haps be named; and these are disfigured by every kind of literary fault.

3. With regard to the stage itself, the building of the first theatre in London has been already described. But for many years previously temporary theatres had been made out of the court-yards, with their surrounding galleries, of London inns, *e.g.*, the Belle Savage in Ludgate Hill, the Red Bull in Bishopsgate Street, and the Cross Keys in Gracechurch Street. It is to the second of these that Gosson alludes in his *School of Abuse* (1579), when he speaks of "the Jew shown at the Bull," and goes on to describe it so as to make it clear that this was an old play with a plot resembling that of the *Merchant of Venice.* If any one desires it, he may still help his imagination to picture the scene, by going into the court-yard of one of the few old city inns still left, the "Four Swans" in Bishopsgate Street for instance, and imagining a stage erected at one end, the galleries crowded with aristocratic spectators, seated or standing, and the open space below filled with play-goers of the common sort, admitted at the charge of one penny, and with the canopy of heaven above their heads. Five of these theatrical inns were turned into play-houses between 1570 and 1630. The company that owned the Blackfriars Theatre erected a new one called the Globe in 1594 on the Bank-side, a position corresponding to one on the present Thames embankment; this, being for summer use, was not roofed in. A play-house called "The Theatre" was built at Shoreditch, outside the city liberties, little, if at all, after the time at which the Blackfriars house was opened; near it stood the "Curtain." Other theatres, the Swan, the Hope, the Rose, &c., rapidly sprang up; and it is estimated that not fewer than 200 licensed play-houses existed in different parts of London at the end of the reign of Elizabeth. All this time the players continued to designate themselves, and to be, the servants either of the queen or of some nobleman; without such protection they could not have exercised their function either safely or profitably. In these primitive theatres no scenery was used; that was first introduced by Davenant after the Restoration. A curtain then, as now, met the spectator's eye on entering; it was slowly drawn up, and he saw a stage strewn with rushes, the side walls hung with arras; a large board with a name painted on it, "Westminster," "Corinth," "Messina," &c., informed him where the scene of the play to be performed was laid; imagination did all the rest. When a battle was to be fought, "two armies fly in represented with four swords and bucklers, and then what hard heart will not receive it for a pitched field?"[1]

Shakespeare. Amidst such rude surroundings, and with such imperfect appliances, the mighty genius of Shakespeare was fain to live and act. It has been observed that English comedy was less advanced at the time of his coming up to London (about 1586) than the other dramatic forms; and it is in comedy accordingly that his early triumphs were won, and his extraordinary superiority to all his predecessors most signally demonstrated. *Love's Labour's Lost* and *The Comedy of Errors* were probably his first essays; they were followed by *Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Two Gentlemen of Verona*, &c. The versification of dramatic dialogue had been thoroughly reformed by Marlowe, whose sense of rhythm was exquisite; English blank verse had been wrought into a fine and fitting material, ready to receive whatever impression a gifted dramatist might stamp upon it. But Marlowe was no meditative observer of human life, no accurate discerner of human motives. The language, therefore, that he puts in the mouth of his different personages does not greatly vary; they are all apt to take to ranting on the least provocation. Shakespeare added to Marlowe's skill of composition a power of characterization which no dramatist, ancient or modern, ever surpassed. To this power, as its fitting accompaniment, was joined a gift of modulation, by which the language assigned to each character was made suitable to it and to no other, and this with a truth and naturalness which the readers and spectators of every following age have recognized. Again, turning, like Chaucer, with eager longing to the refining influences which came from the south, he adjusted and polished his dialogue with the utmost care, till to the swiftness and evenness of movement which he might have learnt from Marlowe he united much of the easy grace of Ariosto and of the sweetness of Tasso. He probably read an immense number of Italian novels, either in the original or in translations; many of his comedies are founded upon such tales. Thus prepared, he could with safety, as in *Merry Wives of Windsor*, deal with home scenes, and a plot of his own invention, without running any risk of falling into the coarseness and vulgarity of *Gammer Gurton*, *George-a-Greene*, and hundreds of other pieces, written by men in whom the Teutonic affinity of the race predominated unchecked. To these qualifications Shakespeare added a sound dramatic judgment, which, as was natural, improved with years and experience, teaching him what to seek and what to shun, so as to secure that popularity which is the test of dramatic excellence. As an acting play, *The Tempest*, written near the end of his career, is far superior to *Love's Labour's Lost.* But to the last he did not attain to supreme excellence in this direction; the unity of action, necessarily sacrificed in the histories, is not always preserved in dramas where its retention would have been easy; nor is that subordination of inferior parts to the central action, which dramatists of less power have often successfully managed, always duly attended to by Shakespeare.

