The Collected Historical Works of Sir Francis Palgrave, K.H.

In Ten Volumes

Volume Ten

REVIEWS, ESSAYS AND OTHER WRITINGS

IN TWO VOLUMES

VOLUME TWO

THE COLLECTED HISTORICAL WORKS OF SIR FRANCIS PALGRAVE, K.H.

edited by his son

SIR R. H. INGLIS PALGRAVE, F.R.S.

REVIEWS, ESSAYS AND OTHER WRITINGS

VOLUME II

with Introduction and Notes by

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CONTENTS

PAGE

INTRODUCTION . . . . . [vii]

PROGRESS OF HISTORICAL ENQUIRY IN FRANCE 1
Reprinted from the "Edinburgh Review" of April, 1841.

LIFE AND WORKS OF SISMONDI 41
Reprinted from the "Quarterly Review" of September, 1843.

MEDIÆVAL KALENDARS—SAINTS' DAYS 103
Reprinted from the "Quarterly Review" of March, 1843.

POPULAR ANTIQUITIES 117
Reprinted from the "Quarterly Review" of July, 1814.

ANCIENT GERMAN AND NORTHERN POETRY 147
Reprinted from the "Edinburgh Review" of February, 1816.

ANTIQUITIES OF NURSERY LITERATURE 185
Reprinted from the "Quarterly Review" of January, 1819.

POPULAR MYTHOLOGY OF THE MIDDLE AGES 209
Reprinted from the "Quarterly Review" of January, 1820.

SUPERSTITION AND KNOWLEDGE 245
Reprinted from the "Quarterly Review" of July, 1823.

ASTROLOGY AND ALCHEMY 285
Reprinted from the "Quarterly Review" of October, 1821.

ANCIENT AND MODERN GREENLAND 317
Reprinted from the "Quarterly Review" of May, 1818.

THE STATES OF WIRTEMBERG 335
Reprinted from the "Edinburgh Review" of February, 1818.

NORMANDY—ARCHITECTURE OF THE MIDDLE AGES . . . 363
Reprinted from the "Quarterly Review" of April, 1821.

THE FINE ARTS IN FLORENCE 403
Reprinted from the "Quarterly Review" of September, 1840.

EDITOR'S NOTES 449

INTRODUCTION

Sir Francis Palgrave's articles, contributed to the *Edinburgh* and the *Quarterly Reviews*, and here reprinted, fall into four main groups. First, two upon the history of France, then a collection of articles which deal with various sides of mediæval fable and superstition, breaking ground in what were the then slightly known fields of comparative mythology and folklore. Essays upon the constitutional history of Wirtemberg, and on ancient Greenland, stand apart from the rest and from each other. The volume concludes with articles upon architecture and upon art in Florence historically treated.

French Historians and Sismondi.

The article upon the progress of historical enquiry in France was suggested by the appearance of the works of Augustin Thierry. Comprehensive treatment of French history was progressing rapidly in the earlier half of the 19th century, though Thierry was not to say the last word upon it. He was hampered by a theory, that in the conflicts of a conquering and conquered race the secret of most historical movements is to be found. He carried it to excess in his history of the Norman conquest of England. To him Becket represented the English, and Henry II the Normans. The archbishop was of French origin in fact, and the Angevin king was not in sympathy with the Norman baronage. The historian loses sight of the real place of the controversy, as a part of the conflict of Church and State in Europe, by insisting upon an imaginary racial antagonism. In France the two elements of Teutonic conquerors and of Romanized Gauls, with their respective contributions to laws and manners, were much more of a reality than any two opposed nationalities ever were in England. Ultimately races were completely blended in France, but it was impossible for French historians to avoid being partisans. As French and German nationalities grew up side by side the patriotic Frenchmen insisted that the former owed as little as possible to the latter. The Frank Emperor Charles became Charlemagne, and was transformed into a Frenchman; and as the monarchy of Paris became a centre round which counties and duchies united to form a truly national kingdom, a right was assumed for the inclusion in a French kingdom

of any province which had ever been ruled by a German king and emperor whose dominions had included Gaul. Perhaps the French verb *réunir* is an unconscious creation of the frame of mind which regarded any people annexed for the first time to the French monarchy as being reunited.

That another prepossession should prevail among early French historical writers was only natural. The monarchy was the visible expression of French nationality. French writers were no more partisan in constitutional matters than English writers were; but as in the 18th and 19th centuries English writers were diligently seeking a justification for the desirable constitutional innovations of the 17th century by exaggerating the constitutional self-government of earlier ages, so Frenchmen were often naturally inclined to magnify the *rôle* of the royal power which had made France united at home and feared abroad. Yet a different bias was shewn in the 16th and 17th centuries, and was not unfelt till the revolution changed both the course of events and the modes of regarding them. The Huguenots were the natural partisans of constitutional rights, but the struggles between the Leaguers and Henri III and Henri IV enlisted the ultra-Catholics upon the side of those who questioned the right of the king to rule without the sanction of popular support, or perhaps popular election. The assumption of power by Louis XIV finally reunited the ideas of despotism in Church and State.

