

7. Mallory's *History of King Arthur and his Knights of the Round Table* is the most remarkable historical romance of the fifteenth century.

8. William Caxton, the "Father of the English Press," was a pious Catholic. He printed the *first* English book in 1471.

---

### CHAPTER III.

#### THE ENGLISH LITERATURE OF THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY.

A. D. 1500 to 1600.

THE AGE OF MORE, DUNBAR, AND SPENSER.

#### HISTORICAL INTRODUCTION.

1. A GLANCE AT ENGLAND AND SCOTLAND IN THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY.—The sixteenth century is the most eventful in English history. It carries us through the reigns of *Henry VIII.*, *Edward VI.*, *Mary*, and *Elizabeth*. Henry VII. died in 1509,\* and was succeeded by his son Henry VIII. In the bloom of youth, his mind well stored with knowledge, and bright hopes lighting up his future pathway, Henry mounted the throne of the rich, prosperous, and powerful Catholic kingdom of England. For about twenty years he enjoyed an excellent reputation. Owing mainly to the abilities of his Prime Minister,

---

\* Henry VII. was the *first* of the Tudor family that sat on the English throne; Elizabeth was the *last*.

the famous *Cardinal Wolsey*, his home administration was marked by wisdom; and the success of his arms against the Scots and French added to the glory of the nation.

Even in letters Henry made a name. It was in his reign that *Martin Luther*,\* a bold, able, and unprincipled monk of Germany, threw off the mask, raised his hand against the Catholic Church in which he had been educated, and stirred up the baser passions of

---

\* Luther was born in 1483, and died in 1546. He was the father of the Protestant Reformation. "Let us clearly understand," says WILLIAM COBBETT, a Protestant author, "the meaning of these words—*Catholic*, *Protestant*, and *Reformation*. *Catholic* means *universal* and the religion which takes this epithet was called *universal* because all Christian people of every nation acknowledged it to be the *only true religion*, and because they all acknowledged *one and the same head* of the Church, and this was the *Pope*, who, though he generally resided at Rome, was head of the Church in England, in France, in Spain, and, in short, in every part of the world where the Christian religion was professed. But there came a time when some nations—or rather parts of some nations—cast off the authority of the *Pope*, and, of course, no longer acknowledged him as the *head* of the Christian Church. These nations, or parts of nations, declared, or *protested*, against the authority of their former head, and also against the doctrines of that Church which, until now, had been the *only* Christian Church. They, therefore, called themselves *Protesters*, or *Protestants*; and this is now the name given to all who are not Catholics. As to the word *Reformation*, it means an alteration *for the better*; and it would have been hard indeed if the makers of this great alteration could not have contrived to give it a *good name*.

"Now a fair and honest inquiry will teach us that this was an alteration greatly *for the worse*; that this '*Reformation*,' as it is called, was engendered in beastly lust, brought forth in hypocrisy and perfidy, and cherished and fed by plunder, devastation, and by rivers of innocent English and Irish blood; and that as to its more remote consequences, they are, some of them, now before us in that misery, that beggary, that nakedness, that hunger, that everlasting wrangling and spite which now stare us in the face and stun our ears at every turn, and which the '*Reformation*' has given us in exchange for the ease, and happiness, and harmony, and Christian charity enjoyed so abundantly, and for so many ages, by our Catholic forefathers."—*History of the Reformation*.

"If mere dissent from the Church of Rome be a merit," writes the great Edmund Burke, "he that dissents the most perfectly is the most meritorious. A man is certainly the most perfect Protestant who protests against the whole Christian religion."

rich and poor. The English king was among the first to enter the lists against Luther. He became the champion of the true faith. He wrote a book in Latin entitled *Defence of the Seven Sacraments*, and sent a copy to *Pope Leo X.* Leo, who was a most illustrious patron of arts and literature, conferred upon the royal author the beautiful title of *Defender of the Faith*.\*

A change, however, came over King Henry. He allowed himself to become the slave of a vile passion, which finally transformed him into a despicable tyrant, drove him headlong into every cruelty, led to the downfall of the ancient faith in England, covered the country with mourning and venerable ruins, and introduced heresy, pauperism,† and grinding despotism into the once happy land of Alfred the Great. Because the Pope would not—and, in truth, could not—allow him to put away his Queen, the virtuous *Catherine of Arragon*,‡ and to marry her maid of honor, the pretty *Anne Boleyn*, Henry broke the sacred tie which bound himself and his kingdom to the Vicar of Christ.

