

CONTENTS.



INTRODUCTION.

	PAGE
Historical documents serve only as a clue to reconstruct the visible individual	2
The outer man is only a clue to study the inner, invisible man	6
The state and the actions of the inner and invisible man have their causes in certain general ways of thought and feeling	10
Chief causes of thoughts and feelings. Their historical effects	13
The three primordial forces—	
I. Race	17
II. Surroundings	19
III. Epoch	21
History is a mechanical and psychological problem. Within certain limits man can foretell	23
Production of the results of a primordial cause. Common elements. Composition of groups. Law of mutual dependence. Law of proportional influences	25
Law of formation of a group. Examples and indications .	30
General problem and future of history. Psychological method. Value of literature. Purpose in writing this book	32

BOOK I.—THE SOURCE.

CHAPTER I.

The Saxons.

	PAGE
I. Their original country—Soil, sea, sky, climate— Their new country—A moist land and a thank- less soil—Influence of climate on character . . .	37
II. Their bodily structure—Food—Manners—Unculti- vated instincts, German and English . . .	41
III. Noble instincts in Germany—The individual—The family—The state—Religion—The Edda— Tragi-heroic conception of the world and of man- kind	49
IV. Noble instincts in England—Warrior and chieftain —Husband and wife—The poem of Beowulf— Barbarian society and the barbarian hero . . .	58
V. Pagan poems—Kind and force of sentiments—Bent of mind and speech—Force of impression ; harsh- ness of expression	68
VI. Christian poems—Wherein the Saxons are predis- posed to Christianity—How converted—Their view of Christianity—Hymns of Cædmon— Funeral hymn—Poem of Judith—Paraphrase of the Bible	72
VII. Why Latin culture took no hold on the Saxons— Reasons drawn from the Saxon conquest—Bede, Alcuin, Alfred—Translations—Chronicles— Compilations—Impotence of Latin writers— Reasons drawn from the Saxon character— Adhelm—Alcuin—Latin verse—Poetic dia- logues—Bad taste of the Latin writers . . .	82

CONTENTS.

ix

	PAGE
VIII. Contrast of German and Latin races—Character of the Saxon race—Its endurance under the Norman conquest	92

CHAPTER II.

The Normans.

I. Formation and character of Feudalism	95
II. The Norman invasion ; character of the Normans—Contrast with the Saxons—The Normans are French—How they became so—Their taste and architecture—Their spirit of inquiry and their literature—Chivalry and amusements—Their tactics and their success	96
III. Bent of the French genius—Two principal characteristics ; clear and consecutive ideas—Psychological form of French genius—Prosaic histories ; lack of colour and passion, ease and discursiveness—Natural logic and clearness, soberness, grace and delicacy, refinement and cynicism—Order and charm—The nature of the beauty and of the ideas which the French have introduced	104
IV. The Normans in England—Their position and their tyranny—They implant their literature and language—They forget the same—Learn English by degrees—Gradually English becomes galliscised	115
V. They translate French works into English—Opinion of Sir John Mandeville—Layamon, Robert of Gloucester, Robert de Brunne—They imitate in English the French literature—Moral manuals, chansons, fabliaux, Gestes—Brightness, frivolity, and futility of this French literature—Barbarity and ignorance of the feudal civilisation—Geste	

	PAGE
of Richard Cœur de Lion, and voyages of Sir John Mandeville—Poorness of the literature introduced and implanted in England—Why it has not endured on the Continent or in England	121
VI. The Saxons in England—Endurance of the Saxon nation, and formation of the English constitution—Endurance of the Saxon character, and formation of the English character	138
VII.—IX. Comparison of the ideal hero in France and England—Fabliaux of Reynard, and ballads of Robin Hood—How the Saxon character makes way for and supports political liberty—Comparison of the condition of the Commons in France and England—Theory of the English constitution, by Sir John Fortescue—How the Saxon constitution makes way for and supports political liberty—Situation of the Church, and precursors of the Reformation in England—Piers Plowman and Wycliffe—How the Saxon character and the situation of the Norman Church made way for religious reform—Incompleteness and importance of the national literature—Why it has not endured	145

CHAPTER III.