There is no great difference in kind between the materials for the earlier history of France and England. France it is true does not possess anything like the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, nor the Anglo-Saxon laws, writings in the vernacular tongue of the body of the inhabitants. But Baeda and Gregory of Tours, though very different, are not as authorities one better than the other. Laws, charters, monastic and other chronicles in Latin, are common material for later enquirers in both countries. The comparison adopted by Palgrave, but originally made by Thierry, between Gregory of Tours and Jean Froissart is intended to be complimentary to the former, but is scarcely just to either. Froissart is not now accorded such a high place as an historian as he held in 1841 when the article appeared. His debt in the first part, and in the best part, of his chronicles, to Jehan le Bel was not then recognized. Conversely, the style and language of Gregory shews how sadly the most intellectual part of Roman Gaul, Auvergne, whence he came, had deteriorated between the 4th and the 6th centuries. Froissart is above him in literary style. Neither chronicler always tells us

what we are most concerned to know; but both are profuse in personal anecdotes and tell good stories. They are here alike.

The *mémoire*, the agreeable gossip upon history, was earlier developed in France than in England. We have no Philippe de Commines in the 15th century.

The progress of enquiry in France did differ from that in England. France is more methodical than England, and our dissolution of the monasteries, before the period of interest in historical research had set in, deprived us of the help of any organization like that of the Benedictines. The care of individual antiquaries, like Leland and Archbishop Parker, even though Cotton followed, was not equal to the task of rescuing the contents of the monastic libraries. It is wonderful how much was preserved. The labours of the Benedictines in France in copying documents, charters, and chronicles in the religious houses, were of immense service to history. They did not write history generally, but they enabled other people to write it. *L'Art de vérifier les dates* was just concluded and the *Recueil des historiens des Gaules* was well advanced when *l'Ancien Régime* came crashing down. The ferocious ignorance of the Revolution tried deliberately to destroy the records of the past. Much perished, but much of this existed also in transcripts owing to the Benedictines. In the end what was preserved became more accessible than it had been, as it had been dispersed formerly in so many hundreds, thousands rather, of monasteries and *châteaux*. The Directory, the Consulate and the Empire were not Vandalic. A Commission of Archives was established. The Institute was set up. The Empire did not encourage historical eulogies of the monarchy, but the Restoration did. The Romantic School might err in too high colouring of the glories of the past, but it persuaded people that the past was alive. "These men have been dead for seven hundred years; yes, but "for the imagination there is no past," as Michelet said. The interest in the middle ages grew, and with interest came understanding. Michaud in the *History of the Crusades*, 1811 onwards, while the Empire still ruled, Fauriel, in his *History of Southern Gaul under the Franks*, 1836, and Raynouard, in his *Poetry of the Troubadours*, 1816 etc., gave in their several lines an immense impetus to the study of the past. Fauriel anticipated Fustel de Coulanges in exploding the idea that vast swarms of Teutonic invaders ousted the Romanized Gauls from their country. L'Abbé Dubos (1670–1742) had expressed the same opinion on the small numbers of the invading Teutons. Raynouard is dismissed too

summarily by Palgrave as a collector of Elegant Extracts. Though literary not historical in his objects, he lighted up the whole life of what was perhaps the most civilized part of Europe before the Albigensian Crusades of the early 13th century. Sismondi was not temperamentally in accord with these men. On Thierry and on Michelet the influence of the Romantic school was profound.

But it was not merely a period of brilliant individual writers. The systematic cultivation of history was going on. L'Ecole des Chartes was finally established in 1829. In 1833 Guizot as minister extended the State support of historical transcription and editing. La Société de l'Histoire de France came into being, its successive Presidents were Barante, Guizot himself, fallen from political power, and Leopold Delisle. The progress of historical enquiry in France, a very incomplete story in 1841, has since then put all European historians, English especially because of our early connexions, under untold obligations. It has moreover by its brilliant success put most European nations, if not all, to shame. Cooperation continues, and the history by many experts, superintended by M. Ernest Lavisse, is the most conspicuously successful example of the cooperative history so far achieved.

