"*From the Governor-General to all the Princes, and Chiefs, and People of India.*

"MY BROTHERS AND MY FRIENDS,

"Our victorious army bears the gates of the temple of Somnauth in triumph from Afghanistan, and the despoiled tomb of Sultan Mahomed looks upon the ruins of Ghuznee.

"The insult of eight hundred years is at last avenged. The gates of the temple of Somnauth, so long the memorial of your humiliation, are become the proudest record of your national glory; the proof of your superiority in arms over the nations beyond the Indus.

"To you, Princes and Chiefs of Sirhind, of Rajwarra, of Malwa, and of Guzerat, I shall commit this glorious trophy of successful war.

"You will yourselves, with all honour, transmit the gates of sandal-wood through your respective territories to the restored temple of Somnauth.

"The chiefs of Sirhind shall be informed at what time our victorious army will first deliver the gates of the temple into their guardianship, at the foot of the bridge of the Sutlej."

The Hindoo temple of Somnauth was in ruins, and it was maintained by those to whom the pompous words of the proclamation were distasteful, that the Governor-general meant to restore it, and thus to manifest a preference for one of the great rival creeds of India—a preference which the policy of England expressly forbade. This might be a wrong inference from the words of the proclamation. But to despoil the tomb of a worshipper of Mahomed, that honour might be done the worshippers of Vishnu, was to offer an outrage to those sensibilities which more than any other cause made and still make the British rule in India so like treading on beds of lava.

CHAPTER XIV.

Continuation of the previous notices of English literature.—Law of Copyright.—Mr. Serjeant Talfourd's long struggle to amend the Law.—Mr. Carlyle's petition.—Serjeant Talfourd's Bill rejected.—Lord Mahon's Bill.—Mr. Macaulay's Amendments.—Application of the Act to Copyrights about to expire.—Authors recently deceased.—Novelists.—Theodore Hook and the Silver-fork School.—Ephemeral Critics and Writers without knowledge.—Utilitarianism.—Changes in the Character of Literature.—Historians.—Macaulay.—Hallam.—Carlyle.—Lingard.—Fraser Tytler.—Palgrave.—Kemble.—Forster.— Mahon.— Napier.—Mitford.—Thirlwall.—Grote.—Arnold.—Novelists.—Bulwer Lytton.—Dickens.—Ainsworth.—Thackeray.—Serials.—Prevalence of Fiction.—Kitchen Literature.—Miss Martineau's Tales illustrative of Political Economy.—Social Aims of Novelists.—Dickens.—Mrs. Gaskell.—Kingsley.—Thackeray's Novels.— Poets.—Tennyson.—Browning.—E. Barrett Browning.—Thomas Hood.—Union of Pen and Pencil.—Theology.—Milman.—Robertson.—Political Economy.—Science.—Criticism.—Antiquarian Inquiry.— Travels.—Book Trade.—Newspapers.

BEFORE we enter upon a narrative, which may be best given continuously, of the great historical period from 1841 to 1846, during which sir Robert Peel was Prime Minister, we purpose to introduce a chapter on the Literature of that period and of the period immediately preceding. We shall attempt this in connection with the subject of the New Law of Copyright, which was finally settled in the session of 1842.

In the preceding volume we devoted a chapter to English Literature in the three latter decades of the reign of George the Third, and gave a chronological table of the principal writers of the present century, with the exception of those who were living at the end of 1861. We propose in this chapter to point out a few of the more prominent instances of the beneficial operation of the Copyright Act of 1842 with reference to the families of authors then recently deceased. Its benefits to living authors, whether in the maturity of a high reputation or rising into public notice, need not be illustrated by individual instances. The oldest writer with a dependent family, and the youngest writer who had given hostages to fortune, felt a comfort and a relief in its salutary provisions against the uncertainty of the future with regard to the descendants "of those who devote themselves to the most precarious of all pursuits." * What is now called "the Victorian Era" of

* "Pickwick Papers," 1837; Dedication to Serjeant Talfourd.

