M.A. THESIS

A Study of the Development of the Meaning of the Word "Romance" (romantic) as used in Literary Criticism.

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INTRODUCTION.

THE word " Romance " in English literature has stood, during the course of six centuries, for literary qualities and tendencies which, since the sixteenth century, have been the object of critical attack and defence.

This study, after a preliminary investigation of the establishment of the word in our literature, and its acquirement of the meaning of fiction, has dealt with the word in connection with certain literary fashions and literary controversies by which its meaning seems to have been permanently modified.

The stages in its history which have been selected are those in which it was affected by :—

1. The " Epic *v.* Romance " controversy in Italy in the sixteenth century, in France and England in the seventeenth century.
2. The rise and fall of the " Heroic Romance " in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.
3. The " Gothic " revival of the later half of the eighteenth century.
4. The critical theories concerning " classic " and " romantic " art which, originating in Germany at the close of the eighteenth, passed into England at the beginning of the nineteenth century.
5. The critical appreciation of the English " Romantic " School in the nineteenth century.

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THE WORD "ROMANCE."

CHAPTER I.

THE DERIVATION AND ORIGINAL MEANING OF "ROMANCE."

THE Old French "romans," with its variant forms—romanz, romance, romanche, romant, rommant, roumant, etc.—originally meant[1] "français par opposition au latin."

On this point all authorities are agreed, but with regard to the exact Latin form from which "romans" was derived, there are differences of opinion. Two theories are advanced :—

1. That it is derived directly from the Latin adjective romanus.
2. That, while ultimately derived from the root "romanus," its direct source is the Low Latin adverb "romanice," as used in the phrase : loqui romanice (= [Old French] parler romans).

The former view seems to be held by the older authorities ;[2] modern scholars[3] favour the latter theory—though none of them appear to give any instance of the occurrence of the phrase "loqui romanice" in extant Low Latin literature. In du Cange's "Glossarium," however, under the heading "romanice," the following reference is given : Bernardi Mon. Ordo Cluniac, partis I, cap. 47, "Duo paria palmariarum, quae ita *Romanice nuncupantur,* manusque defendunt a colore caldariae" . . . . ; this usage of "romanice" approximates closely to that adduced by Skeat, Diez, and Gaston Paris.

Any further discussion of the question would be out of place here ; for the only fact which is of importance for this study is that "Romans" originally meant the language spoken by the rustic population of that part of Romania known to-day as France.

This primitive meaning of the word lasted at least until the middle of the fourteenth century It occurs, for example, in the French mystery play,[4] "La nativité de nostre Sauveur Jésus Christ" :

> "Sartan, il lez vous convient lire
> Et les exposer en *romant.*"

The date of this play is about 1350.[5]

But side by side with the primitive meaning there began, in the thirteenth century, or even earlier, to be attached to the word "romans" the meaning of "a literary work written in the vulgar tongue."

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[1] Godefroi, "Dictionnaire de l'ancienne langue française," 1881—cf. also Raynouard, "Lexique Roman, ou Dictionnaire de la langue des troubadours," etc., Paris, 1838 ; Diez, "Etymologisches Wörterbuch dem Romanischen Sprachen," Bonn, 1887.

[2] E.g., Larousse, "Grand Dictionnaire Universel du XIXme Siècle," 1875 ; du Cange, "Glossarium mediæ et infimæ Latinitatis," 1678 (ed. 1886) ; Littré, "Dictionnaire de la langue française," 1885.

[3] E.g., Diez, "Etymologisches Wörterbuch" (ed. 1887, p. 275) ; Gaston Paris, "Notes Bibliographiques" to "La Littérature française au moyen Age," 1890 ; Professor Skeat, "Concise Etymological Dictionary of the English Language," 1901 ; "New English Dictionary," 1910.

[4] Printed in Jubinal, "Les Mystères" (vol. ii. p. 30).

[5] See M. Petit de Juleville, "Les Mystères" (vol. i. ch. 2) ; Larousse, "Dictionnaire du XIXme Siècle" (under "Mystère.")

M. Gaston Paris says[1] that the word first meant " a translation from the Latin," and afterwards, " any book written in romans." He cites Wace, Garnier de Port-Sainte-Maxence, and Guillaume de S. Pair as the first writers known to have used " romans " as a substantive ; they, he says, use it to mean " a translation."

M. Godefroi does not mention[2] this transitional meaning. He illustrates the earlier uses of the word only by quotations where the meaning is the vernacular, or a work written in the vernacular. His earlier instance of the latter meaning is taken from " Le Chevalier au Cygne," a work of the thirteenth century.

But neither the exact date when the word " romans " acquired its fuller meaning, nor the various stages through which it passed before that meaning was reached, is of great importance here. We are not, moreover, concerned with its subsequent history in French.

It is sufficient for our purpose to note that the meaning of " a literary work " was firmly established in the early thirteenth century, while at the same time the original meaning persisted until at least the middle of the fourteenth century.

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[1] Review of Arsène Darmesteter's " La vie des mots étudiée dans leurs significations " (*Journal des Savants*, April, 1887.)

[2] Op. cit. (tome vii. pp. 230, 231.)

CHAPTER II.

THE WORD "ROMANCE" FROM THE FOURTEENTH TO THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURIES.

(*a*) THE INTRODUCTION OF THE WORD "ROMANCE" INTO ENGLISH LITERATURE.

PROFESSOR KER has drawn attention[1] to the "remarkable change of taste in stories" which, beginning in France in the twelfth century, spread over the whole of Europe. It is in connection with and as a result of this "change of taste" from the "epic" to the "romantic," from the chanson de geste to what is now known as the "roman d'aventure," that, probably in the closing years of the thirteenth century, Englishmen made the word "romance" their own.

It is difficult, perhaps impossible, to give with exactness the date of the first appearance of the word in an English work. A search through many of the better-known works of the thirteenth century—Laȝamon's "Brut," the "Ancren Riwle," the "Owl and the Nightingale," "Dame Siriz," and other poems in the "Reliquæ Antiquæ," the "Anecdota Literaria" and the "Old English Miscellany"—shows that their authors did not know the word, or, if they knew it, had no use for it, but were content with the familiar native words "spelle" or "tale." That Laȝamon, who frankly owed so much to Wace's "Roman de Brut," should not have introduced, together with so much of the "Frenchis clerc's" matter, the title of his original, may at first seem somewhat remarkable. But it has been more than once pointed out[2] that though Laȝamon was the first middle English writer to borrow largely from the French, yet his spirit was essentially English: he treated the "matter of Britain" in a spirit akin to that which inspired the writers of the Old English hero-songs. "We breathe here," says Tenbrink, "a different atmosphere from that in which the Norman trouvère existed. Laȝamon's language adopts but few foreign elements, in spite of its French source, and it is replete with ancient forms, expressions, phrases which often give us a glimpse into the background of English antiquity."

These facts may explain why in such a couplet as,—

> "Ne mai hit na mon suggen on his *tale*
> Of than win and of þan ale,"[3]

where later writers, influenced by French thought and an Anglo-Norman vocabulary, would almost certainly have substituted "romance" for "tale," Laȝamon uses the native word.

But in the late thirteenth century apparently the French romance of love and chivalry was brought from France to England, and with the thing came the name.

The five earliest instances of the use of the word which I have found occur in the Scottish "Tristrem" fragment of the Auchinleck MS.,[4] in "Havelok,"[5] in Robert of Gloucester's Chronicle,[6] in " Richard Cœur de Lion,"[1] and in " Cursor Mundi " ;[2] but the available evidence is insufficient to determine the exact date of any of these works, or to decide which of them is the oldest.

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[1] "Camb. Hist. of Lit." (vol. i. ch. xiii.), and "Epic and Romance" (Eversley ed., p. 322).

[2] Ibid. (vol. i. ch. xi.); Sir F. Madden's Introd. to his ed. of the Brut, 1847 (vol. i. pp. xxiii., xxiv. ; Tenbrink's "Hist. of Eng. Lit." (ed. Bohn, vol. i. pp. 189, 190).

[3] Brut (ed. Madden), l. 604.

[4] Ed. McNeill (S. T. S.), 1886.

[5] Ed. Skeat (E. E. T. S.), 1868.

[6] Ed. Hearne.

The " Tristrem " fragment, if it be the work of the historical Thomas of Erceldoune, must date from before the end of the thirteenth century ; but it is by no means certain that he is its author and all that can be positively stated is that " Tristrem " belongs to the late thirteenth or early fourteenth century.

To " Havelok " Professor Skeat assigns only an approximate date : from evidence afforded by the unique MS. in which it is found it must be placed " certainly not later than at the end of the thirteenth century."

Robert of Gloucester's Chronicle was written during the last decade of the thirteenth century, and " was not completed before 1297, perhaps not until 1300." In the Chronicle Robert refers to the romance of Richard I, which would seem to point to the fact that " Cœur de Lion " belongs to an earlier date than the Chronicle. But Ellis considers[3] that the extant version of " Cœur de Lion " cannot be dated earlier than the end of the reign of Edward I, and was probably written in the early years of the fourteenth century. Again we have only an approximate date.

" Cursor Mundi " is dated by Dr. Murray between 1275 and 1300,[4] by Dr. Morris between 1255 and 1280. If we accept the earlier approximate date, " Cursor Mundi " is probably the oldest extant English work in which the word " romance " occurs. But it is more usual to place the " Cursor " at the very beginning of the fourteenth century,[5] and in this case the work can only be said to contain one of the earliest instances of the use of the word.

This account of the dates at which the works under discussion were produced makes no claim to completeness. The existing data for determining both the exact and relative dates are so inadequate that even experts hesitate to pronounce a decided opinion. But the question is not, as far as the present study is concerned, an important one. It is enough to have shown that by the early fourteenth century the word " romance " was firmly established in our language and in our literature.

(*b*) THE MEANING OF " ROMANCE " IN THE EARLY FOURTEENTH CENTURY.

From the use of the word in the five works which have been mentioned, something may be gathered of the meaning of " romance " for the Englishman of the early fourteenth century. The allusions are as follows :—

Tristrem (l. 1258)

"The king had a douhter dere
þat maiden ysonde hiȝt,
þat gle was lef to here
And *romaunce* to rede ariȝt."

Havelok (l. 2317)

"Hwan he was king, þen mouthe men se
þe moste joie þat mouhte be :
Butunge with sharpe speres,
Skirming with taleuaces, þat men veres,
Wrastling with laddes, putting of ston,
Harping and piping, ful god won,
Leyh of mine, of hasard ok
Romanz reding on þe bok ; . . ."

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[1] Ed. Weber (" Metrical Romances," 1810).
[2] Ed. Morris (E. E. T. S.) (1874 and 1893).
[3] " Metrical Romances " (vol. ii. pp. 180–182).
[4] See E. E. T. S. ed. (Introduction).
[5] Cf. " Camb. Hist. of Lit." (vol. i. chap. xvi. p. 344).

Cursor (ll. 1–20)

"Man yhernes rimes for to here,
And *romans* red on maneres sere,
Of Alisaunder þe conquerour;
Of July Cesar þe emperour;
O grece and troy þe strang stryf
þere many þosand lesis þer lijf;
O brut þat bern bald of hand,
þe first conquerour of Ingland;
O kyng Arthour þat was so rike.
Quam non in hys tim was like,
O ferlys þat hys knythes fell,
þat aunters sere I here of tell,
Als wawan, cai and oþer stabell,
For to were þe ronde tabell;
How Charles kyng and rauland faght,
Wit sarazins wald þai ha saght;
[Of] tristrem and hys leif ysote,
How he for here be-com a sote,
O Ioneck and of ysambrase,
O ydoine and of amadase." . . .

Rob. of Gloucester[1]

"King Richard bileude ther and so nobliche he wroȝte,
That al thut lond ther a boute in is poer he broȝte.
Me nuste longe there bivore, neuer eft in hethenesse
Of so noble kniȝt ne prince, ne do so much prowesse,
Me ne mai noȝt al telle her, ac wo so it wole, iwite,
In *romance* of him imad me it may finde iwrite."

Cœur de Lion (l. 7)

"Fele *romanses* men make newe,
Of good knyghtes, strong and trewe,
Off hey dedys men rede *romance*
Bothe in England and in France."

(l. 201)

"Richard hyghte the fyrste i-wis
Of whom this *romance* i-makyd is."

These quotations suggest—

1. That the reading of romance was a courtly amusement. It had its place at Havelok's court, with "butunge with sharpe speres" and "skirming with taleuaces"; it was one of the occupations of the beautiful "Iseult of the West." The romance, as Professor Ker says,[2] was "for leisure and daylight"—intended to be read in my lady's bower"; it replaced the heroic song of an earlier age, and was a civilized and refined form of literature. In "Havelok" there appears to be a distinction between a "gest" and a "romance":

"Hwan he was king þen mouthe men se
þe moste joie þat mouhte be . . .
Romanz reding on þe bok;
þen mouthe men here þe *gestes singe*." . . .

The "gest" was recited or sung, the "romance" was read; the "gest" was apparently the late representative of the Old English hero poem, the romance was a foreign importation. This distinction, if it were ever clearly marked, was by no means always kept. Robert Mannyng of Brunne speaks of "Sir Tristrem" (probably to be identified with the fragmentary "romance" of the Auchinleck MS.[3]) as a "geste,"[4] and Chaucer speaks[5] on one occasion of the "romaunce" and on another of the "geste" of Thebes. But even if there was no well-defined distinction between a

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[1] Ed. Hearne (vol. ii. p. 487).
[2] "Camb. Hist. Lit." (vol. i. ch. xiii.).
[3] See S. T. S. ed. (Introd. pp. 36–44) for a discussion of this question.
[4] "Ouer *gestes* it has þe steem,
Ouer all þat is or was. . ."
[5] Cf. "Troilus and Cressida," l. 100 and l. 84.

" gest " and a " romance," the impression given us by the " Sir Tristrem " quotation that the reading of romance was a courtly, refined, perhaps mainly feminine employment is confirmed by other instances of the use of the word. Pandarus finds Cressida listening while a maiden reads to her the " romaunce of Thebes,"[1] and the following[2] is a description given in " Ywaine and Gawaine," a romance translated from the " Chevalier au Lion " of Chrestien de Troies :—

> "Thurgh the hal Sir Ywain gase
> Intil ane orchard playn pase ;
> His maiden with him ledes he :
> He fand a knyght, under a tre,
> Opon a clath of gold he lay ;
> Byfor him sat a ful fayr may ;
> A lady sat with them in fere,
> The mayden red, at thai myght here,
> A real *romance* in that place,
> But I ne wote of wham it was ; . . ."

It is the maiden who reads ; perhaps she alone knew how to do so ; perhaps reading was a womanly, not a manly, accomplishment, and " Euphues " not the first " romance " written to delight a feminine audience.

2. The second inference which may be drawn from the early instances of the use of the word is that the subject matter treated in romances was exceedingly varied. The first lines of " Cursor Mundi " show that romances might be concerned with the wars of Alexander, or of Caesar, or of the national hero Brut, " the first conquerour of Ingland " ; they might deal with the " ferlys " of Arthur's court and the adventures which befell his knights ; or they might celebrate the love of " Tristrem and hys leif Ysote." From Robert of Gloucester we learn that romance might recount the deeds of heroes far less remote and legendary than any of these : Richard I. was the subject of a romance.

3. This wideness of scope suggests a third point with regard to the mediæval romance—a point which is explicitly stated in " Cœur de Lion " : no writer was bound to take a subject " staled by custom," there was opportunity for originality in the choice of a hero : " fele romanses men make *newe* of good knyghtes strong and trewe."

The use of the word " newe " and the suggestion of the many possibilities open to the writer of romances leads to the question of how far the romancer was regarded as free to invent—how far, in fact, romance was already associated with fiction. The determination of this question involves a history of the use and development in meaning of the word " romance " from the fourteenth to the end of the sixteenth century.

(c) SUPPLEMENTARY MEANING OF THE WORD IN MIDDLE ENGLISH.

It has been pointed out that in Old French the term " romans " was applied both to a language and to narrative works written in that language. The development in Middle English of the latter meaning has hitherto been dealt with. There are, however, instances in Middle English literature of the use of the word in its primitive meaning, i.e., to denote the French language. Robert Mannyng of Brunne, for instance, writes :[3]—

> "ffrankysche speche ys cald *Romaunce*,
> So sey þis clerkes and men of ffraunce.
> Peres of Langtoft, a chanoun
> Schauen y þe hous of Brydlyngtoun,
> On *Romaunce* al þys story he wrot
> Of Englishe kynges, as we wel wot . . . ."

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[1] " Troilus and Cressida," (l. 100).
[2] Quoted by Professor Ker in " Camb. Hist. of Lit." (vol. i. ch. xiii.).
[3] Chronicle, ed. Furnivall (" Rolls " Series), 1887, l. 16696.

It is noticeable that Mannyng finds it necessary to explain that "ffrankysche speche ys cald Romaunce," as though the word were unfamiliar to his readers. In all other cases he speaks of French as "Frankis," e.g., "one Mayster Wace þe *ffrankes* telles . . ."

Gower, writing late in the fourteenth century, uses romance with the meaning of language in his French works, but in his English works the word always means a narrative poem. Thus in "Mirour de l'Omme" we read :—[1]

> "Ore est a trere en remembrance
> Comme je par ordre en la *romance*
> Vous ai du point en point conté
> Des vices toute la faisance. . . ."

And again :[2]

> "Poy sai latin, poy sai *romance*."

But in the "Confessio Amantis" we read :[3]—

> "Min Ere with a good pitance
> Is fedd of redinge of *romance*
> Of Ydoine and of Amadas . . ."

and in this poem Gower always uses "Frankis," not "Romance," to denote "French."

Mandeville also, in his English "edition" of the travels, says :[4] "And ȝee schulle undirstonde, that I have put this Boke out of Latyn into *Ffrensche*, and translated it aȝen out of Ffrensche into Englyssche. . . ." But in his French "edition" he writes : "Et sachiez que j'eusse cest livres mis en Latin, pour plus brievement deviser ; mais pource que plusieurs entendent mieux *Roumant* que Latin, je l'ay mis en *Roumant*." This is significant ; for had "Roumant" been generally intelligible to his English readers as the name of the French language, it is difficult to believe that Mandeville would not have used it in the English as well as the French translation of his travels.

It seems justifiable, therefore, to conclude that the use of "romance" to denote the French language was not common in Middle English (though there are instances[5] other than that already quoted, given in the New English Dictionary, the date of the latest of them being c. 1450) ; the better known Middle English texts at any rate afford few, if any, instances of such a use.

There is one other instance of the use of the word "romance" which should be noticed here : Lyndesay, in his "Monarche,"[6] written in the early sixteenth century, curiously uses it to mean the language of Rome :—

> "Quhen Romanis rang Dominatoris in deid,
> The ornat Latyne wes thare propir leid.
> In the mene tyme, quhan that thir bauld *Romance*
> Ouer all the warld had the Dominioun,
> Maid Latyne Scolis, thare glore for tyll avance,
> That thare language mycht be ouer all commoun. . . ."

This use of the word seems to be unparalleled elsewhere, and is apparently Lyndesay's own invention.

The modern use of the term "Romance" as a "generic or collective name for the whole group of languages descended from Latin"[7] dates from the seventeenth century. It is derived from the primitive meaning of the word which has been noticed above.

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[1] Ed. Macaulay (Clarendon Press), l. 18374.

[2] Ibid., l 21775.

[3] Ibid., l. 880.

[4] Ed. Halliwell, Prologue (p. 5).

[5] From the "Romaunt of the Rose," from Lydgate, and from "The Lovelich Grail."

[6] Bk. i., l. 580.

[7] New English Dictionary.

(*d*) THE DETERIORATION OF THE MEANING OF "ROMANCE."

It seems certain that originally in the thirteenth century the word "romance" was used of a literary form; any narrative in verse which treated of the doings of men and women was a "romance." The mediæval mind was not, in this instance, concerned to discriminate between fact and fiction; the existence or non-existence of the characters and events described was not a question which troubled either author or readers.

The difficulty of estimating the credulity of the fourteenth or fifteenth century reading public makes any attempt to trace the change in the meaning of the word from "fact" to fiction" at best a hazardous one. Nevertheless its general decadence is apparent. There were, indeed, writers who stood for the truth of romance and its "ferlys," but from the first there had been the sceptical few who threw discredit on marvels which they believed never to have happened, and would make "romance" equivalent to "feigned fable." As time passed, and knowledge grew, the number of these doubters increased; "romance" came more and more to be associated with "fiction," and by the end of the sixteenth century it was almost universally used as a term of disparagement. From being applied to tales—narratives in prose and verse—of all kinds, historical, legendary, religious and secular indifferently, the word "romance" came to be associated especially with the kind of tale (narrative prose or verse) which predominated, viz., the tale of love, magic and adventure—of "ferlys"; and as the attitude of mind of the readers of these tales toward the subject matter altered with the growth of knowledge, and these "romances" came to be regarded as fiction, the word romance acquired the significance it has since retained of "fabling."

The following evidence may be adduced in support of this suggested outline.

I. The Indiscriminate Use of "Romance" for Fact and Fiction.

Robert of Gloucester was one of those writers for whom "romance" undoubtedly meant a true history. He speaks in his "Chronicle" of Richard I. and his prowess:—

> "Me nuste longe there bivore neuer eft in hethenesse
> Of so noble kniȝt ne prince."

Then, having awakened interest in Cœur de Lion, he refers them for further details of his career to "the romance of him imad." The extant romance of Richard I. has its full share of "ferlys," and this reference to it, as affording trustworthy evidence, led Ellis,[1] indeed, to conclude that our text of "Cœur de Lion" must differ considerably from that which Robert of Gloucester knew, for "it is quite impossible that the many absurd fables introduced into the narrative should have found credit" with so "sober and accurate" an historian. But there is plenty of evidence to show that men of intellectual standing in the fourteenth century accepted what Mr. Ellis would call "absurd fables" as facts; nor, when we remember some of the "Vulgar Errors" of the days of Sir Thomas Browne, are we unjust in imputing to the fourteenth century a seemingly childish credulity. The author of the early romance may well imagine that he is telling sober truth. The anonymous writer of "Arthur and Merlin,"[2] for instance, in the early fourteenth century,[3] writes in the manner of the old chroniclers, describing legendary battles, etc., with all the vivid detail of an eye-witness,[4] and never suggesting in his account of the miraculous birth of Arthur and other "ferlys" that his romance is not true.

Lydgate, late in the fourteenth century, shows, in his "Horse, Goose and Sheep,"[5] that to him also the marvels of romance were not "absurd fables." He writes:—

> (l. 253) "In the book of Chyvaler de Sygne
> The stori telleth (as in sentement)

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[1] "Metrical Romances" (vol. ii. p. 179).

[2] "Abbortsford Club" (ed. Turnbull, 1838.) (Also edited by Kölbing, 1890.)

[3] See W. E. Mead (in "Merlin," E. E. T. S., Introd., p. 55); Kölbing ("Altenglische Bibliotheque," vol. iv. p. 60); New English Dictionary (article "Awe").

[4] E.g., ll. 459 ff.

[5] E. E. T. S. (ed. Furnivall, 1866).