Sismondi is now merely a figure, and not the leading figure, in the ranks of French historians of the earlier 19th century. He was not a Frenchman, and though he wrote that if he could love any nation it would be the French, he was better qualified for an impartial treatment of French history than an ardent nationalist might have been. He simply could not understand the love of France, as of an adored mistress, which inspires the earlier parts of Michelet. He loved, or thought he loved, liberty. In later life when people did not do what he liked, either in politics or economics, he deeply deplored their liberty of action. He was too cold to be popular in France, too *doctrinaire* to be interesting everywhere. An extremely interesting book, if you can at once be interested and bored, was the upshot of one judgement upon his French history. Yet his book was, he said, and said with some justice, the first comprehensive and fairly impartial history of France from the beginning. He lacked one indispensable gift, the power of throwing himself into the thought of another age. He disapproved of kings and bishops, and he judged those of the 10th and 11th centuries by the standards of the 19th. If Michelet had too much imagination Sismondi had too little. To the advantage of his impartiality we may remember that he left off at the death of Louis XV. The revolution was outside his

subject. Michelet's brilliant history, which began in Sismondi's lifetime to supersede him, was ruined by the Revolution. He broke off at the Renaissance to write the history of the Revolution, and never recovered his balance. He completed his history, but with less research, with arbitrary and sometimes absurd judgements, and—in a bad temper. Sismondi was more really at home in his history of Liberty in Italy. The Italian Republics appealed to him more than France did. His *Literature of the South of Europe* is considered less successful.

He was no more, or less, an Italian than a Frenchman. His family, Simonde, did come out of France, as persecuted Huguenots driven from Dauphiné in the 17th century. They settled at Geneva, and he was by birth and education a Genevese. Later, and somewhat arbitrarily it would seem, the Simondes of Dauphiné were said to be Sismondis of Pisa, Ghibelline exiles into Dauphiné. The arms of the Sismondis were said to be borne by the Simondes. But whether the Genevese citizens bore any arms before the historian's time, whether the Simondes of Dauphiné had any right to the Sismondis' arms, if they bore them, and where the pedigree was preserved, does not seem to be known. At all events Sismondi in his interests, and his abode for a time, was Italian. An interesting feature of the article is its preservation of the views of Sismondi upon the needs of Italy, and the judgement of a liberal-minded and capable historian like Palgrave upon them. Sismondi, we are told, recognized the incalculable injury Italy would receive by being amalgamated into one Italian kingdom. An Italian republic, one and indivisible, would scarcely have pleased him better. The historian of the Italian republics could not bear the abolition of the city independence, under which mediæval and renaissance Italy had grown to greatness. The opinion of Sismondi, with the evident agreement of Palgrave, will astonish most people who have been brought up to sympathize with the *Risorgimento* and to admire Cavour and Victor Emmanuel. But united Italy was by no means taken for granted as desirable by all patriots and liberals before 1848–9. The Congress of Vienna did wrong in Italy, but probably there was no universal popular desire for an United Italy in 1814. The wiser, better educated Italians wished for a union of northern and central Italy, the Napoleonic Italian kingdom, with what Napoleon had annexed immediately to his Empire restored to it. They had less desire for a union of this with the Two Sicilies. The only king who would not have been an artificial image was Eugène Beauharnais. The allies cannot be severely blamed for re-

fusing to establish Napoleon's stepson; though really they might have made a much worse choice. Some of the Italians asked for a son of George III. Had they had him can we conceive his being a success?

There was no widely spread desire for one Italian republic. The genuine republican feeling was separatist, and as late as 1848–9 it was Roman, Venetian or what not, rather than Italian. The establishment of Austrian rule was wrong, and it was badly worked; but the separate small states, after which Sismondi sighed, were sure to have fallen under Austrian or French influence, which they always had done since 1498, except when they were under Spain. No one could restore the state of things before the invasion of Charles VIII. What Napoleon really did for Italy was to educate the better sort of Italians in the methods of a modern well-organized state. This training made a return to the old conditions intolerable, and in the long run impossible. It was recognized by real politicians that only in united Italy would these methods be strong enough to stand. Sismondi's ideal was impossible. Italy could be divided and mediæval, or it could be united and modern. It could not be both divided and modern, certainly not independent if divided.

Sismondi saw Napoleon in Paris after the return from Elba, and like other people fell under the influence of his genius. He believed in the liberal Empire, and the promise to increase the prosperity of France by strengthening public liberties. Had fortune gone otherwise on June 18th, much more would not have been heard of the increased liberties.

Sismondi's real native republic, Geneva, after an annexation to France, became a Swiss canton in 1814. It had before the Revolution been in alliance with the Swiss. It is strange to many present day readers to find that Switzerland could be regarded in "the forties" as a likely storm centre of Europe. The restoration of the old constitutions in the Swiss cantons, after the fall of Napoleon, had left an oligarchy ruling in many of them. The French Revolution of 1830 had been the signal for disturbances in Switzerland which changed the constitutions of most of the cantons. The difficulties were aggravated by the quarrels of Protestants and Catholics, and in 1843, the year in which this article was written, seven Catholic cantons formed the Sonderbund, and in 1847 began a war of secession. If the Confederation had not triumphed quickly M. Guizot was half inclined to interfere on behalf of the Catholics to anticipate similar action by Austria. In November

1847 Palmerston had advised the Confederation to strike promptly and to strike hard, to get the crisis over and avert interference. In February and March 1848 revolutions in Milan, Paris, and Vienna, gave France and Austria something else to think of. But the fears by Sir Francis of European complications had been by no means unfounded.

