

Literature, &c.

THE TIME TO DIE.

BY MISS MARTHA A. WISWALL.

It was winter. Before a cheerful fire sat an aged man in lonely meditation. The curtains fell in heavy folds to the floor, casting an air of comfort over the room, and excluding the piercing cold. Yet a tremor passed over the frame of the old man, as the storm without fell upon his ear. "I am thankful I have a shelter on such a night as this," said he, drawing his easy chair nearer to the fire: "Woe to the wretch that roams abroad in such a storm;" then musing for some time, he began pacing the room, and ever and anon pausing in deep thought, which at length found expression—"Death is a fearful thing to contemplate at any time, but in such a season as this, methinks I would struggle hard for life. To be placed deep in the cold and frozen earth, no! she herself seems to strive to prevent the act, and winds her robe of snow over her strong breast to prevent admittance within it.

"When I die, may it be in the bright and joyous spring time, when all nature is fresh and gay. But hark! surely I did not hear a knock, for who would venture out on such a night?" and opening the door he saw before him a young girl, who begged for shelter in accents to excite pity in the hardest heart. The appeal was enough for the kind-hearted old man, and drawing her within the room, he gave her a seat near the fire, and tried to revive her drooping frame. After she had so far recovered as to answer his inquiries, she told him she was a lonely creature with no friend in the world; she had roamed about from place to place, living on charity; she had never known father, or mother, or relative.

The old man still dwelling upon the subject which had for some time occupied him, asked her if death would not be a welcome messenger to her, as she had nothing for which to live, and no one cared for her—would she not be willing to die and be at rest?

"Oh, ask me not to give up my life, it is sometimes bright and joyous. In the lovely summer, the flowers are my friends, the birds speak to me from the trees; and the bee winds his tiny horn for me, and then I wander forth to the green woods, and life is all sweetness—'Oh, no! youth is no time to die.'"

Years rolled on; the spring appeared gradually bright, the birds rejoiced on every bough, and all nature smiled to welcome the blithe Goddess of Spring. But the old man had found new ties to bind him to the earth; the houseless wanderer was as a daughter to him; his interest in her was too strong a bond to be easily broken. It was as hard to leave the world now as in the cold and dreary winter; age seemed but to strengthen the love of life, although youth was withered, and nature dying, yet "life! life only was his desire."

Spring passed, and summer with its mild and balmy air, visited the earth; the maiden smiled in her gladness of heart, and the old man rejoiced in her happiness, for she threw joy and bliss around her; her happy laugh rung upon his ear in wild and merry peals as she watched the flight of the gay butterfly, and her sweet song rose upon the air as she tended her birds and watched the opening of each bud to the light. Time flew swiftly by, yet the old man and the maiden were as fondly attached to the earth as in its spring time. Death gained new horrors as the season advanced; their summer paths were strewn with flowers. "It was no time to die."

Autumn, with its purple grape, and downy peach, and pleasant nutting time, took the place of summer, and brought with it the lightness and joyousness of cool air and freedom from the oppressive heat: the little maiden tripped through the dry leaves, and chased the squirrel with almost its own swiftness; then throwing back her sunny curls, she bounded to the side of the old man, as he sat under the vine at the door, making glad his eyes with her bright and happy face, and his heart grew young again in her lightsome, joyous mirth; both little thought of Death. The earth had clothed herself in a robe of brown and dry leaves, and hid herself from the eye of man—she seemed not to wish for human company in this her time of change.

Winter again returned; again we see the old man sitting in his chair before the bright and glowing fire; but he is not the solitary being he was before, for beside him is one in the first blush of youth and grace; she is no longer the gay and noisy child; she is no less lovely, no less happy; but a deeper thought steals over her face, and a heavenly radiance sits upon her features, as she bends over the book from which in accents of deep reverence, she reads the word of God to the old man.

What think they now of death? The faces of both look more restrained, the Holy Spirit sheds its light on the way which leadeth to the grave; it no longer seems dark and lonely. The old man received the heavenly guest into a heart which had always been the residence of kindness and charity. The maiden now drooped daily, but she no longer thought it hard to give up life; and when the cold blast swept over the earth, and the rope of snow enveloped it with robes no less white, she was received into its bosom. Then I asked the old man, "When is the time to die?"

"A holy calm was on his brow,
And peaceful was his breath;
And sweetly o'er his features stole
A smile, a look divine,
He spoke the language of his soul—
"My master's time is mine!"

LOVE ON.