Of neither the comedies nor the tragedies of Shakespeare can it be said that they are in a special sense "dramas of character." The boasting soldier, the lying traveller, the religious hypocrite, the scheming matron, the ambitious tyrant, and many other clearly marked types, are not pourtrayed for us in the plays of Shakespeare with that sharpness of outline which they present in the works of Plautus, Molière, and Alfieri. The cause may perhaps be sought in the absence from Shakespeare's mind of all exaggeration, and in the fact that without some slight exaggeration these striking dramatic types which take hold on the memory and the imagination cannot be produced. Shakespeare saw men as they are, and so described them; and the consequence is that, although neither Macbeth nor Richard III. exhibits the stock character of the "ambitious tyrant," each displays a special form of ambition, modified, as always happens in real life, by many concomitant qualities and aims, to trace the lineaments of which will reward in a high degree the pains of the literary analyst. It is this quality of essential truth of presentation which has gathered round our Shakespeare's dramas the instructive and beautiful criticism of a Gervinus, the interpretations of a Goethe, and the historic faculty of a Guizot or a Villemain.

In the exhibition of tragic passions, and in the range of the appeal which they make to the moral sentiments of an audience, Shakespeare's tragedies have never been surpassed. Considered as acting plays they are of varying excellence. In *Othello* and *Romeo and Juliet*, both founded on Italian novels, the incidents move on in a swift and well-combined sequence, which, from this point of view, leaves nothing to be desired. *Hamlet*, though from tradition and habit it always attracts large audiences, is better suited for the closet than the stage; the *drag* of the third and fourth acts is undeniable. In none of the tragedies is there any attempt to preserve the unity of time except in *Romeo and Juliet*; here the action is powerfully and successfully concentrated. The Roman plays, based on Plutarch's *Lives*, though they abound in passages of great power and beauty, are not so constructed as to produce the highest dramatic effect.

When we turn to the other dramatists, Shakespeare's contemporaries and successors, the one point about them all that most strikes us is, their amazing exuberance. The English genius, as M. Taine in substance remarks, is naturally abundant and full of force; if left to itself, it attends more to quantity than to quality; it is daring and enterprising, and knows not when it is over-matched, as English soldiers are said not to know when they are beaten. Of this national vigour a large proportion was in the Elizabethan times directed to literature, and particularly to the stage. The development of the drama had now gone on without any notable check for many generations. All the artistic faculty of the country which before the Reformation had applied itself to other arts, such as decorative architecture, painting, and sculpture, now, when the scope for the exercise of these was suddenly reduced to the narrowest limits, tended to seek and find a refuge in the Thespian art. Space does not permit of our noticing these dramatists in any but the briefest manner. Ben Jonson, proud of his learning and his university education, invented most of his own plots, and plumed himself on his strict observance of the unities. In the plays of Beaumont and Fletcher the influence of the Spanish drama, the glory of which had been carried to a great height by Calderon and Lope de Vega, is noticeable. The intensity of Massinger and the pathos of Ford, amid much that is grotesque or repulsive, preserve their dramas from entire oblivion. Other names are those of Webster, Chapman, Heywood, Dekker, Marston, Middleton, and Rowley. The plays of Shirley were at the height of their popularity when, after the breaking out of the civil war, the theatres were closed by order of the parliament. This order is the overt act of Puritanism, by which, after having first complained of, then protested against, then furiously denounced, the abuses of the stage, it proceeds, now that it has got the handling of the civil sword, to remove both use and abuse by force. The violent language of Prynne in the book (1633) to which he gave the title of *Histriomastix* (a barbarous compound signifying "the player's scourge"), though at the time cruelly punished by the Star Chamber, told of a great and increasing force of public opinion behind him, of which he was but the mouth-piece. Puritanism, by the order of suppression, at once avenged the insults and ridicule with which the dramatists had assailed it, and cut down a vigorous scion which had grown up out of the root of the ancient civilization. The drama was restored before twenty years were over; but it was a new creation, and never won the people's love as the old Elizabethan drama had done. It was an affair of courts and coteries, and was almost shaken down by the blunt reproaches of one honest, plain-spoken man, Jeremy Collier. Puritanism possessing itself more and more of the popular conscience, the revival of a *national* drama became impossible. Our theatres are supported by the miscellaneous urban population which is always to be found in great cities; but as a nation we have had no drama since the civil war.