Literature, in contrast with "the Georgian Era," had established most prominent characteristics, and had produced the greater number of its eminent writers, at the period when the New Law of Copyright came into operation. We therefore do not essentially narrow the range of our view of "the Victorian Era" when we take our stand-point in the sixth year of the queen's reign. Although this view must be incomplete with regard to some popular writers of the more immediate present,* it relieves us from the invidious task of making any pretension to estimate the value of new reputations; leaving us to speak chiefly of those whose foremost place in the long file of illustrious contemporaries had been for the most part settled by continuous public opinion in the first decade of the queen's reign. Of these contemporaries we shall consider it most becoming to speak with the brevity of a bibliographer rather than with the elaborate judgment of a critic.

In the session of 1842 "an Act to amend the Law of Copyright"—the Act now regulating literary property—was passed, after a struggle that had endured five years. In 1837 Mr. Serjeant Talfourd first drew the attention of the House of Commons to the law of Copyright, as it then existed under the statute of the 54th of George the Third, which gave to the author of a book or his assigns the sole liberty of reprinting such book for the term of twenty-eight years from the date of publication, and if the author should be living at the expiration of that term, for the residue of his natural life. The proposition of Serjeant Talfourd was to extend the term of copyright in a book to sixty years, reckoned from the death of the writer, in addition to its duration during his life. The opposition to this proposal, on every occasion on which it was debated, was of a mixed character. There were legislators who altogether denied the inherent natural right of an author to a property in his labours. These maintained that it was for the public interest that he should labour without reward, or at any rate that he should receive as little as possible in the shape of a money reward, the love of fame being deemed by them amply sufficient to secure to the public an adequate supply of the best books. Others who did not go quite so far maintained that the existing term under the Act of George the Third—"an Act to amend the several Acts for the Encouragement of Learning by securing the Copies and Copyright of printed Books to the Authors of such Books and their Assigns"—was amply sufficient for the remuneration of authors. Others more reasonably opposed Serjeant Talfourd's Bill,

* We shall in part supply this deficiency by appending to this chapter a Table supplementary to that before given, *Ante*, vol. vii. pp, 523-528.

upon the ground that the term which he suggested would in many cases give a monopoly for eighty years and even for a hundred years. There was a class of publishers then, as there always will be, who were only debarred by the laws against piracy from reducing to practice the philosophical theory that an author should work for nothing, to make books cheap. One of these kept a very accurate account of the original date of a publication by a living author, and could calculate the chances of his life according to the most trustworthy tables of mortality. There was a worthy citizen and merchant-tailor of London of the days of Queen Elizabeth, who kept a most exact register of the funerals of the great and wealthy in his time. It was in the way of business, for he was "a furnisher of funeral trappings." * So was it in the way of business that the industrious publisher of Cheapside in the days of Queen Victoria recorded, with Christian satisfaction, the final release of those who, after long battling with fortune, left, by the expiry of their copyright, no heritable title to the property which they had created. Such encouragers of learning stoutly petitioned against any alteration of the law. There were few petitions for the Bill, but there was one which amused and edified the House of Commons in 1839. Of this remarkable and characteristic document we give a sentence or two: "The petition of Thomas Carlyle, a writer of books, Humbly showeth, That your petitioner has written certain books, being incited thereto by various innocent or laudable considerations, chiefly by the thought that said books might in the end be found to be worth something. . . . . That your petitioner does not undertake to say what recompense in money this labour of his may deserve: whether it deserve any recompense in money, or whether money in any quantity could hire him to do the like. That this his labour has found hitherto, in money or money's worth, small recompense or none: that he is by no means sure of its ever finding recompense: but thinks that, if so, it will be at a distant time, when the labourer will probably no longer be in need of money, and those dear to him will still be in need of it."

The various discussions on the Copyright Bill during five sessions of parliament, brought forward many curious points of literary history. The almost universal range of the learning of Mr. Macaulay had a great effect in inducing the House in 1841 to reject Mr. Serjeant Talfourd's Bill. He argued against the public injury of a monopoly of sixty years that the boon to authors would be a mere nullity, but that considered as an impost upon the public it would be a very serious and pernicious reality. He maintained

* "Diary of Henry Machyn"—Camden Society.