He sacrilegiously placed himself at the head of the English Church, and butchered without mercy all who dared to oppose his mad career. This English Nero had six wives, several of whom he murdered.

\* A title to this day retained by the English sovereigns, though they have long since ceased to profess that Catholic faith for the defence of which the title was conferred.

† "Englishmen in general," says William Cobbett, "suppose that there were always *poor-laws* and *paupers* in England. They ought to remember that for 900 years under the Catholic religion there were neither."—*History of the Reformation*

‡ Catherine was the daughter of the celebrated Isabella the Catholic, Queen of Castile, and her husband Ferdinand King of Arragon. Isabella shares with Columbus the glory of discovering America.

The powerful Wolsey died in disgrace, exclaiming, "Had I served my God as I did my king, *He* would not have given me over in my gray hairs!" The venerable *Bishop Fisher* and the great *Sir Thomas More* finished their bright careers at the block, because they chose to obey God and conscience rather than a brutal monarch. Hundreds of monasteries were robbed and crumbled away at the tyrant's destructive touch. Rich and worldly ecclesiastics cowered at his frown and basely became apostates; and the whole fabric of the Catholic Church in England was shaken to its very foundations.

Nothing was sacred in the eyes of this royal savage. The rich shrines which contained the precious remains of the *Venerable Bede* and the "holy, blissful martyr," *St. Thomas of Canterbury*, were rifled of their treasures and the ashes cast to the winds. Even the tomb of *Alfred the Great* was not spared from desecration. Thus, in brief, began the modern religious change in England. The sudden falling away of that nation from the unity of faith in which it had dwelt for nearly a thousand years is a strange and terrible event. Henry VIII., a cruel monster, who was the sport of all the vile and brutal passions, was its originator; and he died as he had lived—scowling on the ruins and desolation which marked his unfortunate and dreadful reign of thirty-seven years.\*

Henry VIII. was succeeded by his little son *Edward VI.*, who, after a brief rule of six years, died at the age of sixteen. The work of planting the new creed, and breaking the Seventh Commandment by

\* During this reign Wales became a part of the kingdom of England.

robbing and plundering Catholic churches and monasteries, went on briskly during this reign.

*Mary*, the daughter of the unhappy Catherine of Arragon, became queen in 1553. She was a most zealous Catholic, reigned for five years, and did her best to repair the mischief done by her father and her brother. It was a thankless task. Because she exercised a certain severity towards the leaders, vow-breakers, and sacrilegious fanatics of the English Reformation, some historians, blinded by bigotry, have denounced her in unmeasured terms, styling her "bloody Mary." This is unjust. "Mary," says Lingard, "only practised what *all* taught. It was her misfortune, rather than her fault, that she was not more enlightened than the wisest of her contemporaries."

The long, cruel, and eventful reign of *Elizabeth* opens in 1558, and carries us through the remainder of the sixteenth century. The religious—or rather irreligious—changes set on foot by her father, Henry VIII., were now brought to a close. The work of iniquity and sacrilege was completed. The English Protestant Church was founded on the ruins of the ancient faith, and barbarous laws were enacted against the creed of Bede, Chaucer, and More. The Catholics were treated with savage ferocity and the most revolting cruelty.\* The churches and religious houses were finally robbed of everything that could minister to private luxury and godless rascality.

\* The minority in England who adhered to the ancient faith became the victims of an organized system of persecution and plunder. Open a book by *Cardinal Allen*, and a score of martyred priests, of harried and plundered laymen, of tortured consciences and bleeding hearts, will blot out from your view the smiling images of peace and plenty.—*Thomas Arnold*.