In the department of Fiction we have to note a new transformation of the romance, by which it assumes the form of pastoral novel. The tale of chivalry, modified so as to recommend a religious ideal by Walter Map and his fellow workers, then passing into the love-story with allegorical embellishments in the hands of Lorris, was further changed by Sannazzaro, Montemayor, and other Spanish and Italian writers, into the love-story with pastoral and mythological embellishments. Here of course we trace the influence of the classical revival; allegory is dropped as too cumbrous; and a florid phraseology, culled from the idylls of Theocritus, the miscellaneous works of Lucian, and other classical or quasi-classical sources, takes its place. The *Arcadia* of Sir Philip Sidney was suggested by Sannazzaro's pastoral romance of the same name, but can be read with more interest, because we see that it has been made the vehicle by means of which a powerful mind makes known its thoughts on many intricate and important questions, in metaphysics, political science, art, and social ethics. But the prolixity of the work, together with its confused arrangement, would always prevent it from attaining to anything like the popularity which it enjoyed when, and for some time after, it appeared. The *Euphues* of Lyly, a kind of philosophical novel, written in an affected and pedantic style, has, since the ascription to its influence by Sir Walter Scott of the magniloquent bombast which he puts in the mouth of Sir Piercie Shafton in the *Monastery*, and considers to be characteristic of the conversation of courtiers at that period, given rise to the term "euphuism." Yet it must be allowed that Sir Piercie Shafton's talk is quite a caricature of the language in *Euphues*; of the two, it more resembles the high-flown language that we meet with in Sidney's *Arcadia.* The *Mundus Alter et Idem* of Hall (afterwards bishop of Norwich) is a satirical romance, written from the clerico-despotic point of view, in the aim of exhibiting the debasement which the principle of democracy, if carried out consistently and over a long period, would, according to the author's theory, bring upon both social and individual man. One of the last and most pernicious delusions of the infatuated community described in the book consists in establishing "a perpetual parliament." Such were the advisers, obeying whose fatal suggestions Charles I. reigned eleven years without a parliament, and brought things to a pass whence civil war was the only issue.

Hooker. In the *Ecclesiastical Polity* of Richard Hooker, published near the close of the 16th century, a solid intellectual basis, illustrated by great learning and the attractions of a grave and majestic style, was for the first time given to the conception of the *via media*, in which Anglican churchmen believed they saw a secure shelter for moderate minds, midway between Rome and the extreme forms of Protestantism. The work is naturally directed rather against the Puritans, who were numerous both in church and state, and might eventually, as in fact they did, gain the upper hand, than against the Catholics, whom the laws already silenced and disarmed. The restiveness of the Puritans under the existing laws and church ordinances, which, as they thought, left religion insufficiently reformed, suggested to Hooker an inquiry into the nature of laws, and the grounds of their binding force; this is the subject of the celebrated disquisition in the first book. The Puritans were not convinced, and the struggle between them and the Anglicans went on increasing in violence, until, after the outbreak of war, the ascendency of the Puritan element in the Lower House, and the secession of most of the peers to Oxford, enabled its enemies temporarily to suppress the established church. During the suppression, a work of great ability, entitled *A Discourse on the Liberty of Prophesying* (1647), appeared from the pen of Jeremy Taylor. Fifty years have made a great difference; the champion of Anglicanism no longer insists on obedience, but pleads for toleration; if only the Church of England could be established again in certain districts, he would be willing to see the worship of many different sects, provided that they all agreed to accept the Apostles' Creed as a common standard, carried on in other parts of the country. The lapse of a few years restored to the church its former status without any damaging concessions, and the question of toleration was laid by till the Revolution.