that there would be the danger that, when an author's copyright should remain for so long a period in the hands of his descendants, many valuable works would be totally suppressed or grievously mutilated.* On that occasion Serjeant Talfourd's Bill was rejected by a majority of seven. His long-continued advocacy of the extension of copyright is held to have been unsuccessful "chiefly through the efforts of Mr. Macaulay who, strange to say, strained every nerve to defeat a measure calculated to give independence to a class of which he himself was so bright an ornament." † This judgment upon the conduct of a great writer towards his fellows is more than unkind, coupled with the entire suppression of the fact that in the next session of parliament when "the tardy act of justice was done to literary men," the benefits conferred upon them were greatly increased, not only by the insertion of clauses known to have originated with Mr. Macaulay, but by his proposition for an extension of time more practically beneficial than that proposed by lord Mahon. On the 3rd of March 1842, his lordship obtained permission to bring in a Bill to amend the law of Copyright, his plan being that the existing term of twenty-eight years should stand—he would make no addition to the term that was certain,—but that the copyright should last twenty-five years after the author's death. Mr. Macaulay proposed a different plan. He would make no addition to the uncertain term, but would add fourteen years to the twenty-eight years which the law allowed to an author. The illustrations from the history of literature, ancient and modern, foreign and domestic, which Mr. Macaulay brought forward, went to prove that the most valuable works of an author being generally produced in the maturity of his powers, his proposition would give a longer term of copyright than that of Lord Mahon. "To Lear, to Macbeth, to Othello, to the Faery Queen, to Paradise Lost, to Bacon's Novum Organum and De Augmentis, to Locke's Essay on the Human Understanding, to Clarendon's History, to Hume's History, to Gibbon's History, to Smith's Wealth of Nations, to Addison's Spectators, to almost all the great works of Burke, to Clarissa and Sir Charles Grandison, to Joseph Andrews, Tom Jones, and Amelia, and with the single exception of Waverley, to all the novels of sir Walter Scott, I give a longer term of copyright than my noble friend gives. Can he match that list? Does not that list contain what England has produced greatest in many various ways, poetry, philosophy, history,

* To meet this possible consequence a clause was introduced in the Bill of 1842.
† Alison—"History of Europe," chap. xli.

eloquence, wit, skilful portraiture of life and manners?"* Sir Robert Peel supported the amendment upon the original proposal, but at the same time he "admitted the weight of the argument founded upon the necessity for an author to provide for his family after death, and on this account he should be glad, if possible, to combine the two propositions, and besides the forty-two years of the amendment, to give an author's family a right for seven years after his death." Mr. Macaulay was against this suggestion. The proposition for the term of forty-two years certain was carried by a majority of seventy-nine; that for a further term of seven years commencing at the time of the author's death was carried by a majority of fifty-eight. The extension of term was to apply not only to future publications, but to books previously published in which copyright still subsisted at the time of the passing of the Act. There was an exception, however, in cases of existing copyright to the extension of the term to be enjoyed, when the copyright should belong to a publisher or other person who should have acquired it for other consideration than natural love and affection, in which case it should cease at the expiration of the existing term, unless the extension should have been previously agreed to between the proprietor and the author. The provisions of the Act of 1842 which had reference to an increased and increasing class of literary works—cyclopædias, reviews, magazines, or works published in a series of books or parts—were of the utmost importance both to the interests of publishers and of authors, which interests, rightly understood, are one and the same.

There were no attempts to conceal, on the part of the advocates for the extension of copyright, that one of the objects of that extension was to benefit the family of sir Walter Scott, and to give an assurance to the venerable age of Wordsworth that the advantage to himself or his family in the popularity which had followed his early period of neglect would not suddenly cease. In the House of Lords, lord Campbell, who warmly advocated the Bill, expressed his belief that the copyright of some of the works of the great author of the Waverley novels was about to terminate, and without the assistance of this Bill it was doubtful whether the descendants of that illustrious man could continue to occupy Abbotsford.† The case with regard to Scott's works was this: the copyright in four of his poems was expired at the passing of the Act—the Lay of the Last Minstrel, published in 1805, ceased to be copyright in 1833; and so Marmion in 1836, Don Roderick in 1839, Rokeby in 1841. The copyright of the Lord of the Isles would

* "Macaulay's Speeches," p. 255. † Hansard, vol. lxiii. col. 812.