The New Tongue.

I. Chaucer—His education—His political and social life—Wherein his talent was serviceable—He paints the second feudal society	170
II. How the middle age degenerated—Decline of the serious element in manners, books, and works of art—Need of excitement—Analogies of architecture and literature	171

CONTENTS.

xi

		PAGE.
III.	Wherein Chaucer belongs to the middle-age — Romantic and ornamental poems— <i>Le Roman de la Rose</i> — <i>Troilus and Cressida</i> — <i>Canterbury Tales</i> —Order of description and events— <i>The House of Fame</i> —Fantastic dreams and visions—Love poems— <i>Troilus and Cressida</i> —Exaggerated development of love in the middle age—Why the mind took this path—Mystic love— <i>The Flower and the Leaf</i> —Sensual love— <i>Troilus and Cressida</i>	173
IV.	Wherein Chaucer is French—Satirical and jovial poems— <i>Canterbury Tales</i> — <i>The Wife of Bath</i> and marriage—The mendicant friar and religion—Buffoonery, waggery, and coarseness in the middle-age	193
V.	Wherein Chaucer was English and original—Idea of character and individual—Van Eyck and Chaucer contemporary—Prologue to <i>Canterbury Tales</i> —Portraits of the franklin, monk, miller, citizen, knight, squire, prioress, the good clerk—Connection of events and characters—General idea—Importance of the same—Chaucer a precursor of the Reformation—He halts by the way—Tediousness and Childishness—Causes of this feebleness—His prose, and scholastic notion—How he is isolated in his age	203
VI.	Connection of philosophy and poetry—How general notions failed under the scholastic philosophy—Why poetry failed—Comparison of civilisation and decadence in the middle age, and in Spain—Extinction of the English literature—Translators—Rhyming chroniclers—Didactic poets—Compilers of moralities—Gower—Oocleve—Lydgate Analogy of taste in costumes, buildings, and literature—Sad notion of fate, and human misery—Hawes—Barclay—Skelton—Elements of the Reformation and of the Renaissance	213

BOOK II.—THE RENAISSANCE.

CHAPTER I.

The Pagan Renaissance.

§ 1. MANNERS OF THE TIME.

	PAGE
I. Idea which men had formed of the world, since the dissolution of the old society—How and why human inventiveness reappears—The form of the spirit of the Renaissance—The representation of objects is imitative, characteristic, and complete	227
II. Why the ideal changes—Improvement of the state of man in Europe—In England—Peace—Industry—Commerce—Pasturage—Agriculture—Growth of public wealth—Buildings and furniture—The palace, meals and habits—Court pageantries—Celebrations under Elizabeth—Masques under James I.	230
III. Manners of the people—Pageants—Theatres—Village feasts—Pagan development	239
IV. Models—The ancients—Translation and study of classical authors—Sympathy for the manners and mythology of the ancients—The moderns—Taste for Italian writings and ideas—Poetry and painting in Italy were pagan—The ideal is the strong and happy man, limited by the present life	243

§ 2. POETRY.

I. The English Renaissance is the Renaissance of the Saxon genius	250
II. The forerunners—The Earl of Surrey—His feudal and chivalrous life—His English individual	

CONTENTS.

xiii

	PAGE
character—His serious and melancholy poems— His conception of inward love	250
III. His style—His masters, Petrarch and Virgil—His progress, power, precocious perfection—Birth of art—Weaknesses, imitation, research—Art in- complete	256
IV. Growth and completion of art— <i>Euphues</i> and fashion —Style and spirit of the Renaissance—Copious- ness and irregularity—How manners, style, and spirit correspond—Sir Philip Sydney—His edu- cation, life, character—His learning, gravity, generosity, forcible expression—The <i>Arcadia</i> — Exaggeration and mannerism of sentiments and style— <i>Defence of Poesie</i> —Eloquence and energy— His sonnets—Wherein the body and the passions of the Renaissance differ from those of the moderns—Sensual love—Mystical love	259
v. Pastoral poetry—The great number of poets—Spirit and force of the poetry—State of mind which produces it—Love of the country—Reappearance of the ancient gods—Enthusiasm for beauty— Picture of ingenuous and happy love—Shaks- peare, Jonson, Fletcher, Drayton, Marlowe, Warner, Breton, Lodge, Greene—How the trans- formation of the people transforms art	276
VI. Ideal poetry—Spenser—His life—His character— His platonism—His <i>Hymns of love and beauty</i> — Copiousness of his imagination—How far it was suited for the epic—Wherein it was allied to the “ <i>faërie</i> ”—His tentatives— <i>Shepherd's Calendar</i> — His short poems—His masterpiece—The <i>Faërie Queene</i> —His epic is allegorical and yet life-like— It embraces Christian chivalry and the Pagan Olympus—How it combines these	289