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[1] Sidney's *Defence of Poesie*, quoted by Charles Knight in his *Shakspere, a Biography.*

The scholastic philosophy fell, as we have seen, at the charge of religion; and for some time nothing took its place. When philosophical studies were revived, they took a new direction, and were pursued in a new spirit. The old philosophy, summing up the wisdom of Greece and that of the Christian schools, said to the student, "Know God, know thyself; from this twofold knowledge learn what is duty; that done, investigate at discretion either nature or the world of ideas." In practice, however, a dry logic and metaphysic, encumbered with technicalities, formed the sole intellectual pabulum provided for most students of philosophy. The new doctrine, introduced by Bacon, said, "Know Nature, and for that purpose study thy own mind, and discover the criteria by which nature's ways may be tested; the knowledge so gained will be *power*, which, well used, will enrich and adorn human life." Mr Hallam, representing the general English opinion, calls Bacon "the father of modern science;" but his claim to the title is disputed both by the French and by the Italians. However this may be, it is certain that he very early conceived the idea of working out a new and complete system of philosophy; and to a juvenile work unfolding his project in outline, which seems to have been written about 1584, he gave the title *Temporis Partus Maximus*, the greatest birth of Time. The phrase sounds arrogant, but was not really so; all that Bacon meant to say was, that the new doctrine was the inevitable outcome of a time now ripe for its reception,—the growth of the Zeit-geist, to use a modern phrase, —and that it was impossible to overstate its importance and potency. But his life was too much taken up with active labours at the bar, on the bench, and in the council-chamber, to permit of his carrying his vast plans into execution. All that we possess of his philosophy is contained in the *Advancement of Learning* (1605), the *Instauratio Magna* (1620), and the *De Augmentis Scientiarum* (1623). The *Instauratio* is a colossal programme of his philosophy in six divisions, of which only the second, the "Novum Organum," is worked out, and that not completely. The "Novum Organum" was designed to be the new logic of induction, which Bacon regarded as the mind's proper instrument in utilizing the fruits of experience. "Experience and observation are the guides through the Baconian philosophy, which is the hand-maid and interpreter of nature."[1] Nevertheless the particular instrument which he invented, the method of instances, is too cumbrous for practical use, and in fact never has been employed in physical inquiries. "If we have not tried it," says Mr Ellis, in one of his exceedingly able introductions to the works of Bacon, "it is because we feel confident that it would not answer. We regard it as a curious piece of machinery, very subtle, elaborate, and ingenious, but not worth constructing, because all the work it could do may be done more easily another way." It is not in virtue of his method, which will not work, nor on account of special contributions to any branch of physical science, for none such exist, that so high a place among philosophers is assigned to Bacon by his countrymen. It is rather on account of the lofty enthusiasm which animates his writings, and makes him appear in them as the hierophant of Nature, eloquently pleading against the neglect of her worship.