Mediæval Kalendars, etc.

The articles which deal with various phases of mediæval beliefs, superstitions and their expression in literature, are properly preceded by that on Mediæval Kalendars. This article, after the manner of Sir Francis Palgrave whose historical studies were never disconnected with the movements of his own time, is curious to us now as revealing the changes which for good or evil have passed over modern English thought and practice. Thus the observance of Sunday is vigorously defended. This is not strange, but it is an observance after a manner not now generally adopted, supported by arguments which would not now be generally used. Thus he writes of "the *Book of Sports*, so entirely contrary to the principles "and practice of the early Christians." That the early Christians could not keep the first day of the week as a holiday was a necessary consequence of their social surroundings. All that we know of their practice is that they habitually met upon it for worship before full daylight. So Justin Martyr tells us. The observance of the Jewish Sabbath was kept up by Jewish converts and by Judaizing Christians as a separate feast. The legislation of Constantine forbade labour on the first day of the week, except necessary agricultural labour. Men might save their crops. The observance of Sunday after the model of the Sabbath is a practice the growth of which is rather hard to trace. John Knox used to give dinner parties on Sunday, a practice which would have been abhorrent to his followers thirty years after his death. Heylyn in his *History of the Sabbath*, 1636, says that the obligation of observing Sunday after the Jewish Sabbatical rules had only been mooted during the last forty years. In their issues of the *Book of Sports* King James and King Charles sinned much more obviously against the rule which forbids wise rulers to offend the prejudices of many of their subjects, than against any known rule of the early Church. The Puritans were much more successful in making strict Sunday observance a part of popular religion than in abolishing other Church festivals. In the former case they were acting, whether with or without ancient authority, upon a salutary principle of

marking man's obligation to the unseen, in the latter they were ignoring a salutary desire to mark traditional anniversaries and to keep holidays. They abolished the Church feasts by law, and on the first abolished Christmas day, 1647, the majority of shopkeepers in Canterbury refused to open their shops. The authorities tried to enforce opening, a riot ensued, and a barber who had opened carried his criticism of the recusants so far as to fire a musket at random down the street and shoot a man through the body. It was the beginning of the troubles which culminated in the desperate fighting at Maidstone, and the siege of Colchester, in 1648. Whereon see Carte, *A True Relation, etc.*

A Kentishman, Sir John Lubbock, afterwards Lord Avebury, succeeded in putting upon the statute book the legal holidays which Lord John Manners, the late duke of Rutland, is here commended for proposing.

The series of articles upon popular antiquities and superstitions, and upon ancient Teutonic folk-lore, abound with curious learning and suggestive remarks. Like the rest they further illustrate the progress of historical research. We are admitted to view the position of a scholar of wide reading in studies which had then been taken up comparatively recently, which have been since very diligently pursued, and upon which the last word has not by any means been spoken yet. We see in them that comparative mythology, like comparative philology, had come upon the scene, but was as yet a new thing in need of apology. The traditions of the Hebrews are still railed off, as a sacred preserve not to be invaded by ordinary rules of criticism. Geology is a thing suspect.

In another point these articles belong to a stage of knowledge. The Sun Myth is entirely absent from them, Max Müller had not yet written. It has come, we cannot say it has gone quite, but it is no longer the universal explanation of all legend. Those of us whose own memories go back to the sixties and seventies can recall, more vividly than those who have only read old books, how we were considered behind the times if we gently murmured that we doubted if the ancestors of Hindhus, Greeks, Celts and Teutons talked only with wearisome iteration about the weather, and wrote solely in the interests of the meteorological office of the Aryan race.

Another more recent explanation of the similarity of stories is of course absent. A common origin is often very likely. Borrowing may explain some likenesses, even where direct borrowing may appear very unlikely. Can anything except an unexplained communication explain the identity of Machiavelli's novel, *Belphegor*,

and a Russian fairy tale called *The Very Bad Wife*? But apart from these explanations, in the days of Sir Francis Palgrave psychology was in its infancy. The limits of the human imagination, the very small circle of ideas, the common nature of all men's minds, which make the accidents, and impressions common to all men express themselves in similar stories, had not been much noticed, if at all.