Elizabeth, on one occasion before she became queen, said that she "wished the earth would open if she was not a true Roman Catholic." But she was an artful hypocrite. However brilliant in some respects, hers was, in the highest degree, a blood-stained reign. The execution of the beautiful and unhappy *Mary Queen of Scots*, by order of the English queen, is one of the blackest crimes recorded in history.

The cruelties of her rule in Ireland would fill a volume. *Hugh O'Neill*, Prince of Tyrone, *Hugh O'Donnell*, Prince of Tyrconnell, and other Irish chiefs\* bravely battled for faith and country against the female tyrant. For fifteen years they defied the power of England and skilfully routed her best generals. This was at a time when, in the words of a famous historian, "it was enough to be an Irishman to be persecuted, and a Catholic to be crucified." "Has Tyrone submitted?" gasped the dying Elizabeth. "No," answered the statesmen who gathered around her bed; and the last of the Tudors passed from earth appalled by the terrors of coming judgment, and vexed at the thought that an Irish prince still defied her power.

Elizabeth was a vile, vain, able, and imperious woman. At her death 3000 dresses were found in her wardrobe. During her last years the Protestant bishop of London, on one occasion, ventured in his sermon to raise her thoughts from the ornaments of dress to the riches of Heaven; but she told her ladies that if he touched on that subject again she would fit him for Heaven.

## 2. SCOTLAND, 1500-1600.—In 1502 the Scottish

\* Principally O'Kane, O'Doherty, MacMahon, MacGuire, Magennis, MacSweeney, and O'Hanlon.

monarch, *James IV.*, married the princess Margaret, daughter of Henry VII. of England. The harmony which this alliance produced between the two kingdoms did not last long. James declared war against Henry VIII. The battle of Flodden Field was fought, and on it fell the Scottish king and the flower of his nobility. He was succeeded by his infant son, *James V.*, who, on reaching manhood, found himself involved in war with his uncle, Henry VIII. The military disasters of his reign hastened his death, a few days before which was born to him a daughter destined to be famous in history as *Mary Queen of Scots*.

The beauty, virtue, and accomplishments of this royal lady, her misfortunes and her heroic death, are events well known. The introduction of Protestantism into Scotland, and the preaching of such fanatical apostates as *John Knox*, upset all law and order. The passions ran wild. Mobs ruled. Mary was powerless.

The unhappy queen fled to England and threw herself on the generosity of her cousin Elizabeth, who promised her every protection. But the English queen was as cruel as she was treacherous. She beheld in Mary Stuart a Catholic and a rival to the throne. Her course was worthy of royal ruffianism. Elizabeth had the Queen of Scots thrown into prison, where for eighteen years she languished in captivity, only to end her career at the block.

How impressive was the scene that marked the last moments of that noble woman! Historians tell us that, with an ivory crucifix in her hand, Mary Stuart advanced into the hall of execution with the grace and majesty so often displayed in her happier days

and in the palace of her fathers. Her last words were: "Into thy hands, O Lord, I commend my spirit!" And at the third stroke of an axe, the most queenly head in Europe was severed from the body, and the pure and lofty spirit of the last Catholic queen of Scotland passed into eternity.

3. CHIEF AGENTS INFLUENCING THE PROGRESS OF ENGLISH LITERATURE IN THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY.—The chief agents that influenced the progress of English literature in this century were: (1) The printing-press; (2) the mature condition of the English language, which had just reached that advanced stage of growth and development that made it a grand and polished instrument for all the higher purposes of prose and poetry; (3) the study of the Latin and Greek classics and the poetry of Italy; (4) the increased number of colleges and public schools, and the consequent diffusion of education; (5) the rise of the middle classes of the people; (6) the discovery of America, and the circumnavigation of the earth. These last events fired the intellect and enthusiasm of Europe. Human curiosity marched over the globe.

4. ENGLISH LITERATURE AND THE EVENT MISNAMED THE REFORMATION.\*—It is the fashion with a large class of non-Catholic writers to view the so-called Reformation as the great agent that gave such a vast and widespread impulse to thought, literature, and social progress in the sixteenth and succeeding centuries. Let us briefly examine this subject by the light of true history. Let facts speak.