expire in 1842, when the copyright of Waverley would also be at an end. It was a favourite argument that a monopoly such as was contemplated by an extended period, would have a tendency to keep up a high price in books. Lord Mahon very truly said, that "the general diffusion of education, and the desire for cheap books which now prevails, precludes the possibility of prices being unduly raised by any copyright bill." Under the extended term of forty-two years, the copyright of Waverley and that of six or seven novels, its successors, have expired. But in 1862 those published between 1820 and 1826 still remain the exclusive property of the assignees of the copyright. It was truly prognosticated in 1842 that the interests of booksellers "would be better promoted by a low price to the multitude rather than by a high one to the few." Messrs. Black are issuing the Waverley novels in a series, of which three volumes, originally published at a guinea and a half, are comprised in a single volume at one shilling. The case of Wordsworth stands thus: he died in 1850 in his eightieth year. The old law gave him protection during his life; but it was an exceptional case. He was seventy-two years of age when the Act of 1842 was passed. Had he died before the passing of that Act the "Excursion" would have become the property of that class of speculators whose position lord Brougham greatly commiserated. "He could show that as much as five thousand pounds had been expended in the expectation of the expiration of copyrights. A man was perfectly justified in making such preparations, and might already have filled his warehouses with the intended publications. Was it for their lordships to step in and ruin those men by a sudden change of the law?"* In the debates on the Copyright Bill the names of Coleridge and Southey were as freely used as those of Scott and Wordsworth. Sergeant Talfourd called up "Coleridge speaking as it were from the grave." It was well known that great as was the reputation of Coleridge in his latter years, "if the income-tax had continued to the day of his death, the collectors of it would have had a sorry recompense for the trouble of calling upon him for his return."† Coleridge has himself said, "I expect neither profit nor general fame by my writings; and I consider myself as having been amply repaid without income."‡ At the time of Coleridge's death in 1834, the copyright of many of his poems had terminated with his own life. His two tragedies, Christabel, and a few miscellaneous poems, had one or two years of legal protection

* Hansard, vol. lxiii. col. 802.

† Anonymous Letter, attributed to "a most illustrious pen" by the Quarterly Review," vol. lxix. p. 225.

‡ Preface to the first and second editions of his Poems.

left to them. His accomplished nephew, Henry Nelson Coleridge, and the poet's gifted daughter, the wife of his nephew, were engaged in producing those admirable editions of his works which acquired a new value under their hands. In these labours of affection were included a new edition of The Friend. The protection of the existing law was thus sufficient to keep off the violating hands of literary traders from these bequests to posterity. But the new law of 1842 enabled these labours to be completed by another son, Derwent. We have thus a monument raised to the father's memory in complete editions of his works, which acquired a new commercial value when the world had arrived at a juster appreciation than during his life of that combination of the poetical and philosophical faculty which rendered him one of the most remarkable men of his time. Southey, the early associate in literary enterprise of Coleridge and Wordsworth, was in 1842 in a condition of unconsciousness as to the various modes in which his name was connected with the copyright question. His overtasked intellect had given away a few years before, and he was quite insensible to what was said in parliament by friends or foes—equally indifferent to the just eulogies of Mr. Monckton Milnes, or to the vulgar ridicule of Mr. Wakley. This gentleman—who not only held a coroner's inquest in a jacose fashion among "mighty poets in their misery dead," but volunteered an appraiser's estimate of the market value and the proper remuneration of living author's—called upon the House not to be led away by sentimental tales. Mr. Monckton Milnes answered the member for Finsbury, that when he talked of sentimental tales he must have heard the tale of a man of the purest and highest life, who was distinguished in many walks of literature,—a poet, a historian, a critic,—he must have heard that this man was at present bereft of his great mind, and that his family were very dependent for their future comfort on the event of the debate of that night.*

Dismissing the individual consideration of the influence upon the fortunes of their representatives effected by the Copyright Bill of 1842, we may briefly recapitulate the names of a few eminent writers, belonging to what is called the Georgian era, who had then recently paid the debt of nature. Of poets, Crabbe had died in 1832; James Hogg in 1835. Of novelists, John Galt had died in 1839, at the age of sixty. Whilst Scott was in the height of his reputation as a delineator of the past manners of his countrymen, Galt was noting with minute accuracy the domestic characteristics of the humbler classes of Scotland in his own day. The Ayrshire

* Hansard, vol. lxi. col. 1389.

