeded Adrian; he took the name of Clement VII, and recalled the fugitives.

3. The Presses of Italy.

3. We have mentioned some of the institutions favourable to letters or the arts, which were either founded or encouraged by the Medicæan

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pontiffs, and the Italian princes. The general cause of literature was equally served by the *presses* with which Italy abounded: the most illustrious of these, are *the Aldine, the Medicæan, and the Vatican.* At a subsequent time, *Cardinal Ferdinand,* a cousin of Leo X, established a press for the publication of works of oriental literature,—the *Typographia Medicæa Linguarum Exterarum.* The cardinal sent learned men into Egypt, Lybia, Syria, and other parts of the East, to purchase manuscripts. He caused, at an immense price, Syriac, Cophtic, Arabic, Ethiopic, and Armenian types to be cast, and a multitude of grammars, vocabularies, catechisms and New Testaments, to be printed in the principal languages of Africa, and Asia. At his expense, 3,000 copies of the Gospels in the Arabic language, with a Latin version, were printed, and distributed among the natives of these spacious territories.—But the subject now calls us to return to Erasmus: this short account of the state of learning in Italy, while he resided in it, will, we trust, be excused by our readers.

4. *Erasmus had felt, from his earliest years, a strong wish to visit Italy:* its classical soil, its numerous monuments of ancient and modern art, its large libraries, and the number of learned men, with whom it abounded, naturally inspired

V. 4. Erasmus in Italy.

him with this desire. It was increased by invitations, which he received from many of its most illustrious inhabitants, and by the hopes of preferment, which they held out to him. We are not acquainted with his route.* *Turin* was the first place, in which we find him: the university of that city conferred upon him the degree of

* In crossing the Cottian Alps, Erasmus first became sensible of the approach of old age: he had not reached his fortieth year; but, who hath not read the admirable verses, in which Mr. Crabbe describes the effects of that year? Erasmus himself has described them not unhappily, in some verses, with which the Cottian muses then inspired him:

Quem nuper hunc Erasmum
Vidisti, mediâ viridem florere juventâ,
Nunc is repente versus
Incipit urgentis senii sentiscere damna,
Et alius esse tendit,
Dissimilisque sui:—Nec adhuc Phœbeius orbis
Quadragies revexit
Natalem lucem, quæ bruma ineunte calendas
Quinta anteit Novembres.
Nunc mihi jam raris sparguntur tempora canis, &c.

The mention in this place of the Cottian Alps, has brought to the writer's reminiscence, that several years ago, it cost him much time and labour to ascertain, with a tolerable approach to precision, the limits of the different chains of mountains, which form the Alps: he has presented the result to the public in the Appendix, Note II, to his "Horæ Juridicæ Subsecivæ, being a connected series of "Notes on the Geography, Chronology, and Literary "History of the Principal Codes and Original Documents "of the Grecian, Roman, Feudal and Canon Law." —1 Vol. 8vo.

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doctor of divinity. Thence he travelled to Bologna; but, as Pope Julius II was then advancing with a large army, to besiege it, Erasmus left it, and, crossing the Appennines, reached Florence and remained in it, during the siege. As soon as Bologna surrendered to the arms of Julius, Erasmus returned, and beheld the pope's magnificent entry into the conquered town. The spectacle did not greatly edify him: he compared, as he informs us, the pontiff's martial character, with the spirit of charity inculcated in every page of the Gospel; his lofty and imperious demeanour, with christian humility, and the costly magnificence which environed him, which the lowly circumstances and manners of him who was meek and humble of heart, and, who himself preached these meek and humble virtues to his followers. These reflections gave rise to the celebrated dialogue, *Julius Exclusus*, or *Julius shut out from Heaven:* an admirable satire: the internal evidence of its being a production of the pen of Erasmus is so strong, that although he never recognized it, we have no hesitation in ascribing it to him. It imports to be a dialogue between St. Peter and Julius. With an equal mixture of bitterness and pleasantry, the pilot of the Galilæan lake reproaches Julius, with his unchristian conduct; laughs at his deeds of arms, exposes the folly of his pompous magnificence,

and finally shuts the door of Heaven upon him. Erasmus returned to the charge in his "Encomium of Folly," which we shall afterwards mention. Alluding, in that work, to Julius, he makes Folly say, "I can show you an old man, "whose valour is equal to that of any youth; "who, to disturb law and religion, spares neither "expense nor caution, and to whose folly his "flatterers give the name of zeal, piety, and "strength of mind. The pontiffs," continues "Erasmus, "are so bent on amassing wealth, "that they leave the duties of the ministry to "the bishops; the bishops leave them to the "curates; the curates to their vicars; and the "vicars, in their turn, leave them to the "friars."

V. 4. Erasmus in Italy.

In Bologna, Erasmus prosecuted his studies with great ardour. He prepared for the press an enlarged edition of his *Adagia*, a work, which we shall afterwards notice. Being desirous that it should be printed by the celebrated Aldus, whose presses were at Venice, he removed to that city. Aldus was sensible of the great merit of Erasmus; gave him the kindest reception; showed him the greatest attention, during his stay in that city, and endeavoured to prevail upon him to make it his permanent residence. Erasmus was grateful for the attention which Aldus showed him, and always mentioned him with regard.

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5. From Venice, Erasmus moved to Padua. *Alexander, a natural son of James IV of Scotland,* was then a student in that city; he had, although very young, been promoted to the archbishopric of St. Andrew's. He was extremely desirous of placing himself, so far as respected his instruction in sacred and profane literature, under Erasmus; and Erasmus accepted the charge. From Padua the preceptor and pupil travelled to Sienna.

6. Thence, the former proceeded alone to *Rome.*

"It is inconceivable," says Rhenanus, one of his earliest biographers, "with what applause and joy, Erasmus was received by persons both of the highest and middle ranks "of life." Among the former, were John of Medici, Giles of Viterbo, and Dominic Grimani: the first was, at that time, cardinal, and soon afterwards, under the name of Leo X, filled the pontifical throne. The second was general of the Augustinian friars, and was subsequently adorned with the cardinal's hat. With it, Grimaldi was then honoured; he enjoyed the highest consideration in Rome. He frequently desired Bembo, who was then his secretary, and afterwards cardinal, to invite Erasmus to his palace. Erasmus accordingly waited upon his eminence: finding him engaged in business, he

was returning, without seeing him, when the cardinal, hearing of his being in the palace, immediately sent for him; accosted him as a person of equal rank with himself, made him sit down, would not permit him to uncover himself, and conversed with him familiarly more than an hour. He pressed Erasmus by every motive, which kindness or ingenuity could suggest, to remain in Rome, and reside with him. The cardinal then sent for his nephew, who, although very young, was archbishop. When his nephew entered the room, he would not permit Erasmus to rise. He showed Erasmus his library; he told him that all the books in it, and all that the master of it possessed, was at his command; and, when the cardinal took leave of Erasmus, he assured him, that he might depend on the sincerity of his offers, and entreated him not to confound his assurances of kindness and favour with the general language of courtesy.

From other cardinals, Erasmus met with a reception equally kind and honourable. He witnessed the triumphal entry of Julius into Rome, on his return from Bologna:* He assures us that he reflected upon it with sorrow, when he compared it with the humble carriage of the prince of the apostles. Having expressed himself to this effect, in one of his letters, his sentiments

* It is described by Rainaldus, anno 1507, p. 3, 4.

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became public, and he was reproached with them, as insults to the church; he replied, that "the "triumph of the church does not consist in "worldly splendour and ceremony; these dis- "tinctions," he observes, "even a profane so- "vereign, rightly principled, would despise."

The cardinal St. George, by the direction of the pope, desired Erasmus to compose a treatise in defence of the war, then meditated by his holiness, against the Venetians. Erasmus accordingly prepared two treatises; one, contained the reasons against the war; the other, those, which might be suggested in its favour; the former was most laboured and carried conviction. On this account, the pope was dissatisfied with him and ordered him into his presence; there, he reprimanded him, but the reprimand was gentle; it amounted to little more than a recommendation to him not to meddle with the concerns of princes. With this slight exception, the respect and kindness shown to Erasmus was universal: he was offered the place of Roman penitentiary, an honourable and lucrative office.

He was not as much gratified, as he expected to be, with the state of letters in Italy: he attributes the decline of them to the wars, with which Italy had been afflicted; but the decline was temporary, the golden age of Italian literature and arts was rapidly advancing. Erasmus

also observed symptoms of the rise and growth of those heterodox opinions, which were first generated on the banks of the Po, and afterwards obtained a settlement, with the appellation of Socinianism, in the northern parts of Europe, from which they have never been dislodged.

Quitting Rome, Erasmus joined his archiepiscopal pupil at Sienna, and returned with him to Rome: they visited in their road the Sybil's cave at *Cumæ*. At Rome, they separated, the archbishop being recalled to Scotland by his father. Erasmus always mentioned him with praise. "He was," says Erasmus, "a youth of great "hopes; and, although he had not reached his "twentieth year, possessed the virtues of the "perfect. He was instructed by me in the Greek "language and rhetoric: he was so fond of "literature, that he desired persons to read se-"rious books to him at his meals." He presented Erasmus with a ring with a figure of the God *Terminus*. Erasmus caused the words "*Concedo nulli*," "I yield to none," to be engraved upon it; and made it his common seal: for this, in a later part of his life, he published an apology. The archbishop perished in 1513, at the battle of Flodden Field.

CHAPTER VI.

THE FOURTH VISIT OF ERASMUS TO ENGLAND.

1. *His Journey to England.*
2. *Archbishop Wareham*;—3. *Doctor Colet*;—4. *Bishop Tunstall*;—5. *Sir Thomas More.*
6. *The Prior of the Convent at Stein endeavours to induce Erasmus to return to it: His Reply.*
7. *His intercourse with Henry VIII.—Verses on the "Battle of the Spurs."*
8. *Teaches Greek at Cambridge.*
9. *Employed in the Foundation of St. Paul's School.*
10. *Pleased with his Reception in England.*

1510. *Æt.* 43.

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1. HENRY VII died on the 22d of April 1509: Henry the VIII, his immediate successor, had long entertained the highest opinion of the learning and taste of Erasmus: a correspondence had, for some time, been carried on between them. A letter from Henry, when he was Prince of Wales, to Erasmus, expresses great regard for him, and great interest in his welfare. A few days after the decease of Henry VII, Lord Mountjoy gave information of it to Erasmus.

VI. 1. His journey to England.

" There is nothing," he tells Erasmus, " which " you may not expect from his successor; so " excellent is his character. You are not only " known to him; but he ranks you among his " friends, as he writes letters to you with his own " hand; an honour, which he has done to few. " Hasten to join your admiration of so generous " a prince, to ours. Henry publicly professes " to love literature, and an intention to protect " those, by whom it is cultivated." By the same letter, his lordship informs Erasmus, that the Archbishop of Canterbury promised him, if he would settle in England, a considerable benefice. To facilitate his journey, Sir Thomas More sent him a bill of exchange for a sum of money, one half of which was advanced by himself, the other half by the archbishop. Other letters from his English friends urged Erasmus not to be wanting to the fortune which awaited him, but to *proceed to England* without delay. He yielded to these united recommendations, and passing the Rhætian Alps, Coire, Constance, Strasbourgh, a part of Holland, Antwerp and Belgium, sailed from Ostend, and immediately on his arrival in London, directed his steps to the house of Sir Thomas More. In travelling from Dover to London, Erasmus passed through Canterbury, and visited the tomb of St. Thomas a Becket. He has described with great pleasantry in his " Colloquy

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on Pilgrimages for the sake of Religion," some superstitions practised at it. If he gives a fair representation of them, they deserved all he says of them: but let us hope that he exaggerated them, and that wit and fancy had some share in his description of them. He was very angry at the jewels and other costly ornaments, with which the tomb was decorated, and wished the value of them had been distributed among the poor. But was it not much better, both for the poor and for society, that the artisan should have been employed in the workmanship of them? Were not both art and science served by it? It is greatly to be lamented, that we have not received from the pen of Erasmus, an account of the interesting countries, through which his journey to England led him.

But he was not long in England, before he found reason to distrust the hopes, which had been held out to him: his character and friends procured for him many scholars; the instructions which he gave them were so far honorary, that no stated sum was required for permission to attend them; something however was expected, but he received little: He appears to give in one of his letters to the Cardinal Grimani, a candid statement of his condition; "It is impossible "for me," he says in this letter, "not to re- "gret Rome; when I consider the numerous

VI. 1. His fourth visit to England.

" advantages which it comprises within its walls, " and that no city in the world contains so many " rich libraries; such delicious literary inter- " course, such information of every kind, as are " found in this favoured spot. My fortune in " England is above my merit; yet, to speak the " truth, it does not answer either my own hopes, " or the expectations held out to me by my " friends: but this is rather the fault of the " times, than of the nation. The king, who is " very generous, shows me great kindness, he " always mentions me with regard, but the war " has taken him from us into Flanders."— Many of the letters written by Erasmus at this time from England express his regret at having abandoned his prospects at Rome. They were increased by the election of the *Cardinal of Medicis* to the tiara: He assumed the name of Leo X, and gave this name to a most brilliant æra of Roman literature, science and art. Erasmus addressed to him a letter of congratulation, and received from him an obliging answer. *Fisher*, the celebrated Bishop of Rochester, being appointed ambassador to Rome, Erasmus intimated his willingness to accompany him: Fisher readily accepted the offer, but something prevented Erasmus from joining him.

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While Erasmus was in England, he enjoyed the acquaintance and respect of many persons, who then did it the greatest honour. Among these, we should particularly distinguish Wareham, the Archbishop of Canterbury, Tunstal, afterwards Bishop of Durham, Doctor Colet, and Sir Thomas More.

2. *Wareham* was at this time Archbishop of Canterbury, primate of all England, and lord high chancellor. It has been mentioned, that to induce Erasmus to visit England, Wareham promised him a large benefice: in performance of his promise, he offered Erasmus the rectory of Aldington, in Gloucestershire, which produced annually two hundred nobles. From a motive of conscience, which did him great honour, Erasmus refused it, on the ground that "his ignorance "of the language of the country, disqualified "him from parochial duty." Wareham compromised the matter by nominating another person to the benefice, and charging it with the payment of an annual pension of one hundred crowns to Erasmus. To this also Erasmus at first objected, on the ground that "the incumbent, "who performed all the duty, should have all "the emolument;" "but," says Erasmus, "the "prelate, who was a person of true piety, re-"moved my scruples, by observing to me, that

" instructing all the pastors of the church as I did " by my writings, I served the church more than " I could by sermons in a village. He therefore " bade me be at ease, and took upon him to " provide for the cure." VI. 2. Archbishop Wareham.

Wareham gave Erasmus many proofs of his regard: upon different occasions, he made him pecuniary presents, the amount of which did not fall short of 550 nobles. Wareham, like Erasmus frequently indulged himself in sallies of wit. Once, when Erasmus suffered from the gravel; " To what end," Wareham said to him in a letter, " are all these stones in so small a body as " yours? what can be done with them? To " enable you to free yourself from them, I send " you thirty angelots; attend to your health, and " let not sickness deprive us of what we expected " of you, and of those advantages which we " promise ourselves from your learning." Wareham had made him a present of a horse: Erasmus suspected that the person entrusted with the delivery of it to him, had changed it: " I have " received the horse, you sent me," Erasmus wrote to the archbishop; " he is not very hand- " some, but he is very good; he has no failing " but gluttony and idleness; he is wary, lowly, " and steady." Erasmus was sensible of Wareham's kindness to him; and on several occasions showed him a scholar's gratitude, by dedicating

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works of his composition to him. In a letter to Leo X, he describes Wareham, as "a person, "who for learning, piety, episcopal virtue, and "a wish to promote literature, was not equalled "in England." "Of those," says Erasmus in a letter to the Abbot of St. Bertin, "who are "kind to me, I place Wareham, the Archbishop "of Canterbury in the first place. What genius! "what copiousness! what vivacity! what faci- "lity in the most complicated discussions! what "erudition! what politeness! what gentleness! "From Wareham, none ever parted in sorrow! "This conduct would do honour to a monarch! "with all these qualities, now great is Wareham's "humility! how edifying his modesty! He alone "is ignorant of his eminence; no one is more "faithful or more constant in friendship."

After the archbishop's death, Erasmus thus wrote of him to one of his correspondents: "How "fully soever Wareham might be occupied with "the concerns of the kingdom, they never tres- "passed upon his archiepiscopal duties: he "might even be thought to be engrossed by "these: he found time, almost every day, to "say mass; to give audiences; to receive am- "bassadors; to attend the royal councils; to "visit some parts of his diocese and even to read. "Conversation with the learned and literary "occupations were his only recreations. Some-

VI. 2. Archbishop Wareham.

" times two hundred persons dined at his table; " it was frequented by bishops, dukes and lords: " it never took more than an hour of his time: " he drank no wine: he was very cheerful; he " never supped; but, if some of his intimate " friends (and he admitted me among them), " remained with him till that hour, he sat down " to table with them, eating nothing or scarcely " any thing himself. He was fond of wit, and " occasionally witty; but his wit had no bitter- " ness. He left behind him no more money than " was necessary to pay his debts."*

Wareham felt how greatly he was honoured by the public testimonies given by Erasmus to his merit. " I have received from you," he writes to Erasmus, " that immortality, which " emperors and kings cannot bestow." †

Wareham was succeeded in the see of Canterbury by the celebrated *Thomas Cranmer*, who

* " Fénélon," says the duke de St. Simon, " died in the " arms of his friends, and his clergy; mourned by all his " diocese; equally lamented by catholics and protestants. " To complete his eulogium, he left behind him neither " debt nor money." The same is said of Doctor Butler, the bishop of Durham, the author of " the Analogy of Religion, " natural and revealed:" Has any other work, at once so profound and so useful, upon any metaphysical subject, appeared in any language? All friends of Christianity should wish this work, and " Bossuet's Universal History," to be in the hands of every well informed person.

† Epist. 8. l. 2.

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imitated him in his encouragement of literature and regard for Erasmus.

3. *Colet*, we have mentioned. The intercourse between him and Erasmus was most intimate. It began by Colet's requesting Erasmus to favour him with his friendship. He mentioned to Erasmus,* that he "then only knew him by "his writings and reputation;" that "when he "was at Paris, he found it full of his name;" that "the Prior des Maisons, with whom he "lodged, described Erasmus to him as a truly "honourable man." He offered all his services to Erasmus, and "wished him to think Eng-"land an agreeable residence." Erasmus was pleased with these advances; and sent a description of himself to Colet, as exact as could be expected from a person writing of himself. "That you may know," he says, "whether "I deserve to be loved by you, I tell you before-"hand, that you will find me a man of small "fortune, or rather of none; one, who is free "from ambition; who has great dispositions to "friendship; who is but tolerably versed in the "belles lettres, yet is a passionate admirer of "them; who sincerely esteems probity in others, "but never makes any boast of his own; and "who yielding to many in learning, yields to

* Epist. 3. l. 5.

VI. 3. Doctor Colet. Bishop Tunstal.

" none in honour; who is simple, frank, free, " incapable of dissimulation; who speaks little, " and promises you nothing except his heart. " If you think such a person worthy of your " friendship, you may rely on Erasmus." Many questions both literary and theological were discussed between these two friends: one, on the " Fear of Death, which Christ felt during his " passion," occasioned Erasmus to publish a treatise upon that subject. He shows in it, that when Christ prayed to his father to be delivered from the chalice which awaited him, he felt and spoke as a man. The treatise is well written, and has been praised by many. Erasmus dedicated some of his works to Colet, and when Colet died, Erasmus lamented his death in the language of real affection and esteem. Colet opposed the extravagant innovations of the times, but ardently wished for a thorough reformation of the abuses in the church. For Erasmus he had the highest esteem: he used to declare that the memory of Erasmus would be immortal,* and that † " he himself should think it an happi- " ness to be in the greatest misery, if he could " purchase by it, one thousandth part of the " learning of Erasmus." We shall afterwards mention the services which Erasmus rendered to Colet in the foundation of St. Paul's school.

* Ep. 4, l. 14. † Ep. 12, l. 2.

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4. *Cuthbert Tunstal*, afterwards Bishop of Durham, is always mentioned by Erasmus with particular respect, and a grateful acknowledgment of favours. Erasmus became acquainted with the bishop when he was public minister in the low countries. "Tunstall," says Doctor Knight, "was of a very mild and gentle disposition; so that, in the cruel reign of Queen "Mary, his diocese escaped the persecutions "which were frequent in others." At first, he favoured the divorce of Henry VIII, but afterwards changed his opinion. Upon that question Erasmus never expressed himself decisively. "There was," said Bishop Burnet, "a constant "correspondence between Cranmer and Tunstal, "though in many things they differed in opinion: "so, when the bill for attainting him passed "in parliament, Cranmer spoke freely against "it."*

* Bishop Tunstal was the author of a treatise "*De Arte* "*Supputandi*," perhaps the first work upon arithmetic which issued from an English press. It was printed at London, by Richard Pinson, in 1522; and has often been reprinted. A very beautiful edition of it was published at Paris, in 1558, 4to, by Robert Stephens. (*See* Biog. Brit. Art. Tonstal, Dibdin's "Typographical Antiquities," Vol. II, p. 478). It is dedicated to Sir Thomas More. The bishop informs his readers, in a preface to this work, that, "on his "elevation to the see of London, he had thrown it aside, "and consigned it to oblivion; but that, thinking it might "be useful to the public, and unwilling that the labours of so

VI. 5. Sir Thomas More.

5. But unquestionably, the Englishman, whose friendship for Erasmus did him the greatest honour, was Sir *Thomas More*. Huttenus, one of the most intimate friends of Erasmus, being also a warm admirer of Sir Thomas More, desired Erasmus to send him a particular descrip-

" many vigils should be committed to the flames, he had " delivered it to the press."

