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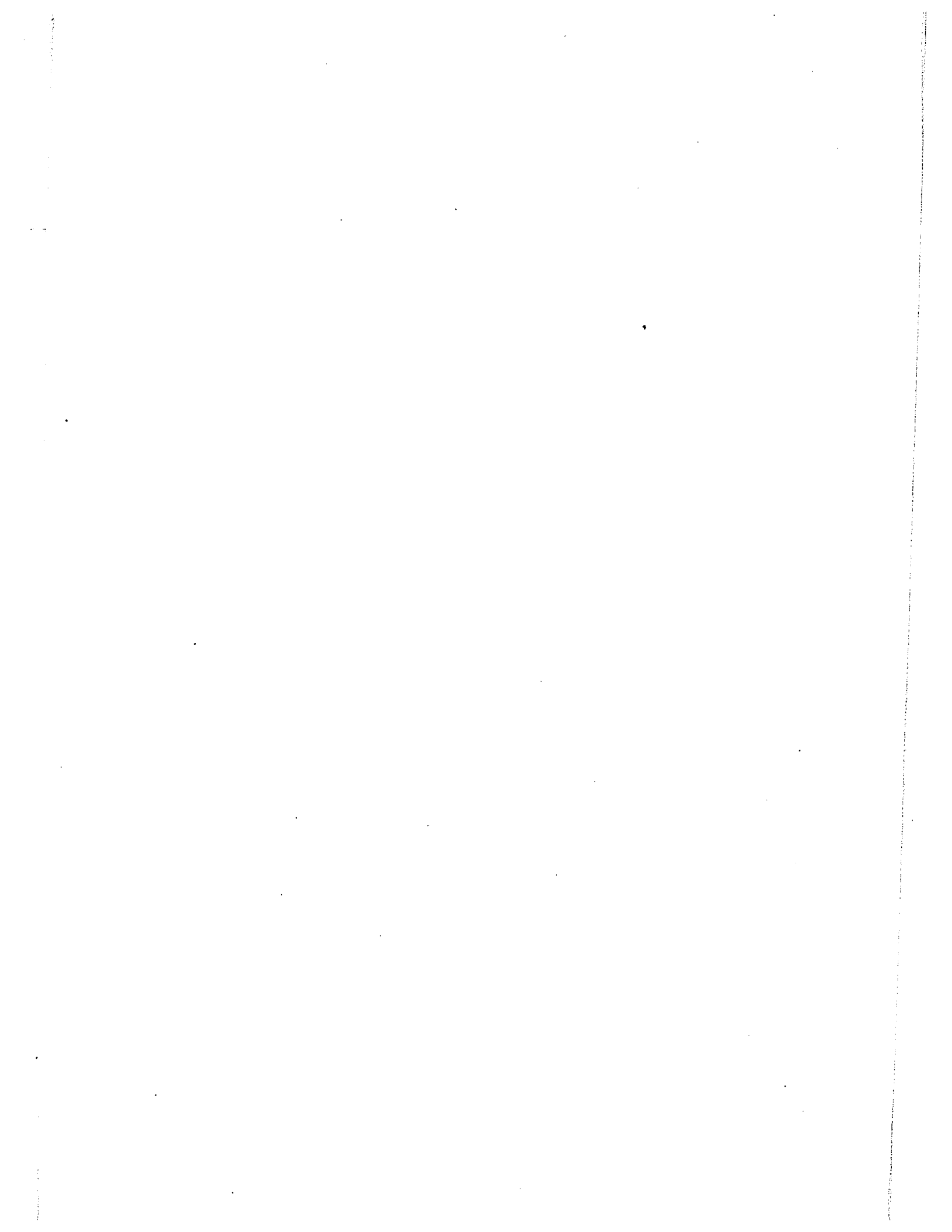
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PRIMARY THESIS.

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HISTORY AND CRITICISM  
OF  
ENGLISH POETRY AND DRAMA.



M. A. L. of O. June 1933



St Marie Cornelius de Sion.

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## PREFACE.

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Literature, and particularly poetry and drama, is the true expression of the life of a nation. Thus, in early English Literature, we find a reflection of the cold cheerless climate from which the ancestors of the people of that period came,- a picture of the gloomy character of the climate in which they themselves lived. We find, too, a description of their existence - 'where might was right' - where the sword reigned supreme - and where man's life must be sacrificed to the gods of war. Not only do we find a picture of climate and life, but also a delineation of the hopes and the aspirations of the age,- the faith in some future abode of incessant and victorious war-fare.

As the times change, the literature of the nation is transformed. At first, uncouth and barbarous like the people to whom it belonged,- later, a gradual change,(which, as we look across the ages, gives us a panorama of the changes in the life of our people), is noted. Finally, as we glance at the literature of modern times, we realize that the age of the few has become the age of the many. Is it possible that any casual reader could miss the grace and sweetness in the poetry of Tennyson, or could fail to see the life of our people depicted in such works as those of Charles Dickens? Does not our drama depict the life of our age?

If such is the case, then, we trust that we are justified in bringing to the notice of our readers not only the more important authors, but also the minor writers, who, it seems to us, fill in the interstices in the walls of time. We can never change the life of past generations, neither would it be of any value to destroy the unity of the whole by destructive criticism; and, for this reason, we prefer to present the authors and to give, where possible, constructive, rather than destructive, criticisms of their works.

## INTRODUCTION.

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English poetry, in the true meaning of the term, is based upon the national poetry of the Saxons. These people, as well as the Angles, cherished the Germanic traditions. Their poets employed about the same number of accents to mark the cadence of their verse, and also used alliteration freely. Four accented syllables and any number of unaccented syllables were used in their long verse. The caesura was employed to divide these into two short verses. Alliteration was used as the binding-link between them. This alliteration took the form of two accented syllables in the first, and one accented syllable in the second, short line; these began with any vowel, with the same consonant, or with consonants that gave approximately the same sound. Rhyme was employed in a few Christian poems which were composed toward the end of the period.

The questions of place and of date have been matters for conjecture, because the Anglo-Saxons who lived toward the end of this period enjoyed pagan legends and traditions just as much as did their predecessors. Even the place of Cynewulf cannot be fixed with certainty. The war-song remained in fashion and favor from the beginning of the period to the end. Together with the war-song, these tribes loved the landscape paintings of their race. Among these descriptions we find the stormy seas and the furies of the northern tempests, the homes of monsters and of gods, as well as beautiful descriptions of summer. We must, therefore, leave the matter of place and of date unsettled until a surer means of ascertaining the dates of the existing poetry can be found.

The author of Beowulf, the most important known poem of this period, has intermingled historical facts with the legends of the pagans of his ancestral land. In this poem, the hero, Beowulf, nephew of the King of the Geatas, left Sweden to destroy the monster Grendel who terrorized the Danes. Rhothgar, the Danish King, warned him

of the danger; but the thought of fighting the monster who had wrought such harm only increased the hero's impatience for the encounter. That night, Beowulf and his men remained in the Danish hall. According to his custom, the monster Grendel came into the hall during the night, and devoured one of the thanes. Beowulf then attacked him. During the ensuing battle, Grendel's arm was wrenched off and he fled, only to die in the morasses.

After he had returned to Sweden, Beowulf heard that Grendel's mother was wreaking havoc in revenge for the death of her son. The hero then returned to Denmark, found the cave under the waters, and in the fierce struggle that followed succeeded in destroying the monster's mother.

Beowulf again went back to Sweden where, after much fighting, he became king. He was loved by his people. After his last battle with a fire-drake, they reared his mound upon the conspicuous headland which he himself had chosen for his burial ground.

This poem was typical of the tastes of the Saxons, who were satisfied and happy only when they had fought well, when they had eaten and had drunk all that they were capable of, when they had been satisfied with music and song, when they had listened to the most ghostly of tales, and when they could end all this by sleeping soundly.

As the people became Christians their poetry also changed. With typical northern settings their poets described the Saints. They translated parts of the sacred Scriptures into Anglo-Saxon verse. It seems almost superfluous to name the greatest among these poets, Caedmon.

Among the few poets of the age of whom we have any certain knowledge Cynewulf wrote graphic poems on religious themes. The poems are also characterized by the frequent dialogues of a lyrical tone and an epical character.

With the Norman Conquest came a slow fusion of Anglo-Saxon, French, and Latin ideas. Poets wrote for the king. For a time it seemed as if the Anglo-Saxon would

be entirely replaced by the language of the conquerors. In reality, the members of the court centres spoke French, while the English themselves (who were not at court) clung to their mother-tongue. However, the French Literature, which the Normans brought with them, helped to transform the minds of the English. At the same time, the literature of the English (the English of the period previous to the Conquest) assisted in changing the attitude of the descendants of the French. Another help in this two-fold transformation was found in the Latin Literature of the time.

After this brief outline of the origins of our English Literature, the English Literature properly so-called may be divided into various periods.

I- The Times Before Chaucer.

II- Geoffrey Chaucer and His Contemporaries.

III- From the Death of Chaucer to the Renaissance.

IV- General Characteristics of the Renaissance.

V- The Beginning Period of the Renaissance.

VI- The Renaissance- A- Ben Jonson.

B- William Shakespeare.

C- Other Writings of This Period.

D- The Successors of Shakespeare.

VII- The Transition Period.

VIII- Modern Times- 1. The Restoration Period.

2. Drama of the Restoration Period.

3. The Classical School.

4. Poetry of Sentiment.

5. The Romantic Period- The First Generation of Poets.

The Second Generation of Poets.

6. Semi-Romanticists.

7. Writers of the Nineteenth Century.

HISTORY AND CRITICISM OF ENGLISH POETRY AND DRAMA.

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THE TIMES BEFORE CHAUCER.

English Literature, properly so called, begins with the fusion of the Normans and the Conquered.

We may divide the poetry of the period before Chaucer into religious and non-religious poetry.

Among the religious poetry we may mention Ormin's Ormulus, written at about the time of the Magna Carta. In it Ormin writes the gospel of each day in verse, adding a sermon, also in verse. He extols a pure, simple, honest, laborious manner of living.

In the same century, we find the Genesis and the Exodus written in verse. Other poets write Psalters and Lives of Saints, which mark the beginning of the poetry which expresses the love of poets and of people for Our Lord Jesus Christ and for His Blessed Mother.

Poetic stories about the Child Jesus, His Blessed Mother, The Angels and Saints, and the miracles worked by them, appear in the fourteenth century in Southern England. At the same time, a similar series of stories in verse are written in the northern part of the country.

The Pricke of Conscience, written in the first half of the fourteenth century, has for its author Richard Rolle, a hermit famed for the holiness of his life. His poetry depicts the miseries of this life and gives concrete material pictures of life in the next world. The form of his verse has, however, very little merit.

In giving a brief sketch of the non-religious poetry, Layamon, the scop, is worthy of mention. His manner is awkward and blunt. He translates the Arthurian legend, adding a few sections not found in the original. Probably he has these from the traditions of his people.

After him come translations in the form of rhymed chronicles. The Owl and Nightingale is clearly written, contains many lively passages, but is tedious in places.

Another poem of this period, the story of Havelock, is written in octosyllabic couplets and gives the principal place to adventure. Horn, however, gives the preference to love and to short poetic lines.

In the fourteenth century satire appears. The vices of all the ruling classes are described and denounced in songs written for the oppressed. Passion and disrespect for morals are portrayed in other songs of this century.

In all the songs, except those having political themes, there is evidence of imitation, ( and of subjects chosen from), of the poetry of other nations. The political songs are, however, composed as they are required, and are, therefore, genuine home-products. They appear for the first time during the period when Simon de Montfort and the barons oppose the oppression of the King.

Wars engender patriotic poetry; consequently this age has this type of verse. It metes out insults to the vanquished enemy, and heaps praise upon the victors.

This period has many and original works produced by poets who, during this stage of formation, are, nevertheless, able to write fluently. Among these poets we find Laurence Minot, already mentioned, who writes in the Northumbrian dialect. His verses are rhymed and held together by alliteration, while his lines are frequently syllabic.

Geoffrey Chaucer and His Contemporaries.

Of the four dialects, -the Northern, Southern, East Midland, and West Midland, the last-named prefers alliterative poetry. Nevertheless, the poets accept words of foreign derivation. They write these according to sound and accent in order to serve the alliteration which they employ in their verse.

Customs, themes of chivalry, and allegories are written on the old model; while, in some of the poems, a foreign touch is added by combining the rhyme with the alliteration of the older form.

An edition by Skeat is extant of Joseph of Arimathe, (a part of the story of the Holy Grail), Guillaume de Palerme, and Pearl, Purity, Patience, and Sir Gawayne and the Grene Knyght. The last four, found in one manuscript, are said to have but one author.

Pearl is an allegorical poem, in which the author, having lost his pearl, (by which he means his daughter), mourns for her, and goes frequently to the garden where he has lost her, (where she is buried). One day he goes to sleep there, and dreams that he is in a beautiful country. In this country he arrives near a beautiful river with Paradise on the opposite bank. A child, dressed in shining white, with a crown of pearls upon her head is on the side of Paradise. She tells him that she is not lost to him, and relates all her happiness in her celestial home. As he finally sees her among the virgins surrounding the Lamb, he makes an effort to reach her. This awakens him; but the dream has made him resigned to the will of God. In its one hundred stanzas, the poet combines beauty with fervor. He groups the stanzas by fives, repeating the last line of the first stanza of each group in each of the remaining four. Each stanza has twelve lines, and each line has four accents in iambic rhythm.

Like Pearl, Purity is in alliterative verse. In Purity the poet relates the Fall of the Angels, the Flood, Abraham Visited by the Angel, Balthazar's Feast, and the Fall of Nebuchadnezzar. He omits rhyme and stanzas. In Patience, written in the same manner as Purity, the poet gives us the life of Jonah.

In the three first poems of this manuscript the poet stresses the virtues of purity and of submission to God's will. His style is in harmony with the theme of his story.

The last named of the poems in this manuscript, is Sir Gawayne and the Grene Knyght, the only one of the four which has not a religious theme. In this poem, one of Arthur's knights, Gawain, accepts the Green Knight's challenge (to strike off this giant knight's head on the condition that he, Gawain, go to the Green Knight's castle in a year's time to receive a similar stroke from the giant knight). The giant, however, picks up his head and gallops off. Bound by his honor, Gawain finds the giant's castle at the appointed time. The master of the castle, an old man treats him as his guest for three days. Every morning the old man goes off for a hunt, while his beautiful wife tempts Gawain with her love. The only thing he accepts is a girdle of green silk to prevent him from being hurt by the axe. In the ordeal the axe only cuts his skin. Thus, the Green Knight and Morgayn la Fay do not succeed in their attempt to bring a stain upon the honor of Arthur and his knights. To save Gawain from any embarrasment, Arthur asks all the knights and ladies of the court to wear a band of green similar to that worn by Gawain. Courteous, pure, and gentle, Gawain incarnates virtue and shows its triumph over vice. The poem is, moreover, notable for the variety of realistic scenes, such as the three hunts. Courtesy and chivalry are fully depicted in this poem.

Another poet of the age is William Langland, known to us by his Piers Plowman. This poem is one of the least artistic of the fourteenth century. On a May morning, a shepherd falls asleep in the Malvern Hills, and has the vision of a field thronged with people of all descriptions, - those who are poor, those who are rich, nobles and peasants, as well as serious citizens and jesters of the court. Lady Holychurch is supposed to tell him that these people are wasting their time with the things of this world when they should be employing it in the acquiring of merit for heaven. This group of men repents, but finds no one who can show them the way to heaven. Piers Plowman appears, and offers to lead the way, first telling them of the country through which they must

pass. On hearing the description, however, many give up the thought of following him. To those who agree to go Piers Plowman says that he must first plow a half an acre of land, and he obliges them to work while they wait for him. Two episodes, the marriage of Lady Meed and the Confession of the Seven Deadly Sins are included in this part of the poem. When it is last rewritten, the poem is nearly doubled in length. The sequel does not possess the attraction found in the scenes of the first part. Sloth and covetousness are the objects against which Langland employs his satire. His poem is, however, a formless work, a mere mixture of scenes. We can scarcely justify his attitude in changing Piers Plowman from an ordinary man to a symbol.