Ther were childre of the Roiall ligne
Born with cheynes which whan thei wern of rent,
Thei turned to Swannes by enchantement,
Took her fliht (the cronycle is ful cleer)
And as swannys the' swomme in the Riueer.

The *story is full autentik and old*
In frencsh compiled often red and seyn. . . ."

There is no trace of satiric purpose in Lydgate's poem ; he means literally that the romance of the Knight of the Swan is " autentik and old," and worthy of credence.

More than a century later (" before 1500 A.D."[1]), the translator of the " Romans of Partenay or of Lusignen or the Tale of Mélusine " shows as clearly as Lydgate that he believes the truth of the story he has to tell. He was of a religious turn of mind, and the last two hundred lines[2] of his book are filled with thanks to God for help vouchsafed in his translation, and with an invocation of the blessing of the Triune God and of a long catalogue of saints on his hero and heroine :—

" By good frendlyhed of thy deite,
Here in humbly wise pray thy excellence
Off tham to haue mercy, grace and pite,
Without tham shewing any violence,
Here in my dite haue put to thy presence,
In aduersite socur thaim alway
That full noble seed of saide pertenay."

He has no doubt that his characters really existed, although Mélusine, his heroine, was a fairy, half serpent and half woman !

Robert of Gloucester, Lydgate, and the translator of " Partenay " use " romance " as a name for works which were true for them but untrue for us ; other writers, even as late as the fifteenth century, applied the word to histories which are true for us as they were for them.

Minot, in his seventh song, says[3] :—

" Heres now how the *romance* sais
How Sir Edward, oure kyng with croune,
Held his sege, bi nightes and dais
With his men befor Calays toune."

Here " romance " is equivalent to " historical narrative." The classic illustration which proves unmistakably that romance retained its meaning of historical narrative long after it had been chiefly associated with " histories " of a less legitimate kind, is found in Barbour's " Bruce,"[4] 1375. Barbour opens his work with the words[5] :—

" Lordingis, quha likis for till her
The *Romanys* now begynnys her
Off men that war in gret distres. . . ."

This passage must be taken in connection with the " preface "[6] which makes it clear that Barbour had no intention of introducing fictitious material into his " romance " :—

" The fyrst plesance is the carpyng,
And the othir the suthfastnes
That schawys the thing rycht as it wes :
And suth thyngis that ar likand

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[1] Skeat, Introd. to " Romans of Partenay " (E. E. T. S., 1866).

[2] Ll. 6448 ff.

[3] Song vii., l. 169 (ed. Hall (Clarendon Press), 1897) ; cf. also Song viii. :—

" How Edward als þe romance sais
Held his sege bifor Calais."

[4] Ed. W. M. Mackenzie (1909).

[5] Bk. i. l. 446.

[6] Ll. 6 ff.

Tyll mannys heryng ar plesand.
Tharfor I wold fayne set my will,
Giff my wyt mycht suffice thartill,
To put in wryt a *suthfast story*. . . ."

Barbour recognizes[1] the element of fiction in the stories of the time, and even approves recreative "fabills":—

("Storys to rede are delitabill,
Suppos that thai be nocht bot fabill"),

but he has no idea of restricting the word "romance" to them.

Still later, in a MS. of which the date "is in all probability about 1430–40,"[2] "romance" is used for "suthfast story." Among the "Poems and Romances collected by R. Thornton, 15th century," there is a work whose title runs "*Romance* of the childhood of Jhesu Criste, þat clerkys callys Ipokrepha."

2. The Conscious Application of the term to Fiction.

Minot, Barbour and other writers who wrote true records under the name "romance," as well as those authors whose "romances" have been regarded as fact by their age but fiction by later ages, helped to preserve the honour of the term. But very soon after its introduction into English there were those who could not accept all the "ferlys" of romance, and who, in consequence, tended to consider romance synonymous with "lying tale."

Robert of Brunne is one of the earliest of these sceptics. In his "Chronicle," written c. 1330, he says:[3]—

"Of Arthur ys seid many selcouþ
In diuerse landes norþe and souþ
þat men holdeþ now for fable,
Be þey neuere so trewe ne stable."

He will not go to the length of declaring all these tales false, but he cannot vouch for their truth:[4]—

"Al ys nought soþ, ne nought al lye,
Ne al wysdom, ne al folye,"

is his conclusion.

Robert of Brunne, early in the fourteenth century, speculatively questions the truth of romances; Wycliffe, late in the same century, proclaims them false. He warns[5] his hearers against "jeestis of batailles and fals cronyclis," against the "fablis þat ben in comune peple." These "fables" and "false chronicles" can be no other than romances which were the popular literature of the day.

Chaucer, with his humorous, cynically amused outlook on life—an outlook not, however, wholly devoid of "high seriousness,"—cannot accept the popular romance as a true story. His celebrated burlesque of its diffuseness, its repetitions, its inartistic use of rhyme, "tag" and epithet in "Sir Thopas," and his ironical aside[6] in the "Nonnes Preestes Tale":—

"This storie is al-so trewe, I undertake,
As is the book of Launcelot de Lake,
That wommen holde in ful gret reverence,"

show that Chaucer recognized that the romance was neither true, nor, in its ordinary, popular form, artistic. But, while he recognized these things, he recognized also the possibilities of the romance form, for "the Knight's Tale is a complete and perfect version of a mediæval romance"; [1] "Troilus and Cressida," originally "grew out of the French Romantic School"; [2] and the "Squire's Tale," as Warton, Hurd and other eighteenth century "romantic revivalists" saw, has enough of pageantry and magic to satisfy the most exacting taste. As a representative poet of the Middle Ages, Chaucer could hardly fail to love the darling child of the mediæval world. He sees its faults, but he caresses it. And so he gives to his readers both "Sir Thopas" and "The Knight's Tale," to interpret as they please. If they think that because he has not spared the faults of romance he is blind to its beauties, Chaucer smiles slyly at their lack of penetration, for he loves "romances that been royales." The amount of discredit which Chaucer threw on the romance was exactly proportionate to his readers' ability to penetrate his real meaning, and to see how far his appreciation of the latent possibilities of the romance—possibilities which he himself discovered and made known to the world in the "Knight's Tale"—outweighs his half-serious satire of its affectations and extravagances. A century later than Chaucer, Caxton has grave doubts about Arthur and his knights. Certain gentlemen have "instantly required" him "tenpryante thystorye of the sayd noble kyng and conquerour kyng Arthur and of his knyghtes wyth thy storye of the saynt greal and of the deth and endyng of the sayd Arthur. . . . To whome I answerd that dyuers men holde oppynyon that there was no such Arthur and that alle suche bookes as been maad of hym ben fayned and fables."[3] Caxton was at length persuaded by such evidence as Arthur's tomb at Glastonbury, Higden's references to the tomb, and Boccaccio's history of Arthur in "De Casu Principum" of the existence of the king, and therefore printed the "Morte d'Arthur." He does not call Malory's book a "romance," perhaps because the term was already beginning to be definitely associated with fiction. It is in any case abundantly clear that "jestis and fablis" had by the end of the fifteenth century fallen generally into disrepute.

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[1] Bk. i. l. 1.

[2] Herrtage in his Introduction to the volume headed "Sege of Melayne" (E. E. T. S., 1880), where some of the poems found in the same MS. (Addit. MS. 31,042 at B. Museum) are printed.

[3] Ll. 10584 ff.

[4] L. 10588.

[5] "Select English Works," ed. T. Arnold, 1869 (vol. iii. p. 196).

[6] Nun's Priest's Tale, ll. 391–393 (Chaucer's Complete Works, ed. Skeat, 1906).

In the early sixteenth century Gavin Douglas uses the word "romance" in a clearly depreciatory sense. In the Prologue to Book VIII. of his translation of the Æneid, which was completed in 1513, he describes a discussion between himself and a man whom he saw in his dream. He laments the covetousness, the longing for excitement, etc., of the age, and ends:[4]—

"I lang to haue our buik done,
I tell the mi part."

For answer his companion "raucht him a roll," in which he began to read "all the mowis in this mold sen God merkit man." The "mowis" are enumerated; then Douglas rejoins:[5]—

"Thir *romanis* ar bot rydlis . . .
Leid lerne me ane uther lessoun, this I ne lyk."

It would seem that a depreciatory sense is to be read into the word "romanis" in this context.

3. ELIZABETHAN CRITICS AND THE ROMANCE.

As the sixteenth century grew older, Puritanism grew stronger, and with the spread of Puritanism romances fell more and more into disrepute. Ascham was not alone in his condemnation of "books of chivalry." He protested against the "bold bawdry" of "Morte Arthur"; [6] Nash, in his "Anatomy of Absurdity," 1589, was equally incensed against those "bookemungers" whose aim it was to "restore to the worlde that forgotten Legendary licence of lying, to imitate a fresh the fantasticall dreames of those exiled Abbie-lubbers from whose idle pens proceeded those worne out impressions of they feyned no where acts of Arthur of the rounde table, Arthur of little Brittaine,

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[1] "Epic and Romance," p. 365.
[2] Ibid. p. 368.
[3] Preface to "Morte d'Arthur" (ed. Sommer, 1889).
[4] Ed. Small, 1874 (vol. iii. p. 147, l. 6).
[5] Page 147, l. 21.
[6] "Schoolmaster," 1571 (ed. Wright, 1904, p. 231).

Sir Tristram, Hewon of Bordeaux, the Squire of low degree, the foure sons of Amon, with infinite others."[1]

The popularising[2] of romance had been attended with not altogether happy consequences. The later versions of the Arthur legends, for instance, have much less literary merit than the early ones, of which the crudest and least inspired have a certain attractive directness and simplicity. The later ballad-romances, such, for example, as many of those included in Percy's "Reliques,"[3] have little claim to artistic beauty, and these, with the prose versions, were the most widely known romance literature. The lack of art in romances, together with their supposed immoral tendency, accounts for the contemptuous notice which they received from the Elizabethan critics. Gabriel Harvey and Nash, Puttenham and Webbe, had all felt to a greater or less degree the influence of Italian "classical" principles of art,[4] and were, therefore, alive to the obvious defects in form of the romance. Hence, although Ascham's objection to the "Morte Arthur" is due to what he considers its "bold bawdry," and although Nash censures the authors of romances primarily from the moralist's point of view, he also finds fault with them on the score of art: "Who is it that reading Beuis of Hampton, can forbeare laughing if he marke what scambling shyft he makes to ende his verses alike."[5] He then gives examples of such forced rhymes, and dismisses them at length as "worne out absurdities." Puttenham[6] is a little kinder to the "Romance or short historicall ditty," but in his estimation also it is a trifle—its artistic defects can be forgiven because of its unimportance.

The romance was undoubtedly decadent in morality and in art, and men of the early Renaissance—which meant for England not only a new conception of the value of art, but also the awakening of Puritan ideals—naturally disparaged a literary form which fulfilled neither the ideals of art nor those of Puritanism. Only a poet-critic like Sidney discovers merit in the tale of "honest King Arthur" which "will never displease a soldier," and acknowledges that Amadis of Gaul, "which God knoweth wanteth much of a perfect poesie," will move men "to the exercise of courtesie, liberalitie, and especially courage."

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[1] Ed. McKerrow, 1904 (vol. i. p. 11).

[2] There were e.g. editions of Malory's "Morte Arthur" in 1485, 1529, 1557, 1560 (?), 1634; of the "Troy Romance" in 1474, 1476, 1503, 1553, 1607, 1617; of the "Four Sons of Aymon" in 1499, 15— (?), 1554.

[3] Cf. e.g. "Sir Perceval" (Camden Society, 1844) with "Sir Lambewell" (Percy's Folio MS., ed. Furnivall, 1867, vol. i. p. 142), and the difference is apparent.

[4] Cf. Nash's conception (vol. i. p. 25) of the relation of poetry and philosophy with that of the Italian critics, and see Sidney's "Apology" passim.

[5] "Anatomy of Absurdity" (Works, vol. i. p. 26).

[6] "Arte of Poesie" (ed. Arber, 1869, Bk. i. ch. xix. pp. 56–7), cf. also Bk. ii. ch. ix. pp. 96–7.

CHAPTER III.

THE USE OF THE WORD IN LITERARY CRITICISM: THE EPIC VERSUS *ROMANCE CONTROVERSY.*

IT has been shown that, by the end of the sixteenth century, the word "romance" had come to be definitely associated in general with the idea of fiction, and in particular with that kind of fiction which seemed to be farthest removed from the truth, i.e., with the "mediæval romance" as it existed principally in late and decadent forms, either in prose or in popular rhyming versions. In the chance references to romance made by the Elizabethan critics there is to be found the suggestion[1] that the romance is inartistic as well as untrue; but their quarrel is mainly with the morality rather than with the method of the romance, and their objection to it for the most part the product of English and Puritan ideals.

The next phases in the development of the meaning of the word are, on the contrary, to be traced to Italian and French influences, and one of them at least was the direct result of that re-awakening of artistic sensitiveness which had taken place at the "Revival of Learning." The meaning of "romance" in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries is affected by two of the most characteristic literary phenomena of the seventeenth century—the cult of the Epic Poem, and the vogue of the "Heroic Romance."

Through the influence of the first of these literary fashions the new significance of "improbable," "unreasonable," "formless," and "chaotic" crept into the meaning of the word; and "romantic," as applied to literary art, becomes antithetic to "classic," which implies "verisimilitude," "reasonableness," "symmetry" and "perfection of form." Through the influence of the second of these fashions romance acquired the meaning "sentimental," while at the same time the meanings "unreal," "remote," which were already attached to it, became accentuated, till, as the result of the two movements, a romance in the later seventeenth century was regarded as equivalent to a far-fetched and badly-composed fiction, destitute alike of truth to nature and artistic workmanship.

Owing to the close relationship which the seventeenth century conceived as existing between the epic poem and the heroic romance, the changes of meaning in the word "romance" occasioned by its use in connection with the two forms are not always easily distinguishable one from the other. In the main, however, the popularity of the epic brought it to pass that certain methods of poetic composition and style were called "romantic," while the vogue of the heroic romance was the cause that subject matter of a particular type was also termed "romantic." The two movements are therefore treated separately.

(*a*) IN ITALY.[2]

The origin of the cult of the epic poem, and the accompanying epic *v.* romance controversy in England, is to be found in the history of Italian literature. It was closely connected with—in fact a result of—the "rediscovery" of Aristotle's Poetics. During the Middle Ages Aristotle had been known not as the "legislator of Parnassus," but as the master philosopher. The Poetics were probably unknown even to Dante and to Boccaccio; Petrarch makes only a single obscure reference to them,[3] and only in 1536, with the publication of the revised Latin version of Alessandro de Pazzi, did they begin to exert an appreciable influence on Italian, and, through Italian, on European literature.[1]

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[1] Nash, "Anatomy of Absurdity" (Bk. i. p. 322, "Eliz. Critic. Essays").

[2] I found that Mr. Spingarn had treated this subject ("Literary Criticism in the Renaissance," chap. iv.) only after the material for this section had been collected. I am therefore not indebted to him (except in cases where indebtedness has been expressly acknowledged) for the opinions expressed.

[3] Spingarn, "Critical Literature of the Renaissance," p. 16.

The method and general trend of almost all Italian criticism in the sixteenth century seems to have been determined by the presupposition that truth is finite and had been already apprehended in its completeness by the human intellect. Truth in all that concerned art had, as the majority of the critics conceived, been discovered by the ancients and embodied by them in a series of laws which could admit of no modification or re-interpretation, but must remain a permanent criterion of artistic value. If the canons of art formulated by Aristotle and Horace be true, any new standard of poetic values must of necessity be false, for " una è la verita,"[2] for all ages. This conception of artistic principles as irrevocably fixed and determined, insensible to any new influence, justified the Italians, from their own point of view, in that respect and honour, hardly " on this side idolatry," which they paid to the principles of art enunciated by Aristotle and Horace, and exemplified by Homer and Virgil.

It was under the influence of these ideas that the critics of the mid-sixteenth century approached the subject of " romance."

The Carolingian Romance, or " romatic epic," had from the twelfth century onwards been among the most popular of all stories in Italy,[3] but, like the later versions of the tales of Arthur, of Guy of Warwick, and Bevis of Hampton, in England, which were sung by minstrels upon " benches " and " barrels' heads " with " boys or country fellows " for an audience,[4] it had been considered unworthy of serious attention on the part of the learned. In the late fifteenth century, however, romance assumed a literary form in Boiardo's " Orlando Innamorato," the greater part of which was published in 1486.[5] In 1516 Ariosto published the first edition of the " Orlando Furioso," and from this time onwards the most conservative of critics were obliged to recognize the romance as a work with, to say the least, pretentions to artistic conception and workmanship.

The success of Ariosto's " irregular " poem aroused the indignation of the classicists, and in 1525 Trissino prepared to write his " Italia Liberata da i Gothi." It was his design to compose an heroic poem modelled exactly on the rules laid down by Aristotle (" il quale elessi per maestro "[6]) and the example set by Homer, which should be a rival to Ariosto's spurious epic. He threw down the glove to his opponents when he wrote that, in following the precepts of Aristotle and the example of Homer, he was alone among modern Italian poets : " Cosa che non si e' fatta più ne la nostra lingua Italiana."[7]

From this time until the appearance of Tasso's " Gerusalemma Liberata " inaugurated a new phase of the controversy, the struggle between the partisans of the epic and the supporters of romance was fiercely waged. It followed from the nature of the basis of criticism adopted, that the great fault found in romances was not one of subject, but one of form and construction. Trissino[8] is content to class together as epic heroes Achilles, Ajax, Nestor, Ulysses, Æneas, Turnus, Tristan, Lancelot, Orlando, and Rinaldo ; Minturno admits that the material of which romances are made could form the substance of a great and beautiful work of art—but with the proviso, " con altro ordine, e con altro modo, e d'altro stile."

The faults of form and construction found by the critics in romance were principally : (1) Violation of the epic principle of unity ; (2) Violation of the law that the marvellous must be probable even though impossible.

1. Minturno, in his " Arte Poetica,"[9] states explicitly the difference between Epic unity and

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[1] Spingarn, "Critical Literature of the Renaissance," p. 17.
[2] Minturno, " Arte Poetica," 1563.
[3] Symonds, " Italian Literature " (vol. i. p. 15).
[4] Puttenham, " Art of English Poesie."
[5] See Garnett, " Italian Literature."
[6] Dedication of " L'Italia Lib." (p. 3).
[7] Ibid.
[8] " Poetic," Bk. vi.
[9] Bk. i. (ed. 1725, p. 28).

"Romantic" diversity of subject; the one "imitates" (the word is a common one in sixteenth century discussions of epic poetry) "une memorevole faccenda perfetta di una illustre persona"; the other is concerned with "une congregazione di Cavalieri e di Donne, e di cose da guera et da pace." He meets the objection that Homer deals with more than one subject by pointing out the unity of purpose which underlies the "Iliad," the fact that it has a beginning, a middle, and an end, and that every episode has a vital connection with that end. He censures Ariosto for having made Orlando the nominal but Ruggiero the real hero of his poem, and for having introduced too many important characters into the "Orlando Furioso."

2. Trissino objects to the needless introduction of the marvellous in romances.[1] Homer was justified in introducing marvels into his poem, for though these were "non ragionevoli" they were "verisimile." But Ariosto and the other "romanci" are not justified in introducing wonders which are unreasonable, episodic, and foreign to the main purpose of the story.

This objection has some analogy with that which Sidney in his "Apologie for Poesie," urged against contemporary tragi-comedy when he complained that it thrust in the clown by the shoulders, "not because the matter so carrieth it": it is directed against the method of introducing the marvels, rather than the marvels themselves; that is to say with art and technique, rather than with subject-matter.

There was another charge[2] of a different class brought against romances, a charge which derived most of its force from the current conception of the poet's function: they were alleged to be inferior to the epic in didactic value, and, in fact, too often actually immoral in tone. This charge would have great weight with critics who believed that "il Poeta du essere un maestro della vita virtuosa e buona," and would make them depreciate the value of romance to an extent which, in days when a different standard of poetic value prevails, seems quite disproportionate to its cause.

Such was the nature of the attack on the romance, considered as a defective branch of the epic "kind." Its defence was undertaken mainly by Pigna and Giraldi Cinthio, whose respective works, "I Romanzi" and "Discorso dei Romanzi," both appeared in 1554. Their methods of defence were not of quite the same kind. Pigna distinguishes[3] Romance from the "Epopeia" or "Heroica poesia," and insists that in certain respects it shall not be bound by epic laws. For example, he meets the charge that the romance is defective in symmetry and balance, by pointing out its original lyric nature: it was a composition meant to be sung, and, as such, is to be judged not by the impression which it produces as a complete whole, but by its effectiveness in process of completion—that is, by vividness of narrative, beauty of phrase, etc.

On the other hand, he deals with the subject on the lines adopted in all contemporary formal treatises on epic poetry, treating successively of Imitare, Atione, Favola, Episodii, etc.[4] Further, he sets out to prove that in certain respects—e.g., in the greatness of its subject and in the character of its heroes—the "Orlando Furioso" is epic, and observes epic laws. Pigna occupies a middle and somewhat anomalous position:[5] he admits reluctantly that epic and romance are different in kind, but he is too much dominated by the spirit of the age boldly to accept all the consequences of his admission and to refuse to judge "romantic" by the laws of "classical" art.

Cinthio's tone is much less diffident and apologetic. He does not try to make excuses for Boiardo and Ariosto, but, recognizing a difference in artistic method between the "Iliad" and the "Orlando," he takes Ariosto's work and deduces from it laws for romantic poetry. Homer and Virgil treat of one action of one man; Boiardo and Ariosto deal with many actions of many men. Such a difference of subject necessitates a difference of form, and no one rule can be laid down for narrative poems. The only essential for all such poems is that the subject be well handled, poetically treated, and of permanent interest. There should be proportion in detail, and to secure unity of interest episodes must depend one on the other, and the event of most importance (i.e., that which most influences the action) should open a romance.

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[1] "Poetic," Book vi.
[2] See especially Cinthio's "Discorso dei Romanzi."
[3] "I Romanzi," Book i.
[4] Cf. Tasso's "Discorsi."
[5] Cf. Saintsbury, "Hist. of Criticism," vol. ii. pp. 62, 63.

This is the method of argument which Cinthio pursues throughout. It is that of positive, constructive criticism, as opposed to the negative, destructive criticism of Minturno and Trissino.

With the advent of Tasso the controversy assumed a new form. Tasso's work was a compromise between epic and romance,[1] and his " Discorsi del Poema Heroico " constitute his apologia. In the " Discorsi " he introduces[2] new subjects of discussion : the legitimacy of the employment of supernatural " machinery," and the use of the marvellous in an epic poem. Tasso defines[3] the romance as an heroic poem lacking epic unity ; for him the heroic poem is the genus, and epic and romance its two species (" i quali con nome comune son chimati poemi heroici "),[4] but the species epic is far superior to the species romance. One by one he meets[5] and answers the arguments of the supporters of romance, and seeks to prove[6] that the unity of an heroic poem must be of the Aristotelian kind, and not that romantic unity which some critics[7] had thought sufficient.