The edifice of Christian philosophy lay in ruins, as we have seen, from the time of the Renaissance; Bacon offered a partial substitute, designed to endow man with power over nature; it was left for Hobbes, his assistant and disciple, to make an attempt to occupy the whole of the ancient field of thought. He desired to instruct mankind as to the origin, nature, and value of their conceptions respecting God and themselves, to investigate the moral nature of man, and to define the forms of guidance and of conduct best suited for a being so constituted in mind and heart. His principal work was published in 1651 under the title of *Leviathan*. The fundamental principle from which he starts is, that every thought which can arise in the mind of man is a "representation or appearance of some quality of a body without us, which is commonly called an object." "There is no conception," he proceeds, "in a man's mind which hath not at first, totally, or by parts, been begotten upon the organs of sense. The rest are derived from that original." The doctrine of innate ideas, and every suggestion that it is possible for man to obtain real knowledge otherwise than through the reports of the senses, are by this preliminary tenet rejected. He proceeds, with the utmost acuteness, and a power of close and sustained observation which is truly admirable, to analyse the more important conceptions concerning God, time, infinity, substance, &c., which find a harbour within the mind. His explanations and definitions on all these heads bear, as might be expected from his primary tenet, a strong materialistic impress. He is also a nominalist; all objects, according to him, exist singly and separately; the only universal is the *name* given to a number of objects which agree in certain given respects; the belief in the existence of universals as *ideas* he rejects, not as erroneous but as absurd; nothing exists for him between, or besides, the object, and the human faculties perceiving and naming it. Of the belief in a God he says that "by the visible things of this world and their admirable order a man may conceive there is a cause of them, which men call God, and yet not have an idea or image of Him in his mind." "As God is incomprehensible, it follows that we can have no conception or image of the Deity; and consequently all His attributes signify our inability or defect of power to conceive anything concerning his nature, and not any conception of the same, excepting only this, that there is a God." In spite of statements of this kind, which are obviously capable of being taken in a good sense, it has been customary to regard Hobbes as an atheist. The cause is found in the complete inadequacy of his system of morals to make good what might be wanting in his speculative tenets. It is not the omissions and one-sidedness of his metaphysics alone, but it is these, coupled with the perversions in his moral philosophy, which have affixed to his name a reputation for atheism. The doctrine of the existence of God, even attenuated to the form which we have seen above, might have been sufficiently integrated by a sound doctrine respecting the human conscience, the best witness for God, according to the general belief, that it is in man's power to appeal to. But when we examine Hobbes's teaching on moral matters, we find it full of paradox and absurdity. Every passion and feeling which can move the human heart is, according to him, the more or less disguised offspring of self-love. He scoffs at the very notion of free-will. The warnings of conscience are merely the fear of something disagreeable happening to ourselves, if we proceed in a particular line of conduct towards our neighbours. Justice and virtue are chimeras; that is just which is commanded by the laws, or which a man has covenanted to do; that is virtuous which tends to the general well-being of the community in which we move.

Hobbes's views on civil society and government were first given to the world in his *De Cive* (1647); but this was afterwards incorporated in the *Leviathan*. The state of nature, he holds, is a state of war; each man has, until he is restrained, a natural right to take everything around him for his own use; every other man has an equal right; war is therefore inevitable. But men find that in the long-run peace conduces to their enjoyment more than war; they are willing, therefore, that the natural right which each possesses should be abridged, and with this end in view they enter into a covenant under which a government is set up over them, charged with maintaining peace, and attending to their welfare in other ways. After this has been done, the subjects cannot change their government without its consent. There are three possible forms of government, —monarchy, aristocracy, democracy,—in each of which the sovereign power cannot be limited or divided. He appears to have thought the limited monarchy of England a vicious form, which events had shown to be practically untenable, the division of power between sovereign and democratic assembly having led to civil war. Of the three forms he much prefers monarchy, that is, absolute monarchy. He thinks it even more important that the sovereign should not be hampered by any opposition on the part of the priesthood, than that he should not be disturbed by the democracy. Accordingly he insists that the state and the church should be the same body under different aspects, the sovereign of the one being also the supreme head and ruler of the other. The sovereign, if he be a Christian, is to determine what religious dogmas shall be taught by the clergy, and to be the judge in the last resort on questions affecting those dogmas. "This," as Mr Hallam observes, "is not very far removed from the doctrine of Hooker, and still less from the practice of Henry VIII."

There is ample evidence that the philosophy of Hobbes exercised a baneful influence on the morality of a large number of educated men in the last half of the 17th century. But for his love of paradox, this influence would doubtless have been still greater. In an eloquent peroration, Mr Hallam thus sums up his examination of the political and ethical writings of the philosopher of Malmesbury:—"The political system of Hobbes, like his moral system, of which, in fact, it is only a portion, sears up the heart. It takes away the sense of wrong, that has consoled the wise and good in their dangers, the proud appeal of innocence under oppression, like that of Prometheus to the elements, uttered to the witnessing world, to the coming ages, to the just ear of heaven. It confounds the principles of moral approbation, the notions of good and ill desert, in a servile idolatry of the monstrous leviathan it creates, and after sacrificing all right at the altar of power, denies to the Omnipotent the prerogative of dictating the laws of His own worship."[1]