The references and illustrations with which the articles teem might provide volumes of commentary. That some seventy years of critical study should have resulted in slight differences in dates, authorship and values being substituted sometimes now for those accepted in the Essays is inevitable. We shall all be corrected in less than a century, if we are remembered at all. The ancient literature of Scandinavia is less ancient in its present form than was generally thought when it was first studied, and as is assumed here. The more elaborate mythology was a product of contact with Christianity. The Elder Edda, which cannot be ascribed to Sæmund Sigfusson as here, was apparently put together in the west of Scotland about 1150, and committed to writing in Iceland about 1250. Neither is the Volsung Saga, made familiar to English readers by William Morris, very ancient in its present form. Both embody very ancient myths and fragments of beliefs and stories. But nothing in them is, in its present shape, older than the *Niebelungenlied*, and nothing is nearly so old as some Anglo-Saxon poems. Messrs Powell and Vigfusson, in Introductions and Appendices to the *Corpus Boreale*, have so taught the present age. The same common stock of Teutonic legend furnished material for the *Niebelungenlied*. The extant poem belongs to the end of the 12th century, written by an unknown author using former materials. Madame de Staël was not so far wrong when she said that the poem had been only lately discovered in her time. It was known of before, but not known. Wolfgang Lazius (1524–1565) a Viennese, had printed parts of it, but it was never published as a whole till 1784. It includes much transformed history, or legends attached to historical names. Attila the Hun, the "Scourge of God," who died 453, figures prominently in it. He dominated traditions far and wide in time and space. Palgrave, trusting to his memory, falls into a slight inaccuracy in his account of Attila's defeat at Châlons. The Ostrogoths and the Burgundians were serving under compulsion in the Hunnish army, not as he says with Aëtius the Roman and Theodoric the Visigoth. Nor is it correct to identify the Hungarians with the Huns. The name Ugri,

corrupted into Ungri, was bestowed by foreigners upon the Magyars. But the memory of ravage by the Hungarians is the probable origin of the stories of the traces of Hunnish ravage in Germany.

The era of the writing of the *Niebelungenlied* corresponds with that of the beginning of the Minnesingers, the love-poets, the knightly minstrels of the 12th and 13th centuries.

The book of Maniss, to which Sir Francis refers, is a MS. containing the works of 140 of these poets with 137 illustrations. It belonged to one Rudiger von Manasse, a senator of Zürich, in the early 14th century. It was printed by Bodmer the Swiss scholar in 1758. It is often called the Paris MS. It had found its way into the Palatine Library at Heidelberg, wonderfully escaped destruction in the Thirty Years' War, but was apparently carried off by a literary French soldier, and so came to the King's library in Paris. Palgrave's conjecture that it "has passed by this time "from Paris to Berlin," was not confirmed by the event. Quite rightly; most of the writers belonged to the Rhineland, and had as little to do with Berlin as with Paris. They were gentlemen, able as Palgrave says "to prove their sixteen Quarters"; but the illustrations of the MS. usually shew no quartering at all. There are coats of arms depicted of nearly all the poets, but quite simple coats.

The Master-singers who succeeded were of a very different kind. Guilds or Schools for the mechanical production of verse were in accordance with the cooperative fashion of the middle ages. No one then was supposed to work at any craft unless he was properly enrolled in a society, and subjected to rules. They might serve as a *reductio ad absurdum* of mediæval trades unionism. They stifled originality successfully for a long time. The Singing School of Nuremberg was closed only in 1770, and at Ulm a similar society existed, but not continuously perhaps, till 1839.

Fairy tales received a patent of nobility when the brothers Grimm first founded comparative folk-lore by their collection. They are the last homely form of history and religion; they are like old manor houses descended in the world to become picturesque cottages. The real passions, the learning and the fears, of a past time become the pastime of its great-grandchildren; and whether or no the superstitions of the middle ages be converted into popular stories, or into noble literature, they are under both shapes a favourite playground for ages which think themselves much wiser. The articles on "Popular Antiquities," "Superstition and

"Knowledge," "Mythology of the Middle Ages," and "Astrology "and Alchemy," are all studies of sides of the same subject, human error in the middle ages. The worst of the contemplation is the induced reflection that it is not unlike in kind to human error now. Sometimes it is identical. Spirits threw about pots and pans then, and are sometimes thought to do so now; just as if they were the naughty little girls, which they sometimes turn out to be.

All our errors are not the same as theirs. But "Lord, what "fools these mortals be," will be as apposite a judgement on the 20th century as on all the others. Yet we are not so cruel in our ignorance as they were. The story of witchcraft which runs through all these essays is a very terrible record, and a very humiliating one. How many thousands of people were put to death for an imaginary crime. Yet it does not follow that all who suffered were innocent of any offence at all, though their offences were not often of capital importance in our eyes. Sorcery and heresy were continually associated as crimes, or sorcery and idolatry. The earliest witchcraft known to Anglo-Saxon legislators was the worship of Odin, Thor and Frey by imperfectly Christianized country folk. The Templars were accused of sorcery, heresy, apostasy and immoralities. The great witch persecutions in France in the 15th century were a phase of the pursuit of heresy, Manichæan or more respectable opinions. Immorality was to the last commonly charged against witches, and malevolence and bad intentions were often truly charged. Palgrave says that it is not clear that under the Anglo-Saxon laws witchcraft and sorcery as such were punishable, if no specific mischief was done by them. But in Edward's and Guthrum's Laws (cap. 11), repeated verbally in Ethelred's Laws (VI. 7), witches were to be expelled, and if they do not go are "to be destroyed," with no specific reference to any ill-effects having followed their sorceries. But in both cases they are associated in the law with other bad characters, adulteresses and so on. The belief in witchcraft was more insistent and harmful after than in the mediæval era. The last great outbreak of the witch mania among English speaking people was in New England, when William III was king. The delusion, which had been growing since the 15th century, had reached its climax in England under the Commonwealth, when religious excitement was in the air. After the Restoration the reaction towards material interests, and the discredit attached to fanaticism, had so far a beneficial result as to check superstition of all kinds. The age became a little rational. The Royal Society was founded already, though it was