"Love not, love not, ye hapless sons of earth."
Love on, love on, the soul must have a shrine,
The rudest breast must have some hallow'd spot,
The God who form'd us left no spark divine,
In him who dwells on earth yet loveth not.
Devotion's links compose a sacred chain
Of holy brightness and unmeasured length;
The world with selfish rust and reckless stain
May mar its beauty, but not touch its strength.

Love on, love on—ay even though the heart
We fondly build on proveth like the sand;
Tho' one by one Faith's corner stones depart,
And even Hope's last pillar fails to stand—
Tho' we may dread the lips we once believed,
And know their falsehood shadows all our days,
Who would not rather trust and be deceived
Than own the mean cold spirit that betrays?

Love on, love on—tho' we may live to see
The dear face whiter than its circling shroud;
Tho' dark and dense the gloom of death may be,
Affection's glory yet shall pierce the cloud,
The truest spell that heaven can give to lure,
The sweetest prospect mercy can bestow,
Is the blest thought that bids the soul be sure,
"Twill meet above the things it loved below.

Love on, love on—Creation breathes the words,
Their mystic music ever dwells around;
The strain is echo'd by unnumbered chords,
And gentlest bosoms yield the fullest sound.
As flowers keep springing, tho' their dazzling bloom
Is oft put forth for worms to feed upon;
So hearts tho' wrung by traitors and the tomb
Shall still be precious, and shall still love on.

ELIZA COOK.

From the Halifax Morning Post.

ENGLISH HISTORY.

OUTLINE SKETCH OF EARLY ENGLISH HISTORY
—ROMAN CONQUESTS, &c.

"Look from the ancient mountains down
My noble English boy!
Thy country's fields around thee gleam
In sunlight and in joy.

"Ages have rolled since foeman's march
Pass'd o'er that old firm sod;
For well the land hath fealty held
To freedom and to God!"

On the evening of Wednesday last, Mr Howe, in continuing his series of lectures on the History of Europe, recalled the attention of the audience to the hasty manner in which in which on a previous evening he had been compelled to run over the Kingdoms and States that compose the most powerful quarter of the Globe, and intimated his intention on the present occasion to confine himself to English History.

We avail ourselves of the opportunity to run off for our readers a rough sketch of the early history of our Father Land.

England derives its name from a village near Sleswick, called *Anglea*, whose population joined the first Saxon treebooters. Egbert called his kingdom *Anglesland*. *Anglesey* means England's Island—*cy* in Saxon being Island. It is said that an ancient manuscript records the arrival of some fugitive Trojans about the year 1200, B. C., under a leader named Brutus, who established a government, and at his death left England, Scotland and Wales, to each of his three sons. This account was believed by Shakspeare, (who founded on it his tragedy of *Lear*, one of Brutus's descendants) by Raleigh and by Milton. Henry VII. published his pedigree in a direct line from Brutus, in proof of his title to the throne.

The earliest records of Britain are the manuscripts and poetry of the Cambrians, corroborated by their monuments at Stonehenge and other places. These shew that in a very remote age a people in the Euxine were conducted to Britain and there established laws and a government. Previous to this the country was covered with forests and inhabited by various wild animals. The language of the first settlers was the same as is now spoken in Wales, of which the Erse of the Scottish highlands and the Irish are dialects, similar to the Phœnician and Carthaginian, with many Greek words; and their religion was the worship of the fire and sun. It is supposed by many that Britain originally joined the continent.

In 55, B. C. Britain was invaded by Julius Cæsar, who marched beyond the Thames and Dover Castle, but subsequently withdrew.—The Romans again invaded England in A. D. 43, and conquered the whole Island except the mountains of Scotland and Wales—Cæsar allying as a reason that the Britons had aided the arms of the Gauls, at that time also subject to the Romans. The country at that time according to the conqueror was semi-barbarous; but had war-chariots, and fought with discipline and bravery—being governed by their priests—called druids and bards. The druids are said to have been fine poets and moralists, but their ideas of causation were superstitious, and they believed in charms, elves, demons, &c. Their moral maxims are equal to any

that were ever composed, and were expressed in triads for ease of memory.