Henceforward the controversy resolved itself into a discussion of the true nature of unity : Can there be unity in a poem which deals with many heroes and in which episodes abound ?[8]

Aristotle's canon exacting unity was no longer disputed (as Cinthio had virtually disputed it, when he wrote that the great essentials for a narrative poem, as regards subject matter, are that it shall be well handled, poetically treated, and of permanent interest[9]), and, whatever may have been the relative merits of Tasso and Ariosto in the eyes of the Italians,[10] the result of the struggle, as far as Western Europe was concerned, was a triumph for the supporters of Tasso and the epic over the supporters of Ariosto and romance. Romance was generally regarded as an artistic form of lower value than the epic, though approximating to it in certain qualities, redeemed from mediocrity or worse simply by the force of Ariosto's genius, and compelling a reluctant admiration for its wild and extravagant beauties. The conclusion of Minturno (who used his axiom to point the moral that romance is an inferior kind of poetry) that " la natura degli uomini ni senz, ' arte non puo far ' opera perfetta "[11] was that adopted by seventeenth century French critics ; it became a cardinal doctrine of their poetic creed and determined the general trend of critical thought and its particular application to romance in France and England for more than a century.

(*b*) THE NON-APPEARANCE OF THE CONTROVERSY IN ENGLISH LITERATURE OF THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY.

The epic *v.* romance controversy made no deep impression on the literary history of either France or England during the sixteenth century. Although the question was being warmly discussed in Italy soon after the mid-sixteenth century,[12] it was not introduced into France and England until almost a century later. There is, however, no lack of evidence to show that the imagination of the men of letters of both countries had been powerfully affected by the idea of the heroic poem long before this : Ronsard had written his " Franciade " and du Bartas his " Divine Weeks " ; du Bellay had longed[1] for a great French epic poet: " Choisy moi quelqu' un de ces beaux vieux romans françois comme un Lancelot, un Tristan ou autres: et en fay renaistre au monde une admirable Iliade et laborieuse Enéide."

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[1] Saintsbury, " History of Criticism " (Bk. ii. p. 94).

[2] " Discorsi," Bk. ii. pp. 33 *et seq.* (1597 edition).

[3] Ibid., Bk. iii. p. 67.

[4] Ibid., Bk. iii. p. 79.

[5] Ibid., Bk. iii. pp. 67–79.

[6] Ibid., Bk. iii. pp. 64 *et seq.*

[7] E.g. Castelvetro.

[8] See Saintsbury, Bk. ii. pp. 94–108 ; cf. Spingarn, p. 124.

[9] " Discorso dei Romanzi " (" Della Favola ").

[10] Huggins (Preface to Transl. of Orl. Fur., 1756) says that the Italians have always ranked Tasso below Ariosto ; Hoole (Preface to Transl. Orl. Fur., 1783, p. xiv.) corroborates the statement.

[11] " Arte Poetica," Bk. i.

[12] Pigna and Cinthio both published in 1554 ; Trissino's " Arte Poetica " was finished in 1563 (Saintsbury, Bk. ii. p. 38) ; Castelvetro's " Poetic " is dated 1570.

Sir Philip Sidney was heavily indebted[2] to the Italian critics for the ideas of his " Apologie," and, like others, was possessed by the idea of the beauty and grandeur of the epic. His reference to Amadis of Gaul (it " wanteth much of a perfect poesie ") may possibly indicate his interest in the controversy, and shows him applying the ideal epic type to the romance. But he classes together Achilles, Cyrus, Æneas, Turnus, Tideus, and Rinaldo as epic heroes,[3] and there is nothing to show that he recognized any distinction between them.

Spenser's Preface to the " Faerie Queene " (1589) deals with the form of his poem. He evidently realizes that his work lies open to the charge of want of unity, and he writes his explanatory " Letter " in order that his readers may " as in a handfull gripe al the discourse, which otherwise may happily seeme tedious and confused." This may show that Spenser knew of the attacks which had been made on Ariosto's method, but he himself recognises no essential difference between the poems of Homer and of Ariosto, and classes together with the " antique Poets historicall," Homer and Virgil, Ariosto and Tasso as excellent poets whose example he has followed.

Ben Jonson was not unaffected by the universal interest in the epic, and from him a definite pronouncement on the classicist side might have been expected. In " Timber "[4] he lays great stress on the necessity of unity in both epic and dramatic compositions; " Spenser's stanzas pleased him not, nor his matter ";[5] he was one of those for whom the old " romantic " material had lost all savour, as is seen in " An Execration upon Vulcan,"[6] where, lamenting the loss of his library through fire, he exclaims :—

> ". . . the whole sum
> Of errant knighthood, with the dames and dwarfs;
> The charmed boats, and the inchanted wharfs,
> The Tristans, Lancelots, Turpins, and the Peers,
> All the mad Rolands and sweet Olivers . . .
> These, hadst thou been pleased either to dine or sup,
> Had made a meal for Vulcan to lick up."

His projected epic,[7] would doubtless have been a spirited welding of English history to the epic form. That—so well equipped—he did not take part in the controversy is perhaps explained by Drummond's caustic comment, " he neither doth understand French nor Italiennes."[8]

Milton, peculiarly well versed as he was in Italian literature, and knowing personally the members of the " private academies of Italy " and their voluminous treatises on the " laws of a true epic poem,"[9] could hardly fail to have been brought into contact with the epic *v.* romance question. He seems, indeed, to be definitely alluding to it when (in the " Reason of Church Government urged against Prelaty ") he includes among the subjects which the mind proposes to herself in the " spacious circuits of her high musing ": " whether the rules of Aristotle herein (i.e., in the epic poem) are strictly to be kept, or nature to be followed, which in them that know art, and use judgment, is no transgression, but an enriching of art." Whether Ariosto in following nature also used art we are not told, but it is to be noted that Milton does not include[10] Ariosto with Homer, Virgil and Tasso among the epic poets, though, on the other hand, he has no contempt for romantic material. For we know that he at one time contemplated writing a great epic with Arthur as its hero, and from this fact and his references[1] to romance generally it may perhaps be concluded that Milton was enough of a "romanticist" to delight in tales of the type of the "Story of Cambuscan bold . . . and of the wondrous horse of brass," and enough of a "Hellenist" to admire romance for its beauties, and to rise, except in the heat and dust of controversy, above the "Hebraist" narrowness of those who despised such "vain, amatorious poems."

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[1] " Défense et Illustration de la Langue Françoise," 1549 (ch. v.).

[2] See Spingarn, *op. cit.*, pp. 268–273.

[3] " Apologie " (ed. Shuckburgh, Camb. Univ. Press), p. 42.

[4] Article, " Of the magnitude and compass of any fable, epic, or dramatic."

[5] " Conversations " (No. 3).

[6] Jonson's Works (ed. Cunningham, vol. iii. p. 319).

[7] Drummond reports (" Conversations," No. 1) that he " had ane intention to perfect ane Epick Poeme entitled ' Heroologia, of the worthies of this Country."

[8] " Conversations " (No. 4).

[9] See " Reason of Church Government urged against Prelaty " (Spingarn's " Seventeenth Century Critical Essays," ii. p. 194); " Treatise of Education " (ii. p. 206); Pref. to " Paradise Lost " (ii. p. 207).

[10] In "Reason of Ch. Govt."

But neither Sidney nor Spenser, Ben Jonson nor Milton introduced the controversy into England: their allusions to the subject were incidental, and only once before the mid-seventeenth century did the Italian theory of the epic appear in English literature. This was in Sir John Harington's Preface to his translation of the "Orlando Furioso" which appeared in 1591. It is evident from the tone of the preface that Harington was aware of the charges of "invraisemblance" and lack of unity which had been brought against Ariosto's work. He enters into a spirited defence of his author, meeting the objection that "Ariosto wanteth art," by attempting to show how "verie strictly" Aristotle's rules are followed in the "Orlando," and declaring that if Ariosto's episodes are "unartificially brought in," the same may be said of Homer's. He contends that the poem is "heroicall" on the grounds that it is founded on history, and that it "feigns nothing utterly incredible." "Ariosto, neither in his inchantments exceedeth credit (for who knowes how strong the illusions of the deuill are?), neither in the miracles that Astolfo by the power of S. John is fayned to do, since the Church holdeth the Prophetes, both alive and dead, have done mightie great miracles."

The validity of this argument as to the credibility of "inchantments" may be questioned, but there is in Harington's Preface,[2] together with touches of mediæval superstition and signs of half-unwilling adherence to the standards of Italian classical criticism, a trace of that bolder and, as we think, more effective method of apology for romantic art which we are accustomed to associate with the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. He answers the criticisms of those who censure Ariosto's "many speeches in his own character," because no such personal touches are found in Homer and Virgil, with the reply: "Methinks it is a sufficient defence to say Ariosto doth it." Such independence as this is not to be found again in the epic *v.* romance controversy for the greater part of two centuries.

Harington's challenge apparently met with no immediate response, for the Elizabethans were still under the spell of the shrilling trumpets of elf-land, intently listening to tales of "brave, translunary things," and uninterested in questions of "reason" and "vraisemblance." It was only when the "spacious times of great Elizabeth" had passed, and men of a second order of genius replaced the literary giants of the sixteenth century, that critics began to find the romance as exemplified by the work of Ariosto, a "thing of shreds and patches." This new trend in literary thought was due to the French influence which, through the relations of the Stuarts with the French Court, began to be paramount in England.

(*c*) EPIC VERSUS ROMANCE IN FRANCE.

The interest of French men of letters in the epic poem dates, as has been shown, from the sixteenth century. In the mid-seventeenth century that interest became much greater, and, inspired by the passion for literary discussion and production which characterized the literary coteries of the Augustan age of French literature, many writers attempted to write poems of the type which they conceived to be the greatest in literature.[3] Their success (or failure) is well known; the interest of the poems for this study lies in the "Traités de la Poésie Héroique," which it was customary to prefix to them. These Prefaces are all of the same general type : they all insist, with varying degrees of conviction, that the epic must conform to the rules laid down by Aristotle, Horace, and others of the Ancients, and that in so far as Ariosto neglected these rules he is to be censured. Pierre Le Moyne is particularly hostile to Ariosto, accusing[1] him of having produced " un monstre, composé de divers corps attachez les uns aux autres," and adding : " Tout ce qu'on peut dire pour excuser l'Arioste c'est qu'il a failly volontairement et par dessein, qu'il a crû que c'estoit le nombre et non pas le choix qui faisoit la réputation ; et qu'il lui seroit plus glorieux que sa Poésie fust chantée dans les Hales, que si elle n'estoit leuë que dans les Palais." He holds up his hands in horror at the spectacle afforded by Ariosto : " Se peut on reuolter avec plus d'audace contre le Raison, contre l'Antiquité, contre l'Exemple ? " and declares that " le Poème Roman est une Fabrique moderne, mais informe et capricieuse." It is not necessary to consider the various modifications of the general epic theory of the earlier seventeenth century. The views of critics differed considerably as to the place of " machinery " in an epic, as to fitting subjects for an heroic poem, etc. : Boileau found himself in opposition to Chapelain on matters connected with epic theory, and Scudery, in spite of rule and authority, classes[2] Ariosto with the epic poets, whereas Le Moyne would none of him. But there was general consensus of opinion that the " Orlando " was deficient in unity, that Ariosto had neglected the rule of vraisemblance and had " bâti en l'air."[3] This was the opinion which Davenant set forth in his Preface to " Gondibert," and in which Hobbes in his answer to that Preface concurred. Davenant's work in actual date preceded that of the French critics, for the Preface appeared in 1650, while Le Moyne's " St. Louis," the first of the French seventeenth century epics, was published in part in 1651 ; but it is to be observed that Davenant wrote at Paris, and there is no doubt that his ideas on the epic were derived from the French critics.

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[1] See especially "Paradise Lost," Bk. ii. ll. 354 *et seq.*; "Apology for Smectymnus" (ed. Bohn, Bk. iii. p. 118).

[2] "Elizabethan Critical Essays" (ed. Gregory Smith), pp. 177 ff.

[3] For a full discussion of seventeenth century French epic, see Julien Duchesne, "Histoire des Poèmes Epiques français du XVIIme Siècle" (Paris, 1870). For an enumeration of these poems, see also Chapelain, Preface to "La Pucelle," 1656.

(*d*). EPIC versus ROMANCE IN ENGLAND.

The epic theory which Davenant formulated with more or less definiteness in his Preface was that which generally prevailed in England for at least a century : Rymer, Dennis and Blackmore, Dryden, Addison and Pope, all approach the subject from the same standpoint,[4] and Hurd's contemptuous remark that this type of criticism " grew into a sort of cant with which Rymer and the rest of that School filled their flimsy essays and rambling prefaces,"[5] is not without justification.

Rymer, Dennis and the rest were indebted not so much to Scudery, Chapelain and Le Moyne as to French critics of the later seventeenth century, and more especially to René Rapin and René Le Bossu. These two critics had treated the composition of the epic as a purely mechanical process, capable of exact analysis and hence of exact imitation. Le Bossu, assuming the essentially didactic nature of the heroic poem, shows[6] how Homer composed his work for the instruction of mankind : having found a " fable " to suit his " Idea," he gave names to the men and women who appeared in the " fable " (he might equally well have chosen beasts to illustrate his " Idea " !), and wrote his Iliad. Homer's flights of fancy (e.g., in making a horse talk) are blemishes which can only be excused on account of the ignorance of the age in which he wrote ; they would be intolerable in a modern epic poet. This is not an extreme example of the kind of criticism in which Rapin and Le Bossu indulge.

Rymer translated Rapin's " Reflexions sur la Poétique d'Aristote " in 1674 (the original had appeared in the same year), and John Davies of Kidwelly his " Observations sur les Poèmes d'Homère et de Vergil " in 1670 ; Le Bossu's " Traité de la Poème Epique " was translated in 1695.

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[1] Preface to " S. Louis " (1658). S. Louis first began to appear in 1651.
[2] Preface to " Alaric " (1654).
[3] Le Moyne, Preface to " S. Louis."
[4] Cf. also Charles Gildon's " Complete Art of Poetry " (1718) for same views.
[5] " Remarks on the Plan and Conduct of the Fairy Queen."
[6] " Treatise of the Epic Poem " (1695 Translation).

The English critics are not slow to admit[1] their indebtedness to the French, whom they consider unerring masters in epic theory. And this epic theory was to them a matter of vital importance,[2] because the heroic poem is the " greatest work which the soul of man is capable to perform."[3] This conviction can alone explain the extraordinary keenness which marked the enquiry into the nature of the epic and the resultant discussion as to the nature of Ariosto's poetry.

* * * * * * * * *

It has been necessary to enter somewhat fully into the history of the epic *v.* romance controversy. Without such a discussion no adequate idea can be formed of the causes which brought it to pass that the romance, which Nash and Puttenham had thought beneath contempt and unworthy of serious consideration, should occupy the attention—even though that attention was bestowed not willingly but of necessity—of the greatest critics of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. A great artist had used the literary form which was seen to be the same as that which the forgotten authors of mediæval " feigned fables " had employed, and by his use of it had, in the eyes of these critics, lent it a dignity which it did not inherently possess. The romance-method could no longer be dismissed with a word: it must be brought into some sort of relation with the epic-method; Ariosto's poem must be classified, and the necessity for this classification, together with the recognition that the poem " smelt strong of the Romance and Fable,"[4] led to the use of the word " romance " to denote a narrative poem marked by a lack of unity in structure and a large measure of improbability in subject-matter. The old Puritan charge that the marvels of romance were untrue, and hence immoral, was replaced by the objections urged by rationalistic and " classical " critics that they were impossible and therefore inartistic.

Instances of the use of " romance " and " romantic " with this meaning could be multiplied; they occur frequently in the " flimsy essays and rambling prefaces " which have been mentioned. A few examples to show the altered significance of the word after the introduction of the " neo-classic " ideals into England may be noted. Waller, unaffected by the French critical thought on this matter, uses[5] " romance " with the general sense of " poem dealing with marvels " :—

" A brave *romance* who would exactly frame
First brings his knight from some immortal dame,
And then a weapon, and a flaming shield
Bright as his mother's eyes he makes him wield."

Milton has[6] a similar use: " Next I betook me among those lofty fables and romances which recount in solemn cantos the deeds of knighthood founded by our victorious kings." In contrast to these may be taken the following, written after the introduction of the French influence :—

" The Epick Poem ought to present the perfect Idea of a great Captain and General of an army, and not of a Knight-Errant who most commonly is but a phantasm and a *Romantick* Palladine. . . . There is always a defectiveness as to matter of probability in those actions of Knights-Errants and solitary Worthies . . . they still smell strong of the *Romance* and Fable."[7]

" The *Romantick* Poetry of Pulci, Boyardo and Ariosto, who regarded no other rules than what the Heat of their Genius inspired."[8]

" Circumstances, the more they have of verisimilitude, the more they keep up the reputation of the Poet . . . so that it would be absurd in a poet to set his Hero upon *Romantic* actions exceeding Human strength and power."[1]

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[1] See Dennis, " Remarks on Blackmore's Prince Arthur," 1696; Blackmore's Preface to " Prince Arthur," 1695; Sir Thomas Pope Blount's " De Re Poetica," 1694.

[2] Cf. Prof. Ker's ed. of " Dryden's Essays " (Introd.).

[3] Dryden, " Discourse on Epic Poetry " (cf. also Le Moyne, Segrais (Pref. to Transl. of Æneid), etc.)

[4] Davies' Translation of Rapin's " Observations."

[5] " To the Queen," ll. 61 *et seq.* (1645).

[6] " Apology for Smectymnus " (Bohn's ed., vol. iii. p. 118), cf. also " Par. Lost," Bk. i. l. 579; " Hist. Britain," iii. (Bohn, vol. v.. p. 255).

[7] Davies, *op. cit.* (1670).

[8] Rymer's Transl. of Rapin, *op. cit.* (1674).

These examples all lay more stress on the idea of improbability than on that of lack of unity, and it is not easy to find an instance of the actual use of the word where the latter is uppermost; though from passages dealing with Ariosto and romance generally it is clear that this idea was implicit in the meaning of the word.[2]

In 1806, when the heat of the epic *v.* romance controversy was long passed, Dr. Gregory defined[3] romance as " a species of composition purely fictitious, in which no other restriction is imposed on the poet's fancy than that he shall continue to interest and amuse his reader." This, though lacking definiteness, fairly summarizes the conception of the poetic species of romance which had been evolved by the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

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[1] Edward Phillips, Preface to " Theatrum Poetarum " (1675).

[2] Cf. Rymer's criticism of Spenser (Pref. to Transl. of Rapin.)

[3] Dictionary (Article, " Epic ").

CHAPTER IV.

THE HEROIC ROMANCE.

THERE is little need to prove the popularity of the heroic romance in England during the later seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. The existence of a large body of fiction of the "heroic" type, introspective, rhetorical, sentimental, having for its main subject chivalric love viewed in all its aspects, is one of the best authenticated facts of the literary history of the age. It is attested by the constant references[1] to heroic romance in the occasional and periodical literature of the day; by the advertisement sheets,[2] covered with lists of "new Romances," which were often appended to contemporary popular literature; by the number of men[3] of letters who, at one time or another, used this form; by the different existing versions and editions of such works as "Theagines and Chariclea"[4]—"the Mother Romance of the world," the Greek pastoral romance, "Daphnis and Chloe,"[5] and Barclay's "Argenis"[6]—"a romance, an allegory and a system of politics;" and by the promptitude and regularity with which the French romances of de Gomberville, La Calprenède, and Scudery were translated into English.[7]

The nature of the heroic romance is as well known as its popularity. Professor Raleigh has thus summarized[8] its characteristics: the predominance of love as a motive in war and politics, complexity of intrigue, long soliloquies and sentimental analyses on conventional lines, superhuman valour of lovers, satire on contemporary kingdoms and courts, historical interest, and a peculiarly involved and intricate structure of the main plot. A comparison of this description with that given by a contemporary writer shows, together with certain similarities, one striking difference. Professor Raleigh in his critical estimate of an artistic form is not primarily concerned with the ethical value of the romance; but the anonymous author of "Eliana" (1661) conceives that the merit of his work lies in its pictures of the fairness of virtue, the foulness of vice, and the rewards of both . . . . Romances are not always farced with love stories and toyes, though those are intertexted for delight, and . . . . things Œconomical, Ethethical [= Ethical ?], Physical, Metaphysical, Philosophical, Political and Theological, as well as Amatory may be, not unaptly, nor unfitly exhibited."

With the love of law and order, of definiteness and regularity in literature which to some extent characterized the later seventeenth century, and grew to be the distinguishing mark of the eighteenth, writers formulated theories concerning the purpose and construction of romances. Huet, in his "Treatise of Romances,"[9] a work the influence of which can be clearly traced on English critical literature of the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, lays it down that "Love ought to be the principal subject of every Romance. They must be writ in Prose. . . . They must be writ with Art, and under certain rules;" the chief purpose of romance is the instruction of the reader, and with this end in view poetic justice must be observed: "romances are more or less regular according as they are more or less remote from this definition and end."[1]

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[1] E.g. Blackmore, Preface to "Essays on Several Subjects" (1716); Addison, *Spectator* (Nos. 19, 241, 365); Chesterfield, "Letters to His Son."

[2] E.g. in "Cleopatra" (1665) occurs the following list: "Cassandra; Ibrahim; Artamenes; The History of the Banished Virgin; The History of Philoscipes and Policrite; The History of Don Fenise; Aurora Ismerina; La Stratonica, a New Romance; Missena, a New Romance; Dianea, a New Romance; Elise, a New Romance; Clelia, an excellent Romance; Coralbo, a New Romance; Ariana; The Romant of Romans; Astrea; The Grand Scipio."

[3] E.g., John Crowne, the dramatist; George Mackenzie; Congreve (See Raleigh, "The English Novel," ch. iv.).

[4] English prose versions include Tate's, 1687 (ed. ii.) 1753; C. G.'s, 1717, 1789.

[5] English versions include those of Thornley (1657) and Craggs (1719). The latter went through at least four editions (see Brit. Museum Catalogue).

[6] English versions include, K. Long's, 1625, 1629, 1636; Re Le Grys and May's, 1629.

[7] See Dunlop's "History of Fiction" (ed. Wilson, vol. ii. chap. xii.).

[8] "The English Novel" (chap. iv. pp. 90–1).

[9] Published (1670) as a Preface to Segrais' "Zayde"; translated into English in 1672, a second time in 1715 (by Mr. Stephen Lewis), and a third in 1722.