Bishop Tunstal's Arithmetic seems to have been superseded in a great measure, by the " *Arithmetica Memorativa, sive, Compendiaria Arithmeticæ Tractatio,*" of *William Buckley*, published in the reign of Edward VI. It is an attempt to reduce the rules of Arithmetic, like those of Grammar, to memorial verses. *Napier* himself did not disdain to give, in his " *Rabdologia,*" memorial verses adapted to the use of his rods. (See " *Leslie's Philosophy of* " *Arithmetic,*" p. 237). *Recorde's* " Ground of Arts, " teaching the perfect working and practice of Arithmetick, " both in whole numbers and in fractions, after a more easy " and exact forme than in former time hath been set forth," first published in 1552, threw both the works mentioned by us into the shade; and was supplanted, in its turn, by *Wingate's* Arithmetic. But all former elementary works upon Arithmetic have been surpassed by *Bonycastle's*: Condillad's *Langue des Calculs* is an excellent introduction to the theory of numbers; a translation of it into the English language is much wanted.

In a former note, the writer expressed his surprise, that while so great advances in many branches of science and literature, were made in the middle ages, their authors did not write purer latinity; but is it not more wonderful that the Hindûs, who worked indeterminate problems in the 7th century, which were not worked in Europe until the middle of the 17th, still multiply, divide, involve and evolve, by processes surprizingly complicated and slow?

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tion of that great man: Erasmus in answer * to Huttenus informs him "that More, was not, "in his stature, either tall or short; that his "form was well proportioned; that his skin "was extremely white; that he had little beard; "had blue eyes; that his physiognomy was "graceful and smiling; that he was gay without "buffoonery; that his right shoulder was higher "than his left, particularly when he walked— "the effect rather of bad habit, than of his "form; that his hands were of the country "sort; that he was not very attentive to clean- "liness; that he was indifferent in respect to "food; that, even in his youth, he had no "other drink than water; that he preferred "plain dishes to delicacies; and was best pleased "with vegetables, fruits, and eggs: that he was "always simply drest, except on days of cere- "mony, when the custom of the country called "for show; that it was difficult to imagine how "much he disliked ceremony; that he was "averse to a life at court, as he hated tyranny "and loved liberty and equality; that Henry VIII "drew him to his palaces with difficulty; that "although he loved ease and tranquillity, no "one, when occasion required, was more earnest "at work; that he seemed to be born for

* Ep. 30. l. 10.

" friendship; that he was very inattentive to his
' own interest, but very attentive to the inte-
" rests of his friends; that he was a model of
" that conduct which one friend should show to
" another; that his society was so delightful,
" that however sorrowful a person might be
" when he first approached him, it was impos-
" sible he should not feel pleasure in his com-
" pany; that, from his childhood he was fond
" of pleasantry, but never degenerated into
" ribaldry; that, when he was young, he com-
" posed comedies, and even acted in them; that
" he had written epigrams; that he had attach-
" ments, but none that gave offence; that he
" had availed himself of the opportunities of
" advancing himself which fell in his way, but
" had never ran after them; that, at any early
" age, he addicted himself to polite literature,
" to the study of Greek and to philosophy,
" in opposition to his father, who wished him
" to addict himself wholly to the study of the
" law, in which profession some of his ancestors
" had been distinguished; that, whatever re-
" pugnance he might have for this course of
" life, he embraced it, rather than quarrel with
" his family; that he acquired in it so much
" reputation, that there was not a lawyer in
" London of more extensive practice; that he

VI. 5. Sir Thomas More.

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" gave much time to the study of the fathers;
" and, in his youth, had explained 'The City
" of God' of St. Augustine to a numerous
" audience, some of whom were priests, and
" some in an advanced age, but that none felt
" any shame at being instructed by so young a
" man; that he had afterwards wished to em-
" brace the ecclesiastical state, and to consecrate
" himself altogether to piety and religious mor-
" tification; but that, yielding to the advice of
" the apostle, he married; that, in his profession
" as a lawyer he was perfectly disinterested,
" and always recommended compromises and
" amicable adjustments; that he presided, dur-
" ing several years, in the English court of
" Common Pleas, and decided with great dis-
" patch the causes brought before him; that he
" refused many extra gratuities which the law
" allowed, and gained by his refusal of them,
" great reputation and general good-will. That
" King Henry VIII, hearing of his merit, em-
" ployed him on several embassies; that, in all,
" he displayed great talents; that, on his return
" from them, the king sought to attach him to
" his court; but that More, in opposition to his
" fortune, resisted it to the utmost; that the
" monarch could not live without him, More
" being useful to him in his various concerns,

" and necessary to his amusement; that More's " high elevation* did not make him forget his " friends, or neglect literature; that he availed " himself of his credit for nothing so much as " to serve his friends; and that Colet used to " say of him, that he was the greatest genius in " England." This character of one great man by another, must, we think, be acceptable to all our readers; particularly as the person described in it reflects honour on our country: and the picture is drawn by the hand of a master.

VI. 5. Sir Thomas More.

Erasmus and More were equally playful in their conversation; and equally delighted with each other. There is little ground for a story, which is very current, and has given rise to a Latin apothegm in frequent use. It is said, that the first time these two great men met, they were

* Upon the fall of Cardinal Wolsey, the king advanced More to the office of Lord High Chancellor of England. He discharged the duties of the high station with universal applause. By indefatigable application he cleared the court of all its causes. One day, having ended a cause, he called for the next; and was told that " there was no other " depending in the court." He was delighted to hear it; and ordered it to be entered on the records of the court. It gave rise to the following epigram, not the worst in the English language:—

" When More some time had Chancellor been,
" No more suits did remain;
" The same shall never more be seen,
" Till More be there again."

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unknown to each other; that a long conversation, in which each was pleased, took place: and that at length More in a transport of admiration of the learning and wit discovered by Erasmus, exclaimed "*Aut Erasmus es aut Diabolus!*" "Thou art either Erasmus or a Demon!"

More was one of the greatest promoters of classical literature: and the letters which passed between him and Erasmus are elegant and interesting: those, in which the latter relates the tragical end, and records the great and amiable virtues of his friend, are beautiful and pathetic in the highest degree. As a writer, the reputation of More rests principally upon his *Utopia*, a description of an imaginary commonwealth: it discovers great observation and acuteness; reprobates sanguinary punishments; and describes a system of religious liberty, which few, even in these days, would venture to recommend for practice. In his polemic writings he conformed too much to the bad taste of his times, expressing himself upon heretics in strong terms of abuse; but with so much elegance, that he gained the reputation of having the best knack of any man in Europe in calling bad names in good Latin.*

* Better rules cannot be laid down for conducting controversy than those suggested by Doctor Hey, a late Norisian professor at Cambridge. From the first volume of his

VI. 5. Sir Thomas More.

Never was the mind of any man less moved by a sentence of condemnation, or by the approach of death. True, under every vicissitude of fortune, to his principles and sense of duty, the recollection of a well-spent life, supported him in those awful moments. Without display or agitation, he met his fate with the calmness

lecture, they are thus extracted, with some additional observations, by the late Mr. Richard Kirwan, in his "*Logic, or an Essay on the Elements, Principles, and different Modes of Reasoning.* Part IV. ch. i. s. 3."

"First,"—says Doctor Hey, "the terms in which the subject in debate is conceived, should be so clearly explained, as that their precise signification should be expressly agreed on by both parties.

"Secondly,—all expressions of self-sufficiency should be carefully avoided: *he* uses such expressions, who calls his own cause the cause of God, and his own interpretation the word of God.

"Thirdly,—whoever uses personal reflections should be deemed an enemy to truth; they prevent even just reason from being attended to by common men.

"Fourthly,—no one should accuse his adversary of indirect motives.

"Fifthly,—the consequences of any doctrine are not to be charged on those who hold doctrines, unless they expressly avow them. If from any proposition, absurd propositions follow, it is rightly concluded that the original proposition is false; but cannot be rightly concluded that the adversaries maintain those propositions;—that is barely a matter of fact.

"Sixthly,—it is improper to refer any thing of an adversary to a party; this is done, when it is said, this is downright Popish superstition, Scottish philosophy, Irish blundering, rash Tory principle."

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with which he would have discharged any ordinary duty. This has been admirably represented by Erasmus in his account of the tragic event.

Erasmus relates, that going, during his stay at this time in England, with some of his friends to Richmond, one, whose name was Polus, suddenly stopped, and raising his eyes to the sky, which was remarkably serene, made numerous signs of the cross, exclaiming, "What "is it I there behold! may God avert the "omen!" This exclamation having excited the curiosity and fear of every person present, "Don't you behold," exclaimed Polus, "the "enormous dragon! his horns of fire! his "curled tail!" Every person present looked to the sky; at first, they saw nothing. By degrees a few thought they saw something extraordinary; others afterwards beheld the dragon; at length all saw it. In three days, the belief of the prodigy became universal, and other marvellous circumstances of it were related. Some persons made serious reflections; others investigated the matter philosophically: Polus, the inventor of the fable, enjoyed all the time the credulity of the public. The story forms one of the most entertaining of the Colloquies of Erasmus, a work which we shall soon have occasion to mention. Whenever the multitude gets fond

of a prodigy, a large impression of this dialogue should be circulated among them.

VI. 6. The Prior of the Convent at Stein endeavours to induce Erasmus to return to it: His Reply.

6. The high celebrity of Erasmus made the canons regular wish, as he had been professed in their order, to recall him to their body. *Servatius, the prior of the convent* at Stein, in which Erasmus had made his profession, always lived on terms of intimacy with him, and now addressed to him a letter, by which he entreated him, by every motive, which religion or friendship could suggest, to return to the convent. Erasmus answered this letter at length: he mentions, "the improper artifices" which were used to induce him to make his religious profession; he reproaches the monastic institution with the multitude of formal observances with which it was then burthened; the actual degeneracy of many of the religious communities from their primitive institutes. Father Servatius had particularly reproached him with abandoning the order, notwithstanding his solemn engagements to it, and with his wandering, unsettled life. In answer to the first charge, Erasmus observed, that the three superiors of his order had formally emancipated him from its observances, and allowed him to live at large, and wear the common habit of a priest.

It is observable that, some time after the

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correspondence between Erasmus and Servatius had taken place, the former wrote to Rome, and obtained from the Pope similar dispensations. In the letter, by which he solicited them,* he exposed, in very lively colours, not only his own case, but cases within his knowledge, and attended with some atrocious circumstances, in which other persons in their early years had, like himself, been inveigled, against their consent, into monasteries. The whole of the letter† was read at length to Leo X, to several cardinals, and to other illustrious personages in Rome. The Pope was delighted with its style, and lively descriptions: he expressed great indignation at those stealers, as he called them, of children; he gave orders that the dispensation, which Erasmus solicited, should be instantly forwarded to him, and remitted the usual fees of office: still, to ensure expedition, the person employed by Erasmus advanced three ducats to the Roman registrar;—thus, at Rome, as in England, expedition fees were known; and it was the interest of the suitors to submit to them.

In respect to the charge of wandering from one country to another, which the good prior had brought against him, Erasmus declared that "he had never changed his residence unless, "when the plague, or some other necessary

* Epist. 5. l. 24. † Epist. 6. l. 24.

VI. 6. The Prior of the Convent at Stein endeavours to induce Erasmus to return to it: His Reply.

"reason of health, or some literary object, had "compelled him to such migrations. Wherever "I have been," says Erasmus in this letter, "I have lived in a manner which has obtained "for me the favour and esteem of the wise and "the good. There is not a country which does "not endeavour to attract me to her: Spain, "France, England and Italy invite me to them." He concludes his letter by assuring the prior that "notwithstanding his utter dislike to the monastic "state, he would set off immediately for Stein, "if he were persuaded that duty called him to a "religious life." He ingenuously confesses some frailties of his early life: "but I never loved money," he says, "I never was subject to am-"bition, or desired glory or reputation. I never "was a slave to sensual passions, though for-"merly I sometimes yielded to them; and, as to "drunkenness, I ever abhorred it.—I will not "boast of my writings, which perhaps you "despise; but many have acknowledged to me, "that, by reading them, they have been made "not only more learned, but more virtuous."—None, who can thus speak of themselves with truth, have lived in vain.

7. During this visit to England, Erasmus, while he was in London, generally lodged with Bernard Andreas, who had been poet laureat

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and historiographer to Henry VII, and tutor to Prince Arthur his eldest son: his house was in Austin Friars. It was not long after his arrival in England, that Erasmus published the translation of Plutarch's treatise, "How to know "a Friend from a flatterer," which we have already mentioned. He dedicated it to Henry VIII, reminding him, that "he had the honour to "know him when he was a child, and telling "him that he rejoiced the more in then renewing "his duty to him, as he beheld in him, the "most illustrious sovereign in Europe, and per- "ceived that he then began to realize the hopes "which he had formed of him in his youth."—Henry rewarded the translator with 60 angels: Erasmus afterwards dedicated to him a Paraphrase of St. Luke's Gospel. On the defeat of the French at *Morin*, in 1515, which the French themselves call the "Battle of the Spurs,"—as they had trusted in it more to their spurs than their swords, Erasmus addressed an epigram to Henry, in which alluding to the known verses of Martial, he says, "Cato, the renowned censor "of Rome, was once asked,—'why, as you "knew the wantonness of the games of Flora, "did you, with all your severity, enter the "theatre in which they were exhibited, and "immediately retire? Did you walk into the "theatre for the sole purpose of walking out of

" it?" In like manner the unwarlike Gaul " should now be asked:—Knowing as thou " didst the cruel games of Mars, and the ferocity " of the English, why didst thou advance into " the field of battle? and lead on thy showy " troops with thy threatening sword? Didst " thou only advance that thou might shamefully " show thy back to the pursuing enemy? as, if " it were a trial of the feet, not of the arms. " Cato could not look at women, thou could'st " not look at men." *

VI. 7. His intercourse with Hen. VIII. Verses on the "Battle of the Spurs."

Erasmus expressed himself angrily of those, who affected to disbelieve that Henry VIII was the author of the "Treatise on the Seven Sacraments," which he had presented to Pope Leo X, and which had obtained from him the title of "Defender of the Faith:"—He mentions the

* "Audivit olim censor ille Romanus,—
"Ludos jocosæ quando noveras Floræ
"Cur in theatrum Cato severe venisti,
"An ideo tantum veneras ut exires?"—
At jure nunc imbellis audiat Gallus,
"Ludum cruenti quando noveras Martis?
"Animos feroces quando noveras Angli?
"Cur quæso, in aciem timide Galle prodisti,
"Ferro minaci spendidas agens turmas?
"An ideo tantum veneras, uti fœde
"Fugiens, sequenti terga verteres hosti?
"Ac, si pedum certamen esset, haud dextræ
"Cato, fœminas videre non potuit.—Gallus
"Viros."

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great care which Henry VII had of the prince's education, and his proficiency in all his studies, particularly noticing the mathematics: For proof of Henry's advances in literature, Erasmus refers to the letters with which that prince had honoured him.

8. Bishop Fisher invited Erasmus to *Cambridge*, placed him in Queen's College, and furnished him with every thing that could render his residence in it comfortable. By Fisher's interest Erasmus was promoted to the Lady Margaret's professorship of divinity, and afterwards to the Greek professor's chair in Cambridge. He had many scholars; yet he found, that his situation was, upon the whole, rather honourable than profitable. Fisher was his constant patron, and as liberal to him as his own limited circumstances would allow. Erasmus, during his establishment at Cambridge, made frequent excursions to London; and generally on horseback. Wareham, More and Colet, were certainly strong attractions to draw him to the metropolis.

Much cannot be said in praise of Cardinal Wolsey's notice or encouragement of Erasmus. At first, the cardinal seems to have countenanced him; he nominated him to a canonicate in the church of Tournay; as Lord Mountjoy was governor of that city, and all the canons expressed

a desire to have Erasmus among them, the nomination was highly gratifying to him; but, for some reason, the cardinal withdrew his nomination, making Erasmus vague promises of preferment, which he never fulfilled. In one of his letters, Erasmus shortly describes the cardinal as one, "whom all feared, and none loved:" Sometimes, however, he speaks of him in more favourable terms; he dedicated to him his "Paraphrase of the Epistles of St. Peter," and his translation of "the Treatise of Plutarch, on "the benefits which we may derive from our "enemies."—In the dedication of these works, he describes Wolsey as a patron of learning and learned men, a great statesman, and an able counsellor of the king:—But, taking in one view, all that Erasmus has said of him, it is evident that the cardinal was no favourite of Erasmus; and if we consider the cardinal's conduct towards Archbishop Wareham, the constant and munificent patron of Erasmus, this can excite no surprise.

VI. 8. Teaches Greek at Cambridge.

9. The services which Erasmus rendered to Dean Colet in the establishment of his celebrated *school near St. Paul's church* in the city of London, are very honourable to his memory. Dr. Knight* informs us that, "of two-and-twenty

* Life of Colet, Clar. Ed. p. 94, et seq.

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"children, left by the parents of Colet, John, "the dean, was the only survivor, and that his "father's inheritance came to him. When he "was in full possession of it, observing that many "of his fellow natives of the city of London, "did, by the mere strength of nature, grow up "into considerable men, he concluded that they "would sooner do it, if they had the help and "advantage of being trained up in good litera-"ture: And that he therefore resolved to lend "at his own expense that assistance to the chil-"dren of that city. For which purpose he "founded a magnificent school, in the east "part of St. Paul's church-yard, and appointed "two masters; the principal being William "Lily,* the other John Ryghthuyse, who was to "attend the lower boys; both men of learning, "of good manners, and of the greatest diligence: "Lily was a man (in the phrase of Horace) of "a pure and unspotted life, who, after he had be-"stowed some years in Italy, for the attaining per-"fect letters (*i. e.* the Greek and Latin tongues),

* He was born at Odiham in Hampshire. In pursuit of knowledge, he travelled to Italy, Rhodes and Jerusalem. At Rhodes he met with some learned Greeks, whom the calamities of their country had compelled to seek refuge in that island, and was instructed by them in the Greek language. After his return to England, he kept a private school, until he was placed by Dean Colet at his newly erected school.

" upon his return was the first among the English " that taught them in any public school. It was " somewhat before his time, that Cornelius " Vitellius, an Italian, born at Cornaro, a ma- " ritime town on the coast of Tuscany, a man of " a noble family, and of all agreeable qualifica- " tions, taught both these kinds of literature at " Oxford." The foundation of this school is generally assigned to the year 1510; it is dedicated " TO THE CHILD JESUS." Dean Colet appointed a married man to be the master, and married men to be the trustees of the establishment. The object of it was to have children instructed in the fundamental doctrines of the Christian religion, and in grammar learning. For this purpose, the founder himself drew up some rudiments of grammar, with a short summary of the principles of the Christian religion, and published them for the use of the school, under the title of " *Rudimenta Grammatices, " a Johanné Coleto, Decano Ecclesiæ Sancti " Pauli Londini, in usum scholæ ab ipso resti- " tutæ.*" This elementary book soon obtained the name of " *Paul's Accidents.*" When Cardinal Wolsey founded his school at Ipswich, he adopted it, and in a short epistle addressed to the masters, directed it to be used in his school. Colet afterwards published the small " *Con-*

VI. 9. Employed in the Foundation of St. Paul's School.

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"*struction of the Eight Parts of Speech.*" He submitted it to Lily, and afterwards to Erasmus; it received some corrections from each. It is usually called "*The Syntax.*" *The common Greek grammar,* used throughout England by the same authority as the Latin, was composed by Mr. *Camden.* It is observable, that many of the examples in the Latin grammar pointed to the public events at the time of its publication.

Erasmus composed, at the request of Colet, some short pieces of poetry, for the use and ornament of the school; and translated, "*The "Institution of a Christian Man,*" which had been recently published, under the auspices of Henry VIII, from the English into Latin verse, in a very plain and simple style. "Another ex-"cellent composition of Erasmus," as it is justly termed by Dr. Knight, was an *Oration in Praise of the Child Jesus,* spoken publicly in the school by one of the scholars, at the solemn time of visiting the school. It is written in a simple style, and recommends a religious attention to duty with equal eloquence and piety.—If Erasmus had written nothing else, it would have entitled him to immortality.

Erasmus afterwards dedicated to Colet his treatise "*De Copia Verborum ac rerum,*" in order

to form the style and help the invention of his young scholars: Colet was highly pleased with it, and presented Erasmus with 15 angels.

VI. 9. Employed in the Foundation of St. Paul's School.

"The last act of Erasmus's kindness," says Dr. Knight "to the dean's school, was to find "out at Cambridge, (where he then was), an "usher or second master, according to the "founder's desire, to be under Mr. William "Lily. He inquired among the masters of arts "there; but he could meet with none, it seems, "that cared for, or were fit for that place, who "would engage in it. They did not affect so "laborious an employment, however honourable "the terms might be. One of the seniors said, "in a floating way, *Who would lead such a sla-*"*vish life among boys in a school, if he could* "*have any other way of living?* 'I answered "gravely,' says Erasmus, 'that the office of "instructing youth in letters and good manners "was a very creditable office; that our blessed "Saviour himself did not despise the conversing "with children; that no age was so capable of "good instruction, and that a man could no "where bestow his pains with a better prospect "of success, than at Paul's school, which was in "the heart of the city, and centre of the king-"dom; besides, said I, if men have a true sense "of religion, they must needs think, that there "is no better way of pleasing and serving God

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" than by the bringing of children to Christ;
" *i. e.* training them to piety, and virtue, and
" knowledge.' But upon this he turned up his
" nose, and said in a deriding manner, *If any*
" *man desires to be an absolute servant of Christ,*
" *he may go into a monastery, and take the vows*
" *of religion upon him.* I told him Paul placed
" true religion in the works of charity; and that
" the greatest charity was to do most good unto
" our neighbours; but he laughed at this as
" a silly way of talking. *Well,* says he, *we stu-*
" *dents seem to have left all; we must be here in*
" *a state of perfection.* No! said I; a man
" cannot be said to have left all, who, when he
" can do good to the world in any station, de-
" clines it, because he thinks it too mean for
" him; and so, to prevent any further dispute,
" I took my leave of him.