The dialect of the East Midlands is the one which finally gains the mastery. John Gower may be taken as one of the outstanding poets of this part of the land. We may say, however, that he is a moralist rather than a poet. After writing in Latin and in French, he begins to write in English. In order to connect some hundred stories he makes use of an artifice. By the advice of Venus, he goes to her priest, Genius, to tell him all about his life. Genius insists that he speak on the seven deadly sins. This framework of love enables Gower to parade the capital sins, with their subdivisions, through the length of seven books. With the mocking of Venus, the supposed lover withdraws from the presence of Genius. Gower, naturally a moralist, is awkward in his role of lover. Many of the stories found in his books would be attractive outside of their absurd setting.

The greatest poet of the age is, without any doubt, Geoffrey Chaucer. The son of John Chaucer, a citizen and vintner of London, and of Agnes de Copton, daughter of Hamo de Copton, the city moneyer, Geoffrey begins his life in the family home which is at present covered by the platform of the Cannon Street Station. We are certain that his education is the best that his father can procure for him. The fact of his being page to the wife of Prince Lionel gives him the opportunity to follow that Prince to France. Geoffrey is taken prisoner at Retters, but is ransomed by King Edward III. Later this king pensions him for life.

Chaucer's married life is an unhappy one. His family numbers at least two sons and one daughter.

After the age of twenty-six years, the king frequently employs him for important diplomatic missions. He is sent to Italy in the years 1372-1373; this is the turning point in his literary life.

In his *The House of Fame* he complains of his official life as comptroller of the customs at the port of London. In the prologue to the *Legend of Good Women* we are led to believe that around the year 1385 he is able to have a permanent deputy for this work. About this time, too, he leaves London to settle in the country near Greenwich. Need for money obliges him to sell two of his pensions. His pecuniary difficulties leads him to take the position of Clerk of the Works at Windsor, at Westminster, and at the Tower, but he is unsuccessful in business affairs. He gets many opportunities, and is cared for by the kings, yet he has pecuniary troubles, and perhaps real penury, towards the end of his life.

The *Canterbury Tales* are the product of his latest and his most difficult period.

An increase of his income by the amount of forty marks allows him to lease a house in the monastery garden at Westminster, close to the Lady Chapel of the Abbey. It is in this house that he meets his death. The only memorial of him for a century and a half is a leaden plate, engraved with a Latin epitaph, and hung up near his grave, in Westminster Abbey. The present canopied grey marble altar-tomb dates from 1556.

Chaucer's major poems, known as genuine, are given the following order:-  
Seventeen hundred and five lines of the *Romaune of the Rose*, (the remainder does not belong to him), and *The A. B. C.* date from about 1366. *The Book of the Duchess* is given the date of 1369; *the Complaint of Pity*, 1372; *Anelida and False Arcite*, 1372-1374; *Troilus and Cressid*, 1379-1383; *the Parliament of Fowls*, 1382; *the House of Fame*, 1383-1384; *the Legend of Good Women*, 1385-1386; and *the Canterbury Tales*,

from 1386 until after 1390.

The first copy of the Tales by the Second Nun, the Man of Law, the Clerk, the Knight, and part of that of the Monk are produced earlier than the Tales by the Miller, the Reeve, the Shipman, and the Merchant, and also earlier than the Wife of Bath's Prologue. These last named Tales are produced after 1387. Therefore, his objectionable work belongs to his later years.

Chaucer has a wonderful vocabulary, as well as the gift of assimilating all that he reads. He is influenced by Ovid, by the Italy of his century, and by the spirit of his age. His writings embrace its fire and licentiousness, its freshness and true-hearted pathos, its brightness and sense of eternity. Because of his habitual observation of facts, his ironic reports of the period are true. His artistic temperament is balanced by his experiences as a soldier and as a diplomat. He is truly the trumpeter of the fourteenth century's note of joy. He is a Catholic who believes in passionless justice. Hence, he paints the period as it is. He paints the gross churchman type grossly, and the fine type finely. He is as two-sided toward the woman as toward the men. We find, moreover, throughout his works, a marked devotion toward the Blessed Virgin. It may be added that Chaucer does not beat a Friar in Fleet Street; this is an invention by Speght, further added to by Chatterton.

After this brief outline of Chaucer's life and work, it may be well to point out his share in English Poetry, and to give a few details about his chief poems.

Chaucer is, first of all, the poet. In order to write effectively he needs a better line than the octosyllabic line in use in England in his time. He does not hesitate to take the French decasyllabic line, and to adapt in such a way as to make it useful in English poetry. For songs, he employs it in stanzas, while for narrations he uses it in couplets. Two of these methods attempted by him remain more noticeable than others: the couplet and the seven-lined stanza of ababbcc. Chaucer chooses to use the London English, but to enrich it with whatever he can find in the French of the period. He learns from Machaut the use of roundels and of ballades. He also translates the Roman de la Rose, and it is in this that he finds

practise in versification. Many of Chaucer's allegories owe their creation to this poem. Chaucer finds, and imitates successfully in English, the poetic beauty of the best French poetry. In his best verses he simply, yet fluently, notes facts and characteristics. However, at times, Chaucer meanders endlessly; sometimes this is tiring to the reader, often it adds a certain charm to the story.

Of his earliest poetry we have nothing remaining. Among his lyrics, the Ballade of Griselidis is the best. For many years he writes according to the old model which begins with a dream followed by an allegory.

In the Book of the Duchess, written after the death of the wife of John of Gaunt, Chaucer appears as a lover reading the story of Ceyx and Alcyone from the Metamorphoses in order to induce sleep to overpower him. When he finally falls asleep he dreams that he is in a hunt held by the Emperor Octavian. He finds a knight, clothed in black, who tells him all about his recently lost wife.

The Parliament of Fowls, written after the betrothal of Richard II, again depicts the poet in sleep. Scipio takes him to the garden where Venus has her temple. It is St. Valentine's Day, so Nature orders all the male birds to choose their mates, holding in her hand a female eagle for the worthiest. The varied moods give interest to the poem.

As an introduction to his House of Fame Chaucer uses a discussion on the origin and truth of dreams, and calls upon the god of sleep. In the dream itself the poet is in the temple of Venus. He sees the story of Aeneas painted on the walls. A golden eagle carries him up to the House of Fame in the heavens, where he meets all the authors of whom he has read and where he sees how the goddess gives her favors to a few and ignores the others. After this he goes to the House of Rumour, where the din of false and true reports deafens him. Chaucer does not finish the poem. He has a preference for real life.

In his prologue to the Legend of Good Women, Chaucer is again allegorical. In it the God of Love finds him kneeling before the daisy, and tells him that he is love's heretic. The Queen of Love decrees that he shall write a legend of virtuous

women. We are lead to see in the prologue that the queen is Alcestis. She commands Chaucer to write about the virtues of the nineteen ladies in her train. This poem is likewise not finished, but it takes Chaucer away from the old model of allegory. In this poem, too, he first uses the ten-syllabled line in the rhyming couplet.

After his first journey to Italy, Chaucer is influenced by its poetry. He takes Italian themes, such as Troilus and Cressid, re-arranging it and transforming the characters, but keeping the tragic part almost the same as in the original. He attempts to be original and yet to imitate. After this, he seeks an English theme.

For a time Chaucer lives at Greenwich, where he sees pilgrims going to the shrine of St. Thomas of Canterbury. From this he may get the idea which he executes in his Canterbury Tales. In these he presents thirty pilgrims to the reader. These include all the types of English at the time, with the exception of the royalty, the nobility, and the lowest class. The prologue gives us a series of pictures of Chaucer and his twenty-nine companions. He mingles descriptions of characters with those of costumes, and insists on insignificant details. He contrasts men of different walks in life, and makes strong, clear outlines of the characters entailed. He makes the type person of each calling in life seem as though he were a person whom Chaucer has previously met, and allows each one to speak freely without superposing his own thoughts and words upon those of his characters. The pilgrims talk to each other as they continue on their way. Chaucer plans to have each pilgrim tell two tales on the way to Canterbury and two on the way back. He has, however, not even the time to give one story to each pilgrim before he is overtaken by death; but he gives us a fairly complete picture of the society of his age. He is the first to paint life as he sees it.

FROM THE DEATH OF CHAUCER TO THE RENAISSANCE.

During the fifteenth century there is no writer of genius in England. It is a transition period, or more correctly, a period of retrogression during which Chaucer's versification is not understood. It is a period of transition from inflected to analytical English.

Among the writers of the fifteenth century, John Lydgate is the most prolific writer. He belongs to Suffolk and enters the Benedictine Abbey at Bury when he is fifteen years of age. His subject-matter is varied, but his poetry is mediocre. About two hundred and fifty of his poems are known, and of these some are very long. The *Troy Book* contains about thirty thousand lines. He is careful in his phraseology and employs a verse that sounds smoothly. We may name the *Story of Thebes*, the *Falls of Princes*, the *Pilgrimage of the Life of Man*, some lives of the saints, *The Life of Our Lady*, *The Dance of Death*, and *The Temple of Glas*. Some critics state that *London Lackpenny* is not by Lydgate.

Thomas Occleve is another poet of this century. The place of his birth is not known. Like Lydgate, he is a lover and an admirer of Chaucer's poetry; like Lydgate, too, is his inability to worthily imitate Chaucer. Although he is a good story-teller he lacks humor. His poem *The Moder of God* is one of his best. The names of some of his works are:- *De Regimine Principum*, which includes various material and is written in the seven-line stanza; *Ars Sciendi Mori*, which ends in prose; among his other poems there are many ballads.

*The Cuckoo and the Nightingale*, written by Sir Thomas Clanvowe, is a debate between love and experience. It is characterized by its pure language and by its light and rapid rhythm.

*The Flower and the Leaf*, by an unknown author, represents Leisure and Work. Other poems of the period are likewise imitations of Chaucer and of Langland. These are mediocre in value.

Alexander Barclay is the first to translate a subject of German origin. His *Ship of Fools* is an indirect translation in which Barclay depicts man's follies.

Barclay is a free translator who adds material of his own. A Dominican, he is careful of doctrine and morals. He is sincere, uses language that is rude, lacks rhythm in his verses, and employs a racy realism. His eclogues are the first in English. These are moral satires.

Stephen Hawes, born in 1475, one year later than Barclay, writes allegories like those of the Roman de la Rose, but adds elements of chivalry. All his poems have a moral to teach.

Perhaps the last writer of this period worthy of mention is John Skelton, an Oxford laureate. He prefers satirical allegory written in short irregular lines and in multiplied rhymes. He aims to impart a lesson and is brutal in the way he accomplishes it. Fortune's friends trouble him on his way to the land of Favor in his allegory, The Bowge of Court. His Boke of Colin Clout witnesses Skelton speaking against the vices that he could find among the clergy of the time. Why Come ye not to Court? is a formal charge against Cardinal Wolsey.

We may mention a few points in the Scottish Poetry of this time. It, unlike that of England, has a sure rhythm and plenty of vitality. A minstrel, called Blind Harry, writes a monotonous list of details in decasyllabic couplets. His poem about Wallace is a contrast to the other poems of this period.

King James I mixes allegory and reality in his poem Kingis Quair. He imitates Chaucer, but the fact that he has experience of some of the things which he relates gives his poetry a certain charm. He writes in a racy manner, and interests us by his details.

The other Scottish poets are still more racy in manner and employ a more pronouncedly Scottish dialect. The greatest among these is William Dunbar. He uses a variety of themes and of versification. Nearly all his poems are short. Although he is an artist in his art, he employs the old forms of allegories and of satires. He uses highly colored figures in his The Thrissil and the Rois to symbolise the marriage of James IV to Margaret Tudor. Dunbar is a master of satire who knows how to choose his

themes for the satires and the frames for conveying his mockery. His chief characteristic is his perfect mastery of form. To him verse-forms are a matter of play.

Gavin Douglas must be noted not only because of his allegories, but, in particular, because he is the first in Britain to translate Virgil into English poetry. For this he employs the heroic couplet and renders it energetically. He is also original in as much as he writes his own prologues to the books of Virgil.

This part of the period would not be complete without a few words about the old ballads, or poems which we never see or hear in the original. Only Chevy Chase and The Nut-Brown Maid may with certainty be ranked among the poetry written before the Renaissance.

In its first form, as we know it, Chevy Chase is written in the seven-accented line divided into two parts, four and three, and having the rhymes in couples. It is a true picture of the conditions existing on the border between England and Scotland at the time of Henry IV. During the seventeenth century it is given a correct form and a regular rhythm, while the obsolete words are replaced by those which the people of the last-named period could understand.

Thirty six-lined stanzas with their alternating refrains give us the picture of an earl's son trying the constancy of his lady-love, a baron's daughter. She proves faithful, so he, who has posed as an outlawed squire, reveals his true ancestry to her. The dialogue in the poem is so arranged that she, the Nut-Brown Maid, and he, the outlaw, alternately speak one stanza with its refrain. This poem is said to belong to the reign of Henry VII.

Before continuing the outline of the remaining poetry of this period it will be well to give a brief sketch of the drama. It is the period of the Christian theatre, the period of the mystery plays which have for their object to instruct and to recreate the people. A play, named Adam, written in French but performed in England is of some importance because it contains many of the characters found in the other mystery plays. At first, these plays are performed on the church porch; later, in market-places and in streets. Little by little the language becomes that of the people, namely English, in lieu of French. Laymen, also, begin to have a share as actors. This is true for the last

part of the thirteenth century. At this time the great feasts of the Church are represented to the people by plays. We see, at last, all the important scenes in the Gospels enacted, as well as the chief facts and events in ecclesiastical history. Important incidents from the Old Testament are not wanting to make the information given to the people complete. The favorite time for playing these various cycles of Miracle Plays seems to be around the Feast of Corpus Christi or around Whitsunday. These plays are performed on platforms or in a species of wagon mounted on wheels, and generally last for several days.

When a scene permits the introduction of comic passages the authors of these plays introduce them freely.

We do not know the exact date of the beginning of the morality plays, but the earliest of which we have any knowledge belong to the fifteenth century. These employ one stage in the place of the many used by the miracle plays. Allegory is the characteristic of the oldest morality, namely Castell of Perseverance, of which we have any knowledge. Other moralities of little merit are found in the same period, but that of Everyman is one of the best of its class. It symbolizes Christian death. The morality plays are still found in later periods.

In the sixteenth century, Blessed Thomas More is the author of some well-written poems.

Sir Thomas Wyatt, after trips to Italy and France, aims at the restoration of English poetry to its former value. Little by little, he arrives at a certain regularity, and imitates the forms of Dante's and of Serafino's poetry as well as the sonnet of Petrarch. By the sonnet Wyatt brings lyricism back to English poetry. In his satires, he imitates Horace and Alamanni.

Wyatt's disciple, the Earl of Surrey, employs the sonnet to convey his imaginative love. His verses are harmonious, and betray his special love for nature. His sonnets are in the English form of three quatrains, having different rhymes and ending with a couplet. We remember him chiefly because of his translation of Books Two and Four of the *Æneid*

into English blank verse. Although his verses are stiff, they are dignified and frequently strong.

Thomas Sackville, a humanist, is the author of the first classical tragedy. We have, besides his contribution to drama, his poems, -Induction, and the Complaint of the Duke of Buckingham. He is faithful to scansion and to alliteration. He is one of the many men of the period who are attempting to re-establish rhythm. There are, however, very few men endowed with poetical genius at this time.