The theory of romantic fiction which makes the "instruction of readers" its primary object is continually found: romances are superior to history in didactic value—"they strain the christal streams of vertue from the puddle of interest"—they "shew not so much what men are as what they ought to be" and "represent to our thoughts the most lively ideas of moral Good and Evil."[2]

This view of the functions of romance is to be accounted for by the growing taste of the age for didactic literature, and, more particularly, by the supposed affinity between the heroic romance and the epic poem. The idea of such an affinity was not a new one in English literature.[3] It is found in Sidney,[4] and is, in fact, a corollary of Aristotle's dictum that "imitation" and not metrical form is the essential part of poetry.[5] But it was through the influence of the seventeenth century French epic writers and critics, that it became a commonplace of seventeenth and eighteenth century literary criticism. The translator of "Theagines and Chariclea" calls his work an "Epick Poem," and the publisher characterizes it as "an excellent Poem or Romance (call it which you please)." Huet notes that there is a "very great relation" between the epic and romance, and describes the latter as "the Fiction of things which may but never have happened"—a phrase which recalls the laborious discussions of "vraisemblance" in the epic by French and Italian critics. The earnestness of the attempt to bring all kinds of fiction within the domain of epic poetry may be gathered from the following extract taken from a Preface to one[6] of the many collections of Eastern Tales which were made in the early eighteenth century: "The Incidents throughout are indeed very Romantick and surprizing; but well prepared . . . . so that every Tale, separately consider'd, may be look'd upon as a little Epick Poem, which wants only the addition of numbers." As late as 1785, Clara Reeve was careful to say[7] that epic and romance "spring from the same root—describe the same actions and circumstances—produce the same effects, and are continually mistaken for each other."

The writers who insisted most emphatically on the near relationship of the epic and the heroic romance were generally equally emphatic in denying any close connection between the heroic and the mediæval romance. Professor Raleigh, seeing from the vantage ground of the twentieth century the whole history of the heroic romance, is of the opinion that "these romances must be regarded as yet another step in the decadence of the romance of chivalry."[8] But seventeenth century romance writers considered that in leaving monsters and dragons, "forests and enchantments drear," and turning to the portrayal of "heroic" types of character, they were forsaking the "extravagant" and "monstrous" and returning to nature.

Thus in the eighteenth century the author of the Preface to the translation of "Theagines and Chariclea," aware of the existing prejudice against mediæval "fine fabling," is careful to distinguish between the two kinds of romance. He knows that "the Book might have gone down much better with some leaders, had that invidious Title (i.e. Romance) been left out. But why Romances should all lie under that hard censure, I am yet to learn. It's true, Books of that name, the Product of Barbarous Ages, that are Stuff'd with nothing but Legendary stories of Knights, Giants, Monsters and Dragons, are very idle in themselves and fit only for children and weak People to read . . . . But what is this to others of a finer Texture, that are fill'd with useful Precepts and wise Reflections, that imitate true History, and have this advantage over it . . . . that every Act has its due consequence." The translator[1] of Huet's " Treatise " expresses a similar view : " Giants, Dragons, and Enchanted Castles, which made so much noise in Romances of former times, are now no longer heard of. The Composers do now consult nature . . . "

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[1] The translator should evidently have written "less or more remote" to make sense. Comparison with the other translations and the original proves that he has committed a verbal error.

[2] Translator's Pref. to "Theagines and Chariclea" (1717); cf. also Knox's "Essays, Literary and Moral," No. 14 (1777), and Pref. to the translation of Huet's "Diana de Castro."

[3] Cf. Professor Ker's "Introduction to Dryden's Essays."

[4] "Apologie for Poetry," ed. Shuckburgh (p. 12): "Xenophon . . . under the name of Cyrus . . . made herein an absolute heroicall poem. So did Heliodorus in his sugred invention of that picture of love in Theagines and Chariclea."

[5] See Scudery, Prefaces to "Illustre Bassa" (1641) and "Alaric" (1654).

[6] "The Thousand and One Days: Persian Tales." Translated from the French by Mr. Philips (1722).

[7] "The Progress of Romance, in a Course of Evening Conversations" (Evening II.).

[8] "The English Novel" (p. 90); cf. also Prof. Ker, "Introd. to Dryden's Essays" and "Epic and Romance," ch. v. p. 352 (ed. 1908).

But in spite of the attempts to prove the heroic romance like the epic and unlike the " old romance," there were those who, even at the height of its popularity, viewed the current fiction with suspicion. The " prejudice " was acknowledged by the translators and writers of romances, and it is perhaps more accurate to consider their dissertations on romantic theory rather as apologies[2] and answers to the objections urged by the serious-minded against romance, than as spontaneous and disinterested explanations of the nature of heroic fiction. These apologies failed in their object, and the " prejudice " seems to have grown deeper and more widespread as the century advanced; for the age of Dryden and heroic plays was passing into the age of Pope and the " Essay on Man," which, though it may not have had enough moral sensitiveness to fear the enervating effects of heroic romance, was too " reasonable," too much interested in man and his social relationships with other men, too practical, in fact, to take great pleasure in a kind of fiction which was frankly remote from every-day life.

The seventeenth century had tried to persuade itself that the writers of heroic romance " do consult nature ; " the eighteenth was obliged to confess[3] that they " soar above nature. They introduce into their descriptions trees, water, air, etc., like common mortals ; but then all their rivers are clearer than crystal, and every breeze is impregnated with the spices of Arabia." The *Spectator* and the *Guardian* in the early, and such periodicals as the *World* and the *Adventurer* in the mid eighteenth century, contain sarcastic references to romances, warnings[4] against reading them, and " terrible examples "[5] of the disastrous moral effects following indulgence in that habit. Addison regarded[6] romances as at best trivial productions, finding their proper place in a lady's boudoir, and, with " chocolates and the like inflamers," to be avoided by the wise.

As early as 1705, Steele had introduced the satirical figure of Biddy Tipkin into his " Tender Husband." Biddy, whose mind is filled with " romantic " ideas of love and marriage, could not dream of marrying the suitor whom her uncle has chosen for her : " Do you think I can ever love a man that's true and hearty ? " she asks.[7] Her name, " Biddy," is most distasteful to her : she begs[8] her lover Clerimont, " If you have occasion to mention me, let it be by Partherissa." Her actions are so largely determined by the rules of conventional romance that she hesitates[9] to marry Clerimont, and, by so doing, extricate herself from a very awkward predicament : " How can we commit such a solecism against all rules ? What, in the first leaf of our history to have the marriage ? You know it cannot be."

In 1753, again, Charlotte Lennox published her " Female Quixote," satirising the sentimental and unpractical ideas of love and of the relationships of life in general which the constant reading of romances engendered.

But before the mid-eighteenth century a check, more effective than the most emphatic warning or most cutting satire, was given to the popularity of romance by the appearance, in the first works of Richardson and Fielding, of the modern novel. From this time onward the essential defect of the heroic romance, its aloofness from real life, became increasingly apparent, and "romance" was still more closely identified with unreality and sentimentality, while "novel" came to stand for fiction characterized by truth to life and healthy sentiment.

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[1] Translator of 1715.
[2] See Prefaces to " Eliana " (1661) and " Aretina " (1660).
[3] *The World* (1753), No. 19.
[4] E.g., *Guardian* (Nos. 5, 58) ; *World* (No. 79).
[5] E.g., *World* (No. 25).
[6] *Spectator* (No. 365).
[7] Act ii. Sc. i.
[8] Ibid.
[9] Act iv. Sc. ii.

The fourth number of the *Rambler* contains an interesting essay,[1] in which Dr. Johnson states his preference for the "comedy of romance" to the "machines and expedients," the "wild strain of imagination" of the heroic romance. He points out the superiority of the realistic novel in the matter of instructiveness—the very point in which the authors of romances had imagined that they excelled,—and shows how clear-sighted his judgment was in things pertaining to character and conduct when he writes: "In the romances formerly written, every transaction and sentiment was so remote from all that passes among us, that the reader was in very little danger of making any applications to himself. . . ." In a note to this essay, Johnson's editor of 1825 remarks that "this excellent paper was occasioned by the popularity of 'Roderick Random' and 'Tom Jones' which appeared about this time, and have been the models of that species of romance, now known by the more common name of 'Novel.'"[2]

This note suggests the effect which was produced on the meaning of the word romance by the distinction between "romance" and "novel." Some difference in the meaning of these words already existed, and at no period probably were they indistinguishable synonyms. In Elizabethan times the term "novel" (Italian, *novella*) had been applied to short stories of the type found in such works as the "Decameron" of Boccaccio, the "Heptameron" of Marguerite of Valois, etc.[3] Thus the title-page of Painter's "Palace of Pleasure" (1566-67) runs: "The Palace of Pleasure beautified, adorned and well furnished with pleasaunt Histories and excellent novels. . . . ." In his "Epistle Dedicatorie" Painter explains at some length the nature of his "novels": "In these histories (which by another term I call novelles) be described the lives, gestes, conquestes and highe enterprises of greate Princes. . . . In these be set forth the great valiance of noble Gentlemen, the terrible combates of couragious personages, the vertuous mindes of noble Dames, the chaste hartes of constant Ladyes, the wonderful patience of puissant Princes, the mild sufferance of well disposed Gentlewomen, and in divers the quiet bearing of advers Fortune. In these Histories be depainted in livelye colours, the uglye shapes of Insolency and Pride, the deforme figures of Incontinencie and rape, the cruell aspectes of spoyle, breach of order, treason, ill lucke and overthrow of States and other persons. . . . And although by ye first fact and view some of these may seeme to intreat of unlawfull Love, and ye foule practises of the same, yet, being thoroughly reade and well considered, both old and yonge may learne how to avoyde ye ruine, overthrow, inconvenience, and displeasure that lascivious desire and wanton will doth bring to their suters and pursuers. . . ."

This long extract from a sixteenth century apology for the "novel" has been quoted because it provides an interesting contrast between the point of view of the author and that of the critic. It was of such books as the "Palace of Pleasure" that Ascham [4] wrote: "And yet the Morte Arthures do not the tenth part so much harme as one of these books made in Italie, and translated in England. They open, not fond and common wayes to vice, but such subtle cunning new and diuerse shiftes . . . as the simple head of an English man is not hable to inuent, nor neuer was heard of in England before, yea when Papistrie ouerflowed all."

The Elizabethan "novel" was certainly a product of the Italian influence, while the "romance," though of French origin, had now come to be looked upon as a native form of literature. Yet the distinction between the meaning of the two words was at first based on their contrast in length rather than in difference in the choice or treatment of subject matter, and this use of the words did not disappear till the mid-eighteenth century. Blackmore seems to suggest it when he says,[1] " Voluminous Romances, the Delight of the past age, are no longer demanded, while short Novels and Tales are become the common entertainment of those who are pleas'd with fictions of that nature." Shaftesbury has a similar usage of the words,[2] and Chesterfield[3] makes the same distinction when he writes : " A novel is a kind of abbreviation of a romance."

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[1] See "British Essayists" vol. xvi. p. 16–22.
[2] Johnson's "Works" (1825), vol. ii. p. 20.
[3] Article "Novel," in "N. E. Dictionary."
[4] "Schoolmaster" (ed. Wright), p. 231.

But in spite of this distinction and the growth of the new and more suggestive antithesis, " novel " and " romance " were still often used interchangeably: heroic romances were freely termed novels,[4] and realistic novels romances.[5]

Gradually, however, the antithesis of subject came to be generally recognized, and Clara Reeve[6] formulated no new distinction when she wrote, in 1785, that " a romance is an heroic fable which treats of fabulous persons and thing. A Novel is a picture of the real life and manners of the times in which it is written. A Romance in lofty and elevated language describes what never happened nor is likely to happen. A Novel gives a familiar relation of such things as pass every day before our eyes, such as may happen to our friend, to ourselves."

Thus the meaning already attached to the word " romance " in the sixteenth century of " unreal," " impossible," " fantastic," was strengthened. Insincerity of emotion and unreality of sentiment were added to the " lying " and " bold bawdry " with which the romance had long ago been charged, and the word having been already set by the literary critic in antithesis to the epic, as inferior in truth to nature and in artistic form, was now set by the moralist in antithesis to the realistic novel, as inferior again in truth to nature and in ethical aim.

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[1] Preface to " Essays on Several Subjects " (1716)

[2] "Letter Concerning Enthusiasm " (1708)

[3] " Letters to His Son " (17$\frac{40}{41}$), ed. Strachey (vol. i. p. 82).

[4] E.g., " Eromena, a Novel " (1683) ; " Diana de Castro, a Novel " (called also a " Romance " in the Preface).

[5] E.g., *The World* (1753), No. 19 ; *Rambler* (1750), No. 4 ; Moore's " View of the Progress of Romance " (1791) ; Beattie's " Dissertation on Fable and Romance " (1783).

[6] Clara Reeve, *op. cit.* (Evening VII.).

CHAPTER V.

THE REHABILITATION OF " ROMANCE."

THUS far the history of the word " romance " has been one of steady decadence.

It has been shown how, owing to the influence of Puritan and pseudo-Classical ideals, the word had become associated both with looseness of morality and artistic defectiveness. Nor had the temporary popularity of heroic fiction served to lend dignity to the word. The heroic romance may, from one point of view,[1] be regarded as merely an episode in literary history : it did not survive the appearance of its rival, the realistic novel, the authors of which acknowledged[2] no indebtedness to it, and, indeed, repudiating any connection with it, insisted[3] on their originality as romance writers. On the other hand, the realistic novel was not unindebted to the heroic romance for some of its machinery ; there is, moreover, a certain resemblance of feeling and method between Richardson's detailed analyses of sentiment and the laborious investigations into the causes, symptoms, effects, etc., of love, which were characteristic of the heroic romance, and were strikingly exemplified in the famous Carte du Tendre of Scudéry's " Clélie." Again, many of the writers of heroic romances believed that they were " following nature "—" imitating true history "[4]—and though a later age has discerned little likeness between the imitations and the original, yet this intention of discarding the purely imaginary in favour of the " natural " seems to point to the possibility of a closer connection between " realistic " and " heroic " fiction than is generally admitted.

But whatever be the relation of the heroic romance and the modern novel, one of the results of their contact was to lay stress on the qualities of unreality and aloofness from ordinary life which were inherent in the former, and this, again, as the distinction between " romance " and " novel " became more generally accepted, had added to the depreciatory force of the word " romance."

But about the middle of the eighteenth century the tide of literary creation and appreciation began to flow in a new direction. During the first years of the century the authority of Pope as a master of poetic art had been little disputed ; but as early as the third decade of the century[5] there had been unmistakeable signs that the Popean school of poets was not to reign undisputed over the " monarchy of wit," that new conceptions of the nature of poetry and the importance of imagination, and a new estimate of the value of our older literature[6] would replace the views which the " Augustans " held on questions of poetic theory and poetic value : in future " the creative and glowing imagination, and that alone," is to entitle a writer to the name of poet, and " the sublime and pathetic " will be regarded as the " two chief nerves of all genuine poetry."[7]

The literary movement of the early nineteenth century, of which these signs of rebellion against Popean authority were the earliest heralds, the movement which forms part of the great European social, intellectual, and spiritual upheaval with which were connected such different phenomena as the French Revolution, the German " Romantic movement," and the rise of modern Nonconformity in England[1]—this literary movement has been styled by a later age " Romantic."

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[1] Cf. Raleigh, " The English Novel " (ed. 1895, p. 109).

[2] Richardson (Preface to " Clarissa Harlowe ") alludes in disparaging terms to " idle novels and transitory romances," to which, he implies, his novels are in no way related.

[3] Fielding, in his Preface to " Joseph Andrews " (ed. Gosse, 1898, vol. i. p. 1) suggests that his conception of the romance may not be that of the " mere English reader," and says that his " kind of writing " is one which he " does not remember to have seen attempted hitherto in our language."

[4] See above, p. 24.

[5] Thomson's " Winter " appeared in 1726, and the completed " Seasons " in 1730.

[6] The Spenserian Revival dates from the early years of the century. The first Spenserian imitation given by Beers (*op. cit.*, p. 84), and quoted by him from Phelps' " Beginnings of the English Romantic Movement," is Prior's " Ode to the Queen " (1706).

[7] J. Warton, " Essay on the Genius and Writings of Pope " (1756).

The significance of the word " romantic " and the extent of its application in this context are debated points, and in view of the fact that " romance " and " romantic " were not generally used in connection with early nineteenth century poetry in England much before 1850,[2] so that no contemporary would have looked at Gray or Collins or Hurd, or either of the Wartons, as the possible precursor of a " Romantic School,"[3] the question will not be considered at this point. The point with which we are for the present concerned is the relation of the later eighteenth century to the romance which they knew, i.e., to the romance as exemplified in the poems of Spenser and Ariosto and the seventeenth century heroic romance.

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It might well be anticipated that, with the reaction against the supremacy of Pope,[4] there would come a revival of interest in the older forms of poetry generally ; both these things were, in fact, symptomatic of the same deep and far-reaching change[5] in taste which marks the later eighteenth century. The revival of interest in our older literature generally,[6] and a largely increased knowledge of the scope and value of that literature, included revived interest in, and knowledge of, the mediæval romance, and this by slow degrees affected the meaning of the word " romance," until, before the close of the century, it comes to be used without any suggestion of contempt and, by a natural transference of meaning, to imply a certain legitimately imaginative quality which romances were seen to possess.

This great change in the meaning of the word followed naturally as the result of a change of feeling towards romance. The judgment passed on romance by a former age was, by the help of critical enquiry, reversed : the vindication of the " romantic " method of composition (as exemplified by Spenser and Ariosto), and the justification of the use of " romantic " material (i.e., the material of romances), together with the " Gothic Revival " of the mid-century, account for the raising of the word from a term of disparagement to one of honour.

It may be found on the whole convenient to consider the history of the rehabilitation of the word in connection with these three factors—the critical examination of the romantic form, the critical examination of romantic subject, and the " Gothicism " of the seventh and eighth decades of the century—though in one or two cases (as in the consideration of the part played by Hurd) it leads to some overlapping. But the additional clearness which results from a treatment of this kind has been thought to compensate for a somewhat arbitrary method of classification ; and it should be explained that the arrangement is adopted as a convenient one only, and not as in any way final or inevitable.

(*a*). THE VINDICATION OF THE " ROMANTIC " METHOD.

In an age which set up the classic epics as models for all subsequent narrative poetry, and deduced from them rules to which all such narrative poetry should comply on pain of being denied the right to please the judicious, there were two courses open to those who saw some beauty in the romance, and were dimly conscious that there must be some adequate apology for its apparent failure to comply with any rule: either to acknowledge the models, and to deduce from them new principles which would cover the romantic method; or to deny the universal validity of epic rules, admit that the romantic is not the epic method, and justify the former on its own merits.

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[1] The rise of Methodism dates from about 1739 ; but the movement did not become of national significance till after the mid-century.

[2] The questions of the date of introduction and the origin of the extended meaning will be discussed later.

[3] It is to be noted, however, that Knox, as early as 1777, had suggested a division of the " admirers of poetry " into the " lovers and imitators of Spenser and Milton " and " those of Dryden, Boileau, and Pope," and had appealed for an impartial estimate of the merits of both " schools " (" Essays," No. 129).

[4] This reaction was first unmistakably apparent in Joseph Warton's " Essay on the Genius and Writings of Pope " (1756). He first asked, " Was Pope a poet ? "

[5] See Beers' " English Romanticism in the Eighteenth Century " passim ; but more especially chaps. iii., v. and vi.

[6] See Saintsbury, " History of Criticism," vol. iii. pp. 171–183 ; Beers, *op cit.*, chaps. vi. and vii.

The second of these ways would certainly be the more effective, and in the light of the modern theory of criticism which insists that every work of art shall stand or fall on its own merits, the only satisfactory one. But the early eighteenth century was not ripe for any such theory; before any such standard of criticism as this could be recognized there came a gradual reaction from the extreme deference which the late seventeenth century had paid to the French epic theorists, followed by a growing appreciation of the poetic value of Spenser, and at last the conviction that Spenser had never intended to copy the structure of Virgil's poem and must be judged by other standards than those of Aristotle and the long line of French critics.

The extreme views of such critics as Le Bossu, which Rymer, Dennis, and others introduced[1] into English criticism, did not long survive the seventeenth century. The geniuses of the Augustan age were too great to be led into thinking that the composition of an epic is a mechanical process; it is only the third-rate men of the age—the Blackmores and Dennises—who still in the eighteenth century believe that Homer first evolved an " Idea " of which his Iliad is the illustration, and can, in all seriousness, write a chapter[2] in support of the proposition " That Poetry is to be established by laying down rules."

Pope, and Addison, and Steele, while they are familiar[3] with the French writers on the epic, will not admit that those critics are infallible, and question their extreme judgments. Pope ridicules[4] contemporary criticism, which " consists only in a knowledge of mechanic rules which contribute to the structure of different kinds of poetry," and gives a satirical " Receipt to make an Epic Poem," with instructions regarding the Fable, Manners, Machines, Descriptions and Language. Again, in the Prefaces[5] to the Dunciad, which first appeared in 1726, he seems to be satirising Le Bossu's theories. In the second Preface Ricardus speaks with scorn of " Monsieur Bossu, a Gallic critic," who " prateth of I cannot tell what phantom of a hero, only raised up to support the fable. . . . As if Homer and Virgil . . . had contrived the story of a War and a Wandering before they once thought either of Achilles or Æneas." Addison disagrees[6] no less emphatically with Le Bossu: " I can by no means think . . . that an epic writer first of all pitches upon a certain moral, as the ground-work and foundation of his poem, and afterwards finds out a story for it " ; and, in treating[7] of the " defects " of Paradise Lost, he is bold enough to admire Milton's digressions in spite of their violation of epic rule. The point of view of these critics is well illustrated by Voltaire in his " Essay on Epic Poetry " (1726),[8] though he was less orthodox than Pope or Addison.[9] He included Aristotle with Castelvetro, Dacier, and Le Bossu among those by whom the reader is not to be " tyranniz'd," and was willing to allow that there might be " many heroes " in an epic poem. But, like others of his age, Voltaire had no love for the " wild fairy tales " of romance; he complains that Tasso has " too much of Ariosto in him," and, in commenting on a passage of Lucan, says that it " shows how the true Grandeur of a real Hero is above the 'romantick.' " Dr. Blair echoes[10] not only Voltaire's scorn of the wonders of romance, but also the objection of Pope and Addison to Le Bossu's theory of the epic " Idea " : it is " one of the most frigid and absurd ideas that ever entered into the mind of critic"; the epic poet "does not sit down . . . to form a plan or Treatise of morality"; but at the same time Ariosto has "despised all regularity of plan," and his fancy can only be described as "extravagant."

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[1] See above, pp. 19–21.

[2] Dennis, " The Grounds of Criticism in Poetry " (chap. ii.).

[3] Cf. Pope's Preface to Homer (1715), with its allusions to Perrault, La Motte, Dacier, and Le Bossu; Addison's references to Boileau, Dacier, Le Bossu; Steele, *Guardian* (No. 12).

[4] *Guardian*, No. 78 (June 10, 1713).

[5] " Martinus Scriblerus of the Poem," and " Ricardus Aristarchus of the Hero of the Poem."

[6] *Spectator*, No. 369.

[7] Ibid., No. 297.

[8] The Essay was written (in English and in England) as an introduction to the " Henriade."

[9] Note Addison's constant appeal to the authority of Aristotle in the Par. Lost papers.

[10] Lecture xlii. (vol. ii.) " On Epic Poetry." The Lectures were published in 1783, though delivered considerably earlier in the century.