" He had also in a former letter mentioned
" his fruitless endeavours to serve him in the
" affair of an usher. And he did not only, in
" the former of these epistles, but whenever he
" had an opportunity, encourage men of letters
" to undertake the laborious care of a grammar
" school; of which he often speaks in the highest
" commendation, as what exalts the school-
" master to the highest dignity; whose business
" is to season youth in learning and religion, and
" raise up men for the service of their country.

" ' It may be,' says he,—' the employment is " accounted vile and mean in the opinion of " fools: but in itself is really great and ho- " nourable.' VI. 9. Employed in the Foundation of St. Paul's School.

" But Erasmus was above all solicitous for the " morals and virtuous dispositions of children. " He would have them read no authors but " what were clean and chaste, and be in no com- " pany but what was innocent and uninfected.

" We find by one of the dean's statutes, that " he was much of his mind; for he orders several " Christian authors (viz. Lactantius, Sedulius, " Juvencus, &c.) to be used in his school, for " fear the children's morals should be corrupted " by some of the heathen writers.

" Erasmus also thought boys carried from " school, as from their first vessel, that savour " or tincture of good and evil that prevailed in " all their following course of life, and gave " them the right or the wrong bent and turn; " to be wise and useful in their generation, or to " be a sort of rakes and reprobates for ever.

" He used to talk over this subject with " Dean Colet upon the occasion of discoursing " about the masters and scholars of Paul's; and " the dean fully declared himself of the same " opinion, that boys would imbibe their prin- " ciples and morals from the books and the " company they conversed with. It is probable

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" that upon this observation the dean made it " a proverbial saying of his, ' We are all such " as our conversation is, and habitually do " practise what we frequently hear.' This apo- " thegm or wise saying of Dean Colet is remem- " bered by Erasmus in his elaborate collection " of adages, and is preferred before any of the " sentences of the ancient philosophers."

10. Erasmus, was, upon the whole, highly pleased with his reception in England. In one of his letters* he mentions the kindness with which Henry VIII treated him; the queen's offer to engage him as her preceptor in the Latin tongue; the contention of the universities of Oxford and Cambridge for him, and the numerous preferments pressed upon him. In a letter to Henry VIII,† he says, with evident pleasure, that " although he was not a native, but an " engrafted child of Great Britain, yet, when he " reflected how many years he had lived in " England, how many protectors he had found " in her, how many honourable and sincere " friends she had bestowed upon him, how much " of his fortune, such as it was, was owing to " her, he felt as great a love for her, as if he " had drawn his first breath in her territory." He more than once upbraids Holland, his native

* Ed. G. B. 4to. p. 193. † Ed. Londini, p. 357.

country, for her neglect of him. It will naturally be asked, why, under these circumstances, and with these sentiments, Erasmus did not finally settle himself in England, and accept the preferments in it, which were offered to him:—Let him answer in his own words. In the last, except one, of the epistles, which we have cited, Erasmus enumerates all the advantages which England held out to him:—"*Hæc* "*omnia*;"—he then says,—"*otio, et studio et* "*laboribus posthabeo.*"—"All these, I value "less than my liberty, my studies, and my li- "terary toils."

VI. 10. Pleased with his reception in England.

CHAPTER VII.

ERASMUS TILL HE SETTLED AT BÂSLE.

1. *Invitations to Erasmus from Charles V.*
2. *Francis I.*
3. *Henry VIII, and other Sovereign Princes, to fix his Residence in their Dominions.*
4. *Fifth Visit of Erasmus to England.*

1517—1521. *Æt.* 47—54.

ERASMUS quitted England towards the end of the year 1516: he led, from this time, until his final settlement at Bâsle, in 1521, a wandering life; sometimes at Antwerp, sometimes at Louvaine, sometimes at Brusselles, sometimes at Anderlac, and once in London.

1. His first journey, after he left England, in 1517, was to Louvaine, where his schoolfellow, Adrian, then Dean of the church of St. Peter's, in that city, afterwards the successor of Leo X in the papacy, procured for him, with the approbation of all the university, the offer of a professor's chair. Erasmus refused it with great politeness. The Emperor Charles V then invited

him to his court at Brussells. On his being presented to the emperor, the Chancellor Gattemare, afterwards Cardinal de Granvelle, announced to Erasmus the emperor's intention to nominate him to a bishoprick in Sicily. The design failed; and the emperor settled upon Erasmus, a pension of 300 livres. Other preferments were designed for him. Cardinal Ximénes the celebrated Archbishop of Toledo, and Salvage the Chancellor of Spain, wished him to establish himself in that kingdom. The chancellor Gattemare, afterwards obtained for him, the dignity of counsellor of the emperor.

VII. 2. Invitations to Erasmus from Francis I.

2. A more particular mention of the offers made to Erasmus by Francis I, of France, will, we think, be acceptable to our readers.

This monarch, on his accession to the throne, announced himself the protector of learning and the polite arts, and signified an intention to establish at Paris, a college for teaching the learned languages, in imitation of that established for a similar purpose at Louvaine, in the formation of which Erasmus had assisted. Francis was one of the warmest admirers of Erasmus; and even preferred him to Budæus, who was generally considered, in France, to be the most learned man in Europe. A correspondence had long been carried on between him and Erasmus. By

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a letter, dated the 5th of February 1517, he informed Erasmus, that, in the preceding evening, he had met, in a bookseller's shop at Paris, William Petit, a celebrated theologian, of the order of St. Dominic, then the king's confessor, and afterwards raised to the bishopric of Senlis. The attachment of this prelate to Erasmus was so well known, that Budæus used to reproach him good-naturedly, that, by his warm patronage of Erasmus, he incurred the guilt of preferring a stranger to his own countrymen: He mentioned to Budæus, that three or four days before their meeting, the king had publicly declared that it was his design to draw the most celebrated men of letters in Europe to Paris; and thus to make the capital of his kingdom, a seminary of learned men; that, on hearing this, he had spoken to the monarch of Erasmus, in the highest terms of praise, and had declared that Europe did not possess one man of letters, whom it was so desirable to draw to Paris; that Budæus was the most likely person to induce him to establish himself there; and that Francis had seized the idea, and directed that Budæus should be immediately written to, and be desired to communicate to Erasmus his majesty's pleasure, with an offer of a benefice producing a revenue of 1,000 francs. This was the subject of Budæus's letter; "But "I advise you," he says in it to Erasmus, "to

VII. 2. Invitations from Francis I.

" ascertain, before you proceed farther, the ex-
" tent of the good father's authority to give these
" assurances, and the reliance which you may
" safely place upon them; as I should be much
" concerned that you should be a dupe in this
" negociation. Whatever may be the issue of
" this business, you should write to the king and
" thank him for the offer."

Stephen Poncherie was, at this time, his majesty's ambassador at Brussells; he was Bishop of Paris, and afterwards Archbishop of Sens. By his majesty's directions, he informed Erasmus of the royal intentions in his regard; and Erasmus was also made acquainted of them by William Copus, his majesty's first physician.

Erasmus wrote immediately to the king: his letter contains a grateful acknowledgment of the royal munificence; he congratulates his majesty on the happy termination of his war with the Swiss; and on his endeavours to establish a permanent peace in Christendom; he recalls to his majesty, his truly wise words, that " the wars
" of princes produced the greatest calamities;
" and, that, if princes could be brought to live
" in amity, the world would behold a return of
" the golden age." Cuthbert Tunstall, one of his best English friends, being then at Paris, Erasmus consulted him on the offers of the French monarch: Tunstall dissuaded him from

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accepting them. "The learned men of France," he told Erasmus, "meet there with no Mæcenas; "this, Budæus himself, the honour of his "country, declares: Arms are in favour; but, "if Budæus speaks true, learning is forced into "the shade." This was doing great injustice to Francis I; his favour to men of letters is proved by many instances of his liberality to them, and it appears certain, that he designed for Erasmus, the treasurership of the chapter of Tours, the revenue of which exceeded 1,000 francs;—at that time, no inconsiderable sum.

Budæus communicated to the French monarch Erasmus's answer. He was dissatisfied with it: "What are his intentions?" exclaimed the monarch? Budæus intimated that Erasmus might expect a specific offer; and mentioned, among his friends, that, until he should have his majesty's express leave to make Erasmus such an offer, he would not interfere further in the concern. In the mean time, Poncherie returned to Paris, full of admiration of Erasmus: "I consider myself "happy," he said every where, "to have lived "with Erasmus. Great as is the reputation which "he enjoys, his merit is far beyond it. Never "have the Cisalpines produced his equal in learn-"ing: Italy herself has no one to compare with "him. When he speaks, what erudition! what "taste! what style! what a memory! it is not

" a man, it is the muse of Athens, whom you
" hear; he has penetrated the inmost recesses
" of philosophy; he perfectly understands Plato,
" Aristotle, and all the ancient philosophers."

VII. 2. Invitations from Francis I.

The negociation however, languished, and finally ended in nothing: it appears that Erasmus was jealous of his independence; was a little afraid of the religious animosity which he thought likely to assail him at Paris, and had some distrust of the monarch's constancy. But he was grateful for the offer: his reply to the monarch is a model of epistolary composition. When Francis was taken prisoner at the battle of Pavia, Erasmus addressed a memorable letter to Charles V, in which, he most earnestly exhorted him to use his victory with generosity. In a a dialogue, which he published about the same time, he writes;—" If I were emperor, thus
" would I address the King of France: My
" brother! some evil genius has kindled war
" between us; fortune has made you my pri-
" soner; she may make me, yours. Your mis-
" fortune has led me to think of the misfortunes
" incident to humanity. The war between us
" has continued too long: let us begin another
" contest: I give you your liberty; give me
" your friendship: Let the past be wholly for-
" gotten. I desire no ransom; let us live in
" good neighbourhood; let our only rivalry be

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" which of us shall excel the other in good offices:
" —he, who shall conquer in this contest, will
" enjoy the noblest of all triumphs."

Statesmen think slightly of the opinion of men of letters on political matters; but certainly, the conduct suggested by Erasmus to the emperor, was both honourable and wise. When the subject was discussed in the emperor's council, the Chancellor Gattemare, one certainly of the greatest politicians of the age, recommended to the emperor the plan of conduct which had been suggested by Erasmus. When Francis obtained his liberty, Erasmus addressed to him a beautiful letter of congratulation, and expressed in it such wishes for the future prosperity of the monarch, as excited the jealousy of the Germans, and made them call Erasmus " a partisan of France."

The conduct of Budæus to Erasmus throughout the whole of the negociation which we have mentioned, was most kind; their friendship subsisted during their lives, fleckered at times by a passing cloud, but never wholly obscured. They were confessedly the princes of literature of the 16th century: comparisons between them were frequently made; and, what often happens in the comparisons of illustrious personages by scholars, there was more antithesis in them than accurate statement of their characteristic excellencies. One, composed by *Longolius*, a cele-

brated writer in those times, was much read and admired; it intimated a preference of Budæus. The work, which contained it, fell into the hands of Erasmus; it produced a letter from him to Longolius: he says, that "in his own opinion, "it praised him too much, and Budæus too "little; that placing him nearest to Budæus "was giving him ample praise." He candidly acknowledges his own faults: "I do not," he says, "sufficiently revise my works; I don't "weigh them with sufficient exactness; I com-"pose in too great a hurry." The whole letter is written with extreme politeness; it conciliated to Erasmus both his friend and his critic. Posterity, whose sentences, being generally pronounced at a time when prejudice and partiality have subsided, are commonly just, has decided in favour of Erasmus: it is admitted that, in knowledge of the Greek language, Budæus may have excelled him; but that, in general erudition, in genius and taste, Erasmus was greatly his superior. We must, however, receive even this sentence with some qualification. The subjects discussed by Budæus attract the attention of few, except the very learned; to these, they are an invaluable treasure; but many subjects, which Erasmus has treated, attract the attention of the multitude; they are therefore more generally

VII. 2. 1517—1521. Æt. 47—54.

read, and the merits of them more generally felt.

Subsequently to these negociations, Ernest of Bavaria, successively Bishop of Passau, and Archbishop of Saltzburgh, being desirous of establishing the University of Ingoldstadt in great splendor, wished to engage Erasmus as a professor in ordinary, in the new establishment, and offered him 200 ducats of gold and several rich benefices. These offers were politely rejected by Erasmus; but, in the formation of the contemplated university, he was very useful to Ernest.

3. In the spring of the year 1517, Erasmus made his fifth visit to England; both the king and Cardinal Wolsey gave him a kind reception; they offered him a splendid apartment, a yearly pension of 600 florins, and a benefice that produced yearly 100 marks; the monarch made him considerable presents. Erasmus hesitated during some time on these offers, but finally declined them.*

* Erasmus frequently mentions, in his letters, "the "plague, from which England, in those times, was hardly "ever free. He attributes it to the incommodious form and "bad exposition of the houses, to the filthiness of the "streets, and to the sluttishness within doors. The floors," he says, "are commonly of clay, strewed with rushes "under which lie unmolested an antient collection of lees,

VII. 3. Invitations from Henry VIII. and other Princes.

Erasmus was present at the election of Charles V to the empire of Germany. He relates, in one of his letters, the disinterested conduct of Frederick of Saxony upon that occasion. By the desire of Henry VIII, Erasmus attended the memorable interview between that monarch and Francis I, on a plain between Ardres and Guignes, called, from the magnificence displayed on it, "The Field of the Cloth of Gold." Erasmus waited upon Cardinal Wolsey; but finding him overwhelmed with business, did not repeat the visit.

His pension from the emperor was increased about this time through the interest of the Chancellor Gattemare; but we do not know to what amount. In 1520, Erasmus, as counsellor of the emperor, attended the diet held in that year at Cologne.

Thus, the most illustrious sovereigns in Europe sought to attract Erasmus to them; the princes of the second order imitated them. We may mention, in addition to those we have noticed, that the Bishop of Utrecht, great uncle to

" grease, fragments, bones, spittle, excrements of dogs " and cats, and every thing that is nasty, &c.

" England is happily altered for the better in these re- " spects, from its condition in the days of Erasmus; to " which change it may in a great measure be imputed, " that we have been for so many years free from the " plague." Jortin's Life of Erasmus, Vol. I. p. 76.

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Charles V, and the Cardinal Albret, Archbishop of Mentz, gave him pressing invitations. The latter presented him with a golden goblet; he informed Erasmus that it was called "The Cup "of Love;" and that "all who drank out of it, "were united in mutual affection." In a contest which Erasmus soon afterwards had with the Louvaine divines, he expressed a wish that they should pledge him in it.

At this time, his circumstances were easy; he describes himself as possessing a yearly income of 300 ducats, exclusively of presents frequently made him by his Mecenates, and the profits which he derived from his publications. "I have," he said, "ceased to complain;" I have enough "to maintain myself comfortably, and some-"thing to spare for an indigent friend." He had attained his fifty-fourth year. All he sought was learned ease. In hopes of obtaining it, he quitted Holland, on account of the religious quarrels which at that time raged there, and established himself at Basle.

CHAPTER VIII.

ERASMUS AT BÂSLE.

1. *Rise of Italian Literature, and modern Latinity.*
2. *General Notice of the "Works of Erasmus."*
3. *Of his "Manual of a Christian Soldier," and "Institution of a Christian Prince."*
4. *His "Adages."*
5. *His "Encomium of Folly."*
6. *His "Colloquies."*
7. *His "Ciceronianus," and "Treatise on the right Pronunciation of the Greek and Latin Languages."*
8. *His "Letters."*

1521—1529. *Æt.* 54—62.

ERASMUS had now attained the height of his reputation: no man of letters possessed equal celebrity, or was so much courted by the great or the learned:—as yet too, he had met with few adversaries.

VIII. 1.

Rise of Italian Literature and Modern Latinity.

All the works of Erasmus are written in the Latin tongue.

A diversity of opinion respecting the origin of *the Italian language*, yet exists among the

CHAP. VIII. 1521—1529. Æt. 54—62.

learned; the most probable conjecture seems to be, that it is a corruption of the Latin, occasioned by the barbarian invaders of Italy. At first, it was far from having the mellifluous softness, which it now possesses: insensibly, the invaders, to render themselves intelligible to the natives, abated something of their own rough and harsh dialects; while the natives accommodated their own languages to them, by introducing an abundance of vowels, and inflections that denoted genders and tenses. It should be added, that the Latin was the language of the church, and that the barbarians sooner or later became accustomed to its sound. From these co-operating circumstances, the Italian language, —a mixture of the Latin, the Celtic, and the German,—arose. Even so late as the 13th century, it was coarse and dissonant; it began in the early part of the 14th, to lose its northern alloy, and from this time,

"Worked itself clear, and, as it run, refined."

CATO.

The *Latin language*, in like manner, entered, in a greater or less degree, into all the languages of the other European territories, occupied by the barbarians. The first effect of its influence appeared in Provençe and the adjoining provinces. Among the lively inhabitants of that beautiful portion of Europe, poetry in rhyme

appeared as early as the 11th century; it was a kind of jargon, in which Latin words and Latin terminations abounded. From this circumstance it received the appellation of *Romançe* and *Romande*. But the provinçals were not the inventors of rhyme; it had previously existed in the Leonine verses of Pagan Rome, and several hymns of the Christian church. The inhabitants of other countries imitated the rhyming poetry of the provinçals and fashioned their several languages to it.

VIII. 1. Rise of Italian Literature and modern latinity.

Poety of a very similar nature found its way into *Germany*. In Provençe the poets acquired the name of troubadours, or *inventors*. In Germany, they were called *mennesingers, or songsters of love*. It is highly probable, that it was received at least as soon and as favourably in Italy as in Germany; but it is remarkable, that no vestige of it is found in the transalpine territories, till a more recent period. Matthew Spinello, a native of Giovennazzo, in the province of Bari, has the honour of being the first Italian who wrote in prose, an historical work in the actural idiom of his country; he published it in 1268.

Till nearly the end of the 13th century, most of the principal cities in Italy were republics; from that period they were generally subject to princes, and most of these patronized literature

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and the arts. The Latin language was still cultivated; all authors on theology or law, all public documents, and many poets and historians used it in their works; but, from this time, most writers of poetry or history began to write in Italian. It was by their writings in this language, that Pulci, Boyardo, Dante, and Petrarch immortalized themselves as poets; that Boccacio became the father of Tuscan prose; and that the three Villanis wrote their histories, still read and still found useful. The merit of these works gave currency to the language in which they were written. The Latin language was still the vehicle of theology and law; but historians and poets continued to write in Italian. Before Erasmus appeared, Machiavel had related, in Italian, the fates of the Medicæan family, four times banished from Florence, and as often recalled; and Ariosto and Tasso had composed the poems, to which the strains of Homer and Virgil, Milton and Shakspeare only, can be preferred.

The revival of the literature of Rome introduced among those, by whom it was cultivated, the frequent and often exclusive use of the Latin tongue. The adoption of it in their conversation and correspondence obviously facilitated both its acquisition and familiar use. In strength and beauty, it exceeded every European lan-

guage; and the possession of it, was then in the estimation as well of the learned as the unlearned; an honourable distinction, which its possessors were proud to display. It must be repeated, that the Latin was the language of the church; and it should be observed, that, out of Italy, few works of merit had appeared in the vernacular language of any nation. These observations may account for the exclusive adoption of the Latin language by the learned, not only in the works which they composed, but in their ordinary intercourse. Notwithstanding the repeated and long residences of Erasmus in Italy, France and England, he did not speak the language of any of those countries.

VIII. 1. Rise of Italian Literature and modern Latinity.

VII. 2.

General Notice of the Works of Erasmus

The publications of Erasmus may be divided into three classes:—Editions of ancient authors,—translations of them,—and original compositions; we may reckon, among the last, the learned and elegant prefaces, with which he often accompanied both his editions and translations.

1. Among his *editions* of profane authors, those of Suetonius, and of several parts of the works of Cicero;—among his editions of Christian writers,

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those of St. Augustine and St. Jerom, are eternal monuments of his learning, taste and industry. In one of his prefaces he has made an ingenious comparison of the two fathers; he gives the preference to the latter. In learning, St. Jerom was certainly superior; but, in Christian theology, and particularly in sublime speculations on the nature of the Deity and human will, a preference must be assigned to St. Augustine: his piety was of a more amiable nature; and his manner of inculcating duty was more engaging.

2. The *original works* of Erasmus are numerous: when they were first published, and during a long subsequent period, they were read with avidity, and universally regarded. Insensibly, most of them ceased to be generally read;—not because any want of merit in them was discovered, but because the subjects which are discussed in them became better understood; because treatises upon them were written in modern languages with equal elegance and more information; and, because the public attention, and, of course the minds of the learned were carried to different objects, to the history and antiquities of their own countries, and the new discoveries in science and art. Add to this, that, in the religious differences, which began in the time of Erasmus, and which unfortunately yet continue, every

party found it necessary to appeal to the people, and appeals to the people must always be in the language which the people understand. Finally, the works of Erasmus spread every where a spirit of taste and good sense; and this general diffusion of them rendered unnecessary the perusal of the works from which they had originally pullulated.

VIII. 2. General Notice of the Works of Erasmus.

Of this, Erasmus himself was duly sensible: one of the most interesting of his elementary works,—his treatise *De Conscribendis Epistolis*, (on epistolary writing),—may yet be read with pleasure, on account of its exquisite Latinity, the soundness of the precepts which it contains, the information supplied by it respecting the titles and forms, in which the Great were then addressed, and the modes of speech which were then considered to be particularly courteous. On these accounts, it is entitled to great praise; but Erasmus himself foresaw that an improved state of literature would soon make the work unnecessary. "If I am not greatly mistaken," says Erasmus, "the time fast approaches, when "the public will no longer stand in need of "these instructions, and young men will no "longer want my precepts." *

* "Nisi me fallit animi præsagium, brevi veniet ætas, "quando nec his monitis erit opus, nec meis præceptionibus "juventus egebit." De Conscribendis Epistolis; C. ix.

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Thus it does not detract from the intrinsic merit of Erasmus, that, for some time, the public has paid little attention to several of his writings. Partial and reverential as we are to the name of Milton, how few either have read or will read his treatise, *De Doctrinâ Christianâ*, so fortunately, within the present year, saved from oblivion?