During this century, the miracle plays do not change, but continue to have a large audience. Moralities, however, appear with humanist and with Protestant influences.

Sir David Lyndsay, attacks the Church in his Satire of the Thrie Estaitis; in this satire he represents the nobles, the clergy, and the merchants pilloried together because of sensuality, deceit, and wantonness. He also depicts the life of the poor in all its misery.

In England, John Bale, a Protestant, attempts to use the Miracle Plays for Protestant ends. His chief attempts are, however, in morality plays. In his King Jehan he travesties history in order to bring out his own points of view with regard to religion.

John Heywood has for his aim to amuse. His four interludes are comic dialogues. He is a friend of Blessed Thomas More, and writes in the spirit of the fabliaux.

Edmund Spenser, the son of John Spenser, receives his B. A. degree at Cambridge in 1573, and his M. A. in 1576. After his university days he spends some time in the northern part of the country, but we find him in the train of the Earl of Leicester and Sir Philip Sidney in 1579. He is sent to Ireland in 1580.

The Shepheardes Calender is a poem arranged into twelve eclogues to represent the twelve months of the year. Into these he fits tales of pastoral poetry taken from the Greeks, the Romans, the Italians, and from the French. The poem lacks unity, and the versification is as varied as the subject-matter. In Mother Hubbard's Tale he employs the fable of the Ape and the Fox as a vehicle for political and social satire. In this poem he uses Chaucer's decasyllabic couplet. Colin Clouts Come Home Againe,

another of Spenser's poems, shows him as an expert in the use of the familiar style. In the first two Hymnes he interprets Love and Beauty, but reveals a platonic idealism. The two later Hymnes are an attempt at Christian mysticism. Spenser's lyricism is at its height in Epithalamion produced at the time of his marriage.

The Faerie Queene is didactic in form. He employs historical fiction to bring home to the people the twelve so-called Aristotelian virtues. A knight is the patron for each virtue, while Prince Arthur represents Magnificence. Arthur seeks to be one with the Faerie Queene, the symbol of Glory. This poem lacks both unity and balance. In this poem he employs a nine-lined stanza, ababbcbcc, and ends with an alexandrine.

#### GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS OF THE RENAISSANCE.

This period gives us the greatest genius in the history of English Literature, namely, Shakespeare. He is preceded by a great number of translators. Full of energy, Chapman's translation of Homer is undoubtedly the best. Many of the translations are part of the poetry handed down to us. Many of the poets also borrow from the others.

During this period writers are also influenced by ancient and contemporary poems written by Italian authors. Plots are taken and adapted to English plays.

Exploration, with its new discoveries give birth to much literature, as do the exploits of the English at sea. Not only this, but the desire to lead in the field of literature as well as at sea gives an impetus to the development of literature, and in particular to the development of poetry and of drama. Patriotism and self-confidence are thus at the basis of the works achieved during this period.

Innovation is another characteristic of this time, when each author considers himself free to do practically whatever he wishes both as regards grammar and as regards versification.

#### THE BEGINNING PERIOD OF THE RENAISSANCE./-1590 to 1625.

Samuel Daniel, a native of Somerset, first dwells in London, and, later, on a Somersetshire farm. A moralist and a historian, he writes reflective poetry. His masques are more successful than his classical tragedies. He is also the author of a number of miscellaneous poems. Fired with patriotism, we find his chief work, Civil Wars, keeps conscientiously to the facts. Harmony is his, but his subjection to facts alone make his poems tedious.

Born in Warwickshire, Michael Drayton, with poetic aspirations, begins to write rather late in life. His poetry is in marked contrast to that of Daniel. The latter is correct and timid, the former is sanguine and daring. He is an innovator, whose style is incorrect, but his aim is to produce effect by color and vigor. His eclogues, sonnets, and historical poetry are all characterized by a certain poverty of thought. In his chief accomplishment, Polyolbion, he describes the various parts of England, adding all the local legends that he could gather. It is a childish fancy which gives

us a grotesque picture of the rivers, hills, and other parts of England masquerading in human form.

In the collections of poems made at this period we find true poetry placed side by side with mediocre and sham poems. The songs are the best. The longer poems are most frequently marked by a general disorder of thought and of arrangement. The songs, however, treat of all subjects and are found everywhere. Moreover, Collections appear containing both songs and music. Shakespeare's songs, interspersing his works, are the most original and the most interesting.

Of the sonneteers of the period, Shakespeare is again the best. Generally speaking, collections of sonnets of this time include chiefly love sonnets and a few dedicatory or complimentary sonnets. Italy exercises a deep influence in this genre of poetry.

In his *Hero and Leander*, Marlowe defies the moral sense of his contemporaries as well as of present day critics. Its sensual coarseness does not appeal to ordinary minds, but only to the depraved.

Shakespeare also has his share in licentious sonnets, but casting these aside, we may say that he is the greatest poetic genius found in the history of England.

Venerable Robert Southwell, S. J., finds death at Tyburn in 1595, after cruel tortures and long imprisonment. The value of his poetry may be partly judged by the fact that Shakespeare read and imitated him in certain things. In his collection, *Maenniae*, his lyricism is rich and pure. In *The Burning Babe*, he depicts the Infant Jesus on fire with love and suffering. His meditations on the Four Last Things are worthy of mention. He is also the author of *St. Peter's Complaint*.

Other poets translate from the Huguenot, du Bartas.

Satire has its place in this period to attack the weaknesses and the vices which are prevalent. Joseph Hall attacks nearly every sphere of life in a lively way.

John Marston's satires are licentious in the extreme sense of the word. Another oddity is the poetry of John Donne, who violates every rule of versification.

George Wither, a Puritan, is imprisoned for his satire of the court, *Abuses Stript and Whipt*. His *Shepherd's Hunting*, written in prison, is his most interesting poem.

George Wither loves nature and an honest life, but he moralises too much.

Another lover of nature, William Browne, restricts his writings to pastorals. He is realistic and cheerful. His verses deserve an honorable place, but cannot be ranked with those of genius.

The fishermen, in the poetry of Phineas Fletcher talk of love and of religion. He is an imitator of Spenser, but uses a more modern style. His brother, Giles Fletcher, is the author of Christs Victorie and Triumph.

Ben Jonson is the author of many poems which do not come under the title of drama. He gives us epigrams, sarcastic portraits, and moral satires. He is also the author of many beautiful elegies and epitaphs, as also of some love poems. He is an egoist who expects all men to accept his views written in the most classical manner possible. He is more of the logician than the poet.

The Renaissance.

A- Ben Jonson.

Tall, energetic, and heavy, a veritable Englishman, Ben Jonson is the personification of his literary accomplishments. He prefers the sword to the trowel, so we see him running away to fight the Spaniards. After his return to England, we find him on the stage, while he uses his free-time in touching up dramas. His proud spirit does not hesitate to accept a challenge to take part in a duel. During his imprisonment, which followed, he is converted to the Catholic Faith. All this takes place before he has reached the age of twenty years. After having been released from prison, he marries. The necessity of making a living urges him to write; but he openly declares his intention of keeping above the vulgar tendencies of the times. He speaks as a censor, attacking the vices and the corruption of the age. His frank criticisms earns many enemies for him, but these can not cower his nature. Naturally liberal, he is always in need of resources. He is attacked by paralysis, scurvy, and dropsy, yet he continues to write. The deaths of his wife and children do not deter his literary bent. Amid sickness and sufferings he continues bravely, aiming only at destroying the vices of the age.

His mind, stored with knowledge, has made Greek and Latin ideas its own. His thirst for knowledge, as well as his gift for mastering it, has made him a specialist in all branches. From the Greek and the Latin writers he gets his habit of decomposing his ideas in their natural order. He is almost a logician. His theories and attachment to rules prevent him from creating personages true to life. Jonson tries to make a person out of some general idea, such as boasting, sensuality, and buffoonery. His creations thus become stage-masks to convey Jonson's ideas and opinions to the audience.

Jonson has, however, many gifts. "For the first time we see a connected, well-contrived plot, a complete intrigue, with its beginning, middle, and end, subordinate actions well arranged, well combined; an interest which grows and never flags; a leading truth which all the events tend to demonstrate; a ruling idea which all the characters unite to illustrate; in short, an art like that which Moliere and Racine were about to apply and teach." (H. A. Taine, D. C. L.). He uses, moreover, precision in his

words. He is never dull, but carries the audience, or the reader, to the end by means of his logical development and immeasurable energy. In his tragedies from Roman life and manners he gives us a true picture of ancient times. He observes unity of time and of place. Most of his works are satirical comedies, in which he displays all the wickedness of the particular vice that he wishes to destroy. He is by nature a moralist who succeeds by employing perfect plots and stinging satire. A few of his comedies are, nevertheless, full of fancy and of allegory. Among these we find Cynthia's Revels, which is also a lyrical comedy. He wrote some love poetry.

Jonson is an inventor of masques. In these he displays the life of the court in all its external pomp. In the Sad Shepherd, Jonson takes us to the land of Robin Hood with its chase, fairies and lovers.

Of the two great men, Shakespeare and Jonson, the former is a born artist and poet, while the latter is almost a logician.

#### B- William Shakespeare.

Until the end of the Tudor Period, Mysteries remain popular. The professional Elizabethan dramatists employ religious themes because these alone fully satisfy the demands of the masses. The Morality is used to instruct, to convince, and to confute. The kings and queens finally compel the players to get licenses for the enacting of these plays. They do this in order that no opinion contrary to their own be spread among the people. Pageantries and processions are enjoyed on the occasion of national feasts, or to please the kings and queens.

John Lyly, the Euphuist, writes to give courtly amusement. His plays are in reality masques and are notable for their lively dialogues and wit. He makes the gods and heroes of ancient times appear with the people of his age. These society plays are interspersed with the tricks of varlets, songs and dances, and foolish actions.

Others also write for court amusement, but they need scarcely any mention. The

special influence of these writings is, however, important, as they teach the players the use of scenery.

John Heywood and others are the writers of farces which have for their aim to produce laughter. Every day scenes are depicted in comedies, while characters from ancient comedies are used in learned plays. Seneca's tragedies are translated into English, and his characters are reproduced in plays performed on the English stage.

The Countess of Pembroke and Kyd translate from the French, F. Greville uses oriental subjects, Sir W. Alexander employs ancient history for his tragedies, while Sidney models his plays upon those of Buchanan. Even Bacon has a share in composing a classical tragedy, and Ben Jonson is a staunch defender of the classical school.

It is not the opinions of literary critics that prevail, however, but the demands of an illiterate public who regard plays based upon the ancients as truly foreign to England. The populace asks for plays suited to its intelligence, and it demands that these be acted in surroundings which will satisfy their English taste for pleasing scenes. Plays are thus written to satisfy the public's demands for sentimental speeches and dialogues, its desire for tragic and gory events, its call for poetry and for some form of noise, its love for apparitions, as well as its demand for the events of the day or for comic or historic scenes. Among these writers we may mention Christopher Marlowe who is given a complete education by his poor father. However, he becomes a licentious, loose-moralled man, who, after six years as a playwright, is killed in a quarrel at Deptford. His writings suit the tastes of the public, so that he gains immediate popularity. His style is sober, yet strong. He develops his plays logically, and is a master hand in using blank verse.

In the beginning the players stage their performances wherever they can find sufficient space for the plays and for an audience. Inn yards and court yards are

excellent for their purpose, but the Council objects to these places on the ground that there are too many accidents. To overcome this difficulty, and to be free from the jurisdiction of the Lord Mayor of London, James Burbage leases a site on the grounds of the suppressed monastery of Holywell, to the north of the town. His playhouse, erected there, becomes known as The Theatre. The success of this attempt leads others to build theatres in the vicinity. Others are built to the south of London. These theatres are round in the interior. The Fortune alone is square-shaped. Generally the stage alone has a roof over it to protect the players and their costumes. Brilliant paint is used for the decorations, and these are supplemented by beautiful costumes. At first men alone take part in the performances, but, later, women also become actresses. Whole companies of children also are formed to act in various places.

After this general survey of the writings of the times, we may turn to the greatest English writer, William Shakespeare. His father, John Shakespeare, a butcher, a wool-stapler, and glover, as well as a dealer in timber and corn, is his father. His mother is Mary Arden, the daughter of a rich yeoman farmer. William is the third of eight children, and was born at Stratford-upon-Avon in the year 1564. It is said that William is the possessor of the best of the educations of the times.

In 1582, Shakespeare is united in marriage to Anne Hathaway. Probably, his need for money and his acquaintance with players from London are inducements for him to leave Stratford. It is said that his stage career begins with the holding of horses at the door, but we soon find him in better positions. He quickly becomes known as a distinguished player and dramatist.

Shakespeare's one aim is to please the throng which frequents the theatres. For this reason his system is the reverse of the classical one. To please the taste of the age the play must be complicated in characters, time, and in place. Shakespeare's characters include all classes of people, and even supernatural beings such as ghosts and witches. To keep the attention of the audience he needs strong contrasts, so he opposes kings to peasants, Hamlet to Ophelia, and Ariel to Caliban. He magnifies

the great, and belittles the lesser ones. He makes a scene with the servants follow one with the lords and ladies, or he makes a clownish interlude follow close upon some nerve-straining act. His places change as swiftly as his scenes, while his periods of time are short or long as the occasion demands. Shakespeare is eminently a man of his country and of his time. For this reason, he writes for the majority, and that majority required extremes, violent contrasts, and the display of unbridled passions.

As a rule he follows the plot such as he finds it in the original from whence he obtained his material; and, if it is not sufficiently complicated or developed, he embellishes it according to the lines of direction indicated in the original. In a few cases he deliberately makes historical errors. When his natural tastes in art and in style differ from the tastes of the public, he puts his own aside in order to serve the majority. He also makes errors in local color. But, what does it matter? The public desire such discrepancies, so Shakespeare allows the wrong nationalities to use such terms as "Monsieur" and "Signor", while his early Britons wear glasses and have churches, and his cities are all near the sea-shore. He employs improbabilities because they are another means of pleasing, and are, after all, true to life, particularly true to the Elisabethan times. He plays upon words, uses shams, and employs bad taste simply because his only rule is to please those for whom he writes. He intersperses his writings with puns and with flowery language.

Shakespeare's greatest gift is undoubtedly his ability to give life to his works. Moreover, his dramatic power is unsurpassed in the history of English Literature.

Where are the sources for his plays? Twenty, or more, of the thirty-seven are founded on the plays of his predecessors, or on Holinshed. Novels and ballads are the sources for the remainder. As has already been said, he likes to follow the original plot, and he shows so great respect for the works of others that he accepts the events which they recorded. What makes his plays, then, so much more successful? His lyric warmth and life-giving power can alone be the secret for the endurance of his works. In "Othello" we see his genius throughout. If we wish an excellent example of his ability to handle, and his love for complex situations, we need only turn to "Hamlet". True to his model in life, he allows comedy and tragedy to appear close together, while he permits his

characters to display their defects as well as their virtues, their good as well as their bad qualities.

Moreover, his keen poetic powers of observation see things in poetic ways. To depict the emotions that he wishes to convey to his audience, he makes the weather and seasons correspond, and he naturally endows objects and abstractions with vitality.

To determine the dates of his plays, more or less exactly, we may examine the form of verse which he employs. In his early plays riming couplets with a more or less distinct pause after each are his common method of forming his verse. Gradually, he neglects the pauses, adding, instead, run-on lines. Later still, he increases the number of lines, and adds an extra unaccented syllable. The blank verse, consisting of five syllables which are accented, (these being the second syllable of each foot), forms his ordinary verse. With the addition of an extra syllable, he thus employs, toward the end, eleven syllables in certain lines.