In spite, however, of such criticisms on the unbridled imagination of the romantic writers—criticisms more characteristic of the late seventeenth than of the eighteenth century[1]—there was a growing appreciation[2] of the imaginative worth of Spenser and Ariosto, and a tendency to rank the Orlando and the Fairy Queen among the great poems of the world in spite of their obvious defects. Hume writes[3] in 1757: "Ariosto pleases; but not by his bizarre mixture of the serious and comic styles, by the want of coherence in his stories, or by the continual interruptions of his narration. He charms by the force and clearness of his expression, by the readiness and variety of his inventions, and by his natural pictures of the passions. . . . And however his faults may diminish our satisfaction, they are not able entirely to destroy it."[4] Much earlier than Hume, J. Hughes had shown[5] his delight in the "vein of fabulous invention" and "poetical magick" of the "Fairy Queen," while at the same time he found its "model" a stumbling-block.

This kind of criticism, clinging to the orthodox classical tradition of art, but "romantic" in sympathy, reached its climax in Thomas Warton's "Observations on the Fairie Queene of Spenser,"[6] which appeared in 1754. Warton presupposes as the basis of his criticism that the "romantic manner of poetical composition" is an inferior one. At the very outset of his work he records his surprise that at the revival of learning, a "new and more legitimate taste of writing" did not succeed the old "romantic manner"—that "unnatural events, the machinations of imaginary beings, and adventures entertaining only as they were improbable," did not give place to "justness of thought and design, and to that decorum which nature dictated, and which the example and precept of antiquity had authorised." Warton praises Trissino for his "taste and boldness" in publishing his epic, and implies that Trissino's contemporaries showed little critical acumen in preferring the "devils and enchantments" of Ariosto to the "real merit" of the "Italia Liberata." Spenser is tried by the time-honoured rules of the epic and found wanting: he fails in "that unity of action by the means of which such a design should be properly accomplished." "Critical taste," Warton writes, "is universally diffused, and we require the same order and design which every modern performance is expected to have in poems where they never were regarded or intended. . . . If there be any poem whose graces please because they are situated beyond the reach of art . . . . it is this. In reading Spenser, if the critic is not satisfied, yet the reader is transported." Thus Warton finds it necessary to discriminate between the reader and the critic: "Spenser pleases," but the pleasure derived from reading him must be snatched surreptitiously by the enthusiastic reader while the eagle eye of the critic is turned away; and if we "scarcely regret the loss" of "that arrangement and economy which epic severity requires," yet Spenser is to be ultimately acquitted only because he "did not live in an age of planning." Warton does not seem to have conceived that there could be more than one method of constructing a long narrative poem: in his eyes the full enjoyment of Spenser necessitates a suspension of critical judgment, a surrender of reason to the power of imagination.

Though Hume and Warton and others preserve the old tone of grudging recognition of the romantic method, there are those who boldly include[7] Ariosto among epic writers; the test of the rise in the esteem of romance is the classing together, without adverse comment on the former, of Ariosto and Tasso. In 1752 Joseph Warton[1] classed Ariosto and Camoens with Tasso as " epic poets," and Hayley in 1782 included[2] him in his long list of epic writers. In fact, the prejudice against the romantic form was by 1785 so greatly diminished that a Clara Reeve[3] could claim epic dignity even for the ballad (" many of the old Historical ballads are equally entitled with the work of the ancients to the name Epic poem "), and could advance the hypothesis that both had the same " original," viz., the war songs of ancient nations.

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[1] See above, p. 28-9.

[2] This connects itself with the Spenserian Revival, which reached its climax in the forties and fifties.

[3] "Of the Standard of Taste" (ed. Green and Grose, 1882, vol. i. p. 270).

[4] But Hume was fundamentally a "classicist." Cf. his eulogy of Wilkie's "Epigoniad" (vol. ii. p. 425)—"A Letter to the Authors of the Critical Review concerning the Epigoniad of Wilkie," April, 1759—(which, however, was never published by the author) with this "faint praise."

[5] Remarks on the "Faerie Queene"—prefaced to his 1715 edition of Spenser.

[6] For general accounts of the "Observations," see Beers, *op. cit.*, pp. 99-101; Saintsbury, *op. cit.* (vol. iii.), pp. 68-70.

[7] In this connection the extended meaning of "epic" should be noticed. Hurd, in his "Letters" (1762), used "epic" and "narrative" as synonymous terms; Hayley's inclusion (in his metrical "Essay on Epic Poetry") of Boccaccio, Ariosto, Trissino, Tassoni, *Chaucer*, Spenser, Cowley, Milton, *Dryden*, Davenant, Blackmore, *Pope* and Chatterton among epic writers points to a similar use of the word.

But it must have been clear to some minds that neither the theory that, though he lacks art, yet, because he has an undoubted imaginative appeal, Spenser is to be classed among the great poets, nor the inclusion of an Ariosto, with or without comment, among the epic writers of the world, would serve to remove the stigma from romance. A bolder method, an attack rather than a defence, was needed: the new criticism must question the existing idea that there could be only one " correct " way of constructing a great narrative poem, must show that Spenser had a " model " which was not that of Homer or Virgil, and justify the " romantics " by the greatness of their achievement.

William Huggins, in his Preface to a translation[4] of the Orlando Furioso, published in 1755, was one of the first, if not the first, to adopt the new method. Huggins states that his translation was the first which had been made since that of Harington[5] in 1591. He acknowledges no indebtedness to Harington, and notices the earlier translation only to condemn it, but his Preface recalls[6] Harington's in more than one point.

In it he declares that Ariosto was not under the restraint of epic laws, and did not follow " the recipe for making an Epic Poem." He asks " Shall diversity of pleasures, the greatest essential in making them pleasurable, be said to be destructive ? If the journey is easy, let him be free to convey me : I shall not be angry if (mode me Thebis modo ponit Athenis) he carries me from Ind to Atlas . . ." His conclusion is that in spite of the fact that the Orlando is not a " regular Heroic Poem," yet Ariosto was " equally great in theory and practice."

This statement is far in advance of Warton's hesitating advocacy of Spenser, but it was left to Hurd in his " Letters on Chivalry and Romance " (1762) boldly to recognize a difference between the " Gothic " and " classic " methods of composition, and to vindicate " Gothic " unity of design against classic unity of action. He writes :[7] " When an architect examines a Gothic structure by Grecian rules, he finds nothing but deformity. But the Gothic architecture has its own rules, by which, when it comes to be examined, it is seen to have its merit as well as the Grecian. The question is not which of the two is conducted in the simplest or truest taste : but whether there be not sense and design in both. The same observation holds of the two sorts of Poetry. . . . Spenser could have planned, no doubt, an heroick design on the exact classical model," but the unity which he aimed at was unity of design, and this was supplied by the relation of the several adventures to a common origin and to a common end.[8]

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[1] " The Adventurer," No. 127 : " In what Arts the Ancients excel the Moderns."

[2] " Essay on Epic Poetry " (Epistle III.).

[3] " Progress of Romance " (Evening II.).

[4] A second edition was published in 1757, with the author's real name attached—edition one had appeared as the work of " Temple Henry Croker," who is described as the " editor." Huggins is stated by J. Warton (" Essay on Pope ") to have been also the author of " The Observer Observ'd," a pamphlet which bitterly attacked T. Warton's " Observations on the Faerie Queene," and vigorously defended Ariosto, whom Warton was said to have " grievously maligned." The Dictionary of National Biography also assigns the pamphlet to Huggins, though in the British Museum copy of the pamphlet there is a MS. note, purporting to be quoted from T. H. Croker (i.e. Huggins), which denies the authorship.

[5] There were at least three editions of Harington's translation. The most recent copy possessed by the British Museum is dated 1634.

[6] E.g., Huggins notices Ariosto's art in " breaking off his stories," which Harington had interpreted as a " peculiar praise " ; he also says that Ariosto " seems particularly observant of all the ancients "—which echoes Harington's declaration that Ariosto followed the laws of Aristotle " very strictlie."

[7] " Letters on C. and R." (ed. 1776 ; publd. with the " Dialogues "), vol. iii. p. 267.

[8] Pp. 272, 273.

In 1783[1] John Hoole, in a third complete[2] translation of the Orlando in heroic verse,[3] followed the example set by Hurd. The translator lays it down that, while it is obvious that Ariosto never intended to write an epic poem, yet the Orlando is not " with respect to the epic part " defective in unity ;[4] the hostile criticism which Ariosto met was " due to the mistaken opinion that he is to be tried by the rules of Aristotle and the examples of Homer and Virgil."

There is no need to follow further this enquiry into the history of the vindication of the romantic method. Hurd's work had shown the right of the narrative poet to adopt a method of construction different from that used by the ancients, and from this time it begins to be generally recognised that the " romantic " is a legitimate, though, possibly, not the highest, artistic form.

(*b*) THE JUSTIFICATION OF ROMANTIC MATERIAL.

Just as the less confident defenders of the romantic method attempted to prove its conformity with the principles of classical art, so the more timorous lovers of " fine fabling " tried to find a classical precedent for the marvels which Davenant and others had thought to resemble a " continuance of extraordinary dreams, such as excellent Poets and Painters . . . may have in the beginning of Feavers " : it was seen that the subject-matter of epic and romance was not unlike, and the magic of Homer was declared to be of the same nature as that of Ariosto.

Burke, in his " Essay on the Sublime and Beautiful " (1756), compares the Æneid with Don Bellianis, and finds that they " differ very little. In both these pieces . . . a tale exciting admiration is told ; both are full of action, both are passionate ; in both are voyages, battles, triumphs and continual changes of fortune." Joseph Warton advances[5] the opinion that mediæval romance was indebted for its winged steeds, monsters, enchantments, etc., to classical myth : " To say that Amadis and Sir Tristan have a classical foundation may at first sight appear paradoxical ; but if the subject were examined to the bottom, I am inclined to think that the wildest chimeras in those books of chivalry with which Don Quixote's library was furnished would be found to have a close connection with ancient mythology."

Dr. Blair,[6] writing of the " stories of knight-errantry " which Tasso used in his " Gierusalemma Deliverata," urges in defence of Tasso that " he is not more marvellous and romantic than either Homer or Virgil. All the difference is that in the one we find the Romance of Paganism, in the other that of Chivalry."

Hoole,[7] again, in his Preface to the " Orlando," speaks of Ariosto's marvels as not more incredible than those of the Greek and Latin poets ; and Clara Reeve[8] calls Homer at once the " greatest epic poet and the parent of Romance," adding, " it is astonishing that men of sense and of learning . . . . should despise and ridicule Romances, as the most contemptible of all kinds of writing, and yet expatiate in raptures on the beauties of the fables of the old Classic poets—on stories far more wild and extravagant, and infinitely more incredible."

Whether these critics were right in their view of the resemblance in kind between the subject-matter of epic and romance, and more especially of the similarity of ancient and mediæval mythology, does not affect the present argument. The thing to be noticed is that they attempted to justify the use of “ romantic *material* ” by an appeal to classical authority, just as, in other instances, efforts were made to show that the romance *form* fulfilled the requirements of the canons of classical art.

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[1] Subsequent editions were issued in 1785, 1791, 1807, 1816, 1818, 1819.

[2] In 1774 an anonymous translation of part of Canto XVIII. had appeared, prefaced by the remark that " as this little piece is receiv'd the remainder will be published or suppress." The remainder was suppressed ! The re-awakened interest in Ariosto is also shown by another fragment translated by Henry Boyd, in 1785. There were several translations in the early nineteenth century.

[3] Huggins' version was in stanzas.

[4] Yet Hoole showed that his appreciation of Ariosto was not quite whole-hearted, for in 1791 he published a version of the " Orlando," in which he had " connected the narrative and disposed the stories in a regular series," thus setting Ariosto in a " more striking competition with the splendid writers of the ancient and modern epic " !

[5] " Essay on the Genius and Writings of Pope " (ed. 1806, vol. ii. p. 3).

[6] Lecture xliv. (ed. 1783).

[7] Translation of " Orlando Furioso " (1783), Preface (vol. i., p. 36).

[8] Op. cit. (Evening II.).

But as in the vindication of romantic art, so in the justification of romantic material, a more positive and independent type of criticism was needed : “ forests and enchantments drear,” and all the other romantic paraphernalia, must eventually stand or fall on their own merits.

The recognition of the intrinsic value of romances was rendered easier for the later eighteenth century by the new realization of the fact that the stories of chivalry were not as remote from real mediæval life as the early eighteenth century had supposed ; that the picturesque fictions of Spenser and Ariosto were not as imaginary as the “ age of prose and reason ” had conceived, but approximated to a true description of one phase of mediæval life. T. Warton points out[1] that though Spenser was “ employed in drawing the affectations and conceits and fopperies of chivalry,” yet “ this was nothing more than an imitation of real life ” ; Hurd[2] shows that “ Gothick manners ” are not “ visionary and fantastick,” but “ natural ” ; Mrs. Dobson, in her Preface to the translation of de Sainte Palaye's “ Memoirs of Ancient Chivalry ” (1784), will have it that “ Chivalry is not a childish object to attend to,” and that the “ old romances ” are to be valued as “ pictures of life ” ; even Dr. Johnson, whose sympathies cannot be called “ romantic,” confesses[3] that the fictions of the Gothic romances were not so remote from credibility as they are now thought.

But though the awakening of the historical spirit helped to win a more respectful hearing for “ tales of wonder,” the new idea of the worth of “ Gothic fictions ” was due primarily to a realization of their imaginative value, and this, in its turn, was the effect of a new conception of the nature and ideals of poetry.

Hughes' and T. Warton's appreciation of Spenser's “ poetical magick ” has already been noticed. Hurd,[4] more daring than they, sets out to prove not only the suitability but the “ Pre-eminence of the Gothick manners and fictions as adapted to the ends of poetry above the Classick.” The “ Gothic fictions are more sublime, more terrible, more alarming ” than those of the Classics, and are therefore more fitted for poetic purposes ; the aim of the poet is not to deceive his readers : he thinks it enough if he can bring them to imagine the possibility of his “ incredible fictions.” He attacks the interpretation put by the Augustans on nature, reason and experience. The poet's nature includes a world of his own, “ where experience has less to do than consistent imagination,”[5] and the epic (i.e., narrative) poet would not only acknowledge the charge of unreality in his poems, but would “ value himself upon it.” He would say, “ I leave to the sage dramatist the merit of being always broad awake and always in his senses : the ‘ divine dream ’ and delirious fancy are among the noblest of my prerogatives.”[6] Hurd closes his Letters with the well-known regret for the lost “ world of fine fabling.”

Could he have looked ahead, he would have seen a new world of fabling, finer, perhaps, than that which had passed away. Those who come after him know how largely he was responsible for the discovery of that new world ;—for all critics are agreed on the importance of his work as one of the heralds of the “ Romantic Revival.”[7]

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[1] Op. cit. section x. (“ Of Spenser's Allegorical Character ”).

[2] Page 316 (op. cit.).

[3] “ Journey to the Western Isles ” (ed. 1825), p. 174. But in spite of this admission, Johnson could assume the fashionable air of superiority towards such stories : “ The study of those who then (i.e. in the barbarous time of Shakespeare) aspired to plebeian learning was laid out upon adventures, giants, dragons, and enchantments. The Death of Arthur was the favourite volume ” (Preface to “ Shakespeare ” (1765), ed. “ Works,” 1855, vol. v. p. 125.)

[4] Op. cit. (vol. iii. p. 282).

[5] Ibid. (p. 303).

[6] Ibid. (pp. 308, 309).

[7] The popularity of the “ Letters ” was considerable ; a sixth edition of the “ Letters,” together with the “ Dialogues ” (to illustrate one of which they were originally written), appeared in 1788. The “ Letters ” were first, however, printed separately in 1762. The British Museum possesses copies of two different editions for that year. For general accounts of the “ Letters,” see Beers, *op. cit.* (chap. vii.) and Saintsbury, *op. cit.*, vol. iii. pp. 75–78.

(c). THE "GOTHIC" REVIVAL.[1]

The revival of the taste for Gothic architecture in the later eighteenth century is closely related to the Romantic Movement, " if indeed," as Mr. Beers says,[2] " it did not give it its original impulse." The word " Gothic " is, during the same period, no less closely connected with the word " romantic." Gothic often implies romantic ; romantic suggests Gothic ; and, in fact, the two terms are not seldom used interchangeably. When, therefore, the taste for Gothic architecture led, first to a fashionable craze for, and later, to a genuine appreciation of, mediæval buildings, and the word " Gothic," in consequence, came to be associated with artistic beauty, there was added to the word " romantic " also the new suggestion of beauty of form.

But before this point was reached, there was a long period (roughly speaking, nearly a hundred years, i.e., c. 1680–c. 1760) during which the term " Gothic " was synonymous with " barbarous."

A short history of the use of the word till the close of the eighteenth century will illustrate the progress of thought, and show the close connection between the terms " Gothic " and " Romantic."

No instance[3] of the use of the word, or of any of its variants or derivatives in English, is given in the " New English Dictionary " before the year 1602, when it occurs in the form " Gothish,"[4] meaning " barbarous," " Goth-like." The first example quoted of the use of Gothic as an architectural term is taken from Evelyn's Diary for the year 1641 : " This toune hath one of the fairest Churches of the Gotiq design I had seen " ; from this time instances of the use of the word are frequent. To Evelyn in the mid-seventeenth century a Gothic Church was " fair," but the late seventeenth century, with its distaste for everything belonging to the Middle Ages, began to find the Gothic style barbarous and lacking in simplicity. Bishop Burnet,[5] writing in 1685–86, says that St. Mark's Church " hath nothing to recommend it but its great Antiquity," and Addison,[6] early in the next century, comparing the impression produced on the mind by the Pantheon and a Gothic cathedral, speaks of the " greatness of the manner " of the one and the " meanness " of the other.

Thus, in the late seventeenth century, the word Gothic acquired a depreciatory meaning, and was almost always placed, consciously or unconsciously, in antithesis to classic. The uncivilized Gothic (or Northern) nations were compared with the refined Greeks and Latins ; the barbaric ornateness of their buildings was set over against the simplicity of classical architecture ; their rhyming poetry and loosely constructed romances were contrasted with the quantitative verse[7] and regularly-planned epics of the ancients. In every case the inferiority of the Gothic nation was obvious to the later seventeenth century, and when the word Gothic was introduced into literary criticism it implied the mediæval as opposed to the ancient, false taste and formlessness as opposed to sound judgment and symmetry. It was found in particular to express those qualities of formlessness and incongruity which the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries considered inherent in romances, and it is in connection with the romance that it is chiefly used : while romance-material —dragons, enchantments, knights, tournaments, etc.—was contemptuously styled romantic, the romance-method was stigmatised as the " Gothick manner." This distinction must not be regarded as a very definite one; it is by no means always kept (see above pp. 19–21 and pp. 29–32). But the general impression retained after reading the 18th century criticisms of "Gothic romances" is that their "Gothicism" consisted rather in their non-observance of the classical rules of unity, etc., than in their use of "romantic" material.

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[1] I am indebted to Mr. Beers for this title, and also for some of the references used in this section.

[2] Page 231.

[3] But the Goths had before this been associated with literary barbarousness. See Ascham's " Schoolmaster," Bk. ii. ". . . our rude beggarly ryming, brought first into Italie by *Gothes* and Hunnes, whan all good verses and all good learning to were destroyd by them " (ed. Ascham's English Works, T. A. Wright, 1904, p. 289).

[4] " Gothish Spaniards . . . farre more sauage than the sauages."

[5] This quotation is taken from S. T. Perry's " Eighteenth Century Literature " (1883), p. 103.

[6] *Spectator*, No. 415 (" On the Pleasures of the Imagination ").

[7] The history of quantitative verse in England is associated with the names of Webbe and Harvey, Stanyhurst and Campion, in the later sixteenth and earlier seventeenth centuries, and with Roscommon in the later seventeenth century. His " Essay on Translated Verse " (written 1670, publd. 1680) ends with a lament that our poetry had adopted the principle of rhyme,

(" For that, in Greece or Rome, was never known
Till by barbarian deluges o'erthrown,")

and a fervent desire for the establishment of quantitative verse.

In 1692 Sir William Temple in his "Essay on Poetry" severely criticizes the productions of the "Gothick genius"; but it is difficult to determine whether the word, as he uses it, means more than "northern," or at most "mediæval," though the suggestion of "barbarism" may perhaps be there.

Three years later Dryden[1] uses "Gothic" with its full depreciatory meaning: "All that has nothing of the ancient gusto," he says, "is called a barbarous or Gothic manner, which is not conducted by any rule, but only follows a wretched fancy, which has nothing in it that is noble"; and again, [2] "The Gothic manner and the barbarous ornaments, which are to be avoided in a picture, are just the same with those in an ill-ordered play. For example, our English tragi-comedy must be confessed to be wholly Gothic . . . for mirth and gravity destroy each other, and are no more to be allowed for decent, than a gay widow laughing in a mourning habit."

Shaftesbury,[3] in his "Advice to an Author" (1710), uses the word with precisely the same meaning: "Without their [i.e., critics'] Encouragement and Propagation we shall remain as Gothick Architects as ever," and later, "We are not altogether so barbarous or Gothick as they pretend."

Addison[4] speaks more than once of the "Gothic taste" of English poets, and contrasts the "beautiful simplicity" of the ancients with the "foreign ornaments" of modern "Goths in poetry."

This low estimate of Gothic art lasted in some instances till late in the century: John Upton, in 1746, deprecated[5] the "naturally Gothic taste of Englishmen," and asserted that when Shakespeare uses Gothic legends, "he writes much below himself"; Smollett, in "Humphrey Clinker"[6] (1771), makes Matthew Bramble write that "the external appearance of an old cathedral cannot be but displeasing to the eye of every man who has any idea of property or proportion . . . and the long slender spire puts one in mind of a criminal impaled"; Cowper, in 1782, speaks[7] of the "tedious years of Gothic darkness past."

But before the mid-century the reaction in favour of "Gothicism" had commenced. John Hughes, as early as 1715, refers to "Gothick chivalry" without the underlying contempt which marks the majority of such references at this time, and he is one of the earliest writers to contrast Grecian and Gothic architecture without drawing a conclusion wholly unfavourable to the latter. He writes:[8] "In the first there is doubtless a more natural Grandeur and Simplicity: in the latter we find great mixtures of Beauty and Barbarism, yet assisted by the Invention of a variety of inferior Ornaments; and tho' the former is more majestick in the whole, the latter may be very surprizing and agreeable in its Parts."

Joseph Warton, in his poem, "The Enthusiast, or the Lover of Nature"[9] (1740), speaks with appreciation of the "ruin'd tops of Gothic battlements," and his brother Thomas' "Ode Written at Vale-Royal Abbey, in Cheshire,"[10] betrays the same affection for the "tall shafts" and "fretted nooks" of Gothic buildings. This guarded approval gave way after the mid-century to the enthusiasm of a fashionable craze, and Richard Owen Cambridge, in his "Scribleriad"[11] (1751), thus satirized the "Gothic gentlemen" of the day:—

"See how her sons with generous ardour strive,
Bid every long-lost Gothic art revive . . .

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[1] Observations on Du Fresnoy's "Art of Painting" (Works: ed. Scott and Saintsbury, vol. xvii. p. 407).

[2] "A Parallel of Painting and Poetry" (vol. xvii. p. 327).

[3] First Ed. pp. 81 and 116.

[4] See *Spectator*, Nos. 62 and 409.

[5] "Critical Observations upon Shakespeare" (pp. 28, 29, 40).

[6] Ed. Routledge (p. 144).

[7] "Table Talk" (l. 564).