Legatees was published in 1820; the Annals of the Parish, which appeared in 1821, established Galt's reputation. More interesting perhaps at the present time than either of these is his Lawrie Todd. This is not only the true picture of a Scotchman in America, but a most graphic representation of the extraordinary process by which mighty cities have grown up in the forest and the swamp. The persevering labours of adventurers such as the "splorifying" Lawrie have, during the last half century, built miserable shanties on the bank of many a solitary river which has now its vast quays and warehouses—large constituent parts of a mighty empire; yet an empire too extensive not ultimately to be separated by conflicting interests, although long held together by the silken thread of a federal union. Theodore Hook died in 1841. He was essentially the novelist of those manners which came to an end very soon after the close of the reign of the last of the Georges. The clever youth, of whom the Regent declared that "something must be done for Hook"—not for his wisdom or his virtue, but for his powers of mimicry—had five years in the Mauritius of luxurious gratification out of his enormous salary as Accountant-general of the colony. He returned to England a defaulter rather from carelessness than dishonesty; and from 1824 to 1841 wrote some dozen novels, whose aggregate volumes amount to forty. These productions constitute an important item in the collection known as "Standard Novelists." If a reader unacquainted with the literature of the last generation were to open these novels, from Sayings and Doings to Gilbert Gurney, and therein expect to find a "standard" of wit or humour—even of that worldly wisdom which results from a large observation and clearsighted estimate of manners—we apprehend that, reasoning from a part to the whole, he would come to very unsound conclusions upon the literary characteristics of an age that had produced Maria Edgeworth and Jane Austen. Hook's novels are essentially artificial. He was, we trust, the last of that race of authors who, without being the hired servants of the great, found a place at their tables for the sole purpose of contributing to their amusement, like the jesters of the middle ages; the last of those who, indulging the belief that they were valued in their higher capacity as men of letters, arrogated a place in the fashionable world, and devoted all their small powers of ridicule to depict the violations of the conventionalities amongst the middle classes. Hook was almost the last of what was called the "silverfork school." It was a school that flourished before Reform-bills and railroads; and its disciples long persisted in their ignorant endeavour to paint the domestic life of

the flourishing citizen as uniformly vulgar, and in their base delineations of the struggles of honest poverty as revolting and disreputable. Every invention of industry, every social arrangement, which had a tendency to put high and low on a level of convenience and comfort, was hateful to such writers and to their fashionable admirers.

At the time when Theodore Hook flourished, in company with a host of imitators who combined the dandyism of the drawing-room with the ignorance of the servants' hall, the tone of periodical criticism was as essentially artificial as the novels and poems which it held up to popular admiration. It was characteristic of the ephemeral criticism which seized only upon the amusing portions of new books for extracts to administer to a lazy taste for the superficial and exciting, that a sort of antagonism was fomented between the class who desired to instruct and the class who sought only to amuse. It was the same dispute which Swift has so happily described in The Battle of the Books, between the Spider and the Bee. The "man of genius," as he called himself—and every small critic was "a man of genius" as well as the object of his laudation—unconsciously used the reproaches of the Spider to the Bee in his periodical attacks upon the literary drudge—"the obscure literary drudge who has not a single idea in his head save what he filches from the British Museum." * Swift's Spider was a self-producing creature, like the "man of genius." The "literary drudge" had his answer in the language of the Bee, who claimed to be the nobler creature of the two, in his universal range bringing home honey and wax, instead of feeding and engendering on itself and producing nothing but fly-bane and cob-web. The "compilers," as they were sneeringly called—and ignorantly called, for what great historical work, for example, is not essentially a compilation—had the best of the battle with the professors of "la Littérature facile." The habit of research, which could not be sneered down, tended to produce that accuracy which gradually became necessary in journalism and even in the fashionable novel. The value of drawing from nature and realities had been tested by the example of a young writer who never looked upon society or upon "still life" without seeing peculiarities which he faithfully reproduced in his characters and scenes. Dickens at once threw his broad day-light upon the "twilight interim" of the herd of his immediate predecessors in prose fiction. "The mob of gentlemen who write with ease" could no longer hug themselves in the false application of a dictum of Burke's: "It is the nature of all greatness not to be

* "New Monthly Magazine."