We may divide his works into the following periods:

- I- A period of loose construction, in which he experiments in character-building. In this period we may place Love's Labour Lost, The Comedy of Errors, Midsummer Night's Dream, and Richard III.
- II- A period of English History and comedy, including such writings as Parts I and II of Henry IV, King John, Romeo and Juliet, The Merchant of Venice, King Richard II, As You Like It, and others.
- III- A period in which he shows himself the master in his work. In this period, his works seem to include personal experiences, bitter tragedies, and comedies. Among the writings of this period we may name Julius Caesar, Measure for Measure, and Hamlet.
- IV- A period of romantic plays, in which we find Cymbeline, Winter's Tale, The Tempest, and King Henry VIII.

To complete this list of plays we may add the following: To the first period (1588-1593), Titus Andronicus, Part I of Henry VI, also Parts II and III with which it is thought that Marlowe helped, and The Two Gentlemen of Verona. To the second period (1594-1601), belong King Henry V, The Taming of the Shrew, Merry Wives of Windsor, Much Ado About Nothing, and Twelfth Night. From 1602 to 1608, the third period, we also find

All's Well That Ends Well, Troilus and Cressida, Othello, King Lear, Macbeth, Anthony and Cleopatra, Timon of Athens, and Coriolanus. Of his fourth period there remains to be mentioned Pericles which most critics say is only partly Shakespeare's work.

Shakespeare also is the author of the Sonnets, A Lover's Complaint, Venus and Adonis, and The Rape of Lucrece. He is the author of a few only of the poems in The Passionate Pilgrim.

Shakespeare is buried in the chancel of Stratford Church. Soon after his death, a bust and an epitaph appeared upon a monument in the same church. On the slab over his grave is inscribed:

"Good frend, for Jesus sake forbear  
To digg the dust enclosed here;  
Blest be the man that spares the stones  
And curst be he that moves my bones."

C- Other Writings of This Period.

Ben Jonson, well-acquainted with Shakespeare, has already been briefly noted. With the lives of these two giants of the age we need only mention the chief characteristics of the innumerable plays written by a large number of authors. These plays are scarcely ever read because of their mediocre and often very poor plots. These authors write for the public of their age, and for the stage, not for the reading. No one can equal Shakespeare in his art, but the classical school produces at this period, of which we are treating, a group of plays treating of the life of the middle classes, and also historical tragedies. Those, who attempt to imitate Shakespeare, carry things to extremes and decadence begins.

In these plays, plots and underplots abound, and are sufficiently numerous to satisfy the demands of the public of the day. The plays are crude, often filled with horror and obscenity, lust and murders. Among the latter class are the plays of Ford, Webster, and Tourneur. Many authors attempt to use a treble plot, and fill them with madmen. Beaumont and Fletcher write fifty or sixty plays of all kinds and styles.

Loosing his father at the age of seventeen, John Fletcher, who is naturally gifted, begins to write for the stage. He has constant recourse to collaboration, and, for

this purpose, organizes a play-factory. Together with his friend, Francis Beaumont, he composes plays for amusement. These plays have good scenic and dramatic qualities, and maintain the interest of the audience to the end. They also possess good versification and pleasing language. Fletcher and Beaumont take scenes and characters from various places in Shakespeare's works. In this attempt to become superior to Shakespeare, they make the real unreal, although their style is more easily understood by the public of their day. Their masterpiece is *The Maid's Tragedy*, a tragedy written in a romantic manner. In *The Knight of the Burning Pestle*, a double parody, continued to the end without any confusion, they show their skill in producing a comedy which pleases their audience. *The Woman-Hater* is written by Beaumont alone; it is a mock-heroic comedy. *The Faithful Shepherdess*, a pastoral written by Fletcher alone, gives us a glimpse of his lyrical ability.

Some critics maintain that Shakespeare collaborates with Fletcher in the two plays of *Henry VIII* and *The Two Noble Kinsmen*.

After the death of Beaumont, we find that Fletcher is associated with Philip Massinger who prefers intellectual problems.

In his own work, Fletcher reveals sentimentality, love for the curious, indecency; but at the same time he reveals his natural gift for poetry, an elegant style, and a thorough understanding of the stage. His work charms certain temperaments, but leaves the impression of being a farce, rather than of being real.

Another writer of this period, Thomas Dekker, is gifted with grace and an instinctive dramatic power. He lacks coherence, yet wins sympathy by his dramatization of people who live.

John Webster raises melodrama to the level of true poetry, but his works are fraught with morbid scenes.

John Marston appears as one endowed with a nervous eloquence which he employs in writing the coarse satires named *The Scourge Of Villainy*, and in dramas filled with the most atrocious of crimes, or in comedies such as *The Malcontent*, (which is full of his pessimism). He also employs lyrical irony, and, at times, his expressions are crude.

As Thomas Heywood is one of the most prolific writers of the age, we may note him

as one who adds the note of tenderness and the note of pity to the writings of the age. Like the rest of the writers of the age (with the exception of the few), he caters to the desires of the multitude. As a result, he writes on many subjects, achieving clearness and fluency. However, he usually keeps the scene of his plays in England. His best works are domestic dramas, such as the Yorkshire Tragedy. In *The English Traveller*, he displays characters with refined and delicate feelings.

One more of Shakespeare's contemporaries must be noted before we take a general view of his successors. This is Thomas Middleton. He delights to display the vices and the weaknesses of the people. In his satires, *the Black Book* and *Father Hubbard's Tale*, he gives complete pictures of the lower class life in London. With the same centre of attraction we find him producing a series of lively farce comedies. Middleton tries his powers in cynicism, moralism, and farcism. Most of his comedies are, however, written in collaboration with others, the best known of whom is William Rowley.

#### D- The Successors of Shakespeare.

We have already had a glimpse of Philip Massinger in the summary of the works of Fletcher, but his natural aptitude leads him to the subjects of politics and religion. To cater to the public, he employs material expedients as well as a certain quantity of vulgarity, but, beyond this, he prefers to show his predilection for exalted ideas and for his personal opinions in life. He is an industrious worker in his art. His plays reveal his love for oratory, and his verse is harmonious. In comedy he employs characters which would scarcely bear the test of real life. In serious drama, however, he is at his best, using, as he does, effective scenes to lead up to, or to form a foundation for the principal acts of his play. His own ideas are best seen in *The Maid of Honour*, in which Camiola has for her aim virtue, and knows how to master her own personal feelings.

John Ford, born two years later than Philip Massinger, puts his own morbid personality into his writings. Although he writes harmoniously, yet his topics show a preference for whatever is strange or even perverse. He likes to depict suffering in its refined forms, and, to do this, employs a pleasing style.

We find little of the character of James Shirley himself in his plays. He has a measure of success in tragedy as well as in comedy. His tragedies are correct in form

and are well written. His comedies paint the life of the day, particularly scenes from the upper and middle classes of London society. Romantic comedies also appear among his works. His fluency, however, lacks the personal note needed for a truly interesting composition, be it comedy or be it tragedy.

The decadence of the period is clearly evident in the inferior blank verse in the plays by Henry Glapthorne.

It is not certain to whom many of the plays of the period are to be imputed. Moreover, a large number of authors of mediocre standing imitate the romance of Spain and of France.

After a little more than sixty years of publicity, the theatres are suppressed. In this short period, about one thousand plays are produced. In these, comedy and tragedy appear side by side to depict life and the interests of humanity. These plays have many defects, such as lack of continuity, sensuousness in abundance, a love for horrors, and a delight in displaying the vices of the day.

We may add that the genius of Shakespeare has still to find its equal; the literature of the period has also the addition of many other authors of some merit who give it a large place in English Literature. Thus, the wit of Lyly is courtly; Jonson adds his weighty thoughts; Heywood displays his deep sympathy; Beaumont and Fletcher contribute their elegance.

The Transition Period.  
1625 to 1660.

Undoubtedly the outstanding figure of this period is Milton. We will, however, touch upon the other writers of this age before taking the life and works of this gifted poet.

The long poetical romances and epics of the period are not successful, and are only noted in histories of literature as connecting links between the period of the Renaissance and Milton's grand poems. Besides these poems and epics, there are the works of the Cavaliers and of the so-called Religious Poets.

The best poet among the Cavaliers is Thomas Carew, known as one of the witty gentlemen at the court of Charles I. Polished style and verse, together with themes of love are his chief characteristics. We may add to these, the vigorous, direct phrasing which prevents his works from being cold and uninteresting.

A light, swinging verse, frequently united with flippancy, is the dominant note in the poems of Sir John Suckling. He is an improviser who depicts the characteristics found in the lives of the Cavaliers, and who knows how to employ mockery and irony to convey his own ideas of things. He writes naturally because he writes for pastime.

Richard Lovelace, a faithful Loyalist, abounds in mannerisms but is poor in art. His sense of honor and ideal of love are depicted in two or three poems which make him worthy of mention in the poetry of the Cavaliers.

Energy, witty satire, and conceit, together with exaggerated love-poetry mark the poems of John Cleveland.

The principle of Robert Herrick's life seems to be disorder. After an early life of dissipation, he becomes an Anglican clergyman. We cannot class his poetry as purely Anglican, and yet it is not purely Cavalier-spirited. He may be taken as a link between the two. He is a gifted poet, who loves disorder in his poetry as in his life. He places the beautiful beside its opposite quality, the good beside the wicked. He does not go deeper than the surface. His thoughts, like his words, are light. His short poems are charming, with their harmonious verse delicately varied.

George Herbert, after many years at court, becomes an Anglican clergyman. In his

poetry Herbert gives us everything by imagery. His poetry is concrete, but subtle and strange. In *The Quip*, a poem of twenty-four lines, we have a summary of his whole life. All his short poems are full of vitality and of meaning.

Richard Crashaw becomes a Catholic, and spends his last days in Rome as the secretary of Cardinal Palotta. His collection, *Delights of the Muses*, has one selection of peculiar beauty. This is a paraphrase of a Jesuit Father's poem on the nightingale's song. It is named *Music's Duel*. It gives us a glimpse of the wealth of the vocabulary which he has at his command. He writes religious poetry before and after his conversion; but the greatest poem that he has in this type of poetry is the *Flaming Heart*, upon the Book and Picture of the Seraphical Saint Teresa. Taken as a whole, his poems are full of music and of realism; but his conceits are also frequently apparent.

William Habington, a native of Worcestershire, is another Catholic author of whom a few words may be said. After being educated abroad, he returns to England. A few years after his marriage, in 1634, appears the first edition of his *Castara*. This is a series of poems addressed mainly to his wife. This edition is enlarged and reprinted in the years 1635 and 1640. It contains many sonnets as well as the usual interspersions of several prose characters. It shows his refined and pure imagination. His poetry is, moreover, skilful and melodious, and is characterised by decency of thought and language; the latter is a rare quality in this period. In 1640, *Queen of Arragon*, a romantic tragedy with very little of the dramatic about it, is published.

Francis Quarles, an Anglican, is an improviser, we may almost say, a journalist in verse. He writes for the many. His *Emblemes* are a series of rhymed attempts at meditations.

Andrew Marvell, a Puritan, likes to write of the charms of nature, talking with birds and plants in his poems. He praises Cromwell. After the Restoration he confines himself to satire. He is a lover of nature, lively and original, who lacks invention in the form of his verse.

Edmund Waller, a man of wit and fashion, and possessing very few feelings, is a courtier of this period who writes poetry as occasion demands. His aim is to have a flowing style and good rhymes. His work is characterised by affectation, elegance, exaggeration, a forced wit, and sensuality. He writes for the society of the day. However, his verses are harmonious, clear, and natural. He lacks gravity and depth.

Sir John Denham, secretary to Charles I, is a writer of satiric verse. His poetry is impressive and pleasing. Comparisons abound in his courtly styled verse. Cooper's Hill is his best poem. It describes a hill and the surrounding country, adding the historical incidents related to it as well as moral reflections.

The outstanding poet of this period, who lives for fourteen years of the period which follows, is, doubtless, John Milton. Born in London, he receives his earliest education from his father and from private tutors. In 1620, at the age of twelve years, we find him studying ancient and modern languages at St. Paul's School. The writings of Spenser also influence him at this school. He spends seven years at the University at Cambridge. After this we find him with his father at Horton in Buckinghamshire, where he devotes six years to the study of classical literature, philosophy, music, and mathematics. A trip to France and Italy is curtailed by the rumor of civil war, which makes him anxious to be back in England. A strong adherent of the Roundheads, Milton is appointed foreign secretary to the Commonwealth. Blindness is his portion from the year 1652, but the assistance of Andrew Marvell makes it possible for him to continue as Latin secretary.

One of the world's finest epics, Paradise Lost, is the fruit of Milton's genius. His subject is the fall of man. In the prelude he tells us that he wishes to "Justifie the wayes of God to men." At first, Milton plans to make the poem a drama, but the subject is not suited for this, so he changes it into an epic. The poem begins with the bad angels, headed by Lucifer, refusing to adore God made Man. With the defeat and fall of the rebellious angels, the poem takes us to the scene of hell where the devil and his followers build Pandemonium. When the earth is created, Satan conceives

the idea of revenge. He goes to the earth and successfully tempts Eve, thus causing the exile from Paradise of Adam and Eve. However, they are given the hope of being redeemed by God's own Son.

In Paradise Regain'd, Milton is not as successful as in the first poem. The three temptations of Our Lord are very poorly treated.

After treating his greatest poem and its sequel, we may return to his earlier works before taking his last poem. In The Hymn on the Morning of Christ's Nativity, Milton shows himself the artist. He blends Christian with classical thought in this poem as in all his later ones. In L'Allgro the poet seeks joy in cheerful scenes, while in Il Penseroso he seeks quiet, study, serious poetry, and religious music.

He writes Arcades and Comus for the private stage. Comus personifies revelry, and Sabrina is the nymph of the Severn. The masque, which is in the woods of Shropshire, ends in happiness. This is Milton's first attempt at blank verse, and is the most flawless of his works. The lady and her brothers are the ideal of the nobler Puritans.

When Edward King, Milton's friend is drowned, Milton writes the monody Lycidas. He gives us the facts of Edward King's life and death, and also brings in ancient myths, Christian teachings, and the political and ecclesiastical problems of England.

Milton's sonnets are modelled on those of Petrarch. His On the Late Massacre in Piemont is great as a sonnet, but is marred by Milton's hatred for the Catholic Church.

Samson Agonistes is his last poem. His hero is blind like himself, and is presented in this allegorical drama as ashamed of his weakness. The chorus is a group of his own people who are come to visit him. His father also visits him and desires to ransom him. In the presence of his wife Dalila and the giant Harapha, Samson shows his moral superiority to them. When the Philistines wish to make an amusement of him, he at first declines the offer to go, but, on second thought, he decides to take this opportunity to revenge the cause of God. The messenger describes how this is accomplished.

Milton thus leaves us an impression of a man passionately devoted to duty and to

virtue, a man who is imbued with elevated principles and who detests weakness in any form. Milton marks the end of this period of transition between the Renaissance and modern times.

John Dryden, 1631-1700, belongs partly to this period and partly to the following period. As he is generally classed in the period of the Restoration, we shall place him in the same class.

MODERN TIMES.

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I- The Restoration Period, 1660-1702.

John Dryden, a poet, dramatist, and satirist, is the greatest writer of this period. He receives the last part of his education at Cambridge, and then goes to London as secretary to Sir Gilbert Pickering, his cousin. Before becoming a Catholic he writes a defence of the Anglican Church. After his conversion, however, he gives us *The Hind and the Panther*. On the succession of Mary and William to the throne, he loses the positions of poet laureate and historiographer. Ten years after this he dies in London. He is buried in Westminster Abbey.