At or about the time of the successful invasion of Britain, Rome was in the zenith of her glory. Her conquests, her orators, poets, and statesmen, are too well known to require recapitulation, and she at that early period shared the commerce of the earth with but few other cities, including Corinth, to whose luxury the Corinthian order is ascribed. The power of Rome had been felt throughout the then known world; and the siege and destruction of Jerusalem, by Titus, may justly be said to be a sample of the cruelty and atrocity that at this time marked the progress of the victorious arms of mighty Rome towards universal Empire—while the luxury, vice, and effeminacy that had usurped the place of her former virtues, were fast sapping the foundations of her prosperity, and eventually left her an easy prey to her enemies. Julius Cæsar usurped the supreme power 48 B. C.; and from that time till 497 there were sixty-four Roman Emperors. Their reigns averaged eight years, and out of the whole number, sixty four, forty five were monsters of crime. Out of sixty two Cæsars, from 44 B. C., to A. D. 395, forty five were assassinated or poisoned, two, (of them Nero,) killed themselves, one died of the plague—another was killed by lightning—another burst an artery—leaving but very few who died natural deaths. It was on the 19th July that Nero set fire to Rome. The fire continued for six days, and three fourths of that fine city was destroyed.

It may be proper to remark that the breaking up of the Roman Empire in Italy by the invasion of the Northerners, and the general conspiracy of the conquered nations, is the period when ancient history ceases. Ancient history therefore commenced in the obscurity of tradition about 1660, B. C., and ended about the year A. D. 400—about two thousand years; and Modern began with Mahomet or Charlemagne. The obscurity of events in the earlier period of Modern History, owing to general ignorance, is almost as great as that which characterizes the antecedent ages of the world.

Many and severe were the contests that marked the period previous to the final subjugation of the Britons by their conquerors; but none of them merits more notice than the heroism displayed by Queen Boadicea, who at the head of her subjects attacked the Romans, burned London, and killed 70,000 of its inhabitants; but being soon after taken prisoner, this heroic woman poisoned herself in A. D. 59. About the time of the division of the Empire, the Roman armies were gradually withdrawn from various countries to combat the enemies of the state nearer Rome, and Britain was thus freed from the yoke of Rome, A. D. 426.

It suited the policy of the latter to style other nations "Barbarians;" but the aggressions and ambition of that people, and their employment of one nation to conquer another, cannot be sufficiently condemned; and it is not at all surprising that injured nations should have united at last to assert their independence. An incursion of the Goths and Heruli was defeated by Claudius II. in 269, when about 300,000 men were killed; but Alaric, (who was subsequently killed by Clovis) King of the Franks, after pushing his victorious arms over Europe from 401 to 410, sacked and plundered Rome in the latter year. Genseric, the Vandal, also overrun Italy, and even invaded Africa in 439, and in 455, Rome fell an easy prey to that warrior. Totilla the Goth, also took and plundered Rome in 537; but Belisarius retook in two years after; and it was again retaken by Totilla, previous to which it had been taken by Odoacer, made King of Italy, in 476. The first Bishop of Rome was made in A. D. 109. That dignity asserted his supremacy in 494; and the Christian Era was invented and introduced by Dionysius in 516. But we must briefly enquire what had been the advantages resulting to Britain by the occupation of the Romans for nearly 500 years.

It is reasonable to suppose that commerce had not been entirely neglected—not that the Romans originated the early trade of Britain, because it is generally believed that many of the Mediterranean traders visited that country previously, for the purpose of procuring tin, which article first gave it an importance in the Ancient World. The Romans it may be supposed first introduced Christianity into Britain; at any rate, it must have been through their means, and some have even asserted that the country was at one time visited by St. Paul. The British lady Claudia, to whom Martial addressed some epigrams, (with others to Linus and Padius,) is supposed to be the very Claudia mentioned with the other two in Paul's Second Epistle to Timothy. She is believed by the Cambrian writers to have been of the family of Caractacus; and perhaps the first British christian. In 51 Caractacus was taken to Rome; in 62 Paul was in that city, and was murdered by Nero in 67; and Martial died in 90 in the same city, aged 75. Her Cambrian name as translated would be Gladys Raffytte; for Martial addressed her husband as Padeus and Rufus on their marriage; and he also addresses two or three of his epigrams to Linus, proving the connexion of the three, all of whom are mentioned by St. Paul as his friends. The writer from whom we glean this says—no proof stronger can be adduced than these of the verity of St. Paul's letters—while the identification of this beautiful Briton as an early christian connected with him is a most interesting and remarkable circumstance. But christianity met with stern opposition from the ancient Britons and their priests; and although generally prevalent when the Saxons arrived in 451, that event again introduced another species of paganism inferior perhaps to the religion of the Druids.