exact." Instead of attempting to verify a quotation, the usual phrase of those who dabbled in history, philosophy, or criticism, was, when they misquoted, "We perfectly well remember that So-and-so said." The poets and novelists, in describing a landscape, never attempted to look upon the face of nature. Their storms and their sunshine were derived from some hazy recollection of "The Seasons;" their flowers and their trees would have puzzled the greatest master of classification to arrange even in families. They gave the apple blossom to the pear, and brought the wheat into ear before the rye. In their delineations of human character, vague generalities took the place of the nice distinctions of passions and humours found in the great dramatists of the Elizabethan age, and in the great novelists of the first half of the Georgian era. Everything, whether in Nature or in Art, in Science or Literature, in the Manners of high life or of low life, was indistinctly painted in their ephemeral manufacture for the Circulating Library. Their style was made up of a barbarous jargon of slip-slop English interlarded with the commonest phrases of French that had no idiomatic meaning. Occasional dashes of slang and half-profanity indicated that the old rags of the court-dress of Vice were still the patches upon the easier and neater costume of the age which had succeeded that of buckles and knee-breeches. All honour to a higher criticism, and to the nobler aims of popular writers following the increase of readers, this race is extinct. Each one of its many genii has faded into vapour, and has gone into a bottle to be sealed up with the seal of Solomon.

Little as there was of philosophy in the small criticism that prevailed in the latter time of George the Fourth, it might have had its origin in the popular expression of distaste to the doctrines of Utilitarianism, which were then advocated somewhat dogmatically in many influential quarters. The Utilitarian creed of morals, and the political economy creed which was associated with it, were imperfectly understood; and they thus became to common apprehensions the exponents of whatever was hard, and narrow, and selfish, in a view of human actions and motives. Some of the disciples of Bentham and Malthus in many respects did great injustice to the real benevolence that was at the root of the principle of "the greatest happiness for the greatest number," and of the principle that mankind has a tendency to increase faster than the food which is to maintain an increasing population. The extreme Utilitarians could see no object in the pursuit of knowledge but the acquirement of something that would conduce to worldly success. With them the Industrial Arts attained their highest

dignity in ministering to the satisfaction of physical wants. The Beautiful was not an essential adjunct to the Useful. The Utilitarian teaching had many important results in legislation and jurisprudence. But it was wholly incompetent to deal with the whole realm of thought. Literature refused to submit to the dictation of a new school that soon produced its pedants in abundance. Out of the contests of thirty or forty years has grown up a school of compromise which best reflects the character of our age.

It has been expressively said, "All Literature is more or less both an effect and a cause, both a product and a power. It both follows and leads. It takes an impulse from its age, and it also gives an impulse to its age."* The amount of the impulse which literature imparts to an age must, to a considerable extent, depend upon the genius of the writers. The opinions and feelings of an age are sometimes so definite and so strong, that the most original thinker is moulded by them into a participation with the prevailing modes of thought, so that at one time every form of literature is highly coloured, and at another time all its tints are neutral. Gradually the prismatic colours become blended into an equable light, as the political and religious contentions of a stirring period fade away into something approaching a catholicity of opinion. A period of quietude succeeds a period of excitement. After the outburst of fiery writing produced by the French Revolution, English literature became for the most part Conservative. After the agitation of Parliamentary Reform had come to an end, writers as well as statesmen became tolerant and compromising. The liberal author was not to be hunted out of society as an Infidel and a Democrat; the Conservative was not to have the mob raised upon him as a slave of the Aristocracy and the enemy of the People. One principal cause of this approach towards forbearance, if not to union, was the general spread of intelligence. Extreme opinions flourish amidst popular ignorance. The passions and prejudices of sect and party, during a long period of contention such as the half century before the age of Victoria, influenced every expression of thought in Philosophy, in History, in Poetry, in Prose Fiction. It came at length to be perceived that two halves of any domain of letters are not equal to the whole; that the useful and the beautiful could not be advantageously cultivated apart like a potato-field and a flower garden; that as the classical and the romantic schools of the French drama were gradually blending, so, in History, it was not absolutely necessary to leave the Picturesque to the Novelist, and the Literal

* G. L. Craik, "English Literature and Language," vol. ii. p. 522.

to the Chronicler; that Poetry would acquire a new charm by an infusion of the real with the imaginative, as, rightly applied, Pre-Raphaelism would work out a needful reform in the highest and the humblest Art. It is enough for us to indicate this change, without attempting any formal illustration of the progress of all literature in the present generation towards a certain homogeneousness.