His first important work is the *Heroic Stanzas*. These are written after the death of Cromwell in a smooth, yet vigorous, manner. As he is an upholder of authority, we find him writing *Astraea Redux* to greet Charles II's return to England. In his *Annus Mirabilis*, Dryden describes the fight with the Dutch Fleet and the fire of London. In this poem he employs the heroic quatrain. With unequalled scorn Dryden attacks Shaftesbury in *Absalom and Achitophel*, and again in *The Medal*. His *Mac Flecknoe* is an answer to Shadwell's reply to *The Medal*.

To show his reason for becoming a Catholic, Dryden gives us *The Hind and the Panther*. In this poem the sects are shown under the appearances of beasts. It is a masterpiece in satire.

Dryden writes his lyrics chiefly to be sung, hence they suit the popular taste for sentiments which are coarse. In paraphrasing Dryden succeeds with Juvenal, Ovid, and Chaucer, but does not succeed with Virgil.

As a dramatist, Dryden wrote to please the public. He generally employs two plots. Many speeches of the tragedies are excellent.

There is a group of court poets. These write lyric poems of gallantry, love, and arguments. These writers are scarcely worth the mentioning as far as poetry is concerned. Among them, however, John Wilmot has some nice little poems;

Samuel Butler, the author of *Hudibras*, is a bitter and scornful writer of satire.

Hudibras is a satire of the Roundheads in which the characters are mere types lacking reality. However there is breadth and humor as well as wit in his sayings which are found throughout his poems.

## II- Drama of the Restoration Period.

Of the dramatists of this period, John Dryden has already been mentioned under the heading of poetry. He is the author of several comedies, such as *The Wild Gallant*, *Secret Love or the Maiden Queen*, *Sir Martin Mar-All*, and *Marriage a la Mode*. Among his tragedies are found *The Indian Emperor*, *All for Love or the World Well Lost*, and *Don Sebastian*. He has three tragi-comedies: *The Rival Ladies*, *The Spanish Fryer*, and *Love Triumphant*. His operas are *The State of Innocence*, *Albion and Albanus*, and *King Arthur*. Of these, *All for Love* is the only one that he writes for his own pleasure. He so arranges his events that the audience is interested in his plots.

William Wycherley, partly educated in France, loves pleasure of every kind. Writing in an easy and natural manner, he shows strength and boldness in his satires of characters. In his comedies, - *Love in a Wood*, *The Gentleman Dancing-Master*, and *The Plain Dealer*, - he holds up different actions of the characters for scorn. He does not fear to display a certain moral standard.

A weak and impulsive character, Thomas Otway is reflected in some of his writings. His writings are humorous, but coarse. *Alcibiades* is his first tragedy. It does not rank high in value. *Don Carlos*, a heroic drama, is popular with the people of his time. His master-piece is *Venice Preserv'd*. He generally gives us interesting scenes and characters to offset his simple style.

Nathaniel Lee collaborates with Dryden in *Aedipus* and in *The Duke of Guise*. His own works are: *The Rival Queens*, *Mithridates*, *Theodosius or the Force of Love*, *Lucius Junius Brutus*, *The Princess of Cleves*, and *The Massacre of Paris*. His plays are written for the stage, not for reading. He is a heroic dramatist who knows how to be both graceful and eloquent. In spite of many excessive expressions his plays are such that they produce the effect needed to give success on the stage.

The first woman in England to make her living as an author, Mrs. Aphra Behn. We are not considering her as a novelist, but as a dramatist. She writes comedies which are witty and contain good plots, but they are very coarse. Her comedies are: The Rover, in two parts; Sir Patient Fancy; The Feigned Courtezans; The City Heiress; and The Lucky Chance.

A graduate of Trinity College, Dublin, William Congreve, meets with success when The Old Bachelor appears on the stage. His other works for the stage are: The Double Dealer, Love for Love, The Mourning Bride (a tragedy), and The Way of the World. The last named is one of the wittiest comedies in the English language. His The Double Dealer is very ironic, but brilliant and witty. The Mourning Bride is intensely alive. Congreve is a writer who employs wit and polish with a gracefulness of language which it would be difficult to surpass. His writings do not contain one homely phrase.

A man of wit and humor, Sir John Vanbrugh reproduces these characteristics in his works. Vigorous and dashing, he is the opposite to Congreve in his carelessness for technique. His chief works are: The Relapse or Virtue in Danger, The Provok'd Wife, Aesop, The Confederacy, and The Mistake.

George Farquar, reckless and good-natured, differs from the other writers of this period in his manner of giving his characters some form of conscience. His plays, though unpolished, are teeming with life, and, what is better, they are original. Among his works we find Love and a Bottle, The Constant Couple, Sir Harry Wildair, The Inconstant, The Twin Rivals, The Recruiting Officer, and The Beaux' Stratagem.

Thomas Shadwell gives us pictures of contemporary life in his plays which are full of wit but lack polish. The Comical Revenge, She Would if She Could, and The Man of the Mode are the works of Sir George Etherege, another witty writer. John Crowne is the author of eighteen clever plays. Thomas Southerne writes humorous comedies and popular tragedies.

### III- The Classical School.

Alexander Pope is the son of a Catholic merchant of London. During his early years he receives a rather desultory education. As he is sickly he passes much time in reading. To the rudiments of Greek and of Latin he adds some knowledge of French and Italian. The lack of a regular education is in a great measure compensated for by his wide reading and the knowledge of how to utilise the same. At an early age, his father leaves London for the country, so that the beauty of nature must have some influence upon the boy. After the death of his father, Pope goes with his mother to Twickenham where they establish their home.

Pope's pastorals, written when he is only sixteen years of age, are only published in 1709. However, under the influence of Walsh, he is turned from this form of verse to one of an entirely different style. On the appearance of Pope's Essay on Criticism, his friend, John Caryll, suggests that Pope write a poem to bring peace and harmony to Miss Arabella Fermor and Lord Petre. Pope produces a mock-heroic poem, The Rape of the Lock. Later, he enlarges upon this poem.

Lacking a philosophy of his own, Pope writes the Essay on Man in four books, Bolingbroke supplying the material. In this poem Pope does not have any intention of going against the Church; but it is pointed out to him that the philosophy in it actually does this. He explains that he had no such intention in writing it.

His Dunciad is a bitter satire against amateur and poor writers of the times. He adds a fourth book to this in the year 1742.

His four Moral Essays are satires. Of Taste is a satire of the Duke of Chandos. Of the Use of Riches praises the Man of Ross and satirises the new man. The first is entitled Of the Knowledge and Characters of Men. Of the Characters of Women is a satire on women.

Windsor Forest is a descriptive poem. In his so-called translation of the Iliad he employs his own style and his own choice of words. Hence it is by no means a translation, but rather, an adaptation. His Odyssey, in which he has help, is not as successful. Eloisa to Abelard and the Elegy to the Memory of an Unfortunate Lady

are sentimental. They are correct and display his dramatic powers.

Matthew Prior, at first a scholar of Westminster School in London, is obliged, after the death of his father, to work in the wine shop belonging to his uncle. He is given his education, however, by the Earl of Dorset, and it is he who also obtains for Prior his first position. Finally he becomes a member of parliament. He is in prison for about two years, and spends the remainder of his life in quiet seclusion.

His occasional verses are the best. These are found in his Poems on Several Occasions. Together with Charles Montagu he travesties Dryden's Hind and the Panther in The Hind and the Panther Transvers'd to the Story of the Country-Mouse and the City-Mouse. His odes do not add to his fame. His humor is delicate, and often underlaid with sadness. He is realistic, showing life in its sudden changes, with its color and with its noise. He models his style on that of Horace.

Thomas Parnell, educated in Dublin, is a friend of Pope, and contributes to the Spectator. His style is, on the whole, artificial. His poetry cannot be classed among the best. In A Night Piece on Death and A Hymn to Contentment his artificial style is not so conspicuous, but he is didactic. His poems, with a few exceptions, are found in Poems on Several Occasions, edited by Pope. The Hermit is a narrative poem giving a moral to its readers.

Another friend of Pope's, John Gay, is a good-humored but lazy person who obtains success by his operas. Gay attempts to obtain success by the writing of poetry. In Rural Sports, Gay is stiff but appreciates nature. The Fan is a poem extending through three books. Six pastorals named The Shepherd's Week are begun as a burlesque, but end in witty pictures of the country. They are realistic in manner. His Trivia gives us a description of London in his age. His Fables are didactic but full of humor.

Some of Gay's Epistles in verse are interesting. It is, however, his operas that give him fame. His Beggar's Opera is a ballad-opera which ridicules the Italian opera and attacks Walpole's Government. His songs in the Beggar's Opera are the cause for his fame. Polly, the sequel, is prohibited for the stage. Three Hours After Marriage

is a failure. The What d'ye Call It gives us Gay's opinion of the drama of this period in the form of a burlesque. As long as Gay is kept on the stage he is a success; but out of this setting he does not bear criticism.

Oliver Goldsmith, shy, yet affectionate, gets into many troubles by his desire to make an impression. His plots are weak. To make an impression he employs comical situations. Among his works of this nature we may class the Good-Natur'd Man and She Stoops to Conquer.

Goldsmith's The Traveller is a melancholy story of his search for happiness which he finds at last within his own being. The sorrows of emigrants are brought into the story. The Deserted Village gives us a simple description of a village and of those who lived in it.

In the world of drama, Colley Cibber attempts to write comedies with a moral note in them, while Mrs. Centlivre believes in Moliere and the Spaniards from whom she obtains most of her ideas.

Tragedy is written in refined verse but lacks true life-situations. They are only a success because of the intense party feelings of the day. In this class are Addison's Cato, Nicholas Rowe's The Fair Penitent and Jane Shore, as well as the works of Edward Young, James Thomson, John Hughes, and George Lillo.

Garrick reforms the theatre by introducing French decoration, by employing facial expression and descriptive movements. He no longer allows the spectators to be on the stage, thus allowing his actors to be seen from one side only.

Richard Brinsley Sheridan, born in Dublin, is a charming and witty person who has knowledge of society and mastery of stage technique.

His first famous comedy, The Rivals, reveals an angry parent, a son in love, and servants catering to both. These persons work for the same ends, but frustrate their own plans, and are only brought back to normal conditions after showing all their foibles to the audience.

The School for Scandal is the greatest English comedy since the time of Shakespeare. Satire and well planned dialogues play a large part in this play which reaches its climax in the "Screen Scene". His Critic is witty , but is chiefly a parody.

#### POETRY OF SENTIMENT.

Edward Young, with no sincerity in his life, is notable because he uses blank verse in his poem, Night Thoughts. This poem has for themes,- life, death and immortality; but it is imbued with a very bad philosophy. The Last Day is written in the classic couplets, and has nothing of the supernatural about it. Vanquished Love is in the same style, but its subject is Lord Guildford and Lady Jane Grey. He displays some wit and energy in his seven satires named Love of Fame or the Universal Passion. He lacks dramatic power, and tries to replace it with bustling and noise. In this style he writes Busiris, The Revenge, and The Brothers.

John Dyer, a Welshman, is a lover of nature. An exact observer of nature, he imitates the metre of Milton's L'Allegro in his Grongar Hill. The Ruins of Rome is another of his poems. He is also the author of The Country Walk. In The Fleece, Dyer sees beauty in the factory as well as in the country.

James Thomson, another nature poet, places his interest in nature in his blank-versed poem, The Seasons. He is a little too decorative in his style, but he is true to the facts of nature and adds many observations of country people and their ways. The Castle of Innocence is an imitation of Spenser. In it, Indolence is conquered by the Knight of Arts and Industry. Britannia and Liberty are political poems written in blank verse. His plays have very little value.

William Shenstone brings into use the trisyllabic metre. His elegies have a certain pathos about them, and the lilt in his lyrics makes us remember them.

Thomas Gray, humorous and warm-hearted, with a little pessimism due to his

delicate constitution, is a classicist who would prefer to burn his works rather than have them be the cause for criticism. Among his playful poems are The Long Story and the Ode on the Drowning of Horace Walpole's Cat. His own pessimistic nature is revealed in Adversity. The Elegy and Spring depict human life. His most perfect work is found in his Pindaric Odes on the history of England and the history of poetry. The Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard has for its setting an English Churchyard and has in it some stanzas of unequalled beauty. Each stanza is like a gem by itself giving a vivid picture as the poet wishes to convey it.

Kind-hearted and a lover of beauty, William Collins claims our attention. From much suffering his health is ruined and, toward the end of his life, he is for a time afflicted with the loss of his reason. His Odes equal those of Gray, and surpass them in musical qualities. In the Persian Eclogues we have a picture in almost every word. He naturally reverts to words found in the time of Shakespeare, but he uses them with a charm which is all his own. His Ode on the Superstitions of the Highlands of Scotland considered as the Subject of Poetry is considered as one of his most outstanding works. In it he allows the imagination to have full play. He might be called one of the romantic poets.

#### The Pre-Romantic Period.

James Macpherson is a Highlander who at first displays a taste for classical poetry. He adapts or invents Fragments of Ancient Poetry from poems of Old Irish cycles found in Scotland. the success of this collection leads to a search for other sources. From these he gives us Fingal, Temora, and other poems in a prose to which he adds rhythm and cadence suitable to his theme. His poems give us simple things and beings in a land of mountains and mists. They are, however, not genuine with their romantic melancholy and ghostly apparitions.

Thomas Percy's Reliques of Ancient English Poetry in three volumes are a collection of old poems and ballads. He frequently makes the language modern and puts

in stanzas of his own to bridge any gulfs in the stories. He thus brings back the influence of the old ballads, and this influence is felt by the English.

Thomas Chatterton, apprenticed to an attorney, spends his spare time in the study of poetry and the history of the medieval times. He is the author of modern poems and imitations on various subjects. His imitations in the old style, which he attributes to a fifteenth century author whom he names Rowley, are borrowed from eighteenth century authors and contain many anachronisms.

William Cowper, after becoming a lawyer, is finally named Clerk of the Journals of the House of Lords. The thought of the formal scrutiny, which precedes this, causes him to become insane. When he regains his normal condition he lives with the Unwins at Huntingdon. His acquaintance with John Newton dates from the time that the Unwin family moves to Olney. John Newton and he are the authors of the Olney Hymns. Shy and very sensitive, Cowper now occupies himself with the writing of poetry. He is a lover of nature and of people. Writing in the classic couplet, he gives us didactic poems and satires in his first volume of Poems. His satires suffer from the fact that he does not know the ways of men and of the world. His other poems are full of energy. One of the minor poems of this volume is famous for the patriotic spirit which it displays. This poem is Boadicea, a tribute to Britain's supremacy on the sea, as it also is to the daring courage of the ancient British queen. Six books of blank verse are entitled The Task. The line "God made the country, and man made the town," gives us Cowper's purpose in writing this poem. Personal observations are utilised in his poems. Among his other poems may be mentioned John Gilpin which is popular with all who have had the opportunity of reading it to follow the adventures of John Gilpin on the return of his wedding day. The Gustaway is written under the influence of stark despair. Cowper brings back to English poetry a natural manner of description. He is not able, however, to rid himself entirely of the mannerisms of his age.

Byron relates of George Crabbe, born at Aldborough in Suffolk, that he is "Nature's sternest painter yet the best," who is "Cradled among the sons of the ocean." His youth is spent in the daily contact with fishermen, poachers, and smugglers. He has a good education, and, with the aid of Edmund Burke, he becomes an Anglican clergyman.

His poetry gives us a gloomy, discouraging view of society, and particularly of the odious and the repulsive scenes. He shows, however, the majesty and degradation, the strength and weakness, and the wisdom and folly to be found in all classes of society. He has an excellent power for minute descriptive painting and for depicting a scene or presenting a character. Another characteristic of his writings is his ability to describe the moral sufferings of men, and the workhouse, jail, fen, and marsh.

His first successful poem, *The Library*, appears in 1780, and is followed, in 1783, by *The Village*, an energetic and inventive poem. *The Parish Register*, *The Borough*, *Tales in Verse*, and *The Tales of the Hall* are all by him.