(1) PRINTING owes nothing to the "Reformation," which it preceded by nearly a century; and from this

\* Cardinal Wiseman truly styled it "that terrible event in English history, the horrors of which have been gilded by the name of Reformation."

invention alone literature received its greatest impulse.\*

(2) THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE *owes nothing to the "Reformation."* Our speech began, developed, and reached its full growth, if not its present perfection, long before Henry VIII. prepared the way for a new creed by tyranny, wife-murder, and sacrilegious robbery.

(3) THE ANCIENT CLASSICS *owe nothing to the "Reformation."* The careful hand and wise, beautiful taste of the Catholic Church saved the masterpieces of Greek and Roman literature from perishing in the wreck of ages. From Catholic Italy England learned to write poetry and to polish her speech.

(4) THE COLLEGES, PUBLIC SCHOOLS, and EDUCATION *owe nothing to the "Reformation."* The University of Oxford consists of nineteen colleges. *Fourteen* of these were founded *before* the "Reformation," and but five since. The University of Cambridge consists of seventeen colleges. *Thirteen* of these were founded *before* the "Reformation," and but four since. It is the same with the great public schools, such as *Eton*,† nearly all of which existed before the

\* How did the English "Reformation" treat the art of printing? "By the regulations of the Star Chamber, in 1585," says Thomas Arnold, "no press was allowed to be used out of London, except one at Oxford and another at Cambridge. Thus every check was imposed on literature, and it seems unreasonable to dispute that they had some efficacy in restraining its progress."—*Hist. of English Literature.*

† Eton College is one of the most famous educational establishments in England. It was founded in 1440 by Henry VI. under the title of "*The College of the Blessed Mary of Eton beside Windsor.*" It barely escaped destruction during the period of robbery and plunder that marked the early course of the "Reformation." For instance, in the reign of Henry VIII. alone, *ninety* colleges were destroyed. Indeed, in 1550 Ascham predicted the speedy extinction of the universities of Oxford and Cambridge from the growing calamities which attended the new religious movement.

"Reformation." But no sooner did the new religion assume sway than the high standard of instruction at Oxford and Cambridge was lowered. The Catholic professors were driven out of the country, and their offices were bestowed upon obsequious apostates and bold ignoramuses. "At Oxford," says Warton, "the public schools were neglected by the professors and pupils and allotted to the lowest purposes. Academic degrees were abrogated as anti-Christian. Reformation was turned into fanaticism." Latimer declared, in 1550, that there were 10,000 fewer students in England than twenty years before; and we have it on the authority of Anthony Wood that in 1563—the fifth year of the reign of Elizabeth—there were only *three* men at Oxford qualified to preach in public. Williams, Speaker of the House of Commons in the same reign, complained that more than *one hundred* flourishing schools had perished in the destruction of the monasteries, and that ignorance had prevailed ever since. The good old Catholic times had passed, and with them passed the noble race of generous princes and pious churchmen who founded schools and colleges. It was a sad change. "The rapacious courtiers of Edward VI.," says Craik, "robbed the institutions of learning in the base race to fill their pockets." The same accurate writer doubts if popular education was farther advanced at the close of the reign of Elizabeth than it was at the commencement of that of her father, or even her grandfather. The lower and many of the middle classes were wholly uneducated and illiterate. It is a question whether the father of Shakspeare, an alderman of Stratford, could write his name.