	PAGE
VII. The <i>Faërie Queene</i> —Impossible events—How they appear natural— <i>Belphebe</i> and <i>Chryso gone</i> —Fairy and gigantic pictures and landscapes—Why they must be so—The cave of Mammon, and the gardens of Acrasia—How Spenser composes—Wherein the art of the Renaissance is complete	300

§ 3. PROSE.

I. Limit of the poetry—Changes in society and manners—How the return to nature becomes an appeal to the senses—Corresponding changes in poetry—How agreeableness replaces energy—How prettiness replaces the beautiful—Refinements—Carew, Suckling, Herrick—Affectation—Quarles, Herbert, Babington, Donne, Cowley—Beginning of the classic style, and drawing-room life	321
II. How poetry passed into prose—Connection of science and art—In Italy—In England—How the triumph of nature develops the exercise of the natural reason—Scholars, historians, speakers, compilers, politicians, antiquaries, philosophers, theologians—The abundance of talent, and the rarity of fine works—Superfluosity, punctiliousness, and pedantry of the style—Originality, precision, energy, and richness of the style—How, unlike the classical writers, they represent the individual, not the idea	330
III. Robert Burton—His life and character—Vastness and confusion of his acquirements—His subject, the <i>Anatomy of Melancholy</i> —Scholastic divisions—Medley of moral and medical science	336
IV. Sir Thomas Browne—His talent—His imagination is that of a North-man— <i>Hydriotaphia</i> , <i>Religio</i>	

CONTENTS.

XV

		PAGE
	<i>Medici</i> —His ideas, curiosity, and doubts belong to the age of the Renaissance— <i>Pseudodoxia</i> —Effects of this activity and this direction of the public mind	343
v.	Francis Bacon—His talent—His originality—Concentration and brightness of his style—Comparisons and aphorisms—The <i>Essays</i> —His style not argumentative, but intuitive—His practical good sense—Turning-point of his philosophy—The object of science is the amelioration of the condition of man— <i>New Atlantis</i> —The idea is in accordance with the state of affairs and the spirit of the times—It completes the Renaissance—It introduces a new method—The <i>Organum</i> —Where Bacon stopped—Limits of the spirit of the age—How the conception of the world, which had been poetic, became mechanical—How the Renaissance ended in the establishment of positive science	347

CHAPTER II.

The Theatre.

I.	The public—The stage	360
II.	Manners of the sixteenth century—Violent and complete expansion of nature	363
III.	English manners—Expansion of the energetic and gloomy character	373
IV.	The poets—General harmony between the character of a poet and that of his age—Nash, Decker, Kyd, Peele, Lodge, Greene—Their condition and life—Marlowe—His life—His works— <i>Tambur-</i>	

	PAGE
<i>laine—The Jew of Malta—Edward II.—Faustus</i> —His conception of man	380
v. Formation of this drama—The process and character of this art—Imitative sympathy, which depicts by expressive examples—Contrast of classical and Germanic art—Psychological construction and proper sphere of these two arts	397
vi. Male characters—Furious passions—Tragical events—Exaggerated characters— <i>The Duke of Milan</i> by Massinger—Ford's <i>Annabella</i> —Webster's <i>Duchess of Malfi</i> and <i>Vittoria Corombona</i> —Female characters—Germanic idea of love and marriage—Euphrasia, Bianca, Arethusa, Ordella, Aspasia Amoret, in Beaumont and Fletcher—Pentheia in Ford—Agreement of the moral and physical type	404