William Mason, a friend of Gray, is the author of two artificial tragedies, *Elfrida* and *Charactacus*, a poem in blank verse named *The English Garden*, and is the editor of the *Works of Gray*. To the latter he adds Gray's biography including his letters and his journal.

Robert Burns, whom the Scots call *Dobbie Burns*, is the son of a very poor gardener who does his best to educate his children. His father engages a teacher for them. The neighbors assist as far as they are able in the education of "Robbie Burns." To this elementary knowledge *Dobbie Burns* adds French and mathematics and the general knowledge obtained through wide reading. This reading acquaints him with the best English poets, thus developing his natural taste for poetry. However, *Dobbie Burns* has to help with the farm work from an early age. In 1781 we find him learning the work of a flax dresser which he has to give up when the premises are destroyed by fire. Upon the death of his father in 1784 he and his younger brother work the small farm

of Mossiel. At the same time his poems attract the attention of his neighbors as well as the notice of literary men. Because of his unfortunate love affair with Jean Armour he decides to go to Jamaica. His need of money for this purpose obliges him to publish a volume of his poems by subscription. A letter from Edinburgh advising him to publish a second edition of his poems changes his plan of emigration. During the various events of the remainder of his life Burns continues to write poetry. Tam O'Shanter is the product of one day's poetic inspiration.

The interpreter for the peasants of Scotland, Burns is gifted with the power of song, of description, and of satire. We find his poetry full of humor. His tender love for the weak and helpless things of this world is given a conspicuous note in To a Mouse. His songs, especially his Scotch ones, are his best productions. He combines description with humor and satire in such poems as the Tam O'Shanter and The Jolly Beggars. His standard English poems are not on the same level as those in his native dialect, but even in these he is the true poetic artist.

William Blake, born in London on Nov. 23, 1757, of poor parents, is the owner of a scanty education. His strong love for painting leads him to spend a great deal of time in the art stores. His talent for engraving and for water-color work is worthy of note. The Royal Academy exhibits his pictures from 1790 to 1800. His acquaintance with artists leads to intercourse with literary men. He entertains the latter with the recitation and the singing of his own poems.

In 1783, his Poetical Sketches give us a view of his poetic talents as well as of his gift for illustration. This double talent is again evident in his Songs of Innocence. Some of these songs are very original and extremely symbolic.

After the Songs of Experience, we are obliged to read his symbolism in his elusive word-pictures as well as in his intricately designed illustrations. The Book of Job contains paintings which give us the grandeur of the theme in exquisite imagery. There is a certain charm in these poems, while in others he exhibits an originality all his own, and at times truly daring.

THE ROMANTIC PERIOD.

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THE FIRST GENERATION OF POETS: WORDSWORTH, COLERIDGE, SOUTHEY.

William Wordsworth, born at Cockermouth, Cumberland, in the year 1770, is an ardent lover of nature. During his stay at Hawkshead we see him taking many solitary rambles to satisfy this bent of his nature. He is a graduate of Cambridge. In 1791 we find him in France. At first, all his sympathies are with the revolutionists, but the extremes to which he watches them go so disgusts him that he becomes conservative in his ways. In 1795, Wordsworth and his sister settle at Racedown in Dorset. After a visit from Coleridge, they move to Alfoxden. Here these two poets are often seen together, and publish their Lyrical Ballads. After a trip to Germany, Wordsworth and his sister make their home at Grasmere. During the remainder of his life we may note his marriage in 1802, his position as inspector of stamps, his trips to Scotland and to other countries, and, lastly, his position as Poet Laureate after the death of Southey.

All his poems give us his love for nature and his belief in the brotherhood of man in beautiful yet simple language. He has an extraordinary power of observation, an excellent imagination, and unites deep feeling with profound thought in his simple yet lofty, sustained and impassioned lines.

His Descriptive Sketches in verse and An Evening Walk (an epistle in verse) contain many picturesque descriptions. The Prelude gives us his impressions of life, and reveals him to humanity as a nature-loving, solitary being who feels the presence of a living spirit in the woods and fields. In The Excursion, extending through nine books, his themes are God, man, man's duties and his hopes, life and nature. His tales, odes, and sonnets merit various degrees of merit and praise. We find a true joy in the natural pleasures of childhood in his Ode to Duty and in his Intimations of Immortality. A romantic interest in common life is revealed in Michael, The Solitary Reaper, To a Highland Girl, and in Stepping Westward. Youthful enthusiasm is the chief characteristic of To a Skylark, and Yarrow Revisited.

Wordsworth is one of the purest and most healthy-minded poets of our English poets. We find him, nearly at all times, on the side of truth and nobility. As he tries to make nature the living expression of the spirit behind it he is essentially sincere and realistic. His death in 1850 was mourned by his friends and admirers.

Samuel Taylor Coleridge, born in 1772 at Ottery Saint Mary in Devonshire, and a student for a time at Cambridge, proves an untiring reader. Together with Southey, he plans the foundation of an ideal community on the banks of the Susquehanna. To be a member of the scheme, however, they put as one condition the married state. The two poets, accordingly, marry sisters. Their scheme is not realized as funds are lacking.

In 1796 we find him living at Nether Stowey in Somersetshire, where he associates with Wordsworth in the publication of their Lyrical Ballads. After going to the Continent with his friend, he settles at Keswick. Rheumatism obliges him to spend a winter at Malta, but, as he is not relieved, he begins to use opium. The habit of drugging becomes so strong that he is obliged to live with a doctor in London. He masters this habit, but he produces very little in the literary field after this. All his friends and acquaintances enjoy his conversational powers.

Coleridge is a profound thinker who displays no ambition, no concentration, no steadiness of purpose. His poetry, however, gives us beautiful and expressive diction, melodious verse, beautiful imagery, and suggestive and subtle thought.

The Rime of the Ancient Mariner is a wild, mystical narrative. It has a strange, unearthly melody, and an air of antiquity which suit the spectral character of the events. Christabel, published without being finished, is a wild, mysterious story. Among his other poems are Work without Hope, The Virgin's Cradle Hymn, Ode to Mount Blanc, Day Dreams, The Devil's Thoughts, The Wanderings of Cain, Youth and Age, Dejection, Ode to France, and Fears in Solitude.

In prose, he is the author of Lectures on Shakespeare; a literary periodical of twenty-seven numbers, named The Friend; Biographia Literaria; and Aids to Reflection.

Associated with Wordsworth and Coleridge, Robert Southey, the son of a Bristol linen draper, spends four years at Westminster School. At the end of that time, he is dismissed for a satirical paper on flogging. Shortly after this he spends two years at Oxford. For a time we find him in the English lake district as the neighbor of Wordsworth and Coleridge. For nearly forty years he continues to produce literary works of merit. He is appointed Poet Laureate in 1813. Shortly after his second marriage in 1839 he is afflicted with imbecility. He does not recover from this state, and dies in 1843 at the age of sixty-nine years.

Won for a time by the principles of the French Revolution, he writes *Wat Tyler* and *Joan of Arc*. His later conservative period gives to literature epics, ballads, miscellaneous verse, pamphlets, reviews, and biographies;- in all, about one hundred and nine volumes, in which he touches upon almost every subject.

Among his works, *Thalaba, the Destroyer*, is a wild and extravagant tale of Arabian enchantment. *Madoc* is the story of a Welsh Prince of the twelfth century who makes a discovery of the Western World. *The Curse of Kehama* resembles *Thalaba*, but it is written in verse. *Roderick: Last of the Goths*, is written in blank verse. Some of his shorter poems are *The Scholar*, *Auld Cloots*, *The Inchcape Rock*, and *Lodore*.

#### THE SECOND GENERATION OF POETS: BYRON, SHELLEY, KEATS.

George Noel Gordon Byron, born in London, in 1788. Until the age of seven he is at home with his mother who allows him to do practically whatever he likes. After four years in the grammar school at Aberdeen, he gets the titles and the estates of the family upon the death of his grand-uncle. He goes with his mother to Newstead Abbey near Nottingham. He is sent to Harrow where he distinguishes himself by his love for sports. During his stay at Cambridge he is impatient under restraint, and frequently commits faults against discipline. Here he wastes his time and acquires habits of reckless profligacy. After two years of this form of life, he returns to his home. A trip to Spain and along the Mediterranean Sea result in the *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage*. His unfortunate marriage in 1815 is the cause of his departure from England with the

expressed determination of never returning to his native land. France, Belgium, Switzerland, and Italy are now the scenes of his travels. From Italy he makes occasional trips to the islands of Greece, and finally visits Athens. In 1823, he decides to join the Greeks in their struggle for independence. He arrives at Missolonghi in January of 1824, but the air of this place does not agree with him. A ten days' attack of fever in April of the same year ends with his death.

Byron's earliest production is the Hours of Idleness, consisting of poems, original and translated, but in no way remarkable. However, as it receives the severe criticism of the Edinburgh Review, Byron retorts with his English Bards and Scotch Reviewers.

In 1812 he publishes the first two cantos of his Childe Harold. In this tale he employs the Spenserian stanza. The public receive this poem with enthusiasm. Giaur and The Bride of Abydos follow in 1813. In 1814, he publishes The Corsair. The three last named poems are written in irregularly rhymed verse (except The Corsair), and are narrative poems. They lack variety of character, and delineate moments of intense passion in oriental life. The third canto of the Childe Harold and the Prisoner of Chillon are written while he is near Geneva. Beppo, a short, satirical poem appears in 1818.

His dramas, which are mostly declamatory and undramatic, are written while he is at Ravenna. He lacks scenic power; besides, he does not attempt to create a variety of characters.

The last canto of the Childe Harold finally appears. In this poem he first attempts to imitate the stanza and the quaint ancient air of The Fairie Queen. He soon abandons this masquerading. Harold is an exhausted and disappointed libertine who wanders recklessly over this earth. Contempt, admiration, baseness, beauty, despair, and patriotism are able to rouse him momentarily.

The Childe Harold is unsurpassed in its pictures of nature, man, and society. It begins and ends with the ocean, to which it has a great similitude.

His last poem, Don Juan, is the picture of all the discordant notes in Byron's

wayward life. In this poem, he rapidly and ceaselessly alternates the severest of satire with the most comic of expressions, and with solemn pathetic images. His power is decreasing. He intermingles long stretches of prose lacking both humor and imagination with his poetry in this story. Occasionally, too, he employs a wit which not only offends against good literary taste, but also offends the moral sense of all decent people.

His genius is remarkably original, versatile, and energetic. His poems are filled with sentiments of dignity and tenderness, and contain many sublime and beautiful passages. However, his poems attempt to destroy all belief in the existence of real virtue, and ridicules enthusiasm and true affection. He has an almost complete command of scorn and despair. We also find, throughout his works, much cheap and tawdry rhetoric and a great deal of vulgar sentimentality.

Percy Bysshe Shelley, the oldest son of a baronet, is a poet of rare genius, but a genius who misses the great aim of life. At Sion House Academy, Brantford, and at Eton, his temperament causes a regular persecution from his companions. His unusual literary ability is recognized at Oxford, but he is expelled because of his pamphlet on The Necessity of Atheism. His first marriage is an unhappy incident in his life. After his second marriage he travels to Italy to make his home there. While out on the Bay of Spezia, he meets death by drowning at the age thirty years.

His schoolboy days have two romances to his credit. A few months after his expulsion from Oxford, Shelley publishes Queen Mab. In this poem he ridicules the popular idea of God, and makes necessity or the spirit of nature his own god. In Alastor, or, the Spirit of Solitude, he reveals a soul seeking after a happiness ever beyond its grasp. The Revolt of Islam is written in the Spenserian stanza. It depicts the struggle of an agitated nation struggling against institutions which it had previously revered. Defiance of all authority is expressed in the four-act drama, Prometheus Unbound. Repulsive and sickening crimes are rehearsed in the Cenci. All his longer works reveal him to us as an inveterate enemy of inequality and as an

advocate of the equal distribution of labor and of reward.

Adonais, written in fifty-five Spenserian stanzas, is a lament over the untimely death of Keats. The Sensitive Plant, The Skylark, The Cloud, Ode to the West Wind, and Ode to the Night are lyrics which are not equalled in their imaginative beauty of thought and of language.

Shelley employs a versification which is free, varied, and musical. His diction is natural and richly poetical; it is only obscured by his intense and subtle imagination. He is the most ethereal of our poets, but he sees nothing beyond the natural world. His writings give us a glimpse of his longing for immortality, for the divine, and for the supernatural.

John Keats is a premature genius who leaves an influence on English poetry. He has not the advantage of a university course, and he knows very little about the classics. He has little knowledge of Latin, and none of Greek. Although he is at first an apprentice to a surgeon, he spends a great deal of time in reading the works of Chaucer and of Spenser. This shows him his aptitude for poetry. His first volume of poetry is scarcely noticed by the public. His largest work, *Endymion*, appears in the year 1817. It is a poetical romance filled with lines of exquisite word-music. *Lamia* is a strange tale of Grecian mythology. *Isabella* is founded on a tale from Boccaccio. *The Eve of St. Agnes* is a romantic story; while *Hyperion* is a mere fragment, but the most polished of his poems. In his *Miscellaneous Poems* we find his odes. These are among the finest in our English Literature.

He expresses the sense of beauty in an intense manner. His diction is beautiful. The cadences of his verse are both harmonious and majestic.

He prefers Greek themes, because, like the Greeks, he treats nature as a god. His death in the year 1821 is untimely, and is caused by consumption and disappointments.

#### Semi-Romanticists.

Samuel Rogers, a financier, is also a poet who has the gift of describing

people and places. Among his poetry we find *The Pleasures of Memory*, which has a very familiar rhythm; *Italy*, which contains many interesting descriptions; and *Epistle to a Friend*, with *Other Poems*.

Thomas Moore, born in Dublin in the year 1779, is called the "sweet son of Song". His sentiments and thoughts are graceful. His allusions and imagery are full of wit and of imagination. His versification is musical and refined. Many of his poems, however, lack reverence and delicacy. His translation of the *Odes of Anacreon* into English brings him into the notice of the public. Shortly after this, his miscellaneous poems are published. Among these there are many that have a sensual and an immoral tinge. His *Epistles*, *Odes*, and *Other Poems* form a volume giving his remarks upon American society and manners as observed by him on his trip to the United States in 1806. The year 1812 marks the beginning of his series of political and of personal satires. These are full of ingenuity and of fancy. His *Irish Melodies*, written to the tune of Irish national airs, include over one hundred lyrics. His *Sacred Songs* and his *National Airs*, the latter including seventy songs adapted to the tunes of other countries, are also popular. *Lalla Rookh* consists of several stories strung together in rhymed couplets. In it he reproduces the life of the Orient with its barbaric splendors in a richly ornamented style. These are Moore's chief poetic works. He is also the author of many prose works; among these we find *The Travels of an Irish Gentleman in Search of a Religion*, and *The History of Ireland*.

Among other poets of this class we may mention John Clare whose love for nature is reflected in his works. Mrs. Hemans employs healthy and every-day emotions in her poems, and these bring success from a public who is not deaf to these. There is scarcely room in a short outline like this to give details about such minor writers as James and Horace Smith, the authors of *Rejected Addresses*; George Darley, the writer of *Errors of Ecstasie*, *Sylvia*, and *Nepenthe*; and William Combe, the author of *Three Tours of Dr. Syntax*.

Charles Lamb, who for many years cares for his unfortunate sister, publishes his short poems with those of Coleridge and Charles Lloyd. He is the author of A

Tale of Rosamund Gray, and of the tragedy, John Woodvil. He and his sister's Tales from Shakespeare are a children's classics. He is also the publisher of Specimens of English Dramatic Poets, Who lived about the Time of Shakespeare. A constant store of humor, tenderness, and love of humanity, are evident in all his works, poetry as well as prose.