[8] "Remarks on the Faerie Queen" (First ed. p. 60).

[9] Printed in Dodsley's Collection of Poems, 1782 (vol. iii. p. 104).

[10] Quoted by Mr. Beers, *op. cit.*, p. 204.

[11] Ibid., pp. 228–9.

Each Celtic character explain, or show
How Britons ate a thousand years ago;
On laws of jousts and tournaments declaim,
Or shine, the rivals of the herald's fame."

Thomas Warton himself recognized that the new interest in things mediæval was not altogether free from affectation. In 1782, in " Verses on Sir Joshua Reynolds' Painted Window,"[1] he confesses that he has been

"For long enamour'd of a barbarous age,
A faithless truant of the classic page . . .";

he has

"Lov'd to catch the simple chime
Of minstrel harps, and spell the fabling rhyme."

But now he owns that these were

"Phantoms that shrink at reason's powerful gleam,"

and that

"Thy powerful hand has broke the Gothic chain,
And brought my bosom back to truth again; . . .
To truth, whose bold and unresisted aim
Checks *frail caprice* and *fashion's fickle claim*;
To truth, whose charms deception's magic quell,
And bind coy Fancy in a stronger spell."

In Horace Walpole " Gothicism " was nothing more than a craze,[2] and his " Castle of Otranto " was, as he himself says,[3] the outcome of a dream due to the " Gothic Story " with which his head was filled. Yet Strawberry Hill, in spite of its false taste, and the " Castle of Otranto," in spite of its melodramatic crudity, have been of some value in the history of architecture and of literature: the one from the extraordinary amount of real interest in Gothic architecture which it excited; the other from its widespread effect on the fiction of the late eighteenth century, and its probable influence on Scott's historical romances.[4]

But, notwithstanding much spurious Gothicism, there was also much judicious appreciation of mediæval art. Thomas Warton's " Observations on the Faerie Queene " and " History of English Poetry " (1774) are sufficient evidence of his unaffected interest in " Gothic " literature, even though some of his mediævalism had been the fruit of " frail caprice." In Gray[5] this scholarly interest is equally evident; Hurd also, as has been shown in previous sections, was a true lover of the Gothic. He first clearly makes the celebrated distinction between the Gothic (i.e., romantic) and classic methods—a distinction which in some slight measure anticipates the much more subtle nineteenth century distinction between classic and romantic art.

By such steps as these the word " Gothic " came no longer necessarily to imply barbarism,[6] but even, as in Hurd's usage, suggested " sublimity," " terror," and " great poetry." Therefore, as the words " Gothic " and " romantic " were often used with but a slightly different suggestion—Hughes, for instance, uses them with very little distinction; Hurd, though he usually speaks of Gothic method and romantic material, tends to use them interchangeably; Clara Reeve links closely together " Gothic imagery " and romance "—the improved significance of the one naturally affected favourably the meaning of the other.

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[1] See Chambers' " British Poets " (vol. xviii. p. 94).

[2] Cf. Mr. Beers, pp. 235–6.

[3] Letter for March 9, 1765 (to Rev. W. Cole).

[4] Cf. Mr. Beers (pp. 230–240), and Leslie Stephen, " Hours in a Library " (" Horace Walpole ").

[5] See Mathias' " Observations on the Writings and the Character of Mr. Gray," 1814. Mathias notes Gray's real appreciation of Gothic architecture (" he not only felt the superiority of its effect in sacred edifices, but he admired the elegance and the good taste of many of its ornaments "), and at the same time remarks his dislike of spurious Gothicism. Gray had at first admired Strawberry Hill, but " when Mr. Horace Walpole added the gallery with its gilding and glass," he said that " he had degenerated into finery."

[6] The word, however, sometimes retained (as it still retains) this significance. See, e.g., the instance from Cowper quoted above.

This is the importance of the " Gothic Revival " in the history of the word Romance.

(*d*) THE USE OF THE WORD " ROMANCE " TO DENOTE QUALITIES ESSENTIALLY POETIC.

It has been already pointed out that Clara Reeve closely associates " Gothic imagery " and " romance." She writes :[1] " Our Poetry owes more to it (i.e., romance) than you imagine ; it was calculated to elevate and warm a poetic imagination, of this I shall bring proofs. . . . Spenser owes perhaps his immortality to it, it is the Gothic imagery that gives the principal graces to his work." Later she speaks of the " Spirit of Romance," and again says[2] that the Elizabethans " had no small portion of Romance in their composition." This use of the word romance to denote a poetic quality is new ; it was unknown in the earlier eighteenth century ; the first example of such a use which I have been able to find occurs in Hurd's " Letters," and it is perhaps not without significance that this early instance of the use of the word with its new meaning should be found in the first whole-hearted apology for romance : Hurd writes with enthusiasm of " the Spirit of Romance " which took its rise from chivalry."

Later in the century plenty of examples occur : John Moore [3] (1777) says that " perhaps nothing greatly delights the heart which has not in it a certain dash of romance " ; Dr. Blair[4] (1783) contrasts the " Romance of Paganism " with " that of Chivalry " ; Dr. Gregory[5] (1783) describes the " Fourth Period of Society " as " the period of Fancy, Enthusiasm, and Romance."

In these instances we have left far behind Davenant's identification of the fancies of romance with feverish dreams, and even Warton's shame-faced apology for Spenser's " poetical magick." It is recognized that the artless, the strange, the wonderful, the improbable—those qualities, in fact, which belong to the " old romance "—are poetic ; that the " dash of romance " is indispensable to poetry which is " magic, not nature."

And thus the word romance, after more than four centuries of steady deterioration in meaning, at length came to denote something good—something concerned, indeed, with the " feigned nowhere," yet not on that account to be condemned, but rather to be prized for its imaginative value, its power to unlock those

> " Magic casements, opening on the foam
> Of perilous seas, in faery lands forlorn."

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[1] Op. cit. (Evening IV.).
[2] Op. cit. (Evening VI.).
[3] " Strictures, Critical and Sentimental, on Thomson's Seasons " (chap. i.).
[4] Lecture XLIV.
[5] " Essays, Historical and Moral " (2nd ed. 1788, p. 39).

CHAPTER VI.

THE INCREASED IMPORTANCE OF THE WORD IN LITERARY CRITICISM IN THE EARLY NINETEENTH CENTURY:

THE THEORY OF "CLASSIC" AND "ROMANTIC" ART, AND THE CONNECTION OF THE TERM "ROMANTIC" WITH CONTEMPORARY POETRY.

THE natural movement of reaction against a dominant fashion had led to a rehabilitation of romance in the second half of the eighteenth century. The poetic qualities of the Gothic romance—the "fine fabling" of "Druidical times, so fruitful in imagery and sentiment"—were recognized and the word "romantic" was used for such distinctive qualities. The phrase "Spirit of Romance" occurs; the suggestion is made that no poetry can "greatly delight" unless it is flavoured by a "dash of romance." In consequence of this, the "manner" and the material of romance were alike, by the close of the eighteenth century, reckoned among the resources of legitimate art.

The early years of the nineteenth century were marked by a continued interest[1] in the older English metrical romances, and an increasing appreciation of Ariosto,[2] the typical "Gothic" poet.

But the characteristic contribution of the nineteenth century to the meaning of the word "romance" in England was not the result of the development of any previous well-marked literary tendency: it was a contribution different in kind from anything that had gone before, a product of the German æsthetico-philosophical speculations of the late eighteenth century. The theory with which the word "romance" now became associated is: that there is an essential difference between the spirit of ancient and modern art; to express this difference the words "classic" and "romantic" were used. This theory was introduced into England with the knowledge of the works of A. W. Schlegel and of Madame de Stäel. Coleridge's speculative imagination seized upon it, and it became a cardinal part of his poetic creed; Hazlitt used it in his lectures on the drama; various reviews of Madame de Stäel's "De l'Allemagne" and of the French and English translations of Schlegel's "Vorlesungen über Dramatische Kunst und Dichtung" noticed the new distinction.

At the same time writers of the early nineteenth century as a whole did not accept the classification, and, if as was by no means always the case, they recognized a real difference between ancient and modern art, they did not use the words "classic" and "romantic" to express the difference. Not till the second half of the century was the term "romantic" commonly used as a general designation for modern poetry, and applied particularly to the poets of the early half of the century as typical exponents of modern poetic art.

This chapter will deal successively with the German theory of classic and romantic art; the appearance of the theory in English literature; its failure to receive general adoption by English critics; and its ultimate recognition by the critics of the later nineteenth century.

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[1] The work of T. Warton and Percy was continued in the early years of the century by such collections and essays as those of Ritson (1802), Ellis (1805), Weber (1810), and by the antiquarian researches, essays (e.g. on "Chivalry" and "Romance," published in the Supplement to the "Encyclopedia Britannica," 1818) and poetry of Scott.

[2] Editions of Hoole's translation were published in 1785, 1791, 1807, 1816, 1819, and other translations, either fragmentary or complete, were made as follows:—"Specimen of a New Translation of the Orlando Furioso of Ariosto" by Henry Boyd, 1785; a translation of Cantos xv. and xvii.–xxiii. by Richard Wharton, Esq., 1804; an unsigned translation of Canto i., 1808 (published 1843); William Stewart Rose's translation of the whole, 1823; Christopher Johnson's Prose translation (twelve cantos only were published), 1827.

(*a*) THE CLASSIC-ROMANTIC THEORY IN GERMANY.

The cleavage between ancient and modern literature had long been more or less clearly recognized in Western Europe : the epic *v.* romance controversy in Italy, France, and England was, as has already been shown, one of the results of this recognition ; such critical dissertations as those of Corneille[1] on different aspects of the drama ; the numberless allusions, from the time of Sidney onwards, to the irregularities of the modern theatre when compared with the ordered beauties of the Greek drama—to say nothing of the famous " Ancients *v.* Moderns " controversy of the later seventeenth and earlier eighteenth centuries—point to a not inadequate appreciation of certain general differences between ancient and modern literature.

But notwithstanding this interest and knowledge, no serious attempt was made to consider the question from an æsthetic point of view ; no one tried, by an examination of the fundamental principles of art, to account for the fact that the formless romances and irregular dramas of the moderns give as much pleasure (though, possibly, pleasure of a different kind) as the well-planned epics and regular tragedies of the ancients : it was only too often taken for granted that modern art has no principles.

In the later eighteenth century, however, German thinkers began to study ancient and modern art from the æsthetic point of view, the difference between the two became increasingly apparent. and in 1795 Schiller formulated a theory which made no attempt to minimize the fundamental difference between ancient and modern art, and at the same time was not brought forward in support of the claims of either the one, or the other.

Schiller's treatise, " Uber naive und sentimentalische Dichtung "[3] was, Goethe claimed,[4] the outcome of discussions between himself and Schiller on subjective and objective poetry : " The idea of the distinction between classical and romantic poetry, which is now spread over the whole world, and occasions so many quarrels and divisions, came originally from Schiller and myself. I laid down the maxim of objective treatment in poetry, and would allow no other ; but Schiller, who worked quite in the subjective way, deemed his own fashion the right one, and to defend himself against me wrote the treatise upon 'Naive and Sentimental Poetry.' He proved to me that I myself, against my will, was romantic, and that my 'Iphigenia,' through the predominance of sentiment, was by no means so classical and so much in the antique spirit as some people supposed. The Schlegels took up this idea and carried it further, so that it has now been diffused over the whole world ; and every one talks about classicism and romanticism of which nobody thought fifty years ago."

" The advance made by Schiller," says Mr. Bosanquet,[5] " consisted in placing the antique and modern principles on an equality, as stages in a natural evolution. His predecessors had not fairly and freely admitted the difference between them, but even when they recognized the greatness of the moderns had endeavoured to force them into the mould of the ancients. It was Schiller who inaugurated the idea that it is not necessary to reduce differences to a vanishing point in order to assert continuity of principle."

Schiller suggests, then, the contrast between the self-consciousness of the moderns and the unconsciousness of the ancients, the objective reality of ancient art and the subjective idealism of modern art.

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[1] " Discours de l'utilité et des parties du poëme dramatique ; " Discours de la tragédie " ; " Discours des trois unités " (1660).

[2] Accounts of the later eighteenth century and early nineteenth century critics of Germany are given from the point of view of pure criticism by Mr. Saintsbury (" Hist. of Crit.," vol. iii. pp. 19–51 and pp. 351–405), from the point of view of æsthetics by Mr. Bosanquet (" Hist. of Æsthetic," pp. 211, *et seq.*).

[3] I use Schiller's " Sämmtliche Werke " (1862), vol. xii. pp. 140–234, and the translation of Schiller's " Essays, Æsthetical and Philosophical " (1884), pp. 262–333.

[4] Conversations with Eckermann (translated by J. Oxenford, 1850), vol. ii. p. 273. The conversation is dated Sunday, March 21, 1830, and occurs at p. 203 in the 1836 ed. of the Conversations in the original. (Cf. also a passage from " Einwirkung d. neuren Philosophie," quoted by Mr. Bosanquet, p. 297).

[5] Op. cit., p. 300.

Goethe says the Schlegels[1] " took up Schiller's idea and carried it further." Perhaps the most characteristic exposition[2] of Friedrich Schlegel's theory of " romantic " art is given in No. II. of the *Athenæum*—a periodical issued by the Schlegel brothers. But the influence of F. Schlegel on English literature of the early nineteenth century was not large, and therefore it may be disregarded. The most important work of the Schlegels as far as this study is concerned is A. W. Schlegel's series of " Vorlesungen über Dramatische Kunst und Dichtung " which were delivered at Vienna in 1808, and printed in 1809.

Schlegel[3] emphasizes in part the same antithesis as Schiller: the spontaneous *versus* the self-conscious, the finite *versus* the infinite. He points out the " unconscious unity of form and matter " in Greek poetry, the " joyous views " of the Greeks, the " plastic " nature of all ancient art, and the excellence of Greek sculpture beside the introspectiveness, the incomplete fusion of matter and form, and the " picturesque " quality of the art of the moderns, who have " never had a sculpture of their own ; " he dwells on the tendency to the infinite which modern poetry exhibits in contrast with the finite and self-contained poetry of the Greeks.

In all this Schiller had shown him the way. But in some of the most important and characteristic points of his description of romantic and classic art—points which in every instance have influenced English literary criticism—Schlegel leaves his master and strikes out on lines of his own.

1. In the first place Schiller's terms, " naive" and " sentimental," are replaced by " classic " and " romantic." Schlegel justifies his use of " romantic " to express the " peculiar spirit of modern art " as follows :[4] " The term is certainly not inappropriate ; the word is derived from romance—the name originally given to the languages which were formed from the mixture of the Latin and the old Teutonic dialects, in the same manner as modern civilization is the fruit of the heterogenous union of the peculiarities of the northern nations and the fragments of antiquity ; whereas the civilization of the ancients was much more of a piece."

This idea appeared in English literature in Coleridge's 1818 " Lectures on Shakespeare,"[5] and it seems impossible, though he acknowledges no indebtedness to Schlegel, not to conclude that Coleridge took the idea from him.

2. In the second place, Schlegel's " classic " and " romantic " do not exactly correspond with Schiller's " naive " and " sentimental." While Schiller classes[6] Shakespeare among " naiv " poets, Schlegel[7] speaks of him as the " greatest master " of the romantic drama—which clearly shows that Schiller's " naiv " is not incompatible with Schlegel's " romantisch "—that the class of " romantic " poets is wider than that of " sentimental " poets. Schiller lays stress on the objectivity of Shakespeare's art : he is one of the poets of whom it may be said, " He is himself his work, and his work is himself ; "[8] Schlegel thinks of his plays as the supreme embodiment of the " spirit of romantic poetry "—a spirit which mingles comic and tragic elements, boldly neglects the unities of Place and Time, prefers to give the significant detail, and give up artistic unity rather than to withhold it and attain perfection of form at the expense of fullness of meaning.

3. Schlegel, again, magnifies the importance of Christianity in determining the nature of modern poetry. Schiller had compared the theology of the Greeks, " the fruit of a joyous imagination,"

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[1] It has not seemed necessary to discuss any differences in the usage of " classic " and " romantic " by the two Schlegels. Their theories are fully treated by Haym, " Die Romantische Schule," 1870 (see especially pp. 689–90 ; 770 ; 800–805).

[2] An extract (transalated) from this " Fragment " is given by Mr. Hjalman Hjorth Boyesen in one of his essays on the " Romantic School in Germany " (" Essays on German Literature," 1892.)

[3] I use John Black's 1814 translation of the " Vorlesungen " (2nd ed. 1889, Bohn), together with vol. v. of Schlegel's " Sämmtliche Werke " (1846). The most systematic exposition of the nature of classic and romantic art is given in the introductory lecture.

[4] Pp. 21, 22.

[5] Ed. Ashe (1885), pp. 203–4.

[6] " Essays, Æsthetical and Philosophical," p. 281.

[7] Black's translation, p. 342 (cf. also p. 23).

[8] Page 281.

with the " ecclesiastical dogmas of modern nations, subtle combinations of the understanding," but tended to consider " sentimental " poetry the natural literary expression of a highly civilized society rather than an art form specially characteristic of Christianized nations. But to Schlegel the religious beliefs of the northern nations of Europe are of primary importance in relation to their poetry: " Religion is the root of human experience. . . . When this centre is disturbed, the whole system of the mental faculties and feelings takes a new shape." From the Christian standpoint " everything finite and mortal is lost in the contemplation of infinity; " and romantic poetry, which sprang from Christianity added to the " honest heroism " of the Germanic race " will always, in some indescribable way, bear traces of the source from which it originated."

Schlegel's tendency is to insist on " the search for the infinite " as the salient characteristic of modern poetry, and it may perhaps be true to say that while Schiller stresses the objectivity of the ancients as compared with the subjectivity of the moderns, Schlegel, with his definitely Christian sympathies, emphasizes the contrast between the finite completeness of ancient poetry and that reaching out toward the infinite which is characteristic of modern poetry. In this feature of Schlegel's work the influence of Schelling[1] is probably to be traced, and the thought cannot, therefore, be said to be an original contribution to æsthetic theory. It was, however, through Schlegel that the thought was introduced[2] into English literature.

In close connection with the thought of the concern of modern art with the infinite, there is to be found in Schlegel the idea of its representing a union of opposites—a reconciliation of warring elements. The moderns, taught by Christianity to recognize their discord with nature, must always endeavour to " reconcile these two worlds between which we find ourselves divided, and to blend them indissolubly together."[3]

4. Schlegel adds a significant illustration, not used by Schiller, to his description of romantic and classic art: he attempts to give definiteness to his meaning by the familiar comparison of the Gothic cathedral with the buildings of antiquity.[4] Coleridge more than once uses[5] this illustration, which is indeed found, though in a somewhat different connection, in English eighteenth century writers,[6] thus supplying an interesting link between the old and new criticism.

Schlegel himself has expressed shortly, and as adequately as a few sentences can express so complex an idea, the essentials of his theory: " In Grecian art and poetry we find an original and unconscious unity of form and matter; in the modern, so far as it has remained true to its own spirit, we observe a keen struggle to unite the two as being naturally in opposition to each other. The Grecian executed what it proposed "—this was a finite end—" in the utmost perfection; but the modern can only do justice to its endeavour after what is infinite by approximation; and from a certain appearance of imperfection, is in greater danger of not being duly appreciated."

An important part in the diffusion of the new meanings attached to the word " romance " was played by Madame de Stäel[7]: her " De l'Allemagne " appears to have introduced the Schlegelian theory of classic and romantic literature to English readers.

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[1] Schelling held a Professorship at Jena from 1798 to 1803. During the greater part of this time A. W. Schlegel and his wife Caroline were at Jena, and a warm friendship sprang up between the three. Schlegel's theories must have been influenced by Schelling's philosophy, which was embodied primarily in " The System of the Transcendental Idealism " (1800) and " The Philosophy of Art " (1802–3). For some account of Schelling's theory of the opposition between " Finite " and " Infinite," see Mr. Bosanquet, op. cit., pp. 323–327.

[2] Coleridge may have taken this idea from Schelling himself or from Schlegel; but the thought is found in English literature in 1813—five years before Coleridge emphasized it in his Lectures. (See the lecture on " The General Character of the Gothic Literature and Art," 1818 (" Miscellanies, Æsthetic and Literary," ed. Ashe, 1885, p. 92).

[3] Page 27, cf. Coleridge, " Progress of the Drama " (" Lectures on Shakespeare," ed. Ashe, p. 205).

[4] Page 23.

[5] See the lecture on " The General Character of the Gothic Language and Art," and that on " Dante " (1818), (" Miscellanies," pp. 92 and 142).

[6] See especially Hurd's " Letters on Chivalry and Romance " (Letter VIII.), an instance which (as has been shown in a previous chapter) is a striking anticipation of nineteenth century theories of art.

[7] For an account of Madame de Stäel, and of contemporary life, see Lady Blennerhasset's " Madame de Stäel. Her Friends and Her Influence in Politics and Literature " (English translation, 1889).

" De l'Allemagne " was published in London in 1813, after the first edition, issued at Paris in 1810, had been destroyed by the civil authorities and Madame de Stäel herself expelled from France.[1] She is throughout the book indebted to A. W. Schlegel. She herself speaks[2] enthusiastically of his gifts as a lecturer, and Crabb Robinson in his diary records[3] her acknowledgment of her debt to Schlegel : " She said to me years after, ' You know very well that I could never have written that book without the assistance of Schlegel.' "

A. W. Schlegel is certainly " writ large " over the chapter headed, " De la poésie classique et de la poésie romantique "[4] : Madame de Stäel insists on the importance of Christianity in relation to modern poetry, on the unity of ancient as opposed to the complexity of modern art, on the perfection of Grecian poetry and the emotional suggestiveness of Germanic art (" la poésie des anciens est plus pure comme art, celle des modernes fait verser plus de larmes "). Her statement of the German theory of poetry is simpler and more lucid, less complex and philosophic than that of Schlegel,[5] and hers is the credit of introducing to the reading public of both France[6] and England the theory of art which has coloured almost all criticism of the later nineteenth century.

(b) THE APPEARANCE OF THE " CLASSIC-ROMANTIC " THEORY IN ENGLISH LITERATURE.

The state of English critical theory at the beginning of the nineteenth century was not as advanced as that of Germany. We had had no Schiller to bring poetry into contact with æsthetic ; literary criticism was seldom disinterested, and depended for the most part on the whim of the individual critic. English literature as a whole was insular in character, notwithstanding the vogue of the " Jacobin drama," which had its origin in " Die Räuber," and the dawning interest, fostered mainly by William Taylor of Norwich, in German literature generally. A wide scholarship, in addition to critical imagination of no common order, and a certain philosophical bias was indispensable to the formation of a theory such as that of Schiller or the Schlegels ; and no one English man of letters appeared to fulfil these conditions : in the earliest years of the century, if the hour for the elaboration of an æsthetic theory of poetic art may be said to have come, no man fitted and ready to take advantage of the hour had appeared. Scott, the importance of whose position in the romantic movement is variously estimated[7] by critics of different schools of thought, cared much for the pageantry of poetry, little for its philosophy ; Wordsworth's theory, as expressed in both his poems and his prose, shows his interest in the aims and functions of poetry rather than in the principles underlying poetic art ; Southey, though he possessed great mental gifts and learning, had not the creative imagination which is necessary (paradoxical though it seem) for the elaboration of so subtle and " inward " a type of criticism ; Francis Jeffrey, the editor of the *Edinburgh Review* and perhaps the most famous critic of his day, was, from his " classical " bias, incapable of appreciating the " romantic " (whatever be the definition of the term), and was hence—even had his scholarship been sufficiently profound for the task—quite unable to evolve a constructive theory of poetic art which should acknowledge the excellences of both classes of poetry.