(5) THE ENGLISH PEOPLE *owe nothing to the "Re-*

formation," for it did nothing to make them free—to elevate them. It gave them no new rights. Magna Charta is the bulwark of English liberty, but it is the work of Catholics. The "Reformation," on the contrary, strengthened the fetters of despotism by centering all power, spiritual and temporal, in the person of grasping and godless monarchs. "A political and spiritual despotism, such as that of Henry VIII. and Cromwell," says Frederick Schlegel, "would have been impossible but for the Reformation." From the reign of Elizabeth until the act of Catholic emancipation was passed in the present century, religious liberty was trampled to the ground in England, Scotland, and Ireland. This was one of the fruits of the "Reformation," and the tree is known by its fruit. For nearly three hundred years blood flowed in torrents, and to be a Catholic was to be persecuted like a wild beast. The same price was offered for the head of a wolf and that of a priest. The fierce Mohawk was not more eager and skilful on an enemy's trail than was the fanatical and barbarous government of England in its hunt after Catholic clergymen; and the humanity of the American Indian compares very favorably with that of the Protestant Briton.

The Holy Book declares that *truth* alone gives freedom—real mental and moral freedom. But the Catholic Church is the grand depository of truth upon earth—that truth which makes men free. She is the mother of true liberty. Now, to unsettle a man's belief in the religion founded by Christ is not to make him free. It is to make him doubt, and doubt is not freedom. Telling a man to master the mysteries of a badly translated *Bible*, and to think as he pleases in dealing with the truths of religion, is not the wise

way to make him free. The lunatic enjoys such freedom. But this is the reprehensible manner in which the so-called Reformation labored to cheat the human mind. It produced doubt, irreverence, infidelity, mental giddiness, moral inconstancy, and a countless number of new "churches," by falsely stigmatizing fixed belief in the sacred dogmas of religion as a state of intellectual bondage.

(6) THE "REFORMATION" HAD NO SHARE in those gigantic achievements which doubled the size of the world's map and revealed the mysteries of the earth to mankind—the discovery of America, and the circumnavigation of the globe. Luther was but nine years of age when the Catholic Columbus planted the cross on the shores of the New World; and it is uncertain if ever the Catholic Magellan heard of the Wurtemberg reformer and mighty "bellower in bad Latin."

The Reformation, in truth, was a sad hindrance to the progress of sound thought and pure, healthy literature. It brought no new truth into the world. It originated no new form of composition. It did not polish speech. It was, at best, a fatal whirlwind that swept over the British mind, leaving behind the scars, changes, hatred, and confusion which marked its pestilential and destroying course. In short, neither English civilization nor English letters owe anything to the "Reformation." For them it was a retrograde movement. Had it never occurred, the career of English literature would, doubtless, have been brighter and grander.

7. THE REFORMATION AND ART, SCIENCE, AND THE WORLD AT LARGE.—The "Reformation" began by showing itself an enemy to the fine arts. To it music, painting, and architecture are certainly under no

obligations. "The Reformation favorable to the fine arts!" writes Archbishop Spalding—"as well might you assert that a conflagration is beneficial to a city which it consumes. Wherever the Reformation appeared it pillaged, defaced, often burned churches and monasteries; it broke up and destroyed statues and paintings, and it often burned whole libraries." Look at the venerable ruins of churches and abbeys in England, Scotland, and Ireland. In mute accents they tell a mournful tale. Over them passed the rude, destroying hand of the Reformation. "With the art of poetry," says Frederick Schlegel, "Protestantism at first disclaimed any connection." It also began by an insane effort to abolish the sciences. Luther pronounced "all science, whether practical or speculative, to be damnable, and all the speculative sciences to be sinful and erroneous; and he even loudly declared that all human learning was "an invention of the devil." The truth of all this is confirmed by history.

Nor does the world at large owe anything to this boasted "Reformation." It was an unhappy rupture between men and their ancestors. It pulled down. It destroyed.\* But it neither built up, originated anything really new and useful, nor added to the sum of human happiness. To thought it added no idea of value.

"Protestantism," says the profound Balmes, "has

---

\* Challoner states that during the reign of Henry VIII. 645 monasteries, 90 colleges, and 110 hospitals were suppressed or destroyed, and the money was pocketed by the royal robber. The destruction of precious libraries in the same reign was truly deplorable. "Those who purchased the religious houses," writes I. D'Israeli, "took the libraries as part of the booty, with which they scoured their furniture, or sold the books as waste paper, or sent them abroad in ship loads to foreign book-binders."

not a single idea of which it can say, *This is my own.*" It lives on borrowed ideas, as, in many places, it still worships in stolen churches.\* It simply led to wars, bloodshed, rancor, robbery, fanaticism, infidelity, persecution, and endless changes in religion. There is nothing *fixed* in Protestantism, for it is the work of man. To the human intellect tossed about on the ocean of life it offers no place of safe anchorage. It shifts with the times. "You change," said Bossuet to Protestants; "and that which changes is not the truth."