VIII. 3.

Manual of a Christian Soldier.

We shall proceed to mention some of the works by which Erasmus is now most generally known.

His "Manual of a Christian Soldier," "*Enchiridion Militis Christiani*," is divided into thirteen chapters. He addressed it to one of his friends, who was engaged in the life of a courtier. Erasmus called it, in Latin, "The Life of a Christian Soldier;" because, according to the expression of Job, "the life of man is a warfare upon earth." For the same reason, the author of "The Spiritual Combat," a work in the highest esteem among Roman Catholics, gave it that military title. "The Manual of a Christian" was read with universal applause. It was immediately translated into the Italian, French, German, English, and Spanish languages. The object of it was to impress on the

minds of its readers, that religion consists not in mere ceremony and minute observances; but, in true piety and the practice of Christian duty. It is admitted, that some expressions in it fail in theological accuracy, and that, considering it as a work of devotion, it does not speak sufficiently to the hearts.

Of his Manual of a Christian Soldier, and Institution of a Christian Prince.

Father Maffei and Father Ribadaneira mention, that St. Ignatius found that the perusal of it cooled his piety, and upon this account desisted from reading it, and forebade the members of his society to read it. At a subsequent time, the celebrated abbot of St. Cyran, expressed a similar opinion; on the other hand, it has been admired by many respectable personages. Pope Adrian VI, professor of theology at Louvaine, at the time when this work made its first appearance, approved it; and, although some blameable passages are found in it, we may justly say of it with Dupin, that "it is full of good maxims "and useful instructions."

In the same spirit and with the like universal applause, Erasmus published his "Institution "of a Christian Prince." Both Charles V and Ferdinand, his brother, professed the highest esteem for this work; the biographers of Ferdinand relate, that he generally carried it in his pocket, and knew almost the whole of it by heart. It was frequently termed "a Golden

" Book :" hostile criticism seems not to have raised her hand against it.

VIII. 4.

Adages.

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Erasmus considered *Adages* and *Proverbs* to be the same. He defines them, " celebrated " sayings remarkable for an agreeable novelty." In a criticism of his work, Henry Stephens defined them more properly, " short moral sentences, " importing something which the words do not, " at first view, seem to imply."

The first edition of the Adages appeared in 1500, and contained 800 proverbs; many subsequent editions of it were published; in each, the number of the proverbs was considerably augmented; the best edition, published by Aldus at Venice in 1508, contains 4,151 proverbs: from this edition, the work has often been reprinted.

It is impossible to consider it without admiration of the industry, learning and talent, which it discovers. To compose it, the author must have read with attention almost all the writers of antiquity, and many works of the moderns; and he must also have been intimately acquainted with the manners and customs of the ancients. It is obvious, that a discussion of a single word must

VIII. 4. Adages.

often have cost him the labour of several days. More than 2,000 Greek verses are cited in the Adages; Erasmus has always given his own translation of them. In a few instances, Hebrew learning displays itself; but Erasmus confesses his entire ignorance of that language, and gratefully acknowledges, that on these occasions he availed himself of the services of Bruno Amerbacius.

Never was a work more applauded: Budæus called it "the Magazine of Minerva:" it was universally mentioned by the learned as a prodigy of learning and taste: it even extorted the praise of the adversaries of Erasmus.

Some theological errors were imputed to it; and on this account, the fathers assembled at the Council of Trent, took it into their consideration, and directed Paulus Manutius to publish a corrected edition of it. This afterwards appeared, but met with no success. The immortal work itself was dedicated by Erasmus, to Charles, the eldest son of his excellent patron, Lord Mountjoy.

VIII. 5.

Encomium of Folly.

This, almost unrivalled effusion of wit, was dedicated to Sir Thomas More. In the preface, Erasmus informs his readers that he wrote it on

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horseback, to beguile the tedious hours of his journey from Italy to England; and to sooth the sciatic pains with which he was then afflicted. It is an ingenious satire of the follies exhibited by persons of every condition of life. These, by his account, are found even among theologians and monks. It abounds in allusions to many of the mosst elegant passages in antient authors; their expressions are incessantly adopted, but used with reference to modern habits and customs, in a manner, which at once strikes and pleases. It would be difficult to mention a work which discovers greater discernment, or more taste or wit. Its success was prodigious; popes, kings, cardinals, archbishops, bishops, princes, barons, all the great and all the gay, who understood the Latin language, read and admired it. Pope Leo X perused it: "Erasmus too," said his holiness, "has his corner in the region of "folly." Neither this pope, nor any other pope, who filled, while Erasmus lived, the chair of St. Peter, reproached him with the work. In his reply to Stainca, he assures him that 20,000 copies of it were sold in a few months.

The most honourable testimony in its favour was that of the illustrious person, to whom it was dedicated. Martin Dorpius, a Louvaine divine, published some remarks upon it, in which he blamed its general spirit, and some particular

passages and expressions. Erasmus answered it by an apologetical reply, which is a perfect model of polemic politeness. He acknowledges, that his work had exposed him to censure; he almost laments that it was written, and solemnly declares that, if he had foreseen the troubles, by which the church was afterwards, at no distant period of time, afflicted, he would not have composed a work so gay, on subjects, which unexpectedly proved so serious. Sir Thomas More came to the aid of Erasmus. In an elegant and conciliatory letter, addressed to Dorpius, he justified the intention of Erasmus in composing the work; defended many passages and expressions, to which Dorpius had objected, and extenuated the apparent culpability of others. Dorpius was appeased: the friendship between him and Erasmus was renewed, and when Dorpius died, Erasmus celebrated his memory in an elegant and affectionate epitaph. In the short account which he has left us of his own life, Erasmus, after mentioning the disputes in which he had been engaged, signifies that, as his dispute with Dorpius had been so completely made up, it should never be noticed by the compilers of his work, or biographers. But some of the enemies of Erasmus were not so placable. In 1542, the Sorbonne condemned the work in savage terms: and some of the enemies of Erasmus procured

VIII. 5. Encomium of Folly.

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the insertion of it in the Roman index. To justify it entirely, is impossible; some propositions in it, strictly considered, are indefensible: the mention in such a work of the Redeemer of the World, was equally offensive to piety and good taste: To each of these charges Erasmus pleaded guilty. "*Lusimus* olim in *Morià*, "incruenti; licet fortasse plus satis libere.* "Fortasse Christum in hoc album vocare non "conveniat.† We disported ourselves in the "praise of folly, but without drawing blood: "our pen was perhaps too free: the name of "Christ ought not perhaps to have had a place "in such a work."

VIII. 6.

Colloquies.

Erasmus is not known to the public so much by any of his works as his Colloquies; and none perhaps has exposed him, more deservedly, to censure. Viewed as a literary composition, this work deserves the highest praise. It abounds in wit, in taste, and both in sacred and profane erudition; it contains admirable descriptions of life and manners. The characters of the speakers are, almost always, perfectly natural; and are brought before us in so vivid a manner, that we

* Epist. 1. l. 2. † Epist. 42. l. 31.

think we see them, and we seem to recollect them as old acquaintances. What classical reader does not carry in his memory, and does not hail as his friends, the four interlocutors in the *Colloquium Senile,* or the *Conversation of the Old Men.* Who does not luxuriate in *the religious, the profane, or the poetical repasts* exhibited in this work: the speakers seem to be brought before us; we see the gravity of some, the archness of others, the good humour of all. It is impossible to deny that the work is written with the greatest elegance, that it abounds in the happiest allusions to classical passages and phrases, or that it displays throughout, both various and profound knowledge. But, if a Roman Catholic reverses the medal, he will show many passages, in which Roman Catholic doctrine and practices are unjustly represented, many bold and many offensive propositions, and these too written at a time when, on account of the general ferment of the minds of men, the publication of them was highly imprudent. The greatest fault of the work however is, that it leads the reader of it to believe, in opposition to the truth, that the abuses described by it, which had only a partial and limited existence, were in fact universal, and existed in the highest degree throughout the whole Roman Catholic world. This, the Roman Catholic may truly say, is

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doing his church and its members a crying injustice.

To these charges, it is difficult for an admirer of Erasmus to make any reply, which will satisfy a Roman Catholic. It must be reduced to two heads; that, by the confession of all candid Catholics, abuses in the church of Rome existed before the council of Trent, in a much greater degree than they do at present; in a greater degree too than those, who have not extended their inquiries far into the subject, will easily believe; and that, as Erasmus wrote before the council of Trent, several of the tenets apparently adopted by Erasmus, which that council condemned, were then merely opinions, which any Catholic might hold, without incurring the crime of heresy. This certainly is placing the defence of Erasmus in the most favourable point of view; and surely Erasmus is entitled to every advantage which it affords him. All lovers of learning must ever wish to find Erasmus in the right; and, when he is not quite in the right, to find him very excusable.

> "Be to his faults a little blind;
> Be to his virtues very kind."—PRIOR.

Is the language of good sense, and even of christianity, as much as of poetry.

The first perfect edition of the Colloquies appeared in 1524, and was dedicated by Eras-

mus to John Erasmius Froben, his god-son. Few works have had so great a sale. At Paris alone, 24,000 copies were almost immediately disposed of. Soon after its first appearance, the Sorbonne took it into consideration, and, on the 26th May 1526, decided that the Colloquies contained many erroneous, scandalous, and impious positions. They also pressed the Faculty of Theology at Paris to adopt their decision. But taste came to the aid of Erasmus; Francis I interfered to stop this career of hostility. In many other places the Colloquies were attacked: ultimately, they were condemned by the Inquisition, and the reading of them prohibited. Editions of them, from which the objectionable passages are expunged, have been published at Paris, and in other places.

VIII. 6. Colloquies.

VIII. 7.

Ciceronianus,—and a Treatise on the right Pronunciation of the Greek and Latin Languages.

The *Ciceronians*, against whom Erasmus composed this dialogue, were at this time a numerous sect in Italy. They maintained that Cicero was almost the only author whose works should be read; whose style should be imitated; or whose words or phrases should be used: they consisted chiefly of Italians. They affirmed that true Latin was not spoken or written out of Italy;

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and, on this account, excluded even Erasmus and Budæus, from their list of approved authors. Some carried Ciceronianism into theology. A person excommunicated was said by them to be "interdicted both fire and water;" the mother of God was called by them "the Lauretenan Virgin;" the apostles were "Conscript Fathers;" and "The Gods" were invoked. These ridiculous excesses were however confined to few; but Ciceronians, in the former sense, were very numerous; and it was against these that Erasmus composed this dialogue. Mr. Gibbon has thus pointed out, in his happiest manner, its excellences and defects:—

"I read," says that gentleman, in a most entertaining work,* "the *Ciceronianus*, and "perused 47 pages of extracts from Erasmus's "letters, which related to it, and which turn "principally upon the great scandal which the "comparison between Ascensius Badius and "the great Budæus, had given in France. The "object of this dialogue is to attack some blind "admirers and copiers of Tully's style, who, at "the revival of letters, formed especially in "Italy, a very considerable sect, the principal "leaders of which were Bembo, Sadolet and "Scaliger. In this attack, he employed every

* "Extraits raisonnes de mes lectures," in his Miscellaneous Works. Vol. 5. p. 259.

VIII. 7. His Ciceronianus, and Treatise on the right Pronunciation of the Greek and Latin Languages.

" arm both of argument and pleasantry; it may " be divided into three parts: in the first, *Noso-* " *ponus* the Ciceronian, is introduced. With " that exquisite species of humour, of which the " *Lettres Provinciales* offer so fine a specimen, " he ridicules his own party by a bare exposition " of those maxims, which he himself venerated " and practised. His exclusive devotion to " Cicero, his three Indices, his never writing but " in the dead silence of the night, his employing " months upon a few lines, his religious caution " about the words, and his total indifference " about the sense, are truly and highly comic. " In the second, Erasmus himself appears under " the name of *Boulephorus*, and entering into " a great detail, establishes victoriously, that " Cicero, though worthy of our attention and " imitation, is not the only one worthy of it; " that so servile an attachment to any author " destroys all freedom and originality of genius, " and produces only a set of tame writers, who " perhaps will copy only the faults, but who will " surely never attain to the perfections of their " great model; and that, finally, we should rather " endeavour to speak as Cicero would do, if he " lived at present, than as he did in his time; " that since words are made for ideas, and not " ideas for words, it is infinitely more reasonable " to *coin* new words to express a variety of

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" things unknown to Cicero, than, out of a vain " ambition of purity to call excommunication " '*interdictio aquæ et ignis*,' and to express all " the objects of Christianity by the terms of the " Pagan rituals. It must be confessed that the " Ciceronians laid themselves very open to ridi- " cule, were it only by their looking on Tully, not " only as the best, but as the sole model, and " that of language as well as of eloquence. " In a polite age, in which a language is tho- " roughly cultivated, every writer, who is a man " of education or letters, and of taste, speaks " nearly the same language; and very often " genius and eloquence, instead of being com- " panions to purity, are enemies to it, by divert- " ing the attention from nobler aims. *Bouhours* " is much purer than either *Corneille* or *Bayle*. " Why therefore should we exclude all other " writers of the Augustine age, and confine our " imitation to Tully alone, who was not a native " of Rome, and who, from the fire of his ima- " gination, the variety of his occupations, and " the multiplicity of his writings, could not " always attend nicely to his expression. Why " is not Cæsar (for example) as safe a model?*

* The late Mr. Alban Butler, the author of "The Lives " of the Saints," and certainly one of the best scholars of his age, professed to find a great difference between the *language* of those works, which Cicero intended for the

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"A Ciceronian must believe Cicero's own account of him: 'Cæsar autem rationem adhibens consuetudinem vitiosam et corruptam purâ et inccorruptâ consuetudine emendat: Itaque ad hanc elegantiam verborum Latinorum adjungit illa oratoria ornamentâ dicendi.' "But the same Ciceronian, if he would condescend to admit the other Latin writers of "that age into a partnership with Tully, would "be much more formidable than Nosoponus. "He would observe that, in all languages, rules "and analogies are very treacherous guides; "that, in modern tongues, we see them give way "every day to custom: That, in the dead ones, "that custom is to be met with only in the most "correct writers; and that whenever we deviate "from them, we risk offending against the idiom "of the language: That the boldest moderns did "not carry their privilege of making new terms "so far as they ought, to have made it really "useful, since they express many modern ones "by very loose periphrases: That, as they are "themselves still fond of copying and alluding

closet, and the language of his Orations to the People; and much greater politeness in the Commentaries of Cæsar than in any production of Cicero. Of these, he used to declare, that the Offices were incomparably the best.—Some classical friends of the writer of these pages, have intimated to him, their agreement in these observations.

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"to the ancients, the writings of Erasmus himself is an incoherent mixture of Roman manners and expressions, with Batavian ones; a mixture not less ridiculous than their scrupulous antique idiom. Perhaps the natural conclusion from these various difficulties, where either freedom or correctness must be sacrificed, was, that instead of that ungrateful labour upon a dead language, it would be better to improve and cultivate the living ones. But this conclusion was too much for the age of Erasmus. The third part of this dialogue, which contains Erasmus's opinion of the style of the principal Latin authors, both ancient and modern, shows great learning, but his judgments are too superficial; and not so much varied as the nature of the subject required. The style of the *Ciceronianus* itself is lively and easy, but the spirit of the dialogue is but indifferently kept up. *Nosoponus* makes no defence, and *Hypologus* is quite a useless personage."

Few publications have produced a greater sensation in the literary world, or exposed their author to more abuse than the *Ciceronianus*. The only point in dispute, was, whether the Ciceronians did not admire Cicero too much. With this, Erasmus charged them: a slighter charge cannot be imagined; it affected neither

theology nor morals. It was a mere question of taste. But, if Erasmus had been guilty of the greatest crimes which imagination can conceive, he could not have been assailed in fouler language than he was by Scaliger. Forgetting equally what he owed to his adversary and himself, that very learned but very arrogant man, not only heaped on Erasmus every epithet of contumely, which the Latin language could supply, but charged him with atrocious crimes. In a letter published in May 1531, and circulated by him over France, Italy, England and Germany, he described Erasmus as "a drunkard, an hangman, a parricide, a monster, a new Porphyry, a Luther, and an infidel." All these charges were false; but, had all been true, they proved nothing in respect to the point in question; for, although Scaliger had shown that Erasmus was every thing he described him, still, the Ciceronians might carry to excess their admiration of Cicero.

VIII. His Ciceronianus, and Treatise on the right Pronunciation of the Greek and Latin Languages.

It is much to be lamented, that the good sense which Erasmus possessed in the highest dignity, deserted him on this occasion. Every author who is attacked, should pause long before he defends himself. If he feel no irritation, he may safely conclude, that the hostile work has made little impression upon the public; for surely none can be so much alive to an author's reputation

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as the author himself. If he be disquieted by the attack, he should wait till all the angry feeling is subsided; and then consider with calmness, whether he has been justly or unjustly reprehended. If he find that blame has been justly imputed to him, he should correct the error: if he find the imputation unjust, it should be his wish to leave the case before the public, and consider that the public's ultimate opinion is rarely wrong. He should also reflect, that an author is seldom written down, except by himself; that one controversy usually produces another; that the mildest controversy too often degenerates into personalities, and that some unlucky word or argument may chance to fall from him, which will give an advantage to his adversary, which, if he himself had remained in silence, his adversary would not have possessed. To the advice of the ancients, "*descendere cum* "*æqualibus in arenam*," to conflict only with "equals," he should rigidly adhere. When an adversary uses language or adopts proceedings, which would disgrace a gentleman, he should feel that his adversary has completely absolved him from the duty of reply. Above all, he should ever bear in mind, that producing a better work is indisputably the best answer to the criticism of a former. The silly criticism of Pradon of the *Phædre* of Racine produced his *Iphigenie*.

How much better was Racine employed in the composition of that immortal tragedy, than he would have been in defending the Phœdre against the critic, who is now only known to us by name? and whose name we should not now know, if Boileau had not *hitched it in a rhyme*. If, after all, an answer, which sometimes is the case, be necessary, it should be as short and as temperate as possible: ungentlemanly words admit of no defence; they afford just presumption, that the person who uses them feels himself in the wrong.

VIII. 7. His Ciceronianus, and Treatise on the right Pronunciation of the Greek and Latin Languages.

Erasmus had friends who suggested these and other arguments to him; and the advice of his friends had so far weight with him, that he abstained from publishing an answer to the work of Scaliger; but he suffered it to prey upon his mind. Without the slightest ground, he brought himself to think that Scaliger had held the pen for others, and he teazed himself with endless conjectures, who these men in vizards were. He made his conjectures public; all were wrong, and they involved him in new disputes. Scaliger thought himself injured by them; he announced his claim to the work in letters extensively circulated, and published a "Second Invective" against Erasmus, still more violent than the former. After repeating the epithets which he had applied to Erasmus in the former, he calls

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him "a fury, an abomination; one, whom Italy, "France and Germany, held in horror, an op- "probrium to the Christian name."

But, even with this second invective, Scaliger was not satisfied; he addressed letters to different persons; and, what the reader will think not very easy, filled them with still harsher epithets, and still grosser abuse.

Universal indignation was expressed by the learned of every nation at his proceedings: his second invective was never seen by Erasmus. Omphalus, the common friend of both, endeavoured to effect a reconciliation between them. At his suggestion, Scaliger addressed to Erasmus a letter, dated the 14th May 1536. He retracts by it, universally, his abuse of Erasmus; declares that he had constantly admired him; acknowledges the great services rendered by him to learning, professes great respect for his arduous labours, and announces, that he ceases to be his enemy; Erasmus, highly to his honour, accepted the apology.

Erasmus did not long survive the receipt of this letter. Very soon after his death, Scaliger composed an elegy to his memory, in which he feelingly laments, that death had snatched Erasmus from him, before their reconciliation had been completed, and pronounces his panegyric.

Joseph, the son of Julius Scaliger, and many

other friends of Julius, endeavoured to suppress all the publications we have mentioned, as highly injurious to his father's memory. This had made them extremely rare; but they fell into the hands of Maussac, who published them in 1621, at Toulouse.* They are only curious, as a monument of the rabid fury, to which literary animosity, when unchecked by religion or good sense, may arise.

VIII. 7. His Ciceronianus, and Treatise on the right Pronunciation of the Greek and Latin Languages.

The treatise of Erasmus, "*De rectâ Latini "Græcique sermonis pronuncatione,*" "*On the "right pronunciation of the Greek and Latin "language,*" followed, and has been often printed with his *Ciceronianus*. It is a curious treatise on the pronunciation of the Greek and Latin vowels and consonants. He had to struggle in it with the great difficulty of conveying sounds by words, or describing them: it is observable, that he approves of the English pronunciation of the theta †.

* Julii Cæsaris Scaligeri adversus Desiderium Erasmum, orationes duæ, eloquentiæ Romanæ vindices; cum quibusdam epistolis et opusculis aliquot nondum evulgatis; quibus de novo etiam accedunt problemata Gallicana, ut reperiri potuerunt Tolosæ-Tectosagum, apud Dominum Petrum Bosc. 1621.

† This treatise, with several others, is published in the Sylloge of Havercamp. 2 vol. oct. Lugd. Bat. 1736–1740.

VIII. 8.

Letters of Erasmus.

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These are unquestionably entitled to a place among the works of Erasmus: even Cardan and Scaliger, his violent adversaries, acknowledged their excellence. They may serve as models for every species of epistolary correspondence:—common place compliment, delicate insinuation, dignified address, elaborate discussion, laboured defence, and bitter invective. They unfold the inmost recesses of the writer's heart, and, if due allowance be made for the weakness and fallibility of human nature, it will be admitted, that Erasmus appears in them to advantage. They also throw great light upon the history of the times; particularly the two most important events in them,—the revival of letters, and the rise of the Reformation.

The style of his letters, as of all his other works, is captivating: it is not that of Cicero, or any other classical author; it is his own. Its warmest admirers admit that it is deficient in purity: Mr. Gibbon, perhaps too harshly, calls it "Belgic Latin." But all the writings of Erasmus display so much learning, ingenuity, spirit, fancy, science and taste, and that,—without which,

nothing is excellent,—*genius* so much abounds in them, that no works, either ancient or modern, are read with greater pleasure. The ancient work which bears the greatest resemblance in style or manner to that of Erasmus, is the dialogue, *De causis corruptæ Eloquentiæ*,—so well translated by Melmoth.