not Royal till 1660, and one of its members, Joseph Glanvill, in vain endeavoured to rally the forces of the believers in witchcraft and apparitions by his *Sadducismus Triumphatus*, in 1666. The tide of opinion was running the other way, and his book did not turn it. But across the ocean, as late as 1692, the old Puritan stock had a relapse into the old follies. The panic seems to have begun, as usual, with the hysteria or mischief-making of girls. It was very violent for a short time. Nineteen persons were executed, and one pressed to death for refusing to plead. To add the usual absurdity to cruelty a dog was hanged and a child of five was accused. The last phase of the affair was a speedy recovery from delusion, and a hearty repentance for their faults and folly by the chief actors[a]. Trials, and executions too, had not quite ceased in England meanwhile, much less in Scotland. In England the high-church religious excitement at the time of Dr Sacheverell's trial was accompanied by an increase of alleged cases of witchcraft, but by no executions. The case cited by Palgrave as the last execution in England, in 1716, is almost certainly an error[b]. There was however a case at Northampton in March 1705–6. Two disreputable women were accused of witchcraft and of causing the death of a boy by spells. They were convicted of witchcraft and murder, and were half strangled, and their bodies burned. A contemporary pamphlet recounts it, and the churchwardens' accounts of St Giles' parish, Northampton, contain a payment for faggots for the occasion. It is almost certainly the last legal execution in England. In Scotland there was one in 1722; Sir Walter Scott records it in his *Demonology and Witchcraft*.

Astrology and alchemy were both rather the misdirected science than the superstitions of their age. How completely the former dominated popular opinion is shewn by the persistent use of language derived from it. Jovial, saturnine, mercurial, martial, ill-starred, disaster, under a lucky star, perhaps lunatic may be added, shew us to be still unconsciously astrological in our talk. Like other superstitions astrology is probably not quite so dead as educated people would wish. Alchemy has been superseded by the speculative company and the Derby sweepstakes, or football competitions. It is pleasant to be reminded by Palgrave how early both sciences were punishable in England as mere swindling when practised for reward.

[a] Cotton Mather, *Magnalia*, bk. VI, ch. 82.
[b] See *Notes and Queries*, 2nd Series, 129.

Ancient and Modern Greenland.

This is a separate subject, except that ancient Norse stories form the foundations. The Saga of Eric the Red, the first settler in Greenland, is in the Icelandic Flatey Book, written there in the 16th century, but of 12th century origin. It is a very plain matter-of-fact narrative, as are the continuations of it upon the voyages to America, bearing truth upon its face. Only when the settlers were all ill with fever they heard and saw strange things, in delirium no doubt. It has been lately translated by Mr G. M. Gathorne Hardy in his *Norse Discoverers of America*. What Palgrave calls "the paradoxical opinion that East Greenland was "situated on the western coast," is nevertheless true. The old Icelandic settlements from the 10th to the 14th centuries were not called West Greenland and East Greenland, but the Western Settlement and the Eastern Settlement. They were all west of Cape Farewell, on the southern end of Greenland, where the general trend of the coast is from W.N.W. to E.S.E. That those in one direction should be called western, and those in the other eastern, is accurate enough. The east coast proper is scarcely habitable by Europeans, and much of it inaccessible by ice. Dr Nansen's famous expedition across Greenland in 1888 confirmed the opinion of the Danish naval captain Graab, who was sent by the Danish Government in 1828, and who explored both coasts. He found the remains of the colonists' houses, of churches, of a bridge, and some runic inscriptions, all west of Cape Farewell. North-east of Cape Farewell he found nothing of the kind. There are some relics of Eskimo occupation on the east coast as far north as lat. 73, but there are no inhabitants now nearly so far north. Captain Graab's report was published at Copenhagen in 1832, *Undersögelse Reise til Oestkysten af Grönland*, etc. The latitude of Cape Farewell is south of Iceland, about the same as that of Bergen in Norway and Sumburgh Head in Shetland. The climate west of it is not intolerably severe nor unhealthy.