The Saxons, like the Romans, did not easily

conquer our forefathers. King Arthur, who flourished between 203 and 240, is recorded by writers, independent of the Romance writers, to have been successful in twelve pitched battles against the Saxons. He is also mentioned in Ossian as an ally of Fingal.—Anything connected with this valiant Prince and his knights of the Round Table must always be interesting. It is therefore satisfactory to know that his body was found in 1189, by Henry II., and that of his Queen (Guinevra) at Glastonbury. It appeared to have been of large stature, and his wounds were traced in his head, by some which doubtless he was deprived of life.

The Britons had annual meetings at Abing and other places, where laws were made and justice administered, and the Saxons also had similar meetings of the *Michel-synoth* or *Michel gemote*, or great council, and *wittens gemote*, or meeting of wise men. The British Laws were translated into Saxon in 590. The English peasantry were so commonly sold into Saxonia as well as in Norman times, that children were commonly sold in Bristol market like cattle for exportation. Many were sent to Ireland and others to Scotland, and the working class were slaves down to a late period. The Saxon invaders divided England into seven distinct governments or kingdoms, called the Heptarchy, between which was prevalent for three centuries, till Egbert of Wessex, in default of issue, united the whole in 827. The first of these kingdoms, (Kent,) was established by Hengist in 455, and the seventh (Merca) about 585. Hence the Heptarchy lasted about 243 years and the kingdom of 372 years.

Alfred, the most renowned of Sovereigns, whom it has been justly remarked that England may have produced hundreds of Kings, only one Alfred, flourished in the years between 850 and 900. The Danes had arrived in England, and had reduced the kingdom once more to the sway of tyranny; but were defeated by Alfred in 878, and were finally driven out of the island in 882. The division of the kingdom into counties, hundreds, and tithings is ascribed to Alfred, and that monarch is also said to have been the contriver of Trial by Jury. It is, however, more probable that Alfred better regulated all these legal provisions, and perhaps the divisions of parishes also; for some counties are said to have borne their names and had these divisions more than a century earlier. There is no evidence of Trial by Jury long before his time. In a case tried in Flintshire 80 years before Alfred's time there is a list of the twelve jurymen, and this is confirmed by the fact that the descendants of one of them, named Corby of Gate, still preserve their name and residence at a spot in the parish called the Gate. The University of Oxford was founded by Alfred, a survey of the country was taken, and the island of Britain indebted for the commencement of its marine that in power now transcends the seas others put together.

Previous to the conquest, the crown of these many lands had long been held by a weak prince, the Edward, successor of Edmund Ironside, who had no children, and a son of Edward, his nephew and heir apparent, died, leaving a son, Edgar, under age, while two turbulent sons of his sister's were all-powerful. He made a will in favor of William Duke of Normandy, whom he had entertained at his court many years previous, and divisions arising from the death of the King the conquest facilitated. William I. began his reign in 1066. The *ex* tapestry wrought by Matilda his Queen, representing the circumstances attending the invasion, (comprising the train of events, and the signature of the will of the besotted Edward down to the crowning of William) is preserved in the Royal Library at Paris. We shall turn again to the interesting details of the early history of England, and entertain our readers with a light and less prosaic sketch of some romantic adventures and heroic exploits of that remote period.

New Works.

Hours of Meditation and Devotional Reflection upon the Religious, Moral and Social Duties of Life. By Heinrich Zschorke. Translated from the German by James S. Haas.

THE POWER OF TRUTH. At the period of the coming of Jesus, the majority of mankind were abandoned to the grossest sensuality. True liberty had disappeared from the earth; and, in its stead, nothing else was seen to exist but the most licentious tyrants, and their slaves, who were ever ready to throw incense upon the vices of their rulers. But, alas, born amidst the gloom of vice and tyranny, men could not form the idea of a better existence; they imagined that human existence had presented the same aspect. The heads of the people alone appeared to have rights, and the subjects only duties. Nations, continually at war with each other, were forced to shed their blood; the ambition of their rulers, and even to gratulate themselves upon their sanguinary destiny. The most brutal passions, transformed into divinities, had their altars; but few raised their hands towards the living God, Creator of the universe. The learned doctors in the law disputed together with great audacity and acuteness, upon the most trifling subjects, and gave the most strange interpretations to the Scriptures; but they regarded as superfluous the worship of God in spirit and truth, as well as the observance of his laws, adapted for the happiness of mankind. The Pharisees made open profession of their devotion in the temple, and at home; they blinded the people by a display of virtue, intended to veil over from vulgar eye their secret vices. Constant attendance at the temple, sacrifices, and other religious rites, were the