The consequences of the so-called Reformation were wide and deplorable. It introduced discord into the bosom of the Christian people of Europe and America. It broke the unity of European civilization. It weakened the moral influence which Europe exercised over the rest of the globe. It carried fanaticism and religious persecution to the shores of the New World. It dwarfed the growth of Christian missions. It checked the progress of Christian civilization or gave it a wrong direction. The invention of printing, the invention of the compass, the progress of art, science, and literature, and the discovery of America led to the formation of bright hopes, alas! never to be fulfilled. Over three centuries ago the wild tocsin of religious strife sounded; all the baser passions were aroused; and the noise, animosity, and confusion have not yet died away.

8. RISE OF THE ENGLISH DRAMA.—THE DRAMA IS not a modern invention. Regular dramatic entertainments were given in Greece as early as 450 B.C., and at Rome about a century later, according to Livy.

---

\* This, of course, does not refer to America.

The ancient drama perished with the downfall of pagan Rome.

In later times Catholic taste and piety revived dramatic exhibitions. First came the MIRACLE PLAYS. For their origin we must go back to the Middle Ages. The earliest miracle-play on record is the *Play of St. Catherine*. It was written in French, and was represented at Dunstable, England, in 1119. The oldest manuscript of a miracle-play in English is one entitled the *Harrowing of Hell*, that is, the conquering of hell by our Blessed Redeemer. It was written about the year 1350.

A miracle-play was some mystery of religion, or story from Holy Scripture, or from the lives of the saints, dramatized for the purpose of instructing the people in a pleasing manner, and initiating them into the spirit of the festivals which the Church celebrated. Few among them could read and study the explanations of the festivals, but all could take in and appreciate what was placed before their eyes. In England the miracle-play did not altogether die out before the early part of the seventeenth century.

The MORAL PLAYS soon partly displaced the miracle-plays, and came into great favor in England about the middle of the fifteenth century. Their object was also to promote religious ideas; but in many respects they differed widely from the miracle-plays. *Virtues* and *abstract qualities* took the place of the historical personages of Scripture. Instead of the *Adam, Moses, Herod, and Pontius Pilate* of the miracle-play, we find *Justice, Mercy, Temperance, and Vice* as characters in the moral play. Virtues and vices talk, jest, and act.

But with the universal popularity of the miracle

and moral plays came their abuse, and they were finally discouraged by the Church. They prepared the way, however, for the modern drama.

We may date the rise of the *English drama* from about the middle of the sixteenth century. The *two earliest English comedies* were *Ralph Roister Doister* and *Gammer Gurton's Needle*. The first dates from about 1540; the second was written about twenty years later. *Gorboduc*,\* the first English tragedy, was from the pen of *Thomas Sackville*, and was acted in 1562.

During the next thirty years a number of wild, gifted, and scholarly young men tried their hands at play-writing. At the head of these stood *Christopher Marlowe*. But a greater far was to come. The culminating point in English dramatic literature was reached in the prince of dramatists—the myriad-minded *Shakspeare*.

9. CONDITION OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE IN THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY.—With the beginning of the sixteenth century we enter on the period of *Modern English*. The language had, by slow degrees, become a polished and mighty instrument of expression. It was now adequate to all the wants of poetry. And in the hands of the great *Sir Thomas More* it exhibited, for the first time, its real powers as a vehicle for dignified prose. More's *Life of Edward V.*, written about the year 1513, is, according to Hallam, the first good specimen of classical English prose, "pure and conspicuous, well chosen, without vulgarisms or pedantry."