VIII. 8. Letters of Erasmus.

CHAPTER IX.

ERASMUS' EDITION, AND LATIN VERSION OF THE NEW TESTAMENT; AND CONTROVERSY WITH STUNICA, ON 1 JOHN, V. v. 7.

WE are now arrived at the work of Erasmus, which, of all his writings, is most honourable to his memory; and which, if he had published no other, would have immortalized his name, and placed him among the greatest benefactors to sacred and profane literature,—his edition and Latin version of the New Testament. A treatise, in which he professed to point out "the "best method of arriving at true theology," * accompanied it, as a preface. He soon afterwards published his "Exhortation to the Study "of Christian Philosophy." † Bothare ranked among the happiest exertions of his pen. It may be said of them, as of his other writings, those even which are most valuable, that they contain some doubtful and some reprehensible positions; but that the general fund is excellent. The passages, which gave most offence at the

* Ratio seu methodus perveniendi ad veram theologiam.

† Paraclesis, id est, Exhortatio ad Christianæ Philosophiæ Studium.

time of their publication, are some, on which he treats the scholastics comtumeliously. Passing by these, as wholly undeserving attention, he recommends the perusal of the works of the fathers; preferring the Greek to the Latin, and the more ancient to the less; but he inculcates that, speaking generally, the Scripture is its own best interpreter. We shall proceed to give some account,—1st. Of his edition; 2d. Then, of his version of the New Testament; 3d. Then, notice a controversy between him and Stunica, a Spanish divine, on the celebrated verse of the *Three Heavenly Witnesses, or the 1st John*, c. 5. v. 7.

IX. Erasmus's Edition, and Latin Version of the New Testament.

IX. 1.

Erasmus's Edition of the New Testament.

An edition of the Greek original had long been desired by the learned of every nation. The glory of having first published it belongs to Erasmus; he printed five editions of it, in 1516, 1519, 1522, 1527, and 1535. He took the greatest pains to render them, particularly the four last, as perfect as possible. "It can-" "not be conceived," he himself says in one of his letters,* "what labour this publication cost "me. May it please Almighty God, that

* Epist. 26. l. 3.

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" Christendom shall derive from it an equiva-
" lent advantage! for this was all I had in
" view. I collated many Greek manuscript
" copies. I adopted that version which I
" thought the best. I made my translation as
" faithful, and at the same time as simple as I
" could; I always endeavoured to avoid what-
" ever was obscure or equivocal: I did not in
" every instance render the original, word for
" word, but I constantly endeavoured not to
" depart from its sense. I took Origen,
" St. Basil, St. John Chrysostom, St. Cyril,
" St. Jerome, St. Cyprian, St. Ambrose, and
" St. Augustin, for my guides, I have added
" some notes to express the reasons which made
" me prefer the sense which I adopted: I uni-
" formly rested upon the authority of the
" ancients."

Erasmus dedicated this truly great work to Pope Leo X. After fully explaining the plan of it to his holiness, he expatiates in the praise of Wareham, the archbishop of Canterbury, his great patron, and expresses an hope, that a work, inscribed with the two great names of Leo and Wareham, would be received favourably by the public.

He acknowledged, that the first edition was hurried; he therefore earnestly desired that the next should be as perfect as possible. At first

he wished it to be printed at Venice, by Aldus; but Froben, the printer at Bâsle, to whom, and to whose family, Erasmus was particularly attached, earnestly solicited that the honour of printing it should be conferred on his press; and to obtain it, offered Erasmus a considerable sum of money. Erasmus refused it, but intimated a wish, that the amount of it should be expended in making the impression as beautiful as possible. Under these circumstances, the second of Erasmus's editions of the New Testament appeared at Bâsle, in 1519. *

IX. 11 Erasmus's Edition of the New Testament.

* Bibliographical writers agree in preferring the second to all the subsequent editions of the New Testament published by Erasmus; its title, however, to this preference may be questioned.—The Complutensian Polyglot was printed in 1514, but not published till 1517: it did not fall into the hands of Erasmus till after the publication of his second edition. A supposition, that, out of respect to the Vulgate, the Complutensian Editors sometimes altered the Greek text, without the authority of a single Greek manuscript, to make it conform to the Latin, was soon entertained, and yet subsists. Now it has been surmised, that Erasmus, in his third and subsequent editions, adopted many readings, merely from respect to the authority of the Polyglot. For this reason his second edition has obtained the preference we have mentioned. But the Complutensian Editors have been ably defended against the suggested charge, by Goeze, and to a certain extent by Griesbach, and the learned Bishop of Peterborough.

The Complutensian Polyglot was prepared and published under the patronage of cardinal Ximénes, one of the

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The first edition was honoured by a brief of Pope Leo X, dated the 10th September 1518. His holiness signified by it, that "the attention "bestowed by Erasmus on the New Testament, "had given his Holiness great pleasure; both "because it showed very great erudition, and "was highly approved by all learned men; "and because his Holiness conjectured, from "the first edition, that the next, which was "to be considerably augmented, would be very "useful to the orthodox faith, and to those "who should study theology. Continue," says the Pope to Erasmus, "to labour for public "utility; hasten to give so holy a work to the "public: God will reward you. We do that

noblest and fairest characters that have appeared on the theatre of the world. It was printed by Arnoldus Brocarius: "I have often heared," says Gomecius, the cardinal's earliest biographer, "John Brocarius, the son of Arnoldus, "relate to his friends, that, when his father had put the "finishing stroke to his last volume, he deputed him to "carry it to the cardinal. John was then a lad: having "drest himself in a very elegant suit of clothes, he ap- "proached Ximénes, and delivered the volume into his "hands: 'I render thanks to thee, O God!' exclaimed "Ximénes, 'that thou hast protracted my life to the com- "pletion of these biblical labours.'—Conversing with his "friends, the cardinal would also observe, that his suc- "cessfully surmounting his various political difficulties, did "not afford him so much comfort as that which he felt "upon the completion of the Polygot."—(*See* the writer's *Horæ Biblicæ*, sect. x.)

"justice to your labours which they deserve, "and you may depend upon the approbation "of all good christians." Erasmus protests, at the close of his preface, that "he never had "intentionally departed from the decisions of "the church; and desires, that if any thing, "not exactly conformable to them, should be "found in his writings, it should be con- "sidered as having escaped from him contrary "to his intention."

IX. 1. Erasmus's Edition of the New Testament.

IX. 2.

Erasmus's Version of the New Testament.

He accompanied the edition of the Greek Testament, with a new version of it in Latin. His first plan was to insert the Vulgate* trans-

* The Latin Vulgate translation of the Bible is often mentioned, but what this translation really is, does not appear to be always generally understood.

1. It is not the *Interpretatio Itala* to which St. Augustin gave the preference over other versions, on account of its greater literal adherence to the text, and its greater perspicuity. This version has long disappeared.

2. *St. Jerome's own translation* of the New Testament from the Greek, is the real stock of the present Vulgate translation of it.

3. The text of this translation was extremely disfigured and corrupted in the *middle ages*. On the revival of letters, many persons of learning endeavoured to procure a new and correct edition of the New Testament; the edition then in general use was called the Vulgate edition; it was declared

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lation, marking those places in which he should think it faulty and suggesting alterations; but, rather out of deference to the wishes of his friends than from any opinion of his own, he framed a version wholly new, still however attending to the Vulgate version, and conforming to it as much as his plan of giving a perfect version allowed.

by the Council of Trent to be the *authentic edition of the Church*, and consequently inerrant, where the dogma of faith or morals is concerned, but not inerrant in any other sense. So far was the council from pronouncing it literally or verbally inerrant, that the council ordered it to be corrected, and a new edition of it to be published.

4. Such an edition was published by *Sixtus Quintus*, in 1590.

5. This edition was found to be so erroneous, that the copies were called in, and a new edition was published by *Clement VIII*, the immediate successor of Sixtus, in 1592. The Roman Catholic church holds this edition in great veneration; and Protestant divines also mention it in high terms of praise. It is unquestionably a translation of the highest merit; it may be considered as a transcript, with very numerous literal variations, of the version made by St. Jerome. As this was made by him when the text was in a purer state than it is at present, and he probably had before him the still earlier *Interpretatio Itala*, some writers of eminence, both Catholic and Protestant, have contended, that the *Clementine Vulgate* expresses more of the true reading of the originals or autographs of the sacred penmen, than any Greek edition which has appeared or can now be framed. Even this may be thought a bold assertion; but to assert the *Clementine Vulgate* to be identical with the *Itala Interpretatio* of St. Augustine, is most evidently a gratuitous assumption.

IX. 2. Erasmus's Version of the New Testament.

The Pope continued to speak both of the text and version with esteem. Campegio, perhaps the most considered, at that time, of all the cardinals, declared that he had devoured, (this was the expression of his eminence), the New Testament and the version. The archbishop of Canterbury, and the bishops of Winchester and Rochester, publicly commended them. Both were received most favourably in every part of Christendom. Posterity has done them equal justice.

"At length, let Desiderius Erasmus, truly the "phœnix of the age," says Huetius, the most learned bishop of Avranches, "appear!—Who "hath abounded with such various learning? "who hath possessed such versatility of genius? "who hath been gifted with such a marvellous "memory? whose writings possess more sweet- "ness, more terseness, or more wit? whose "translations, (to come to the subject of our "present discussion), have been more laboured, "or have approached nearer to absolute per- "fection? he explores every sentence; unfolds "them all with perspicuity; every thing is clear "and sound; succinct, not sterile; concise, not "poor; full without superfluity; easy without "negligence. Every where he accommodates "his style to the subject. In his translations "of the sacred Scriptures, he attends to every

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"letter; in his other translations he is more "loose; and thus, in that branch of literature "which bears translations, he stands without a "rival. If he sometimes failed, as fastidious "and morose critics have suggested, let it be "recollected that he was a man; for my part, "where there is so much excellence, I do not "quarrel for a few blemishes."*

"Some have exerted all their industry in the "interpretation of the New Testament. Of "these, Desiderius Erasmus stands, in my "judgment, unquestionably first. He has so "happily performed this task, that the words, "the sentences, and the general cast of his "translations, equal those of the original. Unit-"ing perspicuity to fidelity in an equal degree, "and representing throughout, the manner of "his author, he possesses all the qualities which "we have required for a perfect interpreter. "Occasionally the genius of the Latin tongue "made it impossible for him to render a parti-"cular word of the original by a single word. "When this happens, he prints the added "words in a different character; and thus shows "to what a degree of fidelity his version is "carried. It deserves the approbation which "the supreme pontiff bestowed upon it.†

* De Claris Interpret, 230.

† De Claris Interpr , 149.

IX. 2. Erasmus's Version of the New Testament.

The testimony of Le Clerc is equally favourable to Erasmus. "Those," he says, "who are "acquainted with the proper manner of ex- "plaining the Scriptures, have always thought "that Erasmus, in the edition and version "which he has given of it, has performed all "the duties of a good interpreter, as far as "it could be achieved in his time and circum- "stances. In the first place, he has exhibited "the Greek text, the manuscripts of which it "was difficult then to meet with, as correctly "as it was possible for him to do. For this, "he consulted all the manuscripts which he "could procure; read the fathers and interpre- "ters, and carefully expressed the various read- "ings in his notes. Next, he undertook to "make a better version than the Vulgate, and it "is impossible to deny that he has improved on "it in many places, although subsequent ad- "vances in criticism enabled others to go be- "yond him. Thirdly, it must be acknowledged, "that his notes, besides a critique of the Vul- "gate, contain a multitude of excellent theolo- "gical and philosophical remarks, founded on "the knowledge of the Greek language, and of "the style of the holy Scriptures. It is certain "that he pointed out the right way, and that it "is only by proceeding upon his principles, that

CHAP. IX. "sacred criticism has since been carried to "greater perfection.*

* It may be shortly mentioned, that the editions of Erasmus of the New Testament were followed; 1. by that of *Colinæus*, in 1584;—2. by those of *Robert Stephens*, in 1546, 1549, 1550, 1551, and 1569;—3. by those of *Bezà*, in 1565, 1576, 1582, 1589, and 1598;—4. by the edition of the *Elzevirs*, first published at Leyden, in 1624. This was printed from the third edition of Robert Stephens; where it differs from that edition, it follows generally the edition of Beza. By this edition, the text, which had fluctuated in the preceding editions, acquired a consistency. It has been generally followed in all the subsequent editions, and has thus deservedly obtained the appellation of the *Editio receptâ*; its editors are unknown.—5. The critical edition of Doctor *John Mill*, was published in 1707;—6. That, of *John Albert Bengel*, abbot of Alsperspack, in the duchy of Wirtemburgh, in 1734;—7. That of *John James Wetstein*, in two volumes, folio, in 1751;—And that of Dr. *James Griesback*, in two volumes octavo, first printed in 1775–1777; and reprinted in 1796–1806.—Of these editions that of Wetstein is pre-eminent: Michaelis, his professed adversary, declares it to be "the most important of all "editions, and the most necessary to those who are engaged "in sacred criticism." The bishop of Peterborough, the celebrated translator of Michaelis, and perhaps the best judge now living of such a work, calls it by the emphatic appellation of "The Invaluable Book." (Horæ Biblicæ, sect. XI.)

IX. 3.

Contest of Erasmus with Stunica, respecting the celebrated verse of the Three Heavenly Witnesses, or 1 *John*, c. 5, v. 7.

IX. 3. Contest of Erasmus with Stunica, respecting the celebrated verse of the ThreeHeavenly Witnesses.

This celebrated verse * may be thus rendered in the English language:—"There are three "who bear witness in Heaven, the Father,

* The genuineness of the verse of the "Three Heavenly "Witnesses," or 1 *John*, ch. 5. v. 7, has engaged much of the attention of the learned during the three last centuries; so that, as the bishop of Peterborough observes, (*Preface to his Letters to Mr. Archdeacon Travis*), "there is hardly a li-"brary in all Europe, from the Vatican to the Bodleian, "from Madrid to Moscow, in which the manuscripts of the "Greek Testament have not been examined, in order to "determine whether it proceeded from the pen of St. John." Mr. archdeacon Travis remarks, that "there are few sub-"jects in the walks of philology or criticism in which one "simple question, as it appears on a distant view, expands "itself on a nearer approach, into so many complicated "branches, and covers so large a field of historical and biblio-"graphical criticism."

The principal disputes to which it has given rise, may be divided into three classes:—1. that between Erasmus and Stunica, mentioned in the text;—2. that, which began by the rejection of the verse by Sandius the Arian, in his *Nucleus Historiæ Ecclesiasticæ*;—3. and that which was provoked by the note in Mr. Gibbon's History, (Ch. xxxvii. n. 118.). This note was attacked by Mr. Travis, and defended by Mr. Porson and the bishop of Peterborough, in their letters to that gentleman.

In a dissertation inserted at the end of the second part of his *Horæ Biblicæ*, the present writer has attempted to give

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" the Son, and the Holy Ghost, and these three " are one."

We have mentioned, that Erasmus published five editions of the Greek New Testament. He did not insert the verse of the Three Heavenly witnesses in the two first: For this, he was repre-

a short historical outline of each of these disputes, and of the principal arguments against and for the authenticity of the verse.

To this dissertation he added two letters to the bishop of Peterborough;—one, upon the insertion of the verse in the "Confession of Faith presented by the Catholic bishops " to the Vandal king, in 484;"—the other, stating the result of an examination which the writer had caused to be made of three manuscripts containing that confession.

Since this publication, the verse has been zealously defended in Mr. Nolan's " Inquiry into the Integrity of the " Greek Vulgate;"—and the learned bishop of Salisbury's " Vindication of 1 John, v. 7, from the objections of " M. Griesbach;" and the same prelate's " Letter to the " Clergy of the Diocese of St. David's, on a passage of the " second Symbolum Antiochenum of the fourth century, " as an evidence of the authenticity of 1 John v. 7." His lordship's " Vindication," is the subject of Article 2, in the Quarterly Review of January 1822.

It is remarkable, that Luther omitted the verse in his translation of the New Testament; the edition of it which was in the press while he was living, but which was not published till after his decease, is that of 1546. In this, as in all the former editions, it is wholly absent. It was, however, inserted in the Frankfort edition of 1574, and was inserted in some, and rejected in others, of the subsequent editions; but since the beginning of the 17th century, with the exception of the Wittenberg edition of 1607, the insertion of it in Luther's translation has been general.

hended in the severest terms by Lee or Ley, an English divine of some note, afterwards promoted by Henry VIII to the archbishoprick of York; and by Stunica, a Spanish divine, employed in editing the Complutensian Polyglott. In answer to them, Erasmus declared his readiness to insert the verse in his next edition of the New Testament, if a single manuscript should be found to contain it. As the verse was inserted in the Complutensian Polyglott, and ought not to have been inserted in it, without the authority of one or more manuscripts, Stunica was bound in honour to produce such a manuscript: Erasmus called for it, loudly and repeatedly; but Stunica produced none. Against the reprehensions of Lee and Stunica, Erasmus defended himself with great ability. The former possessed little learning, or literary talent; both were possessed in a high degree by Stunica; and he displayed both in his contest with Erasmus, but he expressed himself in it with extreme coarseness and violence. Of this he repented in his serious moments; he would not consent to the impression of some works, which he had composed in the same style against Erasmus, but ordered the manuscripts of them to be delivered to him, that he might avail himself of them if he should think proper.

IX, 3. Contest of Erasmus with Stunica, respecting the celebrated verse of the Three Heavenly Witnesses.

Afterwards, the *Codex Montfortianus*, then

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called the *Codex Britannicus*, now in the library of Trinity College, Dublin, was found to contain the verse. Then, Erasmus, in performance of his promise, inserted the verse in his third edition of the New Testament, and it was retained in the two subsequent editions.

It is mentioned in one of the letters of Erasmus,* that Stunica having found cardinal Ximenes reading Erasmus's edition of the New Testament, expressed his surprise, that "his "Eminence should vouchsafe even to cast a look "upon a work, so full, as he termed it, of mon- "strous errors;" and that the cardinal, with great gravity, reproved Stunica for his insolence; and "desired him, if he were able, to produce "a more valuable work, and in the mean time, "not to defame the labours of others." This anecdote does honour to the cardinal's memory, as it shows his candour, and how free he was from the little jealousy of authors, which was one of the blemishes in the character of his great rival for his political fame, the cardinal minister of Lewis XIII.

* Tom. ix. 228. Historia Literaria Reformationis, Pars 1, p. 60, 61.

CHAPTER X.

CONTROVERSY BETWEEN ERASMUS AND LUTHER.

1524. *Æt.* 57.

At first, Erasmus, by his own account, beheld in Luther, an indiscreet and too ardent a Catholic; whose writings teazed the monks and theologians; and whose zeal and talents, though they sometimes exceeded the bounds of moderation, might banish sholastic theology from the universities, and work in the church, that salutary reformation of manners and discipline, which Erasmus so much wished for. He repeatedly acknowledges, that the proceedings of Luther did not, in the first instance, altogether displease him: he admits this to have been an error; "but "this error," says Erasmus, in one of his letters against the Prince of Carpi, "was common to "me and a multitude of persons of the first "distinction, in every condition of life. When "Luther first began to make himself known, "all the world," says Erasmus, in another place, "applauded him. He had on his side, many

CHAP. X. 1524. Æt. 57.

" of the theologians now most opposed to him: " some cardinals, and even some monks, fa- " voured him.* The dispute was at first " applauded; many good men liked to hear of " the incomparable majesty of the Scriptures; " of putting our trust in God, and not in the " inventions of men. The declamations against " the court of Rome, against the profane lives of " the bishops, against the insupportable tyranny " of the monks, and against theological sophistry, " were, though boldly expressed, well received: " they were supposed to proceed from a good " intention."† Sir Thomas More also acknow-

* Ep. 7. L. 21.

† Every true Roman Catholic believes that nothing can be wrong in the faith of the church; but they admit that, when Luther made his attack upon the church of Rome, much reformation in the church, both in respect to its head and its members, was wanting in discipline and morals.—This is expressed without any qualification, in the first pages of Bossuet's *Variations*, particularly in the extracts in them from cardinal Julian's letter to pope Eugenius IV, written nearly a century before the Reformation.

Beausobre's *Histoire de la Reformation* is composed with candour and ability; but he left it incomplete, as it closes with the Confession of Augsburgh.—An history of the Preliminaries of the Reformation, or the *Historia Reformationis ante Reformationem*,—an expression familiar to the writers upon the Continent, is a great want. We are informed by the editor of Beausobre's history, that something of the kind was found among his papers: if it has been printed, it has not yet found its way to the London market.

ledges that "the first declamations of Luther "were favourably received." *

X. 8. Controversy between Erasmus and Luther.

But Erasmus tells us, he soon perceived, that Luther, was driving, by his violence, every thing to extremities. "What dæmon," he exclaims, in a letter to Jocodus Jonas, "agitates "the soul of Luther, when he inveighs with such "license against the Pope, against all the schools, "and against all the mendicant orders?"— He observes, that these proceedings of Luther had a seditious tendency. † It should be remarked, that when this letter was written, Luther was far from having proceeded to his greatest excesses.

It produced a flattering letter to him from Luther; Erasmus answered it; this answer became public; it had the fate of all works, in which an attempt is made to keep well with both parties: it displeased both; and the displeasure of both was increased by a letter written by him in a tone of great moderation to cardinal Albert, archbishop of Mentz. ‡ This letter also, contrary to his intention, became public, and disposed many against him. In proportion as Luther proceeded to extremities, Erasmus expressed greater displeasure at his language and conduct.

* Ep. 25. l. 13. † Ep. 18. l. 17.
‡ Ep. 4. l. 6.

CHAP. X. 1524. Æt. 57.