The end of the settlements is obscure. They are supposed to have been finally destroyed by the natives about the end of the 14th century. Captain Graab supposed that they were destroyed by a fleet from England; but that was probably an opinion originated by our action at Copenhagen in 1801 and 1807. We were authors of all evil, to him. The last resident bishop died in 1377, and the last ship is said to have come from Greenland to Norway in 1410. Yet a bishop is said to have been consecrated for Green-

land in 1433, and in 1448 Nicholas V is said to have been solicitous about the Greenlanders. But the colony had certainly vanished before that. See Paul Egede, *History of Greenland*, p. 86, quoting from the Vatican archives. Paul Egede was the son of the devoted missionary commemorated in the article.

The States of Wirtemberg.

The consequences of a great war always disappoint the too sanguine hopes of many of the noblest of those who have waged it. The sequel of the liberation of Europe from Napoleon was no exception. This article was written under a sense of bitter regret for the failure of constitutional liberalism and national unity in Germany. Palgrave loved an ancient Constitution not only for its merits but for its antiquity, and ranges himself unreservedly upon the side of the supporters of the old Constitution of Wirtemberg against Frederick the first king of Wirtemberg its subverter, but the author of a new Constitution which actually came into existence under his successor. Something however may be said upon the other side. It so happens that we can balance the judgement by the greatest English authority upon German history, and a liberal, against the unreserved condemnation of the king passed here. In January 1890, in the *English Historical Review*, Sir Adolphus Ward reviewed Schlossberger's *Political and Military Correspondence of King Frederick with Napoleon*, and Pfister's *King Frederick of Wirtemberg and his Age*. The reviewer gives his own judgement upon two books, undoubtedly both intended to be apologies for Frederick, but both based upon careful study. He does not consider that the king was unreservedly nor abjectly subservient to the Emperor. He was in a difficult position, but shewed both tact and firmness in defending his own interests and those of his States and people. He succeeded in refusing to allow his army to be employed in Spain, he refused to allow the *Code Napoléon* to be introduced into his dominions. He succeeded in doubling his States, and first of German sovereigns laid down for his extended dominions the basis of a common Constitution, which came into actual existence. He was restless and arbitrary no doubt, but Pfister's view is that his consolidation of the discordant elements of old and new Wirtemberg into one State, with a common Constitution and an efficient army, was a considerable step forward towards the political regeneration of southern Germany. The old Constitution of Wirtemberg is roundly condemned by Sir Adolphus

Ward. "In old Wirtemberg the rust had eaten into a venerated "constitutional machinery to which the population clung with "pathetic fidelity, but which had ceased to serve many practical "purposes except that of making government impossible." The Permanent Deputations, a close corporation electing themselves, with a private treasury and independent agents at foreign courts, were not compatible with either a monarchy, or a democracy. They resembled the Scotch Lords of the Articles, or the baronial Committees of the Provisions of Oxford, carried to extremes. An ancient Constitution is supremely valuable when like our own it is susceptible of development on its own lines to suit new conditions. Otherwise it may be a mere encumbrance, as the rights of many hundreds of petty States, the size of parishes, had become in the Holy Roman Empire before a stronger ikonoclast than Frederick shook that down. Any historical light upon the constitutional history of Wirtemberg will be new to many English readers. As in the article upon East Friesland and its liberties in the last volume, it may be a revelation that constitutional history is to be found here at all. But without in the least detracting from the interest of the article it is well to indicate that there are two sides to the story.

Architecture in Normandy.

A new subject is entered upon in the articles upon Norman Architecture, and Florentine Art. The two great historians of Normandy, Palgrave and Freeman, had a common interest in architecture. The latter though not far removed in date from the former wrote when the history of architecture had been much more thoroughly explored, and is more to be depended upon for the dates which he ascribes to buildings. But to Freeman architecture was almost solely a branch of history, he had very little interest in art for its own sake, and pictures did not appeal to him. A picture of Barbarossa with a black beard instead of a red one is said to have driven him out of the gallery at Florence. Palgrave's interest in art existed over and above its historical value to him.

The uncertainty of the chronology of architecture when Palgrave wrote is illustrated by his statement here that "scarcely "any one fragment in Great Britain can be referred with certainty "to the Saxon era." An earlier time had called all round arches "Saxon." But his opinion represents a reaction as mistaken as the former in another direction. There are many fragments, and

more than fragments, in England of churches dating from before the Conquest. The church at Bradford-upon-Avon had, we may note, not been discovered at this time. Yet probably several of the Anglo-Saxon towers of English churches were built in the 11th century, after 1066, but according to the former pattern.