"The English language," says Henry Reed, writing of the sixteenth century, "was now better fitted for

\* Sometimes called *Ferrex* and *Porrex*.



all the uses of literature, more adequate to the needs of philosophic thought, and of deep and varied feeling—at once stronger, more flexible, and more copious. It was now *one* mighty flood no longer showing the separate colors of the two streams which filled its channel—colors caught from different soils, the Saxon and Norman, in which they had their springs. The hidden harmonies of the language were disclosed, and its power of more varied music shown. The people's speech had grown to its full stature." ✓ ✕

## LESSON I.

GAVIN DOUGLAS. DIED 1522.

Chief works: (1) *Translation of Virgil's Æneid*.  
(2) *King Hart*.  
(3) *The Palace of Honor*.

1. Who has the special honor of having been the *first* to translate any of the ancient classics, Latin or Greek, into English?

*Gavin Douglas*, a learned Catholic bishop of Dunkeld.

2. Where was he born, and to what historic family did he belong?

Gavin Douglas was born in Scotland, and was a younger son of the fifth Earl of Angus, Archibald Douglas, known in Scottish history as "Archibald Bell-the-Cat."

3. Give some of the chief points in his life.

He studied at the University of Paris, entered the religious state, became abbot, and finally bishop of Dunkeld.

4. Which is the most remarkable production of the poet-bishop's pen?

His elegant and scholarly translation of Virgil's *Æneid* into English. This was the *first* translation of a Latin classic into our language.\*

5. Which are his other chief works?

*King Hart* and *The Palace of Honor*,† two long allegorical poems.

6. Where did Bishop Douglas die?

After the disastrous battle of Flodden Field, misfortune frowned on the warlike house of Douglas, and the gentle and gifted bishop was compelled to fly to London, where he died of the plague in 1522.

7. What was his character?

The member of a warlike family, in a rude age and country, Bishop Douglas was noted for his refinement, scholarly tastes, peacefulness, and gentle virtues.

8. In which of his poems do s Sir Walter Scott draw a touching picture of Gavin Douglas?

In his *Marmion*, where, in a striking scene, he says:

"A bishop by the altar stood,  
A noble lord of Douglas blood,

More pleased that, in a barbarous age,  
He gave rude Scotland Virgil's page."

\* Bishop Douglas made this translation in 1512 and 1513.

† *The Palace of Honor* was written in 1501. The leading idea of the poem and some of the details seem to be reproduced in Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*, a work composed about 180 years later. It is very probable that the fanatical Baptist preacher drew from the work of the Catholic bishop much unacknowledged material.

## LESSON II.

WILLIAM DUNBAR. DIED 1530.

Chief works: (1) *The Dance of the Seven Deadly Sins.*  
 (2) *The Thistle and the Rose.*  
 (3) *The Merle and the Nightingale.*

9. What poet has received the title of 'the Chaucer of Scotland'?

William Dunbar, the greatest of the Scottish poets.

10. Give a short account of his early life.

He was born in Scotland, belonged to a family of distinction, and was educated at the University of St. Andrews, where he took the degree of M.A. He then entered the Order of St. Francis,\* was ordained priest, and spent many years as a missionary, traveling on foot through Scotland, England, and France, and living on the alms of the faithful.

11. In what capacity was Dunbar subsequently employed by his sovereign, James IV. of Scotland?

As ambassador in conducting negotiations with various foreign courts. It was thus he gained that wide experience and deep knowledge of men and things which afterwards greatly aided him in his literary labors.

12. Where did he die, and when?

His last days were spent at the Scottish court, a dependent on royal bounty. Here he died, at the age of sixty-five, in 1530.†

\* In early life Dunbar entered the novitiate of the Franciscan Order, but does not appear to have taken the vows.—*Thomas Arnold.*

† "Dunbar's works, with a small exception," writes Dr. Hart, "remained in manuscript unknown to the world for more than two centuries, and it is only within the memory of persons still living that full justice has been done his merits. His poems began to attract attention about the middle of the last century, and since that

13. Into how many classes are Dunbar's poems divided?

Into three classes—the *allegorical*, the *moral*, and the *comical*.