At length Leo X, on the 15th June 1520, published his celebrated bull against Luther. Erasmus disapproved it; he wished milder measures had been resorted to; Cardinal Sadolet expressed the same wish.*

Occasion was taken from the moderation with which the letters of Erasmus to Luther and the archbishop of Mentz were written, to represent him to Leo as a secret partizan of Luther; this induced him to address to Leo, a letter of apology and explanation. It satisfied his Holiness. In his answer to it,† Leo assures Erasmus, that "his letter had afforded him great pleasure:" he acknowledges, "that he had entertained some "doubts of the religious opinions of Erasmus;" that "these had been suggested to his mind, not "only by some learned and prudent persons, "but by some of Erasmus's own publications;" that "he had withheld, on this account, certain "rewards, which he had designed for his talents;" that "his letter had removed all "these impressions;" that "he entertained no "doubt of his attachment to the holy see;" that "he wished all others were as well persuaded of this as himself; he exhorts him to "write against the Lutherans, and invites him "to Rome."

* Ep. 1. l. 11. p. 251.

† Sadolet's letters, published at Rome in 1754, p. 397.

X.
Controversy between Erasmus and Luther.

We have mentioned, that Erasmus, as councellor of the emperor, attended the diet held at Cologne in 1520,. Frederick, the elector of Saxony, the zealous protector of Luther, was present at it; a conference took place between the elector, Spalatinus, the elector's almoner, and Erasmus.*

* Spalatinus gives the following account of it; (Jortin's Life of Erasmus, Vol. 1, p. 246.)—"When Charles V had "been just made emperor, and was at Cologn, Frederick, "elector of Saxony, who was there also, sent to Erasmus, "desiring that he would come to his lodgings. Erasmus "accordingly waited upon him. It was in December, and "he, and the prince, and Spalatinus, conversed together, "standing by the fire-side. The elector proposed to "Erasmus, that he should speak in the Dutch, which was "his native language; but Erasmus chose rather to speak "Latin; and the elector understood Latin, though he ans-"wered him by Spalatinus. The elector then desired Eras-"mus freely to give him his opinion concerning Luther. "Erasmus, says Spalatinus, pressing his lips close together, "stood musing, and delaying to give an answer; whilst Fre-"deric, as it was his way when he was discoursing earnestly "with any one, fixed his eyes steadily upon him, and "stared him full in the face. At last Erasmus brake out into "these words, Luther hath been guilty of two crimes; he "hath touched the Pope upon the crown, and the monks "upon the belly. Spalatinus adds, in another place, that "the elector smiled at the expression, and that he called it "afterwards to remembrance, a little before his death. He "says, that Erasmus at that time judged so favourably of "Luther's doctrine, that when he had taken leave of the "elector, and Spalatinus had conducted him back to the "house where he then lodged, he immediately sat down and

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At this conference, Erasmus avowed his opinion, that, on one hand, the Pope had acted with precipitation in issuing the bull; and that, on the other, Luther had shown great want of moderation in his conduct. The elector was much struck with the representations of Erasmus; and in a letter which he wrote about this time to Luther, recommends to him greater moderation. This letter was ascribed by Luther to the councils of Erasmus; it displeased him highly; he

" wrote some axioms, as he called them, and gave them to " Spalatinus. But soon after he sent a letter to Spalatinus, " entreating him earnestly to return him the manuscript, " lest Aleander should get a sight of it and do him an " ill office. The substance of these axioms was:—

" That good men, and lovers of the Gospel, were those " who had taken the least offence at Luther; that they were " much displeased at the cruelty of the bull, so unworthy of " the mild and merciful vicar of Jesus Christ; that two " universities had indeed condemned Luther, but had not " confuted him; that his request was very reasonable, to be " tried by unsuspected judges; that, he could not be sus- " pected of evil designs, since he sought for no profit and " advantage to himself; that the Pope was more solicitous " about his own glory, than about the honour of Jesus " Christ; that the treatises written against Luther were " disapproved even by those who dissented from Lu- " ther; that the world was now influenced with a vehement " love and longing for evangelical truth, and that such " a general disposition was not to be odiously checked and " oppressed; and, lastly, that it was very improper for " Charles to begin the exercise of his imperial power with " inauspicious acts of severity and violence."—The conference " took place on the 5th of December 1520.

called the moderation which Erasmus recommended, a dereliction of the cause of God.

X.

Controversy between Erasmus and Luther.

Many zealous Roman Catholics were equally scandalized at the tone of forbearance with which Erasmus expressed himself, and filled every part of Europe with their accusations of him. He defended himself in several publications; they form the subject of two remarkable letters written by him; one to the bishop of Tuy; the other to the chancellor Gattemare: he professes in each pure and unsophisticated catholicity, and the most perfect and unreserved submission to the Holy See.*

Pope Leo X was succeeded by Adrian VI. We have noticed, that he was a school-fellow of Erasmus at the college of Daventer. He afterwards taught Erasmus divinity in the university of Louvaine. Soon after his election to the tiara, he invited Erasmus to Rome; assured him of his protection, and of every facility for the prosecution of his studies; strongly recommending to him at the same time, to write some work, in which he should directly, and without any circuity, attack the erroneous doctrines of Luther. This was strongly pressed upon him, both by Henry VIII and cardinal Wolsey. Tunstall, bishop of London, joined in the recommendation, and urged him to it, by "the blood of

* P. 120 of the Letters of Sadolet, Ep. 11. l. 10. Ep. 41. l. 17.

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"Christ, and his hopes of eternal salvation." Letters to the same effect were addressed to him by several persons of the greatest distinction in Europe: they show his celebrity, and the importance attached to his opinions.

Assailed in this manner from every side, Erasmus undertook the work, and chose for his theme the most difficult of all subjects,—FREE WILL.

We feel that we are free: if we were not free, conscience could not exist; for, if a man had not freedom of action, conscience could not intimate to him, either its approbation or its disapprobation of his actions.

But *how* are we free? *How* is free will reconcilable, either with the influence of motive on will? or with the order of the universe prescribed by the Deity? or with his prescience? For that, which his infinite mind prescribes or foresees, must be fixed.

The question soon engaged the attention of the Greek philosophers; some advocated the free will of man; others denied it, and ascribed his actions to fate or destiny; a being or an energy which they were never able to describe or define. Among the Jews, the Sadducees embraced the former opinion; the Pharisees, the latter. Among the Mahometans, a like division prevailed between the followers of Omar and those of Ali.

X. Controversy between Erasmus and Luther.

Unfortunately, the Christians engaged in these perplexing speculations; their disputes chiefly turned on the effect, which motive, suggested by grace or the divine favour, has upon will. Does it necessitate? then, there is no free-will. Does it not necessitate? then, there is a good, of which God is not the author.

The dispute was brought to issue by *Pelagius* and his disciples. They held that man acts independently of divine grace, both in the choice and execution of good. Against them, St. *Augustine* was the strenuous asserter of grace. St. *Thomas* gave a new form to his doctrines, and in the opinion of many, improved upon them.

The Catholic church maintains that divine grace begins, advances, and brings to perfection every thing in man which can be justly called good: still that man co-operates with Grace. In their explanations of this doctrine, some followers of St. *Thomas* used language, which was said by their adversaries to elevate grace too much at the expense of free-will. *Molina*, a Spanish jesuit, and some who followed him, used language which was said by the Thomists, to elevate free will too much at the expense of grace. But both professed to adhere to the doctrines of the church, and the church tolerated the opinions of both. *Luther* maintained, with the Whitfieldian methodists, the irresistible operation of grace.

CHAP. X.

1524.

Against Luther's sentiments on this subject, Erasmus composed his "*Treatise upon Free Will*" "*Diatribe de Libero Arbitrio.*" He contended not for the freedom of the human will in a higher degree than was admitted by Luther. It pleased all his friends, and some even of his enemies. Luther replied to it by his treatise "*De Servo Arbitrio,*" or, "*Will in Bondage,*" with a wonderful degree of ferocity. Even his friends lamented the savageness of his style. Erasmus rejoined by his "*Hyperaspistes.*" This closed the regular controversy between Luther and Erasmus; but each wrote several letters to justify his own conduct, and criminate that of his adversary. The eminence of the combatants gave publicity to them, and transmitted them to posterity.

In respect to the question itself, it cannot be said that the productions of either threw any light upon it. They left it where they took it up:

> And found no end in wandering mazes lost.
>
> MILTON.

In fact the subject is above human reason.

The day will come when "the Almighty will "be judged, and will overcome;—"* when the

* Psalm 50, v. 5. The best discussion of the subject, which has fallen into the hands of the writer, is Bourdaloue's Sermon *sur la Predestination.* Every friend of genius must lament, that it was not seen by the amiable and unfortunate Cooper.

X. Controversy between Erasmus and Luther.

secret of his councils will be unfolded, and the wisdom and goodness of them appear manifest to all.

An interesting account of this controversy is given in the fifth volume of Doctor Joseph Milner's "History of the Church." The Doctor evidently belongs to the Whitfieldian school: he may therefore be suspected of some partiality in the account which he gives of the part taken by Luther in the controversy. Doctor Jortin says, that "Erasmus had the advantage over "Luther in power of reason, Scripture, pri- "mitive Christianity, and the Greek fathers." Unfortunately for Erasmus, neither the works we have mentioned, nor the hatred of him, which the Lutherans expressed on every occasion, could moderate the bitter animosity with which he was pursued by many members of his own communion. To present even a short view of the controversies to which their abuse of him gave rise, and of Erasmus's answers to them, would require a work much larger than the whole of the present volume, and would contain few interesting particulars. That Erasmus had, in some measure, provoked these insults and attacks by his offensive satires and ironies, cannot be denied. But his services to religion and literature should not have been forgotten:——A per-

* Vol. II, p. 271.

CHAP. X. 1524. Æt. 57.

son who courted the favours of the celebrated Lord Bolingbroke, took occasion to mention before him some failing of the Duke of Marlborough, his lordship's opponent: "Sir!" exclaimed Lord Bolingbroke, "The Duke of "Marlborough was so great a man, that I have "forgotten all his faults."

Add to this,—that Erasmus repeatedly and explicitly disclaimed in his works, every opinion that was contrary to the faith or doctrines of the Catholic church; and that he could enumerate among his defenders many of the most illustrious of her children.

CHAPTER XI.

ERASMUS AT FRIBOURGH.

1529—1535. *Æt.* 62—68.

THE establishment of the Protestant religion at Bâsle, occasioned Erasmus to remove from it to the Roman Catholic town of Fribourgh. He repeatedly mentions that it gave him great concern to quit Bâsle: he was treated in it with great respect by all ranks of persons. It was the residence of Froben, his favourite printer and confidential friend. At this very time Froben was employed in printing Erasmus's edition of the works of St. Augustine.

Bâsle also possessed many friends of Erasmus; among them was Œcolampadius. A letter* written by him in his early years to Erasmus, expresses, according to the bishop of Meaux, the purest piety. He describes himself in it, as writing at the foot of a cross, before which he was accustomed to pray, and he breathes such tender sentiments of devotion upon the ineffable charity of Jesus Christ, which the picture brought

* Epist. 42, 43. l. 7. Var. l. 1. p 244.

CHAP. XI. 1529—1535. Æt. 62—68.

to his mind, that it is impossible not to be affected by the perusal of them. He afterwards entered into a religious order: before he took that step, he advised with Erasmus upon it. Erasmus wrote to him, that "he was far from dissuading persons from entering into religion." "How "happy is this Christian philosophy of the Gos-"pel!" exclaims Erasmus,* where such serious "efforts are made to disengage the soul from "the passions of the world, and to prepare her "for an union of Christ, when he shall call her "to him." Erasmus and Œcolampadius had long lived in intimacy, but not without those jealousies which, when they do not proceed too far, serve as a zest to friendship. Œcolampadius did not lessen, by his adoption of the Lutheran principles, the interest which Erasmus took in his welfare. When he married, Erasmus observed* that, "what was generally called Lu-"ther's tragedy, should be rather called his "comedy, as the bustle generally ended in a "marriage." When the intention of Erasmus to quit Basle became generally known, the magistrates used every means in their power to prevail upon him to remain among them. They deputed Œcolampadius to him; a long interview took place between them in Froben's garden; it did not induce Erasmus to alter his design;

* Epist. 27. l. 13. † Epist. 1. l. 19.

but it was agreed that their friendship should continue inviolate; each being at liberty to speak and write upon matters of religion as he should think proper. XL. Erasmus at Fribourgh.

When Erasmus quitted Bâsle, some of its principal inhabitants escorted him out of the town. The magistrates of Fribourgh, if he had permitted it, would have given him a public reception. He reached it towards the end of the month of April 1529.

The life which he led at Fribourgh was perfectly agreeable to his inclinations: he had full liberty to prosecute his studies; two or three persons of acknowledged merit dined at his table every day, and he reckoned several distinguished characters among his visitors. They always consulted his convenience, and retired as it appeared to suit him. He seems to have led that kind of life, and to have enjoyed that personal consideration at Fribourgh, which Mr. Gibbon did at Lausanne, and has so agreeably described.

We have mentioned Lord Mountjoy's munificent patronage of Erasmus: He found about this time another illustrious patron, in the Earl of Ormond, the grandfather of the celebrated Ann Bouleyn. To him Erasmus dedicated the most pious of all his publications, "*A Treatise on the proper Preparation for Death.*" His

CHAP. XI. 1529—1535. Æt. 62—68.

thoughts were employed on that subject, when he received a letter from his lordship, requesting him to publish some devotional work, fit for common use. He accordingly composed this treatise, and dedicated it to his lordship. Erasmus also dedicated to his lordship, an "*Explandtion of the 23d Psalm;*" and his "*Explanation of the Creed of the Apostles,*" in the form of a catechism. Cardinal Sadolet* addressed to Erasmus a complimentary letter upon the last: he tells him, that "he had read it "with great pleasure;" and that, "by it, he had "stopped the mouth of that race of men who "seek to acquire unjust praise by calumny. "Your excellent virtue and character," he adds, "are a sufficient refutation of them." Erasmus contended, that the Creed of the Apostles expressed the heads of their doctrine, but denied that it was composed by them. This opinion was then severely criticised, but few now maintain the contrary. †

* Sadoleti, Epist. 5, l. 4; cited by Burigni, vol. ii, p. 355.

† *On the origination of the Creed of the Apostles*, there are different opinions: some writers have supposed, that the Apostles before their dispersion, agreed on its several articles. An ancient tradition recorded by Rufinus, mentions, that each of the Apostles contributed to it a sentence; and a writer, under the name of St. Austin, proceeds so far, as to assign to each Apostle the article which he contributed. This tradition, and still more the improvement on it, have greatly the air of a fable: and even the opinion, which

XI. Erasmus at Fribourgh.

The health of Erasmus was always very delicate, and he now began to feel the infirmities of old age. He was afflicted by an imposthume, and the worst was feared, when he was cured of it in an extraordinary manner.

Pfettercorn, who had recently left Judaism, and embraced the Catholic religion, had, with the zeal of a new convert, recommended to the Emperor Maximilian, that all the writings of the Jewish rabbies should be burnt. Against this, Reuchlin, a gentleman consummately skilled in the Hebrew, Greek, and Latin languages, and who, according to a custom very prevalent

generally attributes the symbol to the Apostles, is open to serious objection. If it were their composition, it seems unaccountable, that it should not be mentioned in the Acts of the Apostles; that no reference to it should be found in any of the apostolic epistles; that it was not included among the canonical writings; and that, when the Council of Ephesus, and afterwards the Council of Chalcedon, proscribed all creeds except the Nicene, neither excepted the symbol of the Apostles from the general proscription. Without discussing any of these opinions, it is sufficient for the present purpose to state, in the words of Mr. Grabe, adopted by Mr. Bingham, (Ecc. Ant. Book X, l. 4.), "that the symbol "of the Apostles unquestionably contains the articles of "faith solemnly professed by the first Christians, in their "confessions, in the Apostles' days, by their authority, or "at least with their approbation." It was called by several titles: in the course of time, it acquired the name, both in the eastern and in the western churches, of *the Symbol of the Apostles*; but in England it is more frequently called *the Apostles' creed.*

CHAP. XI. 1509—1517. Æt. 43—52.

among men of letters in those times, had taken the name of Capnion,* entered a wise protestation: but several silly persons took part with Pfeffercorn, and heaped the coarsest abuse upon Reuchlin. By the celebrated "*Literæ Obscurorum Virorum,*" ("*Letters of obscure Personages*"), these ignoble adversaries of Reuchlin were turned into the greatest ridicule. The perusal of these letters threw Erasmus into a fit of immoderate laughter; the imposthume burst, and the laugher was cured.

Erasmus, in his character of councillor of the emperor, was invited to the diet of Augsburg. As it is not sufficiently known, how nearly Catholics and Protestants than approached to an accommodation upon their religious differences, the writer begs leave to invite his readers to peruse the short account published by him of this important circumstance, in his "Confessions of Faith,"† and inserted in the Appendix to the present pages.

* *Reuch*, in German, Καπνος, in Greek, signify "smoke."

† Historical and literary account of the formularies, confessions of faith, and symbolic books of the Roman Catholic, Greek, and principal Protestant churches, 1 vol. 8vo. 1816.

In this work the writer has inserted "*An Essay on the Re-union of Christians,*" containing, 1. A general view of the attempts made after the Reformation, to unite the Lutheran and Calvinist churches: 2. Some account of the attempts made at different times by the sovereigns of France for the conversion of their Protestant subjects: 3. The cor-

During the diet, a singular spectacle was exhibited. At a grand repast, at which the emperor Charles V, Ferdinand his brother, several princes of the empire, other distinguished personages, and a great concourse of people attended, a man appeared in the costume of a doctor: he carried a faggot; some twigs were strait, and some were bent; a label upon his

Erasmus at Fribourgh.

respondence of Bossuet and Leibniz, under the auspices of Louis XIV, for the re-union of the Lutheran church to the church of Rome: 4. Some account of an attempt made in the reign of George I, to re-unite to her the church of England: 7. And some general remarks on the re-union of Christians.

A re-union of Christians in the belief of *all* the essential doctrines of religion, is not to be expected; but, to use the golden words of Mr. Vansittart (Lord Bexley), in his excellent "Letter to the Bishop of Llandaff and John "Coker, esq."—"There is an inferior degree of re-union, "more within our prospect, and yet, perhaps, as perfect as "human infirmity allows us to hope for; wherein, though "all difference of opinion should not be extinguished, yet "they may be refined from all party prejudices and interested views, so softened by the spirit of charity and "mutual concession, and so controlled by agreement on the "leading principles and zeal for the general interests of "Christianity, that no sect or persuasion should be tempted "to make religion subservient to secular views; or to employ "political power to the prejudice of others.—The existance "of dissent, will, perhaps, be inseparable from religious "freedom, so long as the mind of man is liable to error; but "it is not unreasonable to hope, that hostility may cease, "though perfect agreement cannot be established. IF WE "CANNOT RECONCILE ALL OPINIONS, LET US RECONCILE ALL HEARTS."

CHAP. XI. 1529—1535. Æt. 62—68.

back contained the word, "*Reuchlin.*" He threw the faggot upon the floor and walked away. Another, in the dress of a priest, then appeared; a label upon his back contained the word "*Erasmus:*" he endeavoured, for a time, to put the twigs in order, and to straiten those that were bent: not succeeding, he got out of humour, and walked away. A person in the habit of a monk then entered; on a label upon his back was written the word, "*Luther;*" he put some coals under the twigs, set fire to them, and walked away. Then a man in the guise of an emperor entered: he drew his sword, stirred the fire, increased the flame, and walked away. Then, a person in a pontifical dress entered; on a label upon his back was written the word, "*Leo;*" he held two vases, one filled with oil, the other with water; he looked frightened, hastily seized the vase of oil, and poured it upon the flames; they suddenly rose to a great height, and he walked away. The actors in this scene were never discovered.

About this time, Sadolet, the Bishop of Carpentras, addressed a letter * to Erasmus, recommending to him a conduct, which it is greatly to be lamented, he did not adopt and persevere in, from his earliest years. "Your learning "and good intentions," he tells Erasmus,

* Epist. 11. l. 25.

" cannot be sufficiently praised. I only wish, " and I pray to God that I may be able to " persuade you, that you should renounce all " disputes; and that you do not disturb received " opinions; for although what you say of them " be not absolutely contrary to true piety, it is " more prudent to be silent upon them. What " obliges a man of your eminent learning to " enter the lists with persons inferior to you in " every kind of merit, while the Scriptures hold " out to you a vast field in which you may dis- " play all the riches of your genius?"

Erasmus replied to Sadolet;* Sadolet returned to the charge.† He observes to Erasmus, in a second letter, that " some things are pious " in themselves, and abuses of them only repre- " hensible. Such," he says, " are devotions to " some saints; and too great a number of " pictures and images in churches; these should " not be quarrelled with; they are not contrary " to faith: it might be better that the mind " should be occupied upon Christ alone, but all " persons are not capable of this sublime piety." Sadolet so highly esteemed Erasmus, that he had recommended Clement VIII to confer upon him a considerable benefice in Germany.

It is impossible to read, and not to admire

* Epist. 12. l. 25. † Epist. 21. l. 25.

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the answer of Erasmus.* He notices the two observations of the prelate. "I plead guilty," he says, "to both. I have done many things "which I wish I had not done. I wish to "God that you had sooner given me these "councils, or that I had received them from "persons who resembled you. I now experi-"mentally feel, that the great applauses which "I have received, were of no great utility to "me. But some calumnies are of such a nature "that it is an impiety not to deny the charges "which they import."

Incredible as it might be thought, it appears by some letters written by Erasmus about this time, and from other circumstances, that he gave easy credit to tales of witchcraft. This may be thought surprising; but, is it not equally surprising that Lord Hale is justly chargeable with the same credulity?

The house of Erasmus at Fribourgh, adjoined a convent of friars. "We live," he writes to one of his friends, "in great harmony; I hear in "my chamber, the psalmody of the friars, as "well as if I was in their church. There is no "malice among them;" one of their preachers, "a good and modest man, occasionally in his "sermons, mentions Erasmus with honour."