Walter Savage Landor, born at Warwick in 1775, is characterized by his rather republican and revolutionary ideas. His audacity is the cause of trouble at Oxford, so he is forced to leave. His quarrelsome disposition leads him to aid Spain against Napoleon, to separate from his wife, and to live in a constant state of misunderstanding with his neighbors. After his return from Italy, he is again forced to leave his native land because of a threatened lawsuit for libel.

The characteristics of his works are a natural and vigorous classicism, regular and well-defined forms, a delicate purity of language, and a majestic and musical movement in his sentences. His poetry is never very successful.

Among Landor's works we find a volume of poems dating from 1795; an epic, named Gebir; a tragedy, named Count Julian; and Imaginary Conversations. In the last named we find touches of bigotry.

#### WRITERS OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY.

Some of the writers already named belong to this class. Of the others it may be permissible to begin by giving a short sketch of the life and works of Sir Walter Scott.

A native of Edinburgh, Sir Walter Scott is one of the greatest writers of the century. He gives excellent descriptions of nature and of the passions of the heart. His works also show his aptitude for the dramatic. He has a variety of life-like characters, is fond of beauty, is vigorous in his manner of execution, uses bold coloring in his historical scenes, and gives his readers a desire for nobler and for more courageous deeds. His works display a high sense of honor, cheerfulness, and an admiration for the chivalrous deeds of old.

The Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border is historical and traditional, giving

many curious details. The Lay of the Last Minstrel is a tale of sorcery and of adventures. Marmion resembles this in scenery; it ends with the Field of Flodden. He is also the author of The Lady of the Lake and of The Vision of Don Roderic.

We know Scott not only from his poetry but especially from his historical novels; but an estimate of these has no place in an outline of poetry. It is said that Scott's intensive work in the writing of his last series of novels is the real cause of his paralysis and death.

Thomas Campbell, born and educated in Glasgow, is a poet whose chief characteristics are hopefulness, refined imagery, deep feeling, graceful diction, harmonious versification, and a powerful manner of expressing his thoughts.

His Pleasures of Hope give us all these characteristics together with an accurate finish and a polished phrasing. He is also the author of the well-known poems: Ye Mariners of England, Hohenlinden, The Battle of the Baltic, The Exile of Erin, Lochiel's Warning, and Gertrude of Wyoming and other poems.

In his prose he entertains his readers, but lacks good taste at times.

Elizabeth Barrett Browning, Born in 1806, spends her childhood among the Malvern Hills. An injury to her spine is the cause of many years spent as an invalid. Some time after moving to London, her Seraphim and Other Poems are published. An earlier work, her version of Aeschylus's Prometheus Bound, as well as a few other little works, is thus brought to the attention of the public.

The sight of her brother drowning brings her broken health. She goes to Italy in order to be cured. Two years before her marriage she publishes her Poems. Some years after her marriage her Casa Guidi Windows give us a bigoted and prejudiced picture of the political struggles of Italy and of Austria.

According to Aurora Leigh, her novel in blank verse, she has the same moral and social standards as Eliot and Dickens. Her poetry is characterized by its feminine emotion. Among her lyrics may be mentioned The Lay of the Brown Rosary, The Rhyme of the Duchess May, Cowper's Grave, and The Dead Pan. She is also the

author of *The Cry of the Children*, and of *Sonnets from the Portuguese*.

Arthur Hugh Clough, born in Liverpool in 1819, is influenced by Thomas Arnold at Rugby. He is a winner of the Balliol Scholarship at Oxford, and a Fellow at Oriel College. We find him in Rome in 1848. The result of his stay there is *Amours de Voyage*, which is a story written in the form of rhymed epistles.

After a visit to America, he becomes a member of the Educational Department of the Privy Council. He also visits Paris and Vienna on business, and Greece and Constantinople for his health. His search after health again takes him to Italy, where he dies as the result of a fever.

Besides *Amours de Voyage*, he is the author of an unfinished life drama named *Dipsychus*; *Qui Laborat Orat*; *Sic Itur*; *Qua Cursum Ventus*; *Say not the Struggle Naught Availeth*; and a vacation pastoral or farewell to Oxford, named *The Bothie of Tober-Na-Vuolich*.

John Keble may be mentioned because of *The Christian Year*, a collection of religious poems. This work is soothing and subduing. He is also connected with the Tractarian Movement.

Dante Gabriel Rossetti, born in London in 1828, a lover of poetry and of art, is noted for his simplicity in writing, and at the same time for elaborate imagery. His poetry is full of visual beauty, and is noted for its artistic workmanship and for its melodious diction. His poems, published in 1870, are criticized for immorality. These poems are written in memory of his wife. His *Ballads and Sonnets*, published in 1881, include *The King's Tragedy*; in this poem we see his dramatic power at its best. His *House of Love* is placed by critics on the same level as Mrs. Browning's *From the Portuguese*, and even on a plane with Shakespeare's *Sonnets*. *The Hand and the Soul*, an imaginative prose study, and *The Blessed Damozel* give the characteristics of his school.

Robert Browning, a native of London, is at first directed in his studies by his father, a lover of the classics and of modern literature. Robert's teachers allow him to follow his own inclinations in his studies. This leads him to a study of art,

music, Latin, French, Italian, and all things leading to a refined culture.

He spends a great deal of time in travelling in Italy and in Russia.

In Browning's poetry we find a strong dramatic element. He loves to give an analysis of all the types and characters of people within his knowledge. He takes some crisis in their life, and then depicts the psychic struggle which follows. Invariably the individual triumphs over all difficulties. Browning is an optimist who tries to convince the men of his age that they can overcome all doubts, that the human soul can triumph over all natural obstacles. Such is his creed, and his thoughts tumble over each other when he attempts to express them. Those who read his poetry without attempting to go deeper than the surface are perhaps justified in saying that he is unmusical and without meaning. Those, however, who judge the matter, say that Browning is greater than Tennyson.

A large part of his dramatic idylls and lyrics is easily understood; but his longer works require concentration for comprehension. Among his poetry may be named *Pauline*. *Paracelsus* is a dialogue written in blank verse with the purpose of illustrating human craving after knowledge. *Strafford* appears in the following year, and *Sordello* four years later. An example of his poetry of thought is found in *Bells and Pomegranates*. *Pippa Passes* is in this collection; in it a little Italian silk-weaver is spending part of her one holiday singing a ditty of hope and confidence; without knowing it, her song influences four unseen groups of people for the better. This collection also contains *Dramatic Lyrics*, *A Blot in the 'Scutcheon'*, and *Colombe's Birthday*. *Christmas Eve And Easter Day* are written in the year 1850. *Men and Women* appear in 1855. Shortly after his *Dramatic Personae*, published in 1864, he returns to England with his son. He travels back and forth between England and Italy, but this does not prevent him from writing. *The Ring and the Book* contains no less than twenty thousand lines. Besides this we may mention *La Saisiaz* which gives his arguments for the soul's immortality, and *Asolando*, published in 1889, the year of his death.

John Wilson's works appear under the pseudonym of Christopher North. Educated

at Glasgow and at Oxford, the loss of his fortune obliges him to turn to some means of earning his livelihood. He is the editor of Blackwood's Magazine for thirty-five years. From 1820 to 1850 he holds the chair of moral philosophy in the University of Edinburgh.

His works are free from conventionalism, and give us a glimpse of his vivacity and imagination. To the last named qualities he adds a wealth of expression all his own. In The Noctes he combines verse with prose, seriousness with hilarity, and description with criticism,- and all these are found in this series of fictitious conversations.

Thomas Babington Macaulay, essayist and critic, is the author of The Lays of Ancient Rome. There is little of true poetry in these, although they are excellent as rhetoric.

Father Frederick William Faber, at first a Calvinist, then converted to the Anglican Church, finally becomes a Catholic in 1845. A member of the Oratory of St. Philip Neri, Father Faber is appointed superior of its London House at its foundation in 1849. He remains its superior until his death. He is distinguished by his burning zeal for souls.

Father Faber is a born poet who appreciates nature. In 1835 he is the winner of the Newdigate poetry prize by his work entitled The Knights of St. John. This is followed a few years later by two volumes of minor poems. One of his poems, Sir Lancelot, is a romantic poem beautifully written.

His Book of Hymns is remarkable for ease of expression and for its Catholic ardor. It includes one hundred and fifty sacred lyrics which cover the whole range of Catholic piety.

Father Faber writes in a style full of imagination and eloquence, employing a choice of words which makes his writings seem to flow in a melodious manner.

Among his books may be named All for Jesus, Growth in Holiness, The Blessed Sacrament, The Creator and the Creature, At the Foot of the Cross, Spiritual

Conferences, The Precious Blood, and Bethlehem.

Nicholas Patrick Wiseman, Born in Spain, has an English father and an Irish mother. To us he is known as Cardinal Archbishop of Westminster. He may be mentioned in this outline because of The Hidden Gem which is a drama in two acts. He employs a clear and polished style.

It may be added that he is notable for his Lectures on the Principal Doctrines and Practices of the Catholic Church, as well as for his achievements for the Church in England. Besides three volumes of essays on various subjects, Recollections of the Last Four Popes and of Rome in their Times, he is the author of many sermons, lectures, and speeches, as well as of Fabiola, a masterpiece.

Matthew Arnold, born in 1822, a Fellow of Oriel College, and Inspector of Her Majesty's Schools for thirty-five years, is noted for his poetry. He is professor of this subject for ten years at Oxford. His first published poems, The Strayed Reveller and Other Poems, and Empedocles on Etna are scarcely noticed by his contemporaries. Poems, published in 1853, contain Sohrab and Rustum and The Scholar-Gypsy. The former is grand in its simplicity, and is made more effective by the use of an irregular metre. The latter is very poetical. Among his other volumes of poems we find Balder Dead. This is written in heroic verse to suit its theme taken from the mythology of the Norsemen. Other poems by Arnold are The Forsaken Merman, Dover Beach, A Southern Night, Shakespeare, Requiescat, and Rugby Chapel.

His other works include criticisms, lectures, and criticisms, and also four books on religious topics. His works are eloquent and polished; clear, direct, and effective; but sometimes a certain amount of conceit mars the value of his writings.

One of the most distinguished poets of this century is Alfred, Lord Tennyson. His father, an Anglican clergyman, doubtless gives his son his own love for literature and for art. While still at Trinity College, Cambridge, Alfred wins the chancellor's medal by his poem, Timbuctoo. Poems by Two Brothers, published in 1827, is written together with his brother Charles. Poems Chiefly Lyrical are published in 1830. Two

years later he gives the public another volume. In this volume we find *The Miller's Daughter*, *Lady Clara Vere de Vere*, *The Death of the Old Year*, and *The Lady of Shalott*. The last named has a peculiar system of rhyme. Coleridge's remark that Tennyson does not know much about metre is the cause of this poet's silence for ten years. His two volumes, published in 1842, gives him a high place among the poets of the nineteenth century.

After the appearance of *The Princess*, a Medley, in 1847, *In Memoriam* is presented to the public in 1850. This is the longest elegy in the English Literature. It is in reality composed of a series of shorter elegies. In this poem, Tennyson expresses his sorrow for the death of his friend Arthur Hallam. The words, 'Tis better to have loved and lost, Than never to have loved at all,' are taken from this poem and have become popular among a wide range of people.

*Ode on the Death of the Duke of Wellington* is dated 1852; *Maud and Other Poems*, 1855. After twenty-five years of labor, his *Idylls of the King* are published. They are dated as belonging to the year 1859, but we must not forget the number of years devoted to them by Tennyson. They have a deep spiritual undercurrent. One of his most popular poems, *Enoch Arden*, published in 1864, gives us the picture of a man, who is supposed to be dead, witnessing the union of his wife with his old-time opponent. Incidentally we are told all the particulars of the lives of the chief characters. Enoch's unselfishness can surely reach the hardest reader's heart. In the same year the following appear in print: *Northern Farmer*, *Sea Dreams*, and *Ballads and other poems*. Six years later *The Window, or Songs of the Wrens*, are published. Another volume of *Ballads and Other Poems* are dated 1880; *Tiresias and Other Poems*, 1885.

From 1884 to 1892 Tennyson enjoys his title of baron in quiet retirement. During this period there are two sets of poems, - *Locksley Hall Sixty Years After*, *Demeter and Other Poems*, published in 1889, and *Akbar's Dream and Other Poems*, published in the year of his death, 1892.

Tennyson's dramas, - *Queen Mary*, *Harold*, *Becket*, *The Cup*, *The Falcon*, *Promise of May*, and *The Foresters*, - are not very successful as such. His historical plays

true neither to their historical characters nor to the spirit of the times.

Tennyson has not the power to develop a series of important events effectively. He cannot create his own characters, nor depict strong human passions. He is, however, the most eminent lyric poet of his century, and he imparts his gentle and beautiful sentiments to those who read his poetry.

Christina Georgina Rossetti owes her education to the direction of her cultured and refined mother. Although her experience is limited, she ranks high in the world of poets. She mingles austerity with gentleness, sensuous color with seriousness of subject, the beauty of nature with her religious beliefs. Some of her best lyrics appear in the journal named *The Germ*, published in 1850. *Goblin Market* is presented to the public after a trip abroad in 1861. Her last twenty-three years are those of an invalid. Before the illness, which was the cause of this, she composed a volume of children's poetry. These poems are published only in 1872. After giving the public some minor prose, her third collection of poems, named *A Pageant*, are published in 1881. Besides her poetry, we may note her *Time Flies*, a book of personal homilies, and her commentary on the Apocalypse, named *The Face of the Deep*.

A narrative poet who believes in vivid action, William Morris employs a rapid action which is often startling, a vigorous style, and verses which are harmonious and which seem to carry the reader with them.

Among his works we may name the following:- *The Defence of Guenevere and Other Poems*; *The Life and Death of Jason*, written in the rhymed pentameter; *The Earthly Paradise*, consisting of romances and legends, Greek, Roman, and German stories,- in all about forty thousand pentameters which rhyme two by two; *The Story of Sigurd the Volsung*, his next production, is a translation of the *Odyssey* in six-foot rhyming English verse. This is followed by the *Aeneid* of Virgil in seven-foot rhyming verse. *The Story of Volsungs* is a mixture of verse and prose. *Signs of Change* are given to the public in 1888. *Hopes and Fears of Art* is a prose composition.

Coventry Patmore, born at Woodford, Essex, in 1823, is one of the major poets as well as a writer of essays in the past century. He is well educated, but quite

unprepared to face the problems of life, which his father's financial difficulties imposed upon him. Through the kindness of Lord Houghton he is given a position as librarian in the British Museum Library. Shortly after the death of his first wife Coventry Patmore becomes a Catholic. Later he marries a Catholic named Marianne Byles, and, after her death, he marries another Catholic lady.

Happy love is the chief theme of his early poetry, and the grief caused by the loss of his first wife that of his later productions. Through his father's help, some of his earlier poems are published; but his first mature work, *Tamerton Church Tower and Other Poems*, is given to the public in 1853. This is followed by *The Angel in the House*, a love-poem very simply written. In it we find short meditations, at times grave, at times witty, on the deeper meaning of love in marriage. *The Espousals, Faithful Forever*, is published in 1860. This is followed, three years later, by *The Victories of Love*. His *Odes* are given to the world in 1868, followed, in 1877, by *The Unknown Eros*. The latter gives sublime thoughts upon love, death, and immortality. It is without flaw in its simplicity, and yet, it is full of subtle thought and emotion.

Coventry Patmore's two volumes of essays, *Principles in Art*, and *Religio Poetae*, are notable for their individuality of thought and of tone.

His poetry is, however, ethereal. Only now are the lovers of poetry beginning to appreciate the value of the poetical works of this shy poet of the nineteenth century.