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[1] See her Preface to " De l'Allemagne," dated October 1st, 1813.

[2] " De l'Allemagne," chap. xxxi. (ed. 1882, pp. 365–68).

[3] Diary for 1804 (ed. Sadler, 1869, vol. i. p. 182).

[4] Part ii. chap. xi.

[5] Cf. also Mr. Beers, *op. cit.*, p. 143.

[6] See *Edinburgh Review*, April, 1830 (Art. xi.).

[7] Any estimate of the importance of Scott's position in the Romantic movement depends on the critic's conception of " romance " : e.g., to Mr. Beers, who tends to define " romanticism " as " mediævalism " (" Hist. of Romanticism in the Eighteenth Century," p. 2), Scott is " the middle point and culmination of English romanticism " " Hist. of Romanticism in the Nineteenth Century," p. 1) ; to Mr. Saintsbury, who, indeed, declines to define romanticism (" Hist. of Criticism," vol. iii. p. 184), but for whom Mr. Herford's definition of " an extraordinary development of imaginative sensibility " would appear to express some measure of the truth, Coleridge is the " high priest of romanticism " (" Hist. of English Literature," p. 656), and Scott, though of great historic importance, a much less significant figure.

It is, therefore, since the great poets and critics of the age were unconcerned with the classic and romantic distinction, not surprising to find in the periodical criticism of the first decade of the century, no recognition of the vital difference between the spirit of ancient and of modern literature, but instead such assertions as these : " Poetry has this much at least in common with religion, that its standards were fixed long ago by inspired writers, whose authority it is no longer lawful to call in question " ;[1] . . . . " in matters of taste . . . . there are no discoveries to be made, any more than in matters of morality ; " hence " poetry is in substance the same everywhere."[2] A critic writing in the *Monthly Review*[3] could even say, in ignorance of any theory postulating the near kinship of English and German literature, that the poetic taste of England and Germany is " fundamentally different."

But it is clear that such statements must, with an increasing knowledge of European literature,[4] become rare, and in 1810 we find an attempt[5] to explain the cause of the difference between ancient and modern poetry. The difference is due, we are told, to dread of imitation on the part of the moderns. The ancients exhausted the subjects which are obviously poetic. Their treatment of them was easy and natural. Hence, if the moderns wish to be original, the only courses open to them are either to delineate characters and external objects in greater detail, or to use a subtler analysis, or to exaggerate and distort nature. " In this way we think that modern poetry has both been enriched with more exquisite pictures and deeper and more sustained strains of the pathetic, than were known to the less elaborate artists of antiquity ; at the same time that it has been defaced with more affectation, and loaded with far more intricacy." This would seem equivalent to asserting that the difference between ancient and modern art consists in a manner which modern poets have consciously assumed in order that they may gratify a love of novelty—a superficial and inadequate explanation.

In the same year as the above, an article[6] on " Mélanges de Littérature et de Philosophie," by F. Ancillon, was published in the *Monthly Review*, in which Schiller's theory of " Naive and Sentimental Poetry " is noticed. Ancillon,[7] had (as the reviewer observes) questioned[8] Schiller's distinction between the " manner and tone " (I quote the reviewer) of ancient and modern poetry, and had stated that the difference is rather one of subject than of treatment. Surprise is expressed that M. Ancillon has not remarked the difference between nature descriptions in the ancients and in the moderns : " Who has not felt a coldness in the finest passages of Virgil and Horace on rural subjects, when placed by the side of the glowing descriptions of Thomson, of Goldsmith, of Gresset, or of Wieland ? " The writer goes on to account for this difference : the nature of men in the heroic ages was childlike; they accepted the fact of external nature just as a child does. The character of modern poetry is the necessary result of modern culture, and to disparage it is to disparage the progress of the race. It is almost impossible for a modern poet to write as the ancients wrote; and the failure of modern imitations of ancient poetry is no proof of poverty of talent either in the individual or in the age. This, it will be seen, is substantially Schiller's theory: it is, as far as I have been able to determine, the earliest attempt to give any coherent explanation in English literature of the German theory. But Schiller's terminology was accepted as little in England as in Germany. Three years later, in 1813, as a result of the publication in England of Madame de Stäel's "De la Littérature" and "De l'Allemagne," A. W. Schlegel's theory made its first appearance in English literature.

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[1] *Edinburgh Rev.*, Oct., 1802 (Art. viii.). This article, written by Jeffrey, and published in the first number of the *Review*, was of the nature of a manifesto, and showed the attitude of the reviewers towards the " new sect of Poets " (i.e., Wordsworth, Southey, Coleridge).

[2] *Edinburgh Rev.*, Oct., 1805 (Art. i.). This was also written by Jeffrey.

[3] *Monthly Rev.*, Dec., 1802 (Art. vi.).

[4] This knowledge is evidenced by the increasing attention paid by the reviews to foreign literature,—the *Monthly*, for instance, devoted three appendices yearly to reviews of foreign works,—and by the constantly growing number of translations of works dealing with continental literature (e.g., F. Schlegel's " History of German Literature " (1818), Sismondi's " Littérature du Midi de l'Europe " (1823).

[5] *Edinburgh Rev.*, Aug., 1810 (Art. i.). This is again by Jeffrey. It perhaps suggests the adoption of a somewhat more conciliatory attitude towards the " Lake School."

[6] *Monthly Review*, Appendix to vol. lxi. (1810), Art. vii.

[7] J. P. F. Ancillon (1766–1837) was a Prussian by birth. He was a great student of history from the philosophical point of view, and his writings include both philosophical and historical works. The " Mélanges de Littérature et de Philosophie " was his earliest work, and was published in 1801 (Berlin) and again in 1809 (Paris). The essay noticed above is entitled " Sur la différence de la Poésie Ancienne et de la Poésie Moderne."

[8] Ancillon criticizes Schiller's distinction as " plus ingénieuse que solide," pointing out that man was never in real harmony with nature ; that what in the ancients is " naiveté " to us, was not " naiveté " to them ; and that " sentimentality " is not characteristic of all or even of the best modern poetry, but is rather a literary fashion of the last fifty years, and the result of a lack of imagination and artistic sensitiveness. The differences between ancient and modern poetry are due to " les mœurs et l'esprit général des siècles." Yet Ancillon is obliged to acknowledge that the differences in " tone and manner " are real, and the reader is, in the end, brought to conclude that Ancillon's theory is substantially that of Schiller.

1. Madame de Stäel's Theory in English Literature.

In "De la Littérature"[1] (1800) Madame de Stäel had drawn a contrast between the literature of the north and that of the south—a contrast which foreshadows the more elaborate distinction between "classic" and "romantic" literature in "De l'Allemagne." Jeffrey, criticizing[2] the book, is inclined to think that Madame de Stäel is "right in saying that there is a radical difference in the taste and genius of the two regions," though his political suspicions are aroused in connection with the implied doctrine of the perfectibility of human nature on which, he says, the book rests. A critic writing in the *British Review* for Feb. 1814, attacks the book on the same grounds—though, again agreeing with Jeffrey, he accepts the idea of the difference between the "painting" of ancient poetry and the "sentiment" of modern poetry.

Though "De la Littérature" was written and published some years before "De l'Allemagne," the introduction of the two to English readers was almost simultaneous: the *Edinburgh Review*, for instance, reviewed "De la Littérature" in Feb. 1813, "De l'Allemagne" in October of the same year. The interest in Madame de Stäel's books, and particularly in "De l'Allemagne"—an interest due partly to the book itself and, perhaps, in no small degree, human nature being what it is, to the circumstances of its publication—was very general, and the theory on which it is based, the theory that Germany is only to be understood by the French on the assumption that there is a romantic as well as a classic art,[3] received due attention. The *Edinburgh* reviewer[4] characterized it as "most ingenious" and also "partly true," but "not secure against the attacks of sceptical ingenuity." Facts, he conceives, do not wholly tally with it, for "it was among the Latin nations of the South that chivalry and romance first flourished." He points out, too, that the poetry of the Northern and Southern nations of Europe has been affected by their adoption of either the Roman Catholic or the Protestant religion; but he gives away his point and leaves Madame de Stäel triumphant when he concedes that "the original character of the nations must have predisposed them to one religion or the other." The *Quarterly* reviewer[5] accepts Madame de Stäel's distinction as "founded in a very accurate knowledge, not only of character but of history," and justifies it on the grounds that:—

1. The interest of the Troubadours in Romance and chivalry was the survival of a taste brought from the German nations of the North, and that "as the memory and institutions of the northern conquerors declined, the tales of 'fierce war and faithful love' were heard with increasing indifference."[6]

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[1] The full title of the work is "De la Littérature considérée dans ses Rapports avec les Institutions Sociales"—which, in itself, gives some idea of the modern nature of Madame de Stäel's critical method. It was first published in Paris (1800); the occasion of the English reviews was the issue of an edition in London (1812).

[2] *Edinburgh Review*, Feb., 1813 (Art. i.).

[3] See the "Observations Générales" prefixed to "De l'Allemagne": "On pourrait dire que les Français et les Allemands sont aux deux extremités de la chaîne morale, puisque les uns considérent les objets extérieurs comme le mobile de toutes les ideés et les autres, les idées comme le mobile de toutes les impréssions."

[4] Oct., 1813 (Art. xii.). The writer was Sir J. Mackintosh.

[5] Jan., 1814 (Art. iv.).

[6] This argument seems to have been advanced in order to refute the assertion made by the *Edinburgh Review* (vol. 22, p. 206), that the rise of mediæval romance in the South disproves Madame de Stäel's theory.

2. The revival of a taste for "chivalrous models and romantic poetry" has been completely successful in England and Germany, but has met with an indifferent reception in France.
3. The best judges south of the Rhine are insensible to "our finest northern descriptions of the wild, the marvellous, the romantic, the terrible."

Neither of these reviewers refers to Madame de Stäel's terminology; the *Edinburgh* critic, indeed, persists in using the old term "Gothic" to denote the characteristics of Germanic art and genius. In the *Monthly Review*,[1] however, William Taylor writes: "The eleventh [chapter] divides European poetry into two Schools, the classical and romantic. The first originates in the imitation of the antients, the second in the progressive amelioration of our native efforts to celebrate our own religion and our own exploits;" while in an appreciative article[2] on "De l'Allemagne" in the *British Review*, the following passage occurs: "The characteristic differences between the classic and romantic poetry, between that which is transplanted and that which is indigenous, that which lays us under the despotism of foreign rules and that which flourishes under the influence of our religion and our institutions, that which is confined to the cultivated classes alone, and that which affects and interests the mass, are conveyed in very accurate and sensible terms."

In these passages we appear to find the introduction into English literature of the antithesis between the words "classic" and "romantic" as referring to two classes of literature.

2. The Introduction of Schlegel's Theory.

But the antithesis came much more prominently into notice in connection with John Black's[3] translation of Schlegel's "Lectures on Dramatic Art and Literature." Black opens his Preface to the translation with the words, "The Lectures of A. W. Schlegel on Dramatic Poetry have obtained high celebrity on the Continent, and have been much alluded to of late in several publications in this country." He seems to be referring particularly to an article on the French translation[4] of Schlegel's lectures which appeared in the *Quarterly Review* for October, 1814.[5] This review summarizes the lectures as "a work of extraordinary merit," and concludes with the remark that they are "on the whole every way worthy of that individual whom Germany venerates as second, and whom Europe has classed among the most illustrious of her literary characters." There is, however, very little reference to Schlegel's fundamental distinction in art: the classic and romantic theory is briefly dismissed, and a note to the paragraph dealing with the subject merely says that "Madame de Stäel has made the British public familiar with these expressions." But two important articles—one of them of exceptional value and interest for this study—appeared as reviews of Black's translation: one[6] was written by W. Taylor, the other[7] by Hazlitt. Taylor thinks that the lectures "deserve to be considered as forming an epoch in the history of criticism," and favourably notices Schlegel's account of the differences between ancient and modern literature. But the most remarkable feature of the article is Taylor's claim—which, though not put forward with much insistence, is certainly made—to have preceded Schlegel in his distinction. Schlegel had laid stress on the part played by religion in determining the character of ancient and modern poetry. "The same idea," says Taylor, "was maintained by us in the *Monthly Review*, vol. xviii., N.S., p. 129," though he admits that the lecturer's epithets, "classical" and "romantic," are perhaps more "exact" than "Gothic" and "Greek," which he had used.

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[1] January, April and July, 1814.

[2] *British Review*, Feb., 1814.

[3] John Black (1783–1855) is best known as editor of the *Morning Chronicle*, "the most uncompromising of the opposition papers." James Mill was one of his supporters; and John Stuart Mill wrote of him: "I have always considered Black as the first journalist who carried criticism and the spirit of reform into the details of English institutions."

[4] This was published in London in 1814.

[5] There are also appreciative references to Schlegel's work in the *Edinburgh Review* for Oct., 1813 (Art. xii. on "De l'Allemagne"), and in the *Monthly Review* for July, 1814 (W. Taylor's third article on "De l'Allemagne").

[6] *Monthly Review*, Oct., 1816. The article is assigned to Taylor by J. W. Robberds in his "Memoir of the Life and Writings of W. Taylor" . . . 1843, vol. ii. p. 469.

[7] *Edinburgh Review*, Feb., 1816 (Art. iv.).

The article to which Taylor alludes was published in 1795.[1] His point seems to lie in the fact that "in proportion as the notion of a future moral retribution of strict ultimate justice is feeble and imperfect, an inclination has ever been apparent to perceive and to produce remuneration here." This accounts for the choice by Greek writers of tragic heroes, with some redeeming qualities, by the side of the purely wicked hero of modern tragedies. For to the Greeks the fall of one who was wholly worthless would have been "purely pleasurable, and therefore improper for tragedy," whereas in the moderns "emotions of vindictive joy are strongly curbed by a sense of their [i.e., of the wicked] impiety and inhumanity: a pity for the sufferer, arising from an attendant alarm for his future condition, is at liberty to operate; and thus is possible among us that perpetual presence of painful associations in which Aristotle places the essence of tragedy." It must be confessed that to the unbiassed reader the wish seems to have been, with Taylor, father to the thought, and that there is little resemblance between Taylor's incidental remarks on the importance of religion as a determining factor in poetry, and Schlegel's consistent and well-sustained theory.

Hazlitt, in a note[2] to his "Spirit of the Age," wrote that Mr. William Taylor of Norwich had inaugurated "the style of philosophical criticism" in English literature. Hazlitt's own claim to fame rests on a criticism which is not only "philosophical" but also imaginative and creative, which, while it interprets the thought of another, adds to that thought a new meaning, a luminous suggestiveness which makes it doubly significant. Of this type is the critique on Schlegel's theory of art.

Hazlitt at once seizes on the distinction between classic and romantic art, which he describes as the "nucleus of the prevailing system of German criticism." Noticing Schlegel's tendency to "mysticism," he leaves Schlegel's exposition of the theory and gives his own conception of the difference between ancient and modern poetry. "The most obvious distinction between the two styles, the classical and the romantic, is, that the one is conversant with objects that are grand and beautiful in themselves, or in consequence of obvious and universal associations; the other with those that are interesting only by the force of circumstances and imagination." Thus, "Othello's handkerchief is not classical, though 'there was magic in the web;'—it is only a powerful instrument of passion and indignation. Even Lear is not classical;[3] for he is a poor crazy old man, who has nothing sublime about him but his afflictions, and who dies of a broken heart." Imitation (i.e., simple and direct expression of a conception) is the ruling principle of Greek poetry, imagination (i.e., the use of illustration, of comparison, of suggestion) is characteristic of modern poetry; and these are "not only distinct, but almost opposite. For the imagination is that power which represents objects, not as they are, but as they are moulded according to our fancies and feelings." Hazlitt elaborates this distinction, tracing to classic "imitation" the "severity and simplicity of Greek tragedy," the unities, the "beauty and grandeur" of the subject-matter of ancient poetry and its perfection of execution, and to romantic "imagination" the "reverse of all this"—"the colour and motion of modern poetry." He then goes on to find the causes of this great contrast in artistic methods, and suggests that differences of "physical organization, situation, religion, and manners" account for it. His picture of the physical conditions under which the Greeks lived, and of the "stern genius of the North which drives men back upon their own resources," is taken almost verbatim from Schlegel; the description of Pagan religion, with its "deification of the powers of nature," resembles that of the German critic; and from him, too, Hazlitt takes the idea of the vast influence of the Christian faith, with its message that "the Infinite is everywhere before us. whether we turn to reflect on what is revealed to us of the Divine nature or our own."

It is not too much to say that Hazlitt has improved upon his master. The "mysticism" of Schlegel which is apparent in such a description as the following:[4] "Romantic poetry . . . . is the expression of the secret attraction to a chaos which lies concealed in the very bosom of the ordered universe, and is perpetually striving after new and marvellous births; the life-giving spirit of primal love broods here anew on the face of the waters"—this "mysticism" disappears in Hazlitt. Schlegel at different moments suggests different points of contrast between ancient and modern art, and, sacrificing the unity of his conception, loses grip and forcefulness. Hazlitt assumes the differences to be due to one fundamental antithesis. The assumption may be open to criticism, but the assumption granted, a consistent theory is evolved; and his whole treatment has, therefore, a clearness and definiteness which is lacking in that of Schlegel. In this way the Schlegelian theory became incorporated[1] in the work of a great English critic. Hazlitt wrote his review of Schlegel in 1816; two years later Coleridge embodied the same theory in his lectures on Shakespeare and on the Middle Ages.

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[1] See Robberds (vol. i. p. 129). The article dealt with "Pye's Commentary on Aristotle" (1795).

[2] In the Essay on "Mr. Jeffrey" (ed. W. C. Hazlitt, p. 241).

[3] This is open to question: Lear had about him the "sublimity" which the "obvious and universal associations" of kingship and fatherhood must give.

[4] Lectures (ed. Bohn). p. 343.

3. COLERIDGE AND THE CLASSIC-ROMANTIC THEORY.

The question of Coleridge's indebtedness to German philosophy and literature generally is an exceedingly complicated one, and does not come within the scope of this essay. Since, however, some account of the relation of his theory of romantic art to that of Schlegel must be given, it will be well to point out some of the causes which make the question one of much complexity and render such an account a tentative one only.

There was, in the first place, an undoubted affinity between Coleridge's speculative thought and that of some of the German thinkers of the nineteenth century. One of Coleridge's earlier contemporaries had declared[2] that he recognized in the "Ancient Mariner" the "extravagance of a mad German poet"; a later contemporary wrote[3] that he "was a German in the grand healthy, speculative, and imaginative excellences of the German mind;" in the twentieth century Mr. Shawcross, the editor of the *Biographia Literaria,* has shown that Coleridge was a metaphysician long before he studied German philosophy and metaphysics. In the following early letter,[4] for instance, there is the germ of the later elaborate theory of the imagination which was developed after Coleridge came to know and partly to follow Kant. He writes: "I know no other way [i.e., than by reading "romances and relations of giants and magicians and genii"] of giving the mind a love of the Great and the Whole. Those who have been led to the same truths step by step through the constant testimony of the senses, seem to me to want a sense which I possess. They contemplate nothing but parts . . . . And the universe is to them a mass of little things." The sense which makes from the "mass of little things" an ordered universe is to be identified with what he later defines as that "esemplastic power" which "recreates" or—if re-creation be impossible—"struggles to idealize and unify."[5]

There was not only this general resemblance between Coleridge's tendency of thought and that of the Germans; there was also much direct borrowing from them on his part. This borrowing is sometimes acknowledged, but, in spite of Coleridge's plea[6] that he is not guilty of "ungenerous concealment or intentional plagiarism," and his emphatic denial of[7] indebtedness to Schlegel for the principles of his Shakespearian criticism, many critics[8] are of the opinion that his debt to German thought is greater than he would ever allow.

When, in addition to these facts, it is remembered that in many cases only fragmentary reports of Coleridge's lectures have been preserved; that the Lectures of 1807–8 (which were said[1] by Coleridge to embody substantially the same opinions as those expressed in lectures delivered after he became acquainted with Schlegel's lectures) have been lost, except for a few scanty notes found in Crabb Robinson's Diary; and that it is not easy to assign correct dates to the utterance of Coleridge's unsystematic and desultory criticisms—when this is remembered, the difficulty is clear of arriving at a just estimate of Coleridge's debt to German thinkers in general and to A. W. Schlegel in particular.

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[1] Hazlitt afterwards used (without acknowledging his own authorship of the extract) a considerable part of this review in Lecture VIII. of his "Series on Elizabethan Literature," 1820 (ed Bohn), pp 243–252

[2] *Analytical Review,* 1798 (vol. xxviii: p. 583).

[3] *Blackwood,* Aug., 1841, "Traits and Tendencies in German Literature" (vol. l. p. 160).

[4] Letter to Thomas Poole, Oct. 16, 1797 ("Coleridge's Letters," ed. E. H. Coleridge, 1895, vol. i. p. 16). See "Biog. Lit.," Introd., pp. xii. and xviii.).

[5] "Biographia Literaria," chap. xiii., "On the Imagination."

[6] Ibid., chap. ix.

[7] See Lecture IX. of the 1811–12 Series on Shakespeare and Milton (ed. Ashe, pp. 126–7); cf. also a letter written by Coleridge, Feb., 1818 (Ashe, p. 127, note), and a note to chap. ii. of "Biographia Literaria."

[8] See an article in *Blackwood,* March, 1840, on "The Plagiarisms of S. T. Coleridge"; cf. also the article on Coleridge in "Dict. Nat. Biog."

Recent critics tend to consider this indebtedness less than some earlier critics had believed: Mr. Shawcross questions[2] "whether the influence of German thought did not, after a certain point, tend more to arrest than to stimulate his mental growth," and says[3] emphatically that "to Kant alone could he be said to assume in any degree the attitude of pupil to master;" Mr. Herford writes[4] that "it is easy to exaggerate the degree of his subservience to his German masters; for in one important department—the criticism of Shakespeare—he freely adopted their more articulate formation of ideas at which he had, it is probable, independently arrived;" the author[5] of a study on "The German Influence on Coleridge" expresses much the same opinion as that of Mr. Herford.

Mr. Beers, on the other hand, is of the opinion that Coleridge's debt to Schlegel is somewhat greater than these critics would suggest. "The principles of the Schlegelian criticism," he says,[6] "were first communicated to the English public by Coleridge; who, in his lectures on Shakespeare and other dramatists, helped himself freely to W. Schlegel's 'Vorlesungen über Dramatische Kunst und Litteratur.'"