Of the Historians of this period those who have exercised the greatest influence upon their age have been Henry Hallam, Thomas Babington Macaulay, and Thomas Carlyle. As the office of historian has a wider range than the description of public events, each of these writers was also Essayist and Critic. Their modes of treating the Past and the Present were as essentially different as their mental characteristics. Guizot has described with more than ordinary animation a visit to Westminster Abbey in 1840 in which Macaulay was his *cicerone*. During three or four hours they walked together through this monumental gallery of the English nation. "At every step," says the memoir-writer, "I stopped, or Mr. Macaulay stopped me. Sometimes answering my questions, sometimes anticipating them, he explained to me an allegorical sculpture, he recalled to me a forgotten fact, he related to me an anecdote little known, he recited to me some fine passage from the poet or the orator at whose name we paused. . . . As the great dead of Italy throng around the passage of Dante, so the most illustrious personages of English History and Literature came out of their tombs before me, at the voice of a representative full worthy of them." * From the stores of his prodigious memory Macaulay thus improvised the learning which he elaborated in his writings. This eloquent monologue—for who that knew the illustrious *cicerone* could doubt that his ordinary monologue would in such a position almost become an oration—this monologue was uttered some seven years before the publication of the first two volumes of "The History of England from the Accession of James II." The great purpose of that History had been long seething in the mind of him who, in his earliest writings, exhibited "his tendency to concentrate his thoughts upon a single subject,—the rescue of our native English liberties from the futile and wearisome tyranny of the Stuarts, and the consolidation of those liberties by the settlement of the Revolution." † If the subject had been in his mind from the time when, in 1824, he wrote in "Knight's Quarterly Magazine" his "Conversation between Mr. Abraham Cowley and Mr. John Milton touching the great Civil War," the mode of

* "Mémoires," tome v. p. 155. † Lucas, "Secularia," p. 248.

treating it was also in his mind when, in 1828, he wrote in "The Edinburgh Review" his article on "The Constitutional History of England from the Accession of Henry VII. to the death of George II. by Henry Hallam." He therein complains that we have good historical romances and good historical essays; that the imagination and the reason have made partition of that province of literature, and hold their respective portions in severalty, instead of holding the whole in common. "To make the past present," he says, "to bring the distant near, to place us in the society of a great man or on the eminence which overlooks the field of a mighty battle, to invest with the reality of human flesh and blood beings whom we are too much inclined to consider as personified qualities in an allegory, to call up our ancestors before us with all their peculiarities of language, manners, and garb, to show us over their houses, to seat us at their tables, to rummage their old-fashioned wardrobes, to explain the uses of their ponderous furniture, these parts of the duty which properly belongs to the historian have been appropriated by the historical novelist. . . . Sir Walter Scott gives us a novel; Mr. Hallam a critical and augmentative history. Both are occupied with the same matter. But the former looks at it with the eye of a sculptor. His intention is to give an express and lively image of its external form. The latter is an anatomist. His task is to dissect the subject to its inmost recesses, and to lay before us all the springs of motion and all the causes of decay." * It was for Macaulay, by a wonderful combination of the two great attributes of History and Romance, to build up a narrative that with the greatest power of charming the Fancy compelled, with very few exceptions, the submission of the Reason. Where he fails it is where he is carried away by the ardour of his political feelings and habits of thought, losing the historian in the partisan. But this total surrender to an overwhelming impulse in some degree ensured his triumph. It required no ordinary amount of energy to turn the young men and maidens who had been nurtured upon Hume, from a sickly sympathy with discrowned Stuarts and plotting Jacobites; to give them, in the place of that sugar-candy of History which sees nothing but the misfortunes of the great and forgets the wrongs and sufferings of the lowly, some more nourishing diet—some diet fitter for a great free people. His view of the Revolution and of the character of William of Orange was producing its effects when Prince Albert, with the moral courage and sagacity that were his by nature and education, said, in a large meeting of Churchmen on the 150th Anniversary of the Society for

* "Essays," vol. i. p. 113.