The origin of the pointed style, "Gothic architecture" as it is called here, is a matter too wide and difficult for brief treatment. Pointed arches exist in Saracenic buildings centuries older than the earliest pointed architecture in Europe. The earliest European examples are probably at Palermo and Pisa, where intercourse with the east was close and frequent. A Saracenic origin for the pointed arch is almost certain. But pointed architecture in its full development is not Saracenic. It was developed in Western Europe in the lands dominated by the Normans, and in Aquitaine. Sir Christopher Wren's conjunction of the Italians, with French, Germans, and Flemings, as its originators, is not happy. The Germans adopted it, and the Italians foisted an imitation from France rather than England upon their own native Romanesque.

The reproach against the French, at the end of the article and earlier, of not caring for their monuments, may have been true in 1821. It is not true now. The countrymen of Viollet-le-Duc are the last people in Europe to deserve it.

If we "made the beauties of the Parthenon our own," it was not in an altogether laudable fashion. Fortunately "the Alhambra, "Ellora, Delhi and Palmyra," cannot be subjected to a London atmosphere for the instruction of visitors to Bloomsbury.

The Fine Arts in Florence.

The "Fine Arts in Florence" carries us, after the manner of the author, far away into deductions and reflections which, if they do not belong immediately to the subject, illustrate both the views and nature of the writer and the dominant phases of thought of his time. We stray into the arena where ikonoclasts and the artistic world have contended and will contend for all time. Does art corrupt religion, or is its use in churches a sign of corrupted religion? Or is it an aid to the imagination of the religious? Do pictures of a certain kind corrupt morality? Henry Drummond, M.P., banker and Irvingite, no doubt gave an honest opinion that the pagan mythological subjects of later Italian painters corrupted the nation. Perhaps the licence of the Renaissance was rather a cause than a consequence of corruption in art. That the lower

classes in Italy had ever been *un modello di modestia*, is an opinion founded less on fact than on charity. We find ourselves at the latter end of the article upon the verge of the ritualistic controversy. Strype's anecdote of Elizabeth and Dean Nowell is characteristic of her at any rate. She allowed a crucifix on the altar in her own chapel, and had her own times and reasons for placating Romanists and Puritans alternately. But she was not going to be hurried on in such matters by any officious clergyman.

The truly interesting side of the article is its anticipation of Ruskin. The art of Florence was good when the heart and soul of the artist was in his work. Whether it was for the glory of Florence, or for the glory of God, the inspired heart and brain could conceive, and could nerve the hand to execute supremely excellent work, but for neither fame nor gain. So only could it be done. When civic independence had departed, when patriotism became but a bitter memory or a curious tradition, when faith decayed and when unreformed religion became a pretence which could invoke no enthusiasm, then art failed. Ruskin was travelling in Italy not long after Palgrave. With his interest in the subject of Florentine art it is inconceivable that he did not read this article. His ideas may have been his own, but there is no saying how far native thoughts may not be shaped and directed by contact with the similar thoughts of another.

A good deal of the article treats of Florentine history from the first. The origin of the city of Florence is obscure. In addition to the reference quoted in the article from Tacitus, Florus (III. c. 21, § 27) mentions a colony of Sulla's veterans, B.C. 80–79. It is said that the Triumvirs planted a colony after the war of Philippi. But it was not a colony in Pliny's time, only a *municipium*. It was a fortified city in the Gothic wars of the 6th century A.D.[a] The Countess Matilda of Tuscany, married in name only to Welf the younger, duke of Bavaria, used it as a residence, but it was antedated in importance by Pisa as a great commercial city. Its republican greatness began after 1250 when the death of Frederick II extinguished any real hope of Imperial rule in Italy. Yet it had been practically independent before that and was rapidly becoming the leading city of Tuscany. In less than 300 years it had flourished, fallen under the power of the Medicis, and settled down into a tyrannically ruled little State. After all, its brilliant period was longer than that of Athens. The Medicis were no worse than other Italian despots, better than some, but are specially

[a] Procop. *de Bello Gothico*, III, 5, 6.

obnoxious to the lovers of liberty because they were so eminent in several cases as to command attention, and because the city which they enslaved was especially famous. They were the successful usurpers of power, when some ruler, foreign or domestic, was sure to have usurped it. Filippo Strozzi, here commemorated, their unsuccessful adversary, who was taken at the battle of Prato and committed suicide in prison, was one of a class no better than they were. Where there are tyrants there are conspirators; and the unsuccessful plotters become victims, not martyrs. If all Florentines had been like Machiavelli and Michael Angelo there would have been no Medicean princes, nor any need for them. Countries have as good a government as they deserve. The city republics of mediæval Italy had played a great part. They could not continue in the face of the great powers of France, Spain, and the Empire; not at least with such habits, political and moral, as had sprung from their ill-constructed Constitutions and from the loss of ancient ideals in religion and morality. Such internal feuds as that which banished Dante, such city rivalries as that of Florence and Pisa, foreboded the want of political stability, and the failure of attempts at unity which were fatal to Italian liberty. The system of which Sismondi was the historian and eulogist was brilliant in its achievements but self-destined to be brief.

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