Such was the high esteem in which Erasmus

* Epist. 21. l. 25.

was held at this time, that invitations and presents were sent to him from every quarter. King Ferdinand, the Queen Dowager of Hungary, then governess of the Netherlands, the Cardinal of Trent, Fugger, the richest merchant in Europe, earnestly entreated him to reside with them. When he intimated the slightest intention to accept any of their offers, it was a subject of triumph to the person who made it.

Erasmus was satisfied, upon the whole, with his residence at Fribourgh, but foresaw that if, what was then very probable, a war should break out between the Emperor and the King of France, Fribourgh would become its first theatre.

CHAPTER XII.

THE RETURN OF ERASMUS TO BÂSLE. HIS DEATH.

1. *His return to Bâsle.*
2. *Eulogy of Bishop Fisher and Sir Thomas More.*
3. *Intention of Pope Paul III to confer the dignity of Cardinal upon Erasmus.*
4. *His last Illness and Death.*
5. *His Will.*
6. *Honours rendered at Bâsle and Rotterdam, to his Memory*
7. *Principal Biographers of Erasmus.*
8. *Editions of his Works.*
9. *Catalogue of them.*

1535, 1536, *Æt.* 68, 69.

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1. WHILE Erasmus was in this disposition of mind, the necessity of attending to the publication of one of his works, then in the press of Froben, obliged him to *return to Basle.*

2. There, he was informed of the fate of his two friends, Cardinal Fisher and Sir Thomas

More:—All the readers of these pages know, that these illustrious personages were condemned and executed for their refusals to take the oath of supremacy, prescribed by Henry VIII. *Fisher* suffered first: both the friends and the enemies of the Reformation united in his praise. Erasmus repeatedly represents him as "a man of consum-"mate integrity, profound learning, incredible "sweetness of temper, and grandeur of soul." For a long time, he was greatly favoured by Henry; that monarch frequently called Fisher the honour of his nation; he asked Cardinal Pole, on his return from the Continent, "if he had found, "in all his travels, a person comparable in virtue "or learning, with the Bishop of Rochester?"

XII. 2. Eulogy of Bishop Fisher and Sir Thomas More.

Nothing is more pleasing than the picture drawn by Erasmus, of the domestic circle of Sir *Thomas More*; of his playfulness, simplicity and universal beneficence. "More," says Erasmus, "did not know what a stranger was: "most are kind only to their own countrymen; "the Frenchman to the French, the German to "the Germans, the Scot to the Scots: with "More, it was otherwise; the Hibernian, the "German, even the Scythian and the Indian, "found More their friend. His general be-"nignity had so much endeared him to all, that "his death was deplored as that of a father "or a brother:" "I, myself," says Erasmus,

CHAP. XII. 1535—1536. Æt. 68—69.

"have seen it bewailed with tears, by several, "who had neither seen, nor had the slightest "intercourse with him."

3. On the death of Pope Clement the VII, Paul III was chosen his successor. Erasmus immediately addressed to his Holiness a letter of congratulation: nothing could be more kind or more honourable to Erasmus than the Pope's reply. It is dated on the last day of May 1535.* Paul assures Erasmus in it, of the great pleasure which his letter had given him, as he had ever esteemed him for his great learning and reputation. "We are not ignorant," says his Holiness, "that your excellent doctrine, joined to equal "eloquence, may be useful to us in destroying "the new errors. Having therefore resolved, "in conformity with the pious advice which you "have given us, to practice moderation, to be "accommodating, to concede, and to dedicate "ourselves entirely to the support of the cause "of faith, and the establishment of tranquillity "in the church; we have seen, with great joy, "that a man of your great judgment, and so much "attached to us, will give us his advice upon "the line of conduct which we should pursue; "and that, while your councils cannot but con-"tribute to our glory, you offer to us your aid

* L. 27. Epist. 26.

"and services. We therefore exhort you, my "son!—you, on whom God has bestowed so "much talent and knowledge, to assist us in "these our holy labours; this, you are well "enabled to do, by aiding, in common with us, "the Catholic cause, by your words and writ- "ings, both before and after the council, which, "with the help of God, we propose to assemble. "By this last act of piety, you will confound "your calumniators; you will justify your apo- "logists; and, although the reward which you "may expect from God, ought to content you, "we will make you sensible that we do not "forget your good actions; and are not un- "grateful for them. You will learn more par- "ticulars of our intentions from Lewis Berus, "whom we have seen, and to whom we have "listened with pleasure, both on account of "his own merit, and in consequence of your "recommendations." Lewes Berus was a canon of Basle, and an intimate friend of Erasmus.

XII. 3. Intention of Pope Paul III. to confer the dignity of Cardinal upon Erasmus.

Two months after writing this letter, the Pope, by a brief, dated the 1st of August 1535, nominated Erasmus to the provostship of Daventer. His Holiness declares in it, that "taking into "consideration the probity and piety of Eras- "mus, his eminence in different branches of "knowledge, and the great services which he "had rendered to the apostolical see, in attack-

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" ing with such great strength the deserters of " the faith, he appoints him to the provostship " of Daventer." He tells him, that " he con- " fers it upon him with great pleasure, and as " the commencement of the favours which he " intended to bestow upon him, as rewards of " his virtue." It was supposed to produce an income of 600 crowns.

Here, the Pope did not mean to stop: he proposed to confer upon Erasmus benefices that should produce a yearly income of 3,000 ducats, to enable him to support with decency, *the dignity of Cardinal*, which he designed to confer upon him. For this, we have the testimony of Rhenanus, who relates the fact in the account which he published of the life of Erasmus, four years after his decease; and in which he calls upon the emperor, Charles V, to warrant its truth. "It is also confirmed," says Burigni,* " by John Herold, by Boissard, by Melchior " Adam, by Bulliard, and an infinity of others." Erasmus himself mentions it in several of his letters. He writes thus, in a letter dated the 24th of August 1535: " I have lately received " from Paul III, † the most courteous and hon- " nourable letter that can be conceived. By the " advice of Lewis Berus, a famous divine, I had " written to his Holiness. I have been assured,

* Vol. II. p. 389. † Epist. 28. l. 27.

" that, before the Pope answered my letter, he " spoke of me in the most honourable terms; " and that, having taken a resolution to make a " promotion of some respectable persons to the " dignity of Cardinal, to be sent to the council " proposed to be convened, he had mentioned " Erasmus! Objections were raised from my " bad health and slender income; for a regula- " tion is said to exist, which excludes all persons " from the dignity of Cardinal, who have not " an income of 3,000 ducats. To remove this " objection, it was resolved to give me bene- " fices of that amount; but this would be toss- " ing a jewel to a cat. I have a friend, at Rome, " who is very active on this occasion, although " I have often written to him, that I will not " have either benefice or pension. I have not " many days to live: I expect death every hour, " and I even wish for it, so great are my suffer- " ings." He writes to the same effect in a letter* to the Bishop of Cracow. In one to Goclinius, he informs him that six cardinals, in conjunction with the Archbishop of Portugal, were then exerting themselves to obtain for him the Roman purple. Cardinal Bembo wrote to him† on the 20th of June, 1535, that " he " saw with extreme satisfaction, that his sin-

XII. 3. Intention of Pope Paul III to confer the dignity of Cardinal upon Erasmus.

* Epist. 25, l. 27. Epist. 70. l. 30.
† Epist. 40. l. 27.

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"gular learning, his piety, and those continual "labours which had almost caused his death, "but which had so enlightened the age, were "viewed as they ought to be by the Pope; he "therefore hoped, that if no obstacle arose from "his health, he would soon receive from his "Holiness that which was most eminent in dig-"nity and honour." Sadolet, who was created cardinal in 1536, intimated to Erasmus that honour and eminence would soon attend him. Still Erasmus persisted in declining both the provostship and the cap. This made an Italian say,* that, "however Erasmus might be praised "for his wit, it was evident that he had none; "for how could any one have wit who refused "that, which, the ardent desires of all for it, "proved to be so highly valuable?" But Erasmus was born with a love of independence and literary occupation; it grew with his growth, strengthened with his strength, and dwelt in him to the last. "Liberty above all things," the motto of Selden, was also the motto of Erasmus.

* Epist. 54. l. 27.—We have stated the evidence brought by the friends of Erasmus, to prove that the see of Rome intended to confer upon him the dignity of cardinal; but considering the tenor of a great proportion of his writings, we think it improbable that the Roman Pontiff would have conferred this dignity upon him, without some preliminary explanation and adjustment.

After all, what real honour could any dignity confer on Erasmus? "*Qui ne sçaurait être "Erasme, doit être Evèque,*" says La Bruyère; and the sentence is become a proverb. XII. 3. Death of Erasmus.

4. But the *shades of death* were now descending upon him; still, he continued his labours for the advancement of sacred and profane literature. It is inconceivable how many works he composed or edited during the two last years of his life, afflicted as he was during all the time, both with the gout and gravel. He was uneasy at his detention at Bâsle, and wished to be removed from it.

While he was in this state, Boniface Amerbachius, Jerome Froben, and Nicholas Episcopius, called upon him: he received them with his usual civility and cheerfulness, but announced to them that he had not many days to live. He expired in the night of the 11th or 12th of July 1536, exhibiting, throughout these awful moments, truly Christian piety and resignation. "His last words were, O! Lord! I entreat your "mercy: Lord Jesus! deliver me. O! Lord! "end my sufferings! O Lord! have compassion "upon me." With these words on his lips, he expired, having preserved his reason to the last moment.

Both Protestants and Catholics commented on the circumstance of his dying in a Protestant

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town, and consequently without the spiritual helps of the Catholic religion: but it is most evident that he meant his stay at Bâsle to be temporary, and intended to settle finally in a Catholic country.

The death of Erasmus was a subject of general concern throughout the Christian world. At Bâsle, he was honoured by a public mourning; most persons of consideration in that town showed their regard for his memory, by visiting and viewing for the last time his mortal remains.

He was buried in the Catholic church at Bâsle, near the choir, in a chapel which had been dedicated to the Virgin Mother of God. The first magistrate, most of the senators, and all the professors and students followed his funeral: he had reached his seventieth year.

Never did a man possess admirers more numerous, or of a higher distinction. This, his printed epistolary correspondence abundantly shows: he contributed more than any other person to the restoration of letters. That his learning was immense, that his taste was exquisite, and that his industry was marvellous, his friends and adversaries agreed: the former admit that, on too many occasions he expressed himself inaccurately and inadvertently; the latter, that he was often blamed without reason.

"Erasmus," says M. de Burigni,* "was cer- XVI. 43
"tainly one of those men who have possessed Death of Erasmus.
"the greatest wit, and he rendered the greatest
"service to his age: but he did not always ex-
"press himself with wisdom and discretion.
"His works contain many rash and bold, and
"some erroneous propositions: but he is not to
"be treated upon this account as an heretic.†
"To call a person an heretic with justice, it is
"not sufficient, according to the catechism of
"Trent, that he errs in faith; he must also
"despise the authority of the church, and main-
"tain his errors with obstinacy. Now, no
"person was ever less obstinate or more sub-
"missive to the church than Erasmus."‡

5. *The will of Erasmus* is written in the Latin language, and may be thus translated:—"In "the name of the Holy Trinity, I, Desiderius "Erasmus, in virtue of a diploma from his "Imperial Majesty, a brief of the Pope, and "the permission of the magnificent magistrate "of the city of Bâsle, renew my last will, by "this writing under my hand, which I wish to "be performed; declaring all contrary dispo-"sitions made by me to be null. Being per-

* Vie d'Erasme, Vol. II. p. 543.
† Part I. Art. 9, 12, 2.
‡ Ep. 501, 547, 670, 905.

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"suaded that I have no lawful heir, I institute "Bonafacius Amerbacius for my universal lega- "tory. I appoint Jerome Froben and Nicolas "Episcopius, my executors. A considerable "time ago, I sold my library to John Baron of "Lasco, a Polonese. According to the con- "tract between us, it is to be delivered to him, "on his paying 200 florins to my heir. If he "refuse to accede to these conditions, or die "before me, my heir may dispose of my books "as he shall think proper. I bequeath my "golden watch to Lewis Berus; a cup of gold "and a fork of gold to Beatus Rhenanus; 150 "crowns of gold to Peter Vetereus; as many to "Philip Montanus. I bequeath to my servant "Lambert, 200 florins of gold, if he be in my "service at the time of my decease, unless I "should, in my life-time, have given him the "amount of this sum. I bequeath to John "Brische, a bottle of silver; to Paul Volsin, a "hundred florins of gold; to Sigismond Telle- "nius, 150 ducats; to John Erasmius Froben, "two rings; one without a stone, the other a tur- "quoise. I give to John Froben, all my clothes "and furniture, in wool, linen, or wood. I give "to his wife a ring, on which a woman looking "behind her is engraved. I bequeath to Nicho- "las Episcopius, a goblet with its lid, upon the "foot of which some verses are written. I

"bequeath to his wife, Justina, two rings, one a diamond, the other a small turquoise. I bequeath to Everhard Goclinius, a goblet of silver, on the top of which the image of Fortune is engraved. If any of my legatees die before me, I direct, that what I have bequeathed to him shall return to my heir, who, in addition to what I have given him by will, shall take my remaining goblets, rings, and other things of the same kind, and also the medals, cruxiadas of Portugal, the medals in which are represented the heads of the Kings of Portugal, and Servatinus Bonerus, and other like things, and moreover, my duple and quadruple ducats. As to the money deposited by me with Everhard Goclinius, my heir is to permit him to make the disposition of it in Brabant, which I have recommended to him. If any thing of mine remains in the hands of Erasmus Schetius, my heir will ask it of him; in concert with my executors, he shall dispose of it and all the residue of my property, for the benefit of aged and infirm poor, in marrying young girls, and in educating young men of good hopes, and generally for the benefit of any other person whom he shall think deserving of assistance. I have written this instrument, containing my last intentions, with my own

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"hand, that it may obtain greater credit; and "I have sealed it with the god *Terminus*, my "true seal. Done in the house of Jerome "Frober, the 12th February 1540."

We may conjecture, from the general tenor of the will of Erasmus, that he died in easy circumstances. Fellenius, as he is cited by Burigni, informs us, that Erasmus was reported to have died possessed of 7,000 ducats.

6. Amerbachius, one of the executors appointed by Erasmus, caused a bust of him to be placed over his tomb, with a laudatory inscription.

His memory is yet in such esteem at Basle, that strangers are taken to see the house in which he died. His name was given by the magistrates to a college, in which theology is taught, and the assemblies of the academy are sometimes held. The magistrates bought his cabinet in 1661, and presented it to the academy. It contains his seal, his sword, his knife, his pincers, his will written with his own hand, and his portrait by Holbein.

Rotterdam, the place of his birth, showed equal respect to his memory. On the house in which he was born, the magistrates caused verses highly complimentary to his memory, to be inscribed.

When Philip II, in 1549, announced his in-

tention to make his solemn entry into Rotterdam, the senate, in order to receive his majesty with greater solemnity, and to raise the town in his opinion, caused a statue of Erasmus, as large as life, to be erected upon the house in which he was born. He was habited as an ecclesiastic, with a pen in his right hand, and a scroll in the left, which contained an inscription. The King, the Queen Dowager of Hungary, and the nobles in their suite, visited the statue, and afterwards the house in which Erasmus was born.

XII. 6. Honours rendered at Basle and Rotterdam, to his Memory.

The statue, thus suddenly erected, was of wood. In 1557, one of stone was substituted for it, by the magistrates. Some time afterwards, the Spanish garrison quartered at Rotterdam, threw down the statue and flung it into the Meuse.

In 1562, after the Dutch had expelled the Spaniards from Rotterdam, the magistrates caused a statue of Erasmus, as large as life, to be cast in copper, and to be placed on a pedestal, surrounded by an iron balustrade. It was the work of Keyser, and is greatly admired. Knight's life of Erasmus contains a good engraving of it. The inhabitants are extremely careful that it should be seen by all strangers of distinction who visit the town. Doctor Knight's Life of Erasmus contains engravings of Holbein's portrait of him; of the house in which

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he was born; of the Queen's college, which contained his room; of the parish church of Aldington, of which he was rector; the inscription upon his monument at Bâsle, and the inscription upon his statue at Roterdam.

It remains to mention the *principal biographers of Erasmus*, and the editions of his works.

A succinct account of his own life, until his 50th year, was written by himself, *in a letter to Grunnius*, one of his most intimate friends. *His letters to Grunnius and Servatius* mention some particulars of his early years. *Beatus Rhenanus* prefixed to his edition of the works of Erasmus, a biographical memoir of his life. All these accounts of him are inserted in the *London edition of his letters*, published in 1642, in one volume folio.

Bayle has assigned an article to Erasmus in his dictionary; it contains, as is usual with this author, a multitude of curious facts and observations, but to be read with caution.

While *Mr. le Clerc* was employed upon the edition of the works of Erasmus, he drew up *Chronological Minutes* of the principal events of his life, and inserted them in different volumes of the *Bibliothèque Choisie*. A translation of them, with considerable additional mat-

ter, forms the first volume of Doctor *Jortin's Life of Erasmus*, published by him in two volumes quarto, in 1757: the second volume contains remarks on the works of Erasmus, and extracts from his writings, and from those of other authors. Among them we find the *Julius Exclusus*, mentioned in a former page of the present work. An improved edition of the first volume of Doctor Jortin's work was published in 1808, in three volumes 8vo.

Dr. *Knight* published, in 1726, a *Life of Erasmus*, in one volume 8vo.; an useful work, but chiefly employed on that part of the life of Erasmus which he spent in England. *A Life of Dean Colet*, by the same writer, mentions many interesting particulars of Erasmus.

In 1757, M. de Burigny published in two vols. 8vo. "*Vie d'Erasme; dans laquelle on trouvera* "*l'histoire de plusieurs hommes célèbres, avec* "*lesquels il a été en liaison, l'analyse critique* "*de ses ouvrages, et l'examen impartial de ses* "*sentimens en matières de religion.*" The writer has been informed, that this work has appeared in Germany, with great additions; but whether in the original language, or in a German version, he has not discovered. The title of M. de Burigni's work promises much, and the work performs all that the title promises. "It is," says Mr. Gibbon, "a work of great

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"reading. M. de Burigni proposed connecting "with his history, a general account of the "sciences and religion in his time, and has "very deeply considered the subject. His style "and reflections are suited to a man of science "and modesty, who neither pretends to nor "possesses the least share of genius. Upon "the whole, the book is a perfect contrast to "the fashionable French ones; since it is use-"ful without being brilliant." Before a reader of the work of M. de Burigni acquiesces in the justice of Mr. Gibbon's denial of genius to him, it should be ascertained what "historical genius" means, in Mr. Gibbon's vocabulary.

A good account of Erasmus is inserted in the article appropriated to him by Mr. *Chalmers, in his Biographical Dictionary.*

All these, and some smaller works, relating to the life of Erasmus, were always under the eye of the present writer, when he wrote the preceding pages.

8.—Erasmus was much solicited in his lifetime, both by the learned and the patrons of literature, to publish a complete EDITION of his works; he himself wished to see it; and chalked out a plan for its execution. Such an edition was published four years after his decease, at the press of Froben, by Beatus Rhenanus, in

nine volumes, folio, at Basle. It was dedicated to the emperor Charles V. The dedicatory epistle bears date the 1st June 1516. XII. 8. Works of Erasmus.

This edition having become extremely rare, and bearing an enormous price, a new edition was published at Leyden, in 1703, in a very handsome manner, in 10 volumes, folio, under the inspection of Le Clerc; he accompanied it by short and instructive notes.

9.—The following is a CATALOGUE OF ALL THE WORKS OF ERASMUS, in the order in which they are printed in that noble edition of them:—

In the first tome.

De Copia Verborum ac Rerum, libri duo.
Theodori Gazæ Grammatices, libri duo.
Syntaxis. *Ex Luciano versa.*
Saturnalia.
Cronosolon, i. e. Leges Saturnalicie.
Epistolæ Saturnales.
De Luctu.
Abdicatus.
Icaromenippus.
Toxaris.
Alexander, sive Pseudomantis.
Somnium.
Timon.
Tyrannicida.

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Erasmi Declamatio Lucianicæ Respondens.
De iis, qui Mercede Conducti degunt.
Dialogi Amatorii XVIII.
Herculus Gallicus.
Eunuchus.
De Sacrificiis.
Lapithæ, sive Convivium.
De Astrologia.
De Ratione Conscribendi Epistolas.
De Pueris Statim ac Liberaliter Instituendis.
De Ratione Studii,
De laude Medicinæ.
Libanii aliquot Declamationes versæ.
Similium Liber unus.
Colloquiorum Liber.
De recta *Latini Græcique* Sermonis Pronuncatione.
Ciceronianus, sive de Optimo Dicendi Genere.
De Civilitate Morum Puerilium.
Galeni Exhortatio ad bonas Artes, versa per *Erasmum*.
Epitome in Elegantias *Laurentii Vallæ*.
Euripidis Hecuba et Iphigenia, Erasmo Interprete.
In Nucem Ovidii Commentarius.
Epigrammata Diversi Generis.

In the second tome.

Adagiorum Opus.

XIII.
Catalogue of his Works.

In the third tome.

Epistolarum Opus.

In the fourth tome.

E. Plutarcho Versa.
De Discrimine Adulatoris et Amici.
Quomodo utilitas Capiatur ab Inimicis.
De tuendâ bonâ Valetudine.
Principi Maxime Philosphandum.
Animi an Corporis Graviores morbi.
Num recte Dictum sit, Λάθε βιώσας.
De Cupiditate Divitiarum.
De Cohibendâ Iracundiâ.
De Curiositate.
De Vitiosâ Verecundiâ.
Apophthegmatum Libri VIII.
Moriæ Encomium, h. e. Stultitiæ laus.
Panegyricus ad Philippum Burgundionum Principem.
Ad eandem Carmen Gratulatorium.
Institutio Principis Christiani.
Isocrates de Regno Administrando.
De Morte, Declamatio.
Declamatiuncula Gratulatoria.
Pacis Querimonia.
Lingua.
Xenophontis Tyrannus.
De Senectute Carmen.