Faith and patriotism are the chief sources of the poetry of Aubrey de Vere, a convert to our Catholic Faith. Besides being a lover of Anglo-Irish History, he retaliates (to newspaper invectives) by his *English Misrule and Irish Misdeeds*, and writes articles on the Irish Poor Law, colonization, education, and on the Irish Church. The names of his poetical selections give us some idea of their contents. One volume is named *the May Carols*. *The Legends of St. Patrick* give us a picture of the beginning of Ireland's faith. *Inisfail* continues the story of her faith, giving an account of it from the Norman Conquest through the Wars of Religion and

the Penal Laws, and celebrates the final victory of the Faith as a result of the fortitude of the sons of St. Patrick. Legends of Saxon Saints relate the heroic deeds of the early Christians in England.

Besides these, he is the author of several hundred sonnets, many odes and miscellaneous poems. Among the latter are Lines Written Near Shelley's House and the Miserere in the Sistine Chapel. He also gives us some dramatical selections. Alexander the Great, and St. Thomas of Canterbury give us, on the one hand, a type of pagan pride and ambition, and, on the other, a type of Christian heroism with its fortitude and humility. Antar and Zara is an eastern romance. He gives us an idea of his ability in composing lyrical drama in The Fall of Rora, and in the writing of masques in his Search After Proserpine.

His early writings are characterized by simplicity; but a high purpose helps him to find a happy medium between a too great simplicity and a too pretentious style of writing. He trumpets forth his faith in saints and in miracles in a world which scoffs at the supernatural. He admires Wordsworth, is not quite as musical as Tennyson, but fulfills the mission which he proposes to himself in justifying the deeds of his own people when they acted according to faith and justice.

Francis Thompson, the son of a convert and a physician, is a pupil of Ushaw College. After a trial given to medicine, he decides to give his energy to literature. Until Wilfrid Meynell begins to help him he is often starving.

Browning and others praise his Poems published in 1893. These are followed, in 1895, by Sister Songs, and, in 1897, by New Poems. The theme of The Hound of Heaven is God pursuing the sinner. Other poems that are becoming well known are: The Poppy, Ex Ore Infantium, poems having children's ideals as themes, To Monica Thought Dying, and Love in Diana's Lap. He embodies in his poems his own strong imagination, deep feeling, and Catholic spirituality. He employs an original and daring technique.

In prose, Thompson gives an essay on Shelley and a Life of St. Ignatius. As critic and essayist, he employs a fine discrimination and a balanced judgment.

Francis Thompson's pure and gentle spirit wins all his readers as well as his contemporaries; but his character is weak. In the world of ideals he is mature, but in the world of realities he is as helpless as a child. His ill health leads him to use opium. Consumption grips him, so that he needs care. This is given to him by his friends,- the Meynells, the monks of the Capuchin monastery of Pantasaph, and those of the monastery in Storrington. He meets death in London in 1907.

Charles Algernon Swinburne, born in London, is also an original poet; but he is unchristian, and defies his environment. Although he invents new forms of rhyme, and puts an original beauty into old forms, he gives us very little thought in his poetry. He likes to write about the grandeur of the seas, about pagan subjects, and to extol the innocence of childhood. He has an unequalled power in using words, and his poems are replete with his flowing rhythm.

Associated with Morris and Rossetti after his trip upon the Continent, he publishes *The Queen Mother, Rosamond* (1860), *Atlanta in Calydon* (1865), and *Poems and Ballads* (1866-1878-1889).

From 1861 to 1870 he writes odes such as the *Song of Italy* and the *Song before Sunrise, Ave atque Vale* is published in 1868, *Bothwell* in 1874, *Songs of the Spring-Tides* in 1882, and *Tristram of Lyonesse* in 1886 same year.

John Henry Newman, the son of a London banker, has a perfection of style scarcely ever equalled in our literature. After various positions in the Church of England, his conversion to the Catholic Church and his vocation to the priesthood creates a commotion in England. He is made a Cardinal in 1879. We associate his name with the Tractarian Movement.

Of his thirty to forty volumes, most of them are sermons, critical and polemic treatises, essays and historical selections. He is also the author of poetry and romance. His style is strong and beautiful, giving us profound thoughts couched in faultless English.

Robert Louis Stevenson, educated at a private school and in the University of

Edinburgh, is a poet, essayist, and a fiction writer, who ranks with Scott as a story-teller.

The disadvantages of bad health and of poverty seem but a means of making him acquire an exquisite style which gives him one of the leading places in the ranks of the writers of his times. His book, *A Child's Garden of Verses*, is the delight of every child who has the happiness of making its acquaintance. A second volume of verse meets with the same popularity, because of its simplicity and vividly painted scenes. We are not referring to his essays and stories in this short sketch, beyond stating that his style is always on a higher level than his stories.

Another British poet and novelist, George Meredith, is a native of Portsmouth. His early education is obtained in Germany. After this, we find him in a lawyer's office in London, and, later, among the leading newspaper men of his time.

Besides his contributions to newspapers and periodicals, he is the author of: a small volume of *Poems*, published in 1851; *Modern Love and Poems of the English Roadside*, with *Poems and Ballads*, published in 1862; *Poems and Lyrics of the Joy of Earth*, 1883; and *Ballads and Poems of Tragic Life*, 1887.

He is original in his manner of taking the reader and placing him, as it were, in the place of the actor. The reader thus sees the story or incident as if he were the person to whom it is happening. In this manner, George Meredith makes his reader participate to a large extent in his energetic and deep thoughts.

Rudyard Kipling, born in Bombay, India, in 1865, is the son of English parents. He is educated in England, where he enters the United Service College at Westward Ho, Devonshire, in the year 1878. We find many events of this period of his life described in *Stalky & Co.*

In 1882, he is again in India as sub-editor on the *Civil and Military Gazette* at Lahore. He is named assistant editor of the *Allahabad Pioneer* in the year 1887. After his fame is established, he visits other parts of India, as well

as China, Japan, and the United States, in the year 1889. In the last-named country he meets and marries Miss Caroline Balestier. He spends four years in America, and again visits this continent in 1899. Before settling in England, he takes a trip through South America.

Kipling has the power of conveying to his readers whatever impressions he may choose. Originality, together with fine lyricism, mark his poetry in a special manner. He is not at all a slave of conventions, but writes in a vivid vigorous, and swinging style. He is, moreover, a master of the short story. His powers range from such imaginative children's stories as The Jungle Books to the weird setting of The Brushwood Boy, or to Soldiers Three with its effective realism.

British imperialism is accurately expressed in his Recessional and in The White Man's Burden. His Departmental Ditties are a collection of verses written for the Civil and Military Gazette. Some of his other works are Plain Tales From the Hills, The Phantom Rickshaw, Wee Willie Winkie and Other Stories, Life's Handicap, Barrack Room Ballads, Many Inventions, The Seven Seas, Captains Courageous, The Day's Work, Kim(his best story of India), Just-So Stories(for children), The Five Nations, Letters of Travel, Puck of Pook's Hill, and other books.

Gilbert Keith Chesterton, born in London in 1874, is a modern poet, novelist, and essayist. After studying at St. Paul's School and at the Slade Art School, he follows his literary calling by beginning to write for London newspapers and magazines. Literature, reviewing, journalism, - these are his works.

A vigorous, racy, witty style, together with his extreme fondness for paradoxes, gives him a wide circle of admirers and readers in the British Empire and in the United States. He handles his subject in an original and individual manner; he gives searching criticisms in a rather dogmatic style. Two volumes of verse, The Wild Knight and Greybeards at Play, give us another

view of his genius. He is also the author of critical biographies of Browning, Watts, Dickens, and Shaw. Among his essays and reviews are Heretics, Orthodoxy, and Twelve Types. A clerical Sherlock Holmes is the centre of interest in his Father Brown series of detective stories. His novel, The Napoleon of Notting Hill, is popular. Among other works, he is also the author of a play, Magic, produced in the year 1913.

G. K. Chesterton is at present using his prodigious power over the English language in the defence of Catholic truth in modern controversies, as well as in writing pithy articles for the magazines. His themes include every possible subject, handled in his own Chestertonian style. Even the poor despised donkey finds a sympathetic place in Chesterton's poetry. In his poem The Donkey, one verse gives this "outlaw of the earth" a place of honor:

"Fools! For I also had my hour;  
One far fiercer hour and sweet:  
There was a shout about my ears,  
And palms before my feet."

Joseph Milaire Pierre Belloc, - described as a "Frenchman, an Englishman, an Oxford man, a country gentleman, a soldier, a satirist, a democrat, a novelist, and a practical journalist" is a naturalized British subject.

His nonsense rhymes include Cautionary Tales, and More Beasts for Worse Children. A small collection of his poems are dated 1910. He loves to write about Sussex. His epigrams are excellent, and may be found in his Collected Poems of 1923. A fine romanticism characterizes his religious poems. His quaint humor is as welcome to the mind as is the rain to the parched grass.

Alice Meynell ( Christina Thompson ) has an intense and vivid imagery of her own. Her poetry is dominated by religious emotion; but its wealth of feeling and vivid descriptions prevents it from becoming dull or tedious. A collection of her poems is named The Poems of Alice Meynell ( Complete Edition ) . ( 1923 ).

Verses, a volume of poetry published in the year 1919, is the work of her daughter, Viola Meynell, who evidently has her mother's talents.

From the host of other writers of the nineteenth, or of the beginning of the twentieth, century, a few may be mentioned. As a lyricist, Andrew Lang may be named as the author of Ballads and Lyrics of Old France, Ballades in Blue China, and Rhymes à la Mode.

Robert Bridges, appointed Poet Laureate in the year 1913, is a master of metre and rhythm. Among his works may be mentioned Prometheus the Firegiver, Eros and Psyche, Shorter Poems, and October and Other Poems.

To Robert Bridges we owe the deciphering of many of the poems written by Gerard Manley Hopkins. This poet uses a wealth of color and an originality which makes us regret his death at a time when he seemed to have found the style most suited to his thought. In The Leaden Echo he displays the changes wrought by time upon beauty regardless of man's futile attempts to stop the ravages of this ruthless enemy of beauty.

Another original poet, crude in his expressions, is Thomas Hardy. Beginning to make poetry the vehicle for his thoughts only when past middle age, he believes in originality and complexity of thought and of form. He is the author of The Dynasts, a drama of the Wars of Napoleon. This drama, partly historical, partly imaginary, as well as his poems, give us a wealth of description.

Katharine Tynan Hinkson, born in Dublin in the year 1861, is the author of many novels, miracle plays and poems. Her themes are mostly religious in character. One stanza from All Souls may give a glimpse of her musical lines:

"The door of Heaven is on the latch  
To-night, and many a one is fain  
To go home for one night's watch  
With his love again."

Henry Newbolt, at first an imitator of Tennyson, is at home, and original, in his ballads of the sea. Mordred is a drama in blank verse. The Island Race

About thirty of his sea ballads are found in the book named "The Island Race." These ballads have the air and rhythm suited to sailors' songs.

Well-acquainted with the native customs and traditions of the Irish, William Butler Yeats is one of the leaders of the Celtic revival. The author of many volumes of prose, plays and poetry, he is thoroughly musical and revises his work with care. His dramas are published under the name Plays for an Irish Theatre. From his poems The Wind Among the Reeds and Later Poems may be mentioned.

Another Irish author, John M. Synge, is careful to use only language carefully selected. He is the composer of five poetic prose dramas. He employs emphatic expressions and wealth of scenery. One of his productions is well known under the name of The Playboy of the Western World. His verses are not as notable as his plays.

Rhythmical and dramatic poetry is found in Moira O'Neill's Songs of the Glens of Antrim, and in her More Songs of the Glens of Antrim.

John Mc Crae, Canadian by birth, is immortalized by the title poem of his volume In Flanders Fields. This poem is a perfect rondeau, but the sentiments expressed in the third stanza might have been less war-like.

#### IN FLANDERS FIELDS.

In Flanders fields the poppies blow  
Between the crosses, row on row,  
That mark our place; and in the sky  
The larks, still bravely singing, fly  
Scarce heard amid the guns below.

We are the Dead. Short days ago  
We lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow,  
Loved and were loved, and now we lie

In Flanders fields.

Take up our quarrel with the foe:

To you from failing hands we throw

The torch; be yours to hold it high.  
If ye break faith with us who die  
We shall not sleep, though poppies grow  
In Flanders fields.

Walter De La Mare, a native of Kent, is the author of delicate picturesque verses. His manner of expressing his thoughts catches the fancy of the present generation. Among his works are Songs of Childhood and Collected Poems. His fanciful thoughts are best illustrated by taking one of his poems for example:

SILVER.

Slowly, silently, now the moon  
Walks the night in her silver shoon;  
This way, and that, she peers, and sees  
Silver fruit upon silver trees;  
One by one the casements catch  
Her beams beneath the silvery thatch;  
Couched in his kennel, like a log,  
With paws of silver sleeps the dog;  
From their shadowy cote the white breasts peep  
Of doves in a silver-feathered sleep;  
A harvest mouse goes scampering by,  
With silver claws and a silver eye;  
And moveless fish in the water gleam,  
By silver reeds in a silver stream.

John Masefield, English by birth, is perhaps too realistic in his Salt-Water Ballads ( 1902 ), and Ballads ( 1903 ); but, after the Great war, he is more dignified than previously, although he retains much of his former buoyancy of spirit. His Collected Poems include those written before the year 1924. He is also the author of several plays, two of them being Tragedy of Man and Pompey the Great. The latter is

classical as opposed to the former of modern type. One of his well known novels is Multitude and Solitude.

The following is taken from John Masefield's Good Friday and Other Poems:

SONNET.

Is there a great green commonwealth of Thought  
Which ranks the yearly pageant, and decides

How Summer's royal progress shall be wrought,  
By secret stir which in each plant abides?

Does rocking daffodil consent that she,  
The snowdrop of wet winters, shall be first?

Does spotted cowslip with the grass agree  
To hold her pride before the rattle burst?

And in the hedge what quick agreement goes,  
When hawthorn blossoms redden to decay,

That Summer's pride shall come, the Summer's rose,  
Before the flower be on the bramble spray?

Or is it, as with us, unresting strife,  
And each consent a lucky gasp for life?

Alfred Noyes, a Staffordshire man, sacrifices much of his art to public opinion. Drake is an epic in blank verse. It consists of twelve books recalling the brave men found among the "English Sea-Dogs" of Queen Elizabeth's days. To complete this period, he attempts to give us glimpses of Shakespeare and other famous writers in Tales of the Mermaid Tavern. A few of his many poems will remain in our literature, but the majority will be forgotten. One poem loved by children, because it recalls their beloved Robin Hood, is Sherwood.

Joseph Mary Plunkett, born in Ireland in the year 1887 and executed after the uprising in 1916, allows his poems to be pervaded by mysticism. One example will bring this to our attention more vividly than a multitude of words:

I SEE HIS BLOOD UPON THE ROSE.

I see His blood upon the rose  
And in the stars the glory of His eyes,  
His body gleams amid eternal snows,  
His tears fall from the skies.

I see His face in every flower;  
The thunder and the singing of the birds  
Are but His voice - and carven by His power,  
Rocks are His written words.

All pathways by His feet are worn,  
His strong heart stirs the ever-beating sea,  
His crown of thorns is twined with every thorn,  
His cross is every tree.

Many authors, not mentioned in this short outline of our literature, appear, and not a few disappear again; But a short thesis of this description must necessarily be limited to the more outstanding writers of each period. These brief outlines are an attempt to bring out the main characters of each period, together with their qualities rather than with their defects. Constructive criticism is, we believe, far more acceptable than destructive criticism. Hence, we trust, that faults overlooked in the authors named will also be forgotten. This omission is deliberate, and made with the thought that our readers will treat this short history and criticism with the same leniency.