VII. *Reaction and Counter-Action*, 1660–1700.—At the Restoration, the king and his personal friends, who had lived abroad during the Commonwealth and Protectorate, brought to England a sense of fitness in things literary, and an aversion to what was grotesque and exaggerated in style, which they had picked up in the polished society of the French salons. In poetry, perhaps, no reform was needed. The prevalence of good taste and good sense, assisted by the example of Milton, who in his juvenile poems scorned to use the "new-fangled toys" of the fantastic poets, had already condemned the school which delighted in "conceits." There is a purity of form in the odes of Waller, in the works of Denham, and even in much that in his later years came from the pen of Cowley, which prevented exception being taken to them on the score of refinement. With regard to prose style and the drama the case was different. When men looked back for twenty years and more to the theatre as it was before the troubles, and remembered the plays of Jonson and Shirley, they felt that there was much need of a change. The gay young *roué* of Jonson's plays is a coarse, brutal, and insupportable personage; his "clenches" and sallies are not wit, but the noisy outcome of a superficial cleverness, aided by a flow of animal spirits. The easy badinage and well-managed *double entendre* of the French comic stage were new phenomena, of which that of England had never had the least conception. Nor, in tragedy, was there any inclination to return to the piled up agony—"horror on horror's head"—of the plots of Ford and Fletcher. Corneille had shown that the sentiments of honour and love in their chivalrous intensity, when exhibited as in conflict with the harsh demands of circumstance and the world, are capable of producing the finest tragic situations. Dryden's heroic plays (*The Indian Emperor*, *The Conquest of Granada*, &c.) were up to a certain point imitations of Corneille; the extent to which they are sensational and crowded with incident was a feature taken from the theatre of Spain. The verse is rhymed in imitation of his French models; and in more than one of his prefaces or essays Dryden ably urged the claims of "his long-loved mistress, Rhyme," as an indispensable decoration without which the requisite weight and dignity of the tragic style could not be attained. In the article on the DRAMA (vol. vii. p. 434), notice has been taken of the chief works, both in tragedy and comedy, produced by our dramatists between the Restoration and the end of the century. Dryden, whose power and insight grew with advancing age, recognized, after devoting himself to the heroic style for years, the superiority of Shakespeare, abandoned rhyme, and produced in 1690 his finest play *Don Sebastian*. But it was then too late to arrest the decay of the drama. The Dutch king who then sat on the Stuart throne, the Dutch army which had placed him there, the exultation of the Whigs and the dissenters, were all so many indications that the Teutonic element in the English mind was again in the ascendant. And the ascendency of the Teutonic element, then still more than in previous ages, on account of the gulf which had been established between the Teutonic and Latin races by the Reformation, implied the predominance of an energy which preferred strength to grace, the useful to the beautiful, industry to art. All these impulses were of course only confirmed by the religious and moral views which are grouped under the general name of Puritanism. The drama, therefore, being in opposition to the prevailing spirit, fell ever lower and lower; and though momentarily uplifted, in later times, by the genius of a Goldsmith or a Sheridan, it has never regained its hold upon the nation. A modern critic has compared our drama, commencing with the Elizabethan age and ending with the present day, to a huge pyramid which stands on a broad and magnificent base, dwindles continually, and ends in nothing. Even at this day, there is still too much of the Puritan temper in general society to admit of the success of any proposal in parliament tending to the encouragement and support of the drama by the state, as a department of national culture.

Decline of the drama.

The prose style of the French writers was, at the time of the Restoration, much superior to ours. We had no one to oppose to Segrais, Fontenelle, Balzac, Voiture, Menage, and Bouhours, to select only the principal names among the French critics and *beaux esprits*. Nor was this superiority of our neighbours sensibly diminished till the next century, when Addison, Steele, and Swift redressed the balance. Yet it must be conceded to Dryden that the prose of his numerous essays, prefaces, and dedications, prefixed or subjoined to his published plays (especially the *Essay on Dramatic Poesy*), is incomparably more polished and more effective than any of the rude attempts at criticism which our writers had hitherto attempted. There is, however, a certain wildness clinging to Dryden's style, in spite of his efforts to improve it, and in spite of his wit and the promptitude of his vivacious intellect: one never feels quite secure against the occurrence of a solecism. Hobbes's

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[1] Hallam.

[1] *Literature of Europe* vol. iii.