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In the fifth tome.

Enchiridion Militis Christiani.

Oratio de Virtute Amplectendâ.

Ratio Veræ Theologiæ.

Paraclesis.

Modus Confitendi.

Enarratio Psalmi, *Beatus Vir.*

Enarratio Psalmi, *Quare Fremuerunt Gentes.*

Paraphrasis in Psalmum, *Domine quid Multiplicati.*

Concio in Psalmum, *Quum Invocarem.*

De Puritate Ecclesiæ Christi.

Enarratio in Psalmum, *Dominus regit me.*

De bello *Turcis* Inferendo Consultatio.

Enarratio in Psalmum, *Benedicam Dominum in Omni temp.*

Enarratio in Psalmum, *Dixi Custodiam Vias meas.*

De amabili Ecclesiæ Concordia.

Concio in Psalmum LXXXV.

De misericordiâ Domini Concio.

Virginis et Martyris comparatio.

Concio de Puero *Jesu.*

Epistola Consolatoria ad Virgines sacras.

Christiani Matrimonii Institutio.

Vidua Christiana.

Ecclesiastes, sive de Ratione Concionandi.

Modus Orandi Deum.

Symbolum, sive Catechismus.

Precationes.

* Pæan Virgini Matri dicendus.

Oratio ad *Mariam* in rebus adversis.

De Contemptu Mundi.

De tædio et pavore Christi Disputatio.

De Preparatione ad Mortem.

Ode de Casâ Natalicià Jesu.

Epostulatio *Jesu* cum Homine Pereunte.

* Hymni varii.

Liturgia Virginis *Lauretanæ*.

Carmen votivum *Genovesæ*.

Commentarius in duos Hymnos Prudentii, de Natali et Epiphaniâ pueri *Jesu*.

Christiani Hominis Institutum Carmine.

Epitaphia in *Odilian*.

In the sixth tome.

Novam Testamentum cum Annotationibus.

In the seventh tome.

Paraphrases in totum N. Test. exceptâ Apocalypsi.

In the eighth tome.

Ex *Chrysostomo* Versa.

Adversus *Judæos*, Homiliæ v.

De Lazaro et Divite Homiliæ iv.

De Visione Homiliæ v.

De Philogonio Martyre Homilia i.

De Orando Deum, libri ii.

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De David et Saule, libri III.

Quum Presbyter esset Designatus, Homilia I.

In Psalmum, *Cantate Domino.*

Quum *Sarioninus et Aurelianus* acti essent exillium Hom. I.

De fide *Annæ* Homiliæ II.

Commentariorum in *Acta* Apostolorum Homiliæ IV.

Commentariorum in Secundam ad Corinthios, Homiliæ VII.

In Epistolam ad *Galatas.*

In Epistolam ad *Phillipenses* Homiliæ II.

Ex Athanasio.

De Sancto Spiritu Epistolæ II.

Contra *Eusebium* de Nicæna Synodo Epistolæ II.

Apologetici duo Adversus eos qui Calumniabantur, quod in persecutione fugisset.

De Passione Domini, Homilia I.

De hoc, quod Scriptum est, *Euntes in vicum quod contra vos est.*

De Virginitate.

De Peccato in Spiritum.

De Spiritu Sancto.

De Origene.

De vitâ, Phrasi et Operibus Origenis.

Fragmentum in Evangelium *Matthæi.*

Ex Basilio.

Principium Esaiæ.
De Spiritu Sancto Liber.
De Laudibus Jejunii, Homiliæ II.

In the ninth tome.

Epistola Apologetica in *Dorpium.*
Ad *Jacobum Fabrum Stapulensem.*
Ad *Jacobum Latomum.*
Ad *Mensem* pro Declamatione Matrimonii.
Apologia de, *In Principio erat Sermo.*
Apologiæ tres Notationes *Edvardi Lei.*
Ad *Jacobum Lopim* Stunicam.
Adversus *Sanctium Caranzam.*
De loco, *Omnes quidem Resurgemus.*
In Natalem *Beddam.*
Adversus *Petrum Sutorem* Cartusianum.
* Appendix de Scriptis *Clithovei.*
Declarationes adversus Theologos Parisienses.
Ad *Phimosthomum* de Divortio.
Ad Juvenem Gerontodidascalum.
Ad Monachos quosdam *Hispanos.*
Ad *Albertum* Pium Carporum Principem.
De esu Carnium.
De libero Arbitrio Collatio.
Hyperaspistæ Diatribes, Libri II.
Purgatio adversus Epistolam *Lutheri.*
* Detectio Præstigiarum Libelli cujusdam.
Adversus pseudo—Evangelicos Epistola.

XII. 9. Ad *Eleutherium* Epistola.
1535—1536. Ad *Grunnium.*
Æt. 68—69. Ad fratres Germaniæ inferioris.
Spongia adversus Aspergines Hutteni.
Pantalabus, sive Adversus Febricitantem.
Adversus Mendacium et Obtrectationem.
Antibarbarorum liber.
Ad quosdam Græculos Epistola.
Responsio ad *Petri Curtii* defensionem.
De Termino, Epistola.

APPENDIX,

REFERRED TO IN PAGE 200.

I.

THE CONFESSION OF AUGSBURGH.

From the Writer's Historical and Literary Account of the Formularies, Confessions of Faith, or Symbolic Books of the Roman Catholic, Greek, and principal Protestant Churches.

I. The Confession of Augsburgh.

IN 1530, a diet of the German princes was convened by the Emperor Charles V, to meet in that city, for the express purpose of pacifying the religious troubles, by which most parts of Germany were then distracted. "In his journey towards Augsburgh," says Doctor Robertson, "the Emperor "had many opportunities of observing the dispositions of the Germans in regard to the points in "controversy, and found their minds every where so "much irritated and inflamed, that nothing tending "to severity or rigour ought to be attempted, till the "other methods proved ineffectual. His presence "seems to have communicated to all parties an "universal spirit of moderation and desire of peace.

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" With such sentiments, the Protestant princes em-
" ployed Melancthon, the man of the greatest learn-
" ing as well as the most pacific and gentlest spirit
" among the reformers, to draw up a confession of
" faith, expressed in terms as little offensive to the
" Roman Catholics as a regard to truth would
" admit. Melancthon, who seldom suffered the ran-
" cour of controversy to envenom his style, even in
" writings purely polemical, executed a task, so
" agreeable to his natural disposition, with modera-
" tion and success."

The best account of this important document, which has come to the knowledge of the writer of these pages, is the history given of it, and of the transactions with which it is connected, by M. de Beausobre, in the eighth book of his History of the Reformation. He speaks in terms of great praise of the spirit of conciliation with which the Emperor entered on the business, and which distinguished every part of the conduct of Melancthon. An extract from a letter, written by that eminent reformer, to Cardinal Campegio, the Pope's legate, is transcribed by Beausobre, and shows how nearly, at one time, matters were considered to be brought to an accommodation. By this letter, Melancthon informs the legate, " that he and all his party were ready to
" receive peace on any terms; that they had no
" dogma which differed from the church of Rome,
" and that if they disputed with her, it was only on
" some articles which might more properly be re-
" ferred to the schools; that the reformers had re-
" pressed those who sought to spread pernicious
" doctrines; that they were ready to obey the church

" of Rome, on condition that she would treat them " with that clemency which she uniformly showed " all, and connive or relax in some parts of little " importance, which it was no longer in the power of " the Protestants to alter; that they honoured with " profound respect the authority of the Roman pon- " tiff and all the ecclesiastical hierarchy; that all " the favour asked by them was, that the Pope would " have the goodness not to reject them; that nothing " had made them so odious in Germany, as the con- " stancy with which they defended some of the " doctrines of the church of Rome; and finally, that " with the grace of God, they would remain faithful " to the last breath to Jesus Christ and to the church " of Rome."

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This remarkable letter was accompanied by a memoir, in which it was proposed; " 1st, that the " Pope would have the goodness to concede to the " Protestants communion under both kinds, particu- " larly as the Protestants did not blame those who " communicated in one kind only, and confessed " that the body of Jesus Christ, entire, together with " his blood, was received under the sole species of " bread. 2dly. That his Holiness would allow the " marriage of priests. 3dly. That he would allow, " or at least tolerate, the marriages already contracted " by priests, or other religious persons, and dispense " with their vows." " As to the mass," says the writers of the memoir, " we retain its principal " ceremonies." The distinction of meat and other observances, Melancthon treats as secondary points, to be easily settled.

Beausobre considers the authenticity of the letter

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and memoir to be unquestionable. "Nor are we," says Beausobre, "to hold Melancthon alone responsible for this relaxation; as it appears, that the "Protestant princes declared to the mediators, that "if they would permit communion under both kinds, "the marriage of priests, and the celebration of the "mass, according to their reformation of it, and this "only till the decision of the council should be "obtained on these points, they were willing to obey "in the rest." Beausobre also brings strong reasons to show, that these propositions were not suggested without the knowledge of Luther. Cardinal Pallavicini (lib. iii. c. 5.) mentions, on the authority of a letter of the Cardinal Legate Campegio, that, "the "parties were on the foot of coming to an agree-"ment, when some injudicious publications which "he mentions, rekindled the discord." Greatly, indeed, is it to be lamented, that, where such a general disposition of conciliation appeared, and such near approaches to it were made, any thing should have prevented its completion.

When Melancthon had framed the Confession, he delivered it to the Protestant princes who attended the diet. It was composed by him in the German language, and he himself translated it into the Latin. The German was read at the diet, and both the original and translation were delivered to the Emperor.

The singular importance of this document of Protestant faith, seems to require in this place a particular mention of its contents. It consists of twenty-one articles. In the first, the subscribers of it acknowledge the unity of God, and the trinity of

persons; in the second, original sin; in the third, the two natures and unity of person in Jesus Christ, and all the other articles contained in the symbol of the Apostles, respecting the Son of God. They declare in the fourth, that men are not justified before God by their works and merits, but by the faith which they place in Jesus Christ, when they believe that God forgives their sins out of love for his Son. In the fifth, that the preaching of the Gospel and the sacraments, are the ordinary means used by God to infuse the Holy Ghost, who produces faith whenever he wills, in those that hear his word. In the sixth, that faith produces the good works to which men are obliged by the commandments of God. In the seventh, that there exists a perpetual church, which is the assembly of saints; and that the word of God is taught in it with purity, and the sacraments administered in a legitimate manner; that the trinity of this church consists in uniformity of doctrine and sacraments; but that an uniformity of ceremonies is not requisite. In the eighth, they profess that the word of God and the sacraments, have still their efficacy, although administered by wicked clergymen. In the ninth, that baptism is requisite for salvation, and that little children ought to be baptised. In the tenth, that in the sacrament of the last supper, both the body and blood of the Lord are truly present, and distributed to those who partake of it. (The various readings of this article will be afterwards mentioned.) In the eleventh, that confession must be preserved in the church, but without insisting on an exact enumeration of sins. In the twelfth, that penance consists of contrition and faith,

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or the persuasion, that, for the sake of Jesus Christ, our sins are forgiven us on our repentance, and that there is no true repentance without good works, which are its inseparable fruits. In the thirteenth, that the sacraments are not only signs of the profession of the Gospel, but proofs of the love of God to men, which serve to excite and confirm their faith. In the fourteenth, that a vocation is requisite for pastors to teach in the church. In the fifteenth, that those ceremonies ought to be observed, which contribute to keep order and peace in the church, but that the opinion of their being necessary to salvation, or that grace is acquired, or satisfaction done for our sins by them, must be entirely exploded. In the sixteenth, that the authority of magistrates, their commands and laws, which the legitimate wars in which they may be forced to engage, are not contrary to the Gospel. In the seventeenth, that there will be a judgment, where all men will appear before the tribunal of Jesus Christ, and that the wicked will suffer several torments. In the eighteenth, that the power of free will may produce an exterior good conduct, and regulate the morals of man towards society; but that, without the grace of the Holy Ghost, neither faith, regeneration or true justice, can be required. In the nineteenth, that God is not the cause of sin, but that it arises only from the corrupt will of man. In the twentieth, that good works are necessary and indispensable; but that they cannot purchase the remission of sins, which is only obtained in virtue of the merits of Christ, and in consideration of faith, which when it is sincere, must produce good works. In the twenty-first, that the virtues of

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the saints are to be placed before the people in order to excite imitation, but that the Scripture no where commands their invocation, or mentions any where any other mediator than Jesus Christ. "This," say the subscribers of the Confession, "is the summary "of the doctrine taught among us; and, it appears "from the exposition which we have just made, that "it contains nothing contrary to Scripture; and that "it agrees with that of the Catholic church, and "even with that of the Roman church, as far as it "is known to us by their writers. This being so, "those, who wish that we should be condemned as "heretics, are very unjust. If there be any dis-"pute between us, it is not upon articles of faith, "but only upon abuses that have been introduced "into the church, and which we reject. This, there-"fore, is not a sufficient reason to authorise the "bishops not to tolerate us, since we are agreed in "the tenets of faith, which we have set forth: There "never has been an exact uniformity of exterior "practices since the beginning of the church; and "we preserve the greater part of the established "uses. It is, therefore, a calumny to say that we "have abolished them all. But as all the world "complained of the abuses that had crept into the "church, we have corrected those only which we could "not tolerate with a good conscience; and we entreat "your Majesty to hear what the abuses are which "we have retrenched, and the reasons we had for "doing it. We also entreat, that our inveterate "enemies, whose hatred and calumnies are the prin-"cipal causes of the evil, may not be believed."

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They then proceed to state the abuses in the church of Rome of which they complain. The first, is the denial of the cup in the sacrament of the Lord's supper; the second, the celibacy of the clergy; the third, the form of the mass. On this head, their language is very remarkable. "Our churches," they say, "are unjustly accused of having abolished the "mass, since they celebrate it with great veneration; "they even preserve almost all the accustomed cere- "monies, having only added a few German hymns to "the latter, in order that the people may profit by "them." But they object to the multiplicity of masses, "and to the payment of any money to a priest for "saying them. The fourth abuse of which they com- "plain, is the practice of auricular confession; but "they observe, that they have only taken from it the "penitent's obligation to make to the priest a parti- "cular enumeration of his sins; and that they had "retained the confession itself, and the obligation of "receiving absolution from the priest. The fifth "abuse, is the injunction of abstinence from parti- "cular meats. Monastic vows they represent as "the sixth abuse. The seventh and last abuse of "which they complain, is that of ecclesiastical power. "They say, that a view of the attempts of the Popes "to excommunicate princes, and dispose of their "states, led them to examine and fix the distinction "between the secular and ecclesiastical power, to "enable themselves to give to Cæsar what belongs "to Cæsar, and to the popes and bishops what be- "longs to them." That "ecclesiastical power, or "the power of the keys, which Jesus Christ gave to

" his church, consisted only of the power of preach- I.
" ing the Gospel, of administering the sacraments, The Confession of Augsburgh.
" the forgiveness of sins, and refusing absolution to
" a false penitent. Therefore, say they, neither pope
" nor bishops have any power to dispose of kingdoms,
" to abrogate the laws of magistrates, or to prescribe
" to them rules for their government;" and that,
" if there did exist bishops who had the power of
" the sword, they derived this power from their
" quality of temporal sovereigns, and not from their
" episcopal character, or from divine right, but as a
" power conceded to them by kings or emperors."

It is not a little remarkable, that considerable differences or various readings, are to be found in the printed texts of this important document; and that it is far from certain, which copy should be considered the authentic edition. The German copies printed in 1530, in quarto and octavo, and the Latin edition printed in quarto in 1531, are in request among bibliographical amateurs; but there is a verbal, and, in some instances, a material discrepancy among them. The Wittenburgh edition of 1540, is particularly esteemed, and has been adopted by the publishers of the *Sylloge Confessionum Diversarum*, printed in 1804, at the Clarendon press. One of the most important of these various readings occur in the tenth article. In some of the editions which preceded that of 1540, it is expressed, " that the body and blood of
" Christ are truly present and distributed to those
" who partake of our Lord's Supper, and the contrary
" doctrine is reprobated." The edition of 1540, expresses, that " with the bread and wine, the body and

I. The Confession of Augsburgh.

"blood of Christ are truly given to those who par-"take of our Lord's Supper." This difference is noticed in the edition of the Confessions at the Clarendon press.

"In the Confession of Augsburgh," says Dr. Mac-laine, the learned translator of Mosheim's Ecclesiastical History, "there are three sorts of articles; one sort orthodox, and adopted by the Roman Catholics and Protestants; another, that consists of certain propositions, which the papal party considered as ambiguous and obscure; and a third, in which the doctrine of Luther was entirely opposite to that of Rome. This gave some reason to hope, that by the means of certain qualifications and modifications, conducted mutually by a spirit of candour and charity, matters might be accommodated at last. For this purpose, select persons were appointed to carry on the salutary work; at first, seven from each party, consisting of princes, lawyers and divines, which number was afterwards reduced to three. Luther's obstinate, stubborn and violent temper, rendering him unfit for healing divisions, he was not employed in these conferences; but he was constantly consulted by the Protestant party."

The Confession was read at a full meeting of the diet, by the chancellor of the elector of Saxony. It was subscribed by that elector, and three other princes of the German empire, and then delivered to the emperor.

II.

THE APOLOGY OF THE CONFESSION OF AUGSBURGH.

II. The Apology of the Confession of Augsburgh.

John Faber, afterwards Archbishop of Vienna, and two other Roman Catholic divines, composed an Answer to the Confession: Melancthon replied to their answers by his defence of the Confession of Augsburgh, *Apologia Confessionis Augustanæ*. Two editions of this apology, one in quarto, the other in octavo, were published by him in 1531; the former edition is preferred. It was composed in the Latin language, and immediately translated into the German. The curious should acquire both the quarto and octavo Latin editions, and the German translation, as in all of them, there are various readings. Doctor Semler says, that the variations in the German translation were made with the privity of Melancthon. He also intimates, that Faber's Answer, which produced the Apology, was not published till 1572, when it was published in the German language. It appeared in Latin in the following year. (*D. Is Semleri Apparatus in Libros Symbolicos Ecclesiæ Lutheranæ. Halæ Magdeburgiæ*, 1775, *Oct.* § 84.

THE ARTICLES OF SMALCALD.

The Confession of Augsburgh and its defence, were followed at a distance of some years, by the articles of Smalcald, drawn up by Luther, on the occasion of a meeting of the Protestant princes in that city. They were framed by Luther, and exhibit a striking contrast between the Doric eloquence of that reformer, and the Ionic gentleness of Melanc-

The Articles of Smalcald.

thon. In the Confession, and its defence, every harsh expression was avoided; and great reserve observed in the mention of the Pope. In the articles of Smalcald, it is explicitly declared, that "the Pope is not of "divine right; that the power which he has usurped "is full of arrogance and blasphemy; that all which he "has done, and does, in virtue of that power is diabolical; that the church can, and ought, to subsist "without having a chief; that though the Pope "should own that he is not of divine right, but that "he was established solely for keeping up, more conveniently, the unity of christians against the sectaries, nothing good would come from such an "authority; and that the best method of governing "and preserving the church, is, that all bishops, "though unequal in gifts, should be equal in their "ministry under one chief, who is Jesus Christ; "and, finally, that the Pope is the true Antichrist." The subscriptions to these articles are preserved. Melancthon was among the subscribers, but widely differing from Luther in his opinion of the Pope; he expressed his subscription in the following terms:—"I, Philip Melancthon, approve the preceding articles as pious and charitable. As to the "Pope, my opinion is, that if he would receive the "Gospel, for the peace and common tranquillity of "those who now are, or hereafter shall be under "him, we might accord to him the superiority over the "bishops, which he now holds of common right;" a sentiment subsequently expressed both by Grotius and Leibniz. The earliest and most approved edition of the articles of Smalcald, is in the German language, and was printed in 1538.

It was intended that they should be presented at the general council, then convened at Mantua, and afterwards held at Trent. With this view they were translated into Latin.

III.

THE CATECHISMS OF LUTHER.

The Catechisms of Luther.

Long before the publication of any of the books we have mentioned, *the Great and Little Catechisms* of Luther made their appearance. Both of them were printed in the year 1529. Which first issued from the press, is a question much agitated by Lutheran bibliographers.

IV.

THE FORM OF CONCORD.

To the books which we have mentioned, many Lutheran churches add *the Form of Concord.* It is also called, from the place in which it was composed, the Book of Torgau. Its object was to effect an amicable adjustment of the differences among the Lutherans, and to preserve their churches against the opinions of the reformed churches in relation to the eucharist. With this view, Andreæ, a distinguished theologian of the Lutheran communion, with the assistance of several other theologians of the same party, composed in 1576, this document. It was sent by the elector of Saxony to the Lutheran princes, for their examination. By some it was approved; by others rejected; and it was censured by many theologians. This engaged the compilers to review and correct it; and from the document, thus new modelled, the Form of Concord, as it now stands, was

IV. The Form of Concord.

originally drawn. It was published in 1579. It produced much disturbance; was rejected by all the reformed and some of the Lutheran divines; and even the authenticity of the document was questioned, as the printed copies were stated to differ in many places from the manuscript copy, which had been approved. Dr. Maclaine (Mos. Ecc. Hist. cent. xvi, sect. 3, p. 2, n. e.) charges it with a spirit of intolerance, and accuses the Lutheran divines of calling to its aid the terrors of the sword. The best edition is that of Dresden, in 1580. The best account of it is to be found in Hospinian's *Concordia Discors*. Tigur. MDCVII, and Hutter's *Concordia Concors*. Wittemb. MDCXIV, in folio; reprinted in the following year at Leipsic, in the quarto size. By the former it is ably attacked; by the latter ably defended. It is the latest of the Lutheran formularies.

The Confession of Augsburgh, its Defence by Melancthon, the Articles of Smalcald, and the Great and Little Catechism of Luther, and in many Lutheran churches, the Form of Concord are the standard books of the Lutherans. They have often been printed together; and in Germany, are universally known by the appellation of the *Symbolic Books of the Lutherans*.

FINIS.

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