14. Which are his best and most original allegorical poems?

*The Dance of the Seven Deadly Sins* and *The Thistle and the Rose*.

15. What is *The Dance of the Seven Deadly Sins*?

It is a long allegorical poem, the scene of which is in the infernal regions. Mahomet furnishes the music. In the fearful dance *Pride* leads the other Deadly Sins. Each of the seven is a terrible personage, painted in horror's darkest hues, and lighted in the dance by the lurid flames in which he leaps.

And first of all in dance was *Pride*,  
 With hair combed back, bonnet on side.

Then *Ire* came in with strut and strife,  
 His hand was e'en upon his knife."\*

*The Dance of the Seven Deadly Sins* is a masterpiece.

16. What is the *Thistle and the Rose*?

It is a fine allegorical poem, commemorating the marriage of the English Princess Margaret to James IV. of Scotland in 1503. The *Rose*, the type of beauty, is wedded to the *Thistle*, the type of strength, who is commanded to cherish well and guard his Rose.† Many critics consider this Dunbar's *most perfect poem*.

time his fame has been steadily rising; and it became at length so great that in 1834 a complete edition of his works was printed."—*Manual of English Literature.*

\* In these lines the spelling is modernized. Dunbar spells *pride*, *pryd*; *back*, *bak*; *came*, *cam*; and *knife*, *knufe*.

† The *Thistle* symbolizes Scotland; the *Rose*, England. Dunbar spells the words *Thrissill* and *Rois*.

17. Which is considered the best of Dunbar's *moral* poems?  
*The Merle\** and the *Nightingale*, a beautiful poem in which the two rival songsters debate in alternate stanzas the merits of earthly and heavenly love. The Merle argues that human love is the best. The Nightingale replies in behalf of the love of God. The last verse comes to the conclusion that "all love is lost but upon God alone."

18. What may be said of his *comic* poems?  
 Though full of the most genuine fun and the broadest humor, there is in most of Dunbar's comic pieces an element of coarseness and indecency, which unhappily detracts not a little from their merits.

19. What is Dunbar's rank in English literature?  
 He is one of the great writers of our language, and is certainly *the greatest poet between Chaucer and Spenser.*

"A poet unrivalled by any that Scotland has ever produced."—  
*Sir Walter Scott.*

"In the poetry of Dunbar we recognize the emanations of a mind adequate to splendid and varied execution. As a descriptive poet he has received superlative praise. In his allegorical poems we discover originality and even sublimity of invention."—*Irving.*

"Burns is the only name among the Scottish poets that can be placed in the same line with that of Dunbar; and even the inspired ploughman, though the equal of Dunbar in comic power and his superior in depth of passion, is not to be compared with the elder poet either in strength or in general fertility of imagination."—  
*Craik.*

\* *Merle*, the blackbird.

*shy*  
 LESSON III.

HENRY HOWARD, EARL OF SURREY. DIED 1547.

Chief works: (1) *Translation of the Second and Fourth Books of Virgil's Æneid.*  
 (2) *Songs and Sonnets.*

20. Who was Henry Howard, Earl of Surrey?

Henry Howard, styled "the English Petrarch," was a member of the ancient and noble Catholic family of the Howards, and eldest son of the third Duke of Norfolk. His is one of the youngest, brightest, and most romantic names in the history of English literature.

21. Where did he receive his education?

At Oxford University; but he afterwards travelled much, and during his stay in Italy made himself familiar with the rich literature of that country, especially the writings of Petrarch.

22. What are we told of Surrey's romantic career?

It was very eventful. He was a gay, gifted, brave young man who early learned the secret of joining brain to action. A knight, a great lord, a relative of the king, he had made war, commanded fortresses, mounted to assaults, fought tournaments, and wrote sonnets before his years had filled up a quarter of a century.

23. What was his unhappy fate?

Having fallen under the displeasure of the brutal Henry VIII., the brilliant but unhappy Howard, on a frivolous charge, was cast into the Tower of London; and, while still in the bloom of youth, was bar-