The question whether Coleridge had arrived independently of Schlegel, as he himself maintained, at a theory which accounted for the differences in method and construction of ancient and modern drama, and had realized for himself not only the genius but also the judgment of Shakespeare, the typical modern dramatist, may be left open. But it is difficult to believe that the elaboration of this idea, and the use of the word "romantic" to describe the complexity of the modern drama as opposed to the "classic" unity of form and expression exemplified by the Greek drama, were not borrowed from Schlegel, though Coleridge declines to acknowledge any such debt. "The Romantic standpoint," says[7] Mr. Herford, "is first apparent in his Lectures of 1811–12." At this time Coleridge, by his own confession,[8] had become acquainted with Schlegel's work, but he points back to an earlier course of lectures, and will not admit[9] that "there is one single principle in Schlegel's work . . . . that was not established and applied in detail" by himself in that course,[10] and which was delivered before Schlegel's "Vorlesungen" (Vienna, 1808).

Neither, however, in the lectures of 1811–12, nor in the "Biographia Literaria" (1817), the standpoint of which was essentially "romantic," does Coleridge make use of the distinction between classic and romantic literature. The terms are first used by him in the 1818 Lectures on Shakespeare and on the Middle Ages.[11]

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[1] Note to chap. ii., "Biog. Lit."

[2] "Biog. Lit.," Preface (p. v.).

[3] Ibid., Introduction.

[4] "Age of Wordsworth" (pp. 84, 85).

[5] J. L. Haney (1902).

[6] "Hist. of Romanticism in the Nineteenth Century" (p. 158), cf. also pp. 88, 89.

[7] "Age of Wordsworth" (p. 86).

[8] "Lectures of 1811–12" (Ashe, p. 126).

[9] Letter for Feb., 1813 ("Lectures, 1811–12," p. 127, note).

[10] This course has been almost entirely lost. Coleridge's accounts of it are vague and contradictory. For a discussion of the date, subjects, etc., of the course, see T. Ashe's "Introductory Remarks to the Lectures on Shakespeare" (Sect. 5, pp. 29–32).

[11] Of the "Lectures" among which the criticism dealing with the Middle Ages is found, the editor writes: "We may have an essay, or fragment of an essay, by Coleridge, used—or not used—in 1818, written before, or written after; we may have mere memoranda by him, made for—or not made for—the lectures, or reports, or memoranda, made by others, who heard them." Hence the difficulty in drawing any conclusion as to relative dates from them. Sections i. and ii., however, from which the extracts dealing with classic and romantic art are taken, undoubtedly formed part of lectures delivered in 1818. See "Literary Remains of S. T. Coleridge," ed. H. N. Coleridge, 1836 (vol. i. pp. 60 ff.).

In the introductory lecture to the course on Shakespeare, Coleridge says: " I have before spoken of the Romance, or the language formed out of the decayed Roman and the Northern tongues; and comparing it with the Latin, we find it less perfect in simplicity and relation—the privileges of a language formed by the mere attraction of homogeneous parts; but yet more rich, more expressive and various, as one formed by more obscure affinities out of a chaos of apparently heterogeneous atoms. As more than a metaphor—as an analogy of this, I have named the true genuine modern poetry the romantic, and the works of Shakespeare are romantic poetry revealing itself in the drama." Coleridge makes no allusion to the fact that Schlegel had used a similar distinction to the one he suggests, though both features which Coleridge emphasizes—the analogy between the heterogeneous nature of the Romance language and the variety of romantic poetry, and the characteristic expression of romantic poetry in the plays of Shakespeare—are stressed by Schlegel. The qualities which Coleridge seems to have considered typical of modern art are:—

1. The combination of the heterogeneous, of a " multitude of interlaced materials,"[1] as compared with the selection of the homogeneous—" the sternest separation of the diverse in kind and the disparate in degree."[2]
2. " Reverence for the infinite," use of " the indefinite as a vehicle of the infinite " and consequent " sublimity "—beside the Greek " idolization of the finite " and consequent " grace, elegance, proportion, fancy, dignity, majesty."[3]
3. " Inwardness or subjectivity "—beside the objectivity of Greek art. (It is the absence of subjectivity which " principally and most fundamentally distinguishes all the classic from all the modern poetry."[4])

These characteristic qualities of modern art are all noticed by Schlegel. In details also—e.g., in the contrast[5] drawn between the Pantheon and a Gothic cathedral, in the description[6] of the character and environment of the northern nations—the resemblance between the two is striking—too striking, it would seem, to be accidental or to be explained otherwise than by assuming that Coleridge borrowed them from Schlegel.

In one instance Coleridge appears to be directly indebted (though he acknowledges no debt) to Schiller.[7] As an illustration of the subjectivity of modern poetry he refers to the passage in Ariosto where Rinaldo and Ferrauto fight and are reconciled, contrasting it with Homer's description of a similar scene between Diomed and Glaucus. This passage had been quoted[8] by Schiller in his " Naive und Sentimentalische Dichtung," to illustrate the same characteristic: for Schiller as for Coleridge, the self-obtrusion of Ariosto and the self-effacement of Homer—the subjective treatment of the incident by the one, the objective treatment by the other—constitutes the fundamental distinction between ancient and modern art. Whether, therefore, independently evolved, or inspired by Schlegel, Coleridge's ideas coincide with those already promulgated by the " Romantics " in Germany, and, further, any credit which may attach to the introduction of the terms " classic " and " romantic " to express the difference—real though intangible—between ancient and modern art, is not his: in the use of these terms W. Taylor and Hazlitt, as well as other lesser men, had, as far as can be ascertained, preceded him. His importance in this connection is that in his work the theory was embodied in literature destined to exercise much influence on the critical thought of the later years of the century.

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[1] " Lectures on Shakespeare " (Ashe, p. 234).

[2] Ibid. (p. 205).

[3] Ibid (pp 194–5); cf " Miscellanies " (pp. 93, 140).

[4] Lecture X (" On Dante "), (" Miscellanies," p. 141).

[5] " Miscellanies " (p 142); cf. also pp. 90 and 92.

[6] Ibid. (pp. 92–3).

[7] Coleridge appears to have been most influenced by Schiller's æsthetic about the years 1808–09. Mr. Herford (" Age of Wordsworth," p. 85) says " that Crabb Robinson's notes of the 1808 lectures on Shakespeare bear traces of the influence, which is very apparent in ' The Friend ' (1809)."

[8] Schiller's " Essays, Æsthetical and Philosophical " (pp. 282–284); cf. Coleridge, " Miscellanies " (p. 141).

4. OTHER EARLY NINETEENTH CENTURY CRITICS AND SCHLEGEL'S THEORY.

Hazlitt's brilliant review of Schlegel's Dramatic Lectures in the *Edinburgh* has already been noticed. This is not the only expression of his views on the Schlegelian theory which we have. Lecture VHI. of the course[1] dealing with Elizabethan Literature, is headed, " On the Spirit of Ancient and Modern Literature." In it Hazlitt subdivides all tragedy into four kinds : the antique or classical, the Gothic or romantic (which " might be called the historical or poetical tragedy, and differs from the former only in having a larger scope in the design and boldness in the execution "[2]) the French or common-place rhetorical style, and the German or paradoxical style.

In contrasting the classic with the romantic drama, Hazlitt uses a long extract[3] from his *Edinburgh* article—without, however, acknowledging his authorship of the critique, but he adds to his description the following eloquent and suggestive passage : " Sophocles differs from Shakespeare as a Doric portico does from Westminster Abbey. The principle of the one is simplicity and harmony, of the other richness and power. The one relies on form or proportion, the other on quantity and variety and prominence of parts. The one owes its charm to a certain union and regularity of feeling, the other adds to its effect from complexity and the contribution of the greatest extremes. The classical appeals to sense and habit ; the Gothic or romantic strikes from novelty, strangeness, and contrast. Both are founded in essential and indestructible principles of human nature."[4] In this comparison Hazlitt anticipates the thought of more than one later critic : for De Stendhal[5] also classicism implies the habitual, romanticism the novel : " Le romanticisme est l'art de présenter aux peuples les œuvres littéraires qui, dans l'état actuel de leurs habitudes et de leurs croyances, sont plus susceptibles de leur donner le plus de plaisir possible. Le classicisme, au contraire, leur présente la littérature qui donnait le plus grand plaisir possible à leurs arrière-grands-pères ; " for Walter Pater,[6] as for Hazlitt, romance implies " strangeness "—" strangeness added to beauty."

One other instance of the appearance of Schlegel's theory in the early nineteenth century must be noted. In his " Essay on English Poetry," prefixed to " Specimens of the British Poets " (1819), Campbell refers to Schlegel's distinction between the classical and romantic drama, and the new method of Shakespearian criticism which had resulted therefrom. He finds[7] " romantic principles of art " unintelligible : " If a man contends that dramatic laws are all idle restrictions, I can understand him ; or if he says that Perdita's growth on the stage is a trespass on art, but that Shakespeare's fascination over and over again redeems it, I can both understand and agree with him. But when I am left to infer that all this is right on romantic principles, I confess that those principles become too romantic for my conception."

This is the opposite point of view from that of Hazlitt and Coleridge—the point of view of classic criticism which prefers to account Shakespeare an " irregular genius," whose faults are more than outweighed by his " excess of beauty," rather than, by declaring him free of the rules of classic drama, to put a doubt upon their validity as permanent laws of artistic production.

(c) THE FAILURE[8] OF THE CLASSIC-ROMANTIC THEORY OF LITERATURE TO PERMEATE LITERARY CRITICISM FROM 1820–1860.

To those who look back upon the nineteenth century from the vantage ground of the twentieth century, the acceptation of the distinction between classic and romantic art by Coleridge and Hazlitt, the two greatest of the early nineteenth century critics, might seem to carry with it a general acquiescence in the theory, and, in consequence, a widespread attempt to introduce criticism of a "philosophical" type, based on the assumption that "romantic" poetry is not to be tried by the canons of "classical" art.

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[1] The lectures were delivered in 1820 (publd. 1821).

[2] Ed. Bohn, 1884 (p. 242).

[3] Cf. pp. 70–76 of *Edinburgh Review*, Feb., 1816 (Art. IV) with Lecture VIII., pp. 243–253.

[4] Page 243.

[5] " Racine et Shakspeare " (1823), chap. iii. (ed. 1854, pp. 32–34). See also Pater, "Appreciations " (ed. 1907, p. 245).

[6] Postscript to " Appreciations " (ed. 1907, p. 246).

[7] Page 153.

[8] Mr. Herford has also pointed out this fact (" Age of Wordsworth," p. xxvii., Introd.).

This was far from being the case. Contemporary critics were in this matter apparently little influenced by Hazlitt, Coleridge, and Schlegel (who, it will be remembered, could be read in Black's translation). Reviewers writing for the periodical press, men whose opinions "are not the guide, but the expression, of public opinion,"[1] showed how far the distinction between classic and romantic literature was from forming part of the mental stock-in-trade of the professional writer about literature—of that class to whose lot falls "honest journey-work in default of better." There were adequate reasons for such an indisposition to accept what was, both in France and Germany, a commonplace of literary criticism.

In the first place, the position of Coleridge and Hazlitt as critics of the first order was not definitely established.

Again, there was a natural prejudice against the use of a term which, to the Englishman of insular tastes and insular convictions, primarily suggested libertinism, Roman Catholicism, "le gilet rouge," unkempt hair, and other things equally undesirable; for it is important in this connection to note that the critics and poets who adopted the distinction between classical and romantic literature on the Continent claimed that they, as the typical representatives of modern thought, were in a special sense "romantic." Their opponents were quite ready to admit this claim, and the word "romantic" came to denote not only the spirit of modern as opposed to that of ancient literature, but also the characteristics associated, rightly or wrongly, with the work, and in some instances with the private life, of those who defended "romantic" principles of art. This double use of the word was probably a considerable hindrance to its general adoption in England; for the term "romantic" —which for a large section of literary opinion was suggestive only of spurious ideals of art—was, since thus it could be clearly comprehended and defined, far more widely used as the designation of a "School" of writers, than as a term generally descriptive of the elusive spirit of modern art which defies comprehension and definition.

Further, neither poets nor critics of the earlier nineteenth century saw what we to-day recognize to be the underlying unity of the literature of the age. There was, moreover, little realization of the homogeneity of European literary movements, little attempt to link English poetry with that of France and Germany, but, on the contrary, often direct repudiation of any such connection—a striking instance of the inability of an age to form a right judgment of its own literary relations and attainments.

There were other circumstances which, if in themselves insufficient to account for the current distaste for the word "romantic," and the rejection of the antithesis between classic and romantic art, are yet not without significance in relation to these facts of literary history.

After the early thirties there was no living critic from whom the elaboration or application of an æsthetico-philosophic theory of art might have been looked for. Hazlitt died in 1830, Lamb and Coleridge in 1834; De Quincey and Leigh Hunt lived on till 1859, but even had their mental endowment fitted them for criticism of this type—which is a doubtful point—neither of them was interested in such criticism. Leigh Hunt shows, for instance, no adequate appreciation of Coleridge's speculative thought: he speaks[2] somewhat disparagingly of Coleridge's "discursive genius," which "ended in satisfying nobody and concluding nothing," and complains that he "did nothing with all the vast 'prose' part of his mind but help the Germans to give a subtler tone to criticism, and sow a few valuable seeds of thought in minds worthy to receive them." De Quincey, though acquainted[3] with nineteenth century German literature generally, and even with the critical work of the Schlegels,[4] makes no allusion, when such allusion would be easy, to the modern theory of art.

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[1] Ruskin, "Modern Painters" (Preface to 2nd ed.).

[2] "Imagination and Fancy"—section on "Coleridge" (ed. 1891, p. 249).

[3] See e.g. his essays on Goethe, Schiller, Lessing, J. P. F. Richter, "The Last Days of Immanuel Kant."

[4] See the essay on "The Theory of Greek Tragedy" (ed. 1862, p. 64).

The great critics of the rising generation were not concerned with questions of pure æsthetic. Carlyle, who was before everything else a preacher with philosophical sympathies, and whose two texts were Work and Wonder, had no taste for æsthetic discussions ending in a cul-de-sac. He dismisses[1] the continental controversies on Romanticism in a word, and hints at their triviality with, it would appear, a sarcastic innuendo against all such misplaced critical enquiry.

Macaulay, one of the matter-of-fact order of critics, had neither the discriminating taste nor the metaphysical thought of the earlier critics: the "mysticism" which even Hazlitt confessed to be inherent in Schlegel's theory of art, would render it unattractive to him.

But not only was there no critic of the stamp of Coleridge or Hazlitt to develop the romantic theory of art at this time. It should also be noticed that literary production of any kind was between the years 1824–1833 at a very low ebb. With the deaths of Shelley and Byron in 1822 and 1824 the first great period of poetic production in the nineteenth century came to an end. Wordsworth was writing little, and that little was inferior in value; Scott was engaged in the production of his last romances; Landor was busied with his "Imaginary Conversations;" the poets of the time were Beddoes, Darley, "Barry Cornwall," Mrs. Hemans, Keble, "L. E. L.," Hood, Praed, and Elliott, the "Corn Law Rhymer." In prose, Hazlitt's "Spirit of the Age" (1825) was the last great work of the first quarter of the century, and between 1825 and 1834, when "Sartor Resartus" appeared, no work of the first rank was written.

About 1830 the new age of creative literature began. In that year Tennyson's first independent volume[2] of poems appeared, and in 1833 Browning published "Pauline"—though until 1842 Tennyson was only the fashionable poet of a coterie, and Browning, though he published[3] regularly, went for years (as "E. K." wrote[4] long before of Spenser) "uncouthe, unkiste." But when the tide of creative energy flowed again, the critical antithesis which Coleridge, Hazlitt, and the rest had suggested was developed neither in practice nor in theory.

Neither Browning[5] nor Tennyson was interested in æsthetic questions; both poets, though Tennyson perhaps less than Browning, were concerned with the problems of real life, and intent on delivering their message to the age.

In the prose also of these years (1830–1850) there was an underlying purposefulness, a close contact with life—with problems whose existence is evidenced by such events as the Reform Bill of 1832, the Chartist movement, the passing of the Factory Act (1833) and of the Poor Law Amendment Act (1834), and the agitation roused by the Corn Laws and their repeal (1846).

The great prose writers—Carlyle, Dickens, Thackeray—keep a firm hold on life, see things as they are, never, in the search for the immortal garland of Truth, slink out of the heat and dust of the race, where, despite "the weariness, the fever and the fret," it is alone nobly to be won. While their attention was concentrated on the vital problems of the age, the greater writers had no leisure to bestow on questions of merely theoretical interest.

This "realism," in the form of preoccupation with needs of the present, of itself involved some falling into disrepute of romantic material. It is the demand for the actual which makes Carlyle speak[6] with scant respect of "our Virgins of the Sun, and our Knights of the Cross, malicious Saracens in turbans and copper-coloured chiefs in wampum, and so many other truculent figures from the heroic times or the heroic climates," and ask: " Is there not the fifth act of a Tragedy in every death-bed, though it were a peasant's, and a bed of heath ? " It is this which leads Sterling, in his review[1] of Tennyson's poems of 1842, to set the " Idylls " (" Dora " and " The Gardener's Daughter ") —" compositions drawn from the heart of our actual English life "—above the " glittering marvels and musical phantasms of Mr. Tennyson's mythological romances ; " it is this again which brings scorn into Mrs. Browning's voice when she says :[2]

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[1] See below, pp. 65, 66.

[2] He had previously published, with his brother Charles, "Poems by Two Brothers" (1827).

[3] The following works were published before 1850: 1833, "Pauline"; 1835, "Paracelsus"; 1837, "Strafford"; 1840, "Sordello"; 1841, "Pippa Passes"; 1842, "King Victor and King Charles," and "Dramatic Lyrics"; 1843, "The Return of the Druses," and "A Blot in the 'Scutcheon"; 1844, "Colombe's Birthday"; 1845, "Dramatic Romances and Lyrics"; 1846, "Luria," and "A Soul's Tragedy"; 1850, "Christmas Eve and Easter Day."

[4] In the dedication of "The Shepherd's Calendar" (1579) to Mayster Gabriell Harvey.

[5] Browning's "Old Pictures at Florence," which might seem to refute this statement, was not published till 1855 (in vol. ii. of "Men and Women.")

[6] In the "Essay on Burns" (*Edinburgh Review*, Dec., 1828); (cf. also the "Essay on Scott" (1838), where he speaks of the early nineteenth century as the "sickliest of recorded ages, when British Literature lay all puking and squealing in Werterism, Byronism, and other Sentimentalism tearful or spasmodic.")

"I do distrust the poet who discerns
No character or glory in his times,
And trundles back his soul five hundred years,
Past moat and drawbridge, into a castle-court,
Oh, not to sing of lizards or of toads
Alive i' the ditch there !—'twere excusable ;
But of some black chief, half knight, half sheep-lifter,
Some beauteous dame, half chattel and half queen."

There was, moreover, with this " realism " and consequent disrepute of romantic material, a reaction also against certain features of the romantic method in favour of the " formal beauty " of classic works of art. The view that Landor had stood for in the height of Romanticism began once more to prevail : in the fifties there was a Matthew Arnold who might have joined the " unsubduable old Hellenist " when he appealed[3] to Aubrey de Vere :—

"Show us the way ; we miss it, young and old.
Roses that cannot clasp their languid leaves,
Puffy and odourless and overblown,
Encumber all our walks of poetry . . .
. . . . . but who hath trackt
A Grace's naked foot amid them all ?
Or who hath seen (ah ! how few care to see !)
The close-bound tresses and the robe succinct ? "

During this mid-century, therefore, the word romantic, as applied to a form of art, would suggest principles, both as to choice and to treatment of subject, that were out of fashion. Hence to some extent the neglect of the early nineteenth century æsthetic theories, and the temporary disappearance from literary criticism of the distinction between classic and romantic art.

It was not until the sixties and seventies, the time of the florescence of the art of the " Pre-Raphaelites," when Browning and Tennyson, though still producing work of high quality, had given to the world what critics consider to be their masterpieces, that, in the work of Walter Pater the old distinction was once more reiterated—but " with a difference "—in critical writing of the first order. Then Pater draws out with exquisite suggestiveness the difference between classical and romantic art ; he speaks of the poets of the early nineteenth century as the English " romantic " school ; and it is apparently to him that we owe not only the modern familiarity with the distinction between ancient and modern art in general, but also the common application of the epithet " romantic " to the literature of the early part of the last century in particular.

This is not to say that Pater was the first later nineteenth century critic who dwelt on the distinction, or that he, first of English critics, termed Coleridge, Byron and the rest " romantic " poets. Such a statement would, as the following pages will show, be untrue. But it is from him that the impetus to a new consideration of the relation between ancient and modern art seems to come, and it is from his time that there is anything approaching a general tendency to call the poets of the early part of the century " romantic " in a special sense.

The influence of the general literary conditions of the mid decades of the century—the scanty production of the late twenties and early thirties, followed by a large output of literature characterized by a very definite " application of moral ideas to life "—on the matter under consideration has been already indicated.

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[1] *Quarterly Review*, Sept., 1842 (Art. iv.).
[2] " Aurora Leigh " (1857), Book v. ll. 188 ff.
[3] " Last Fruit off an Old Tree " (1853), (" Epistles," No. VI.).

This chapter will deal with the failure of the early nineteenth century poets and critics to recognize a "romantic" principle underlying their work and common to them all, together with the causes of this failure, and will then point out the growth of the idea of the unity of nineteenth century poetry and of an affinity between Byron and Wordsworth, Coleridge and Shelley, Scott and Southey, till we reach the application of the epithet "romantic" to these poets, as an important corollary of the emphasized distinction between classic and romantic art, in the work of Walter Pater.

1. THE NON-RECOGNITION OF THE UNITY OF EARLY NINETEENTH CENTURY LITERATURE.

In his Preface to " The Age of Wordsworth," Professor Herford says that " Romanticism is the organizing conception of the present volume " ; Mr. Beers, in his " History of Romanticism in the Nineteenth Century," writes :[1] " Most of the poetry of the century that has just closed has been romantic in the wider or looser acceptation of the term."

But neither Wordsworth nor his contemporaries ever applied the word " romantic " to their poetry ; " romanticist " and " romanticism " were unknown terms[2] in English literature of the early nineteenth century ; and the poets of the age would have derided an attempt to interpret their work by any one " organizing conception."

It is difficult for us who are accustomed to associate the year 1798 with a new era in literary history, and to regard the " Lyrical Ballads " as marking the completion of the long stage of tentative romanticism (of good and bad quality) that had extended since the second quarter of the eighteenth century—it is difficult for us to read ourselves into the past, and to look upon the work of Wordsworth, Coleridge and Southey, of Byron and Scott, of Shelley and Keats, as they or their critics looked upon it.

It is not too much to say that the " Lake Poets," who have often been pictured by modern critics as a brotherhood of poets, one in aim though divergent in method, would have denied the existence of so close a connection between themselves. Coleridge criticized[3] Wordsworth's poems and poetic theories, and protested[4] against " this fiction of a new school of poetry and . . . the clamours against its supposed founders and proselytes " ; Southey's estimate[5] of the " Lyrical Ballads " —written after the days of Partisocracy—is significant : " Coleridge's ballad of the ' Ancient Mariner ' is the clumsiest attempt at German sublimity I ever saw. Many of the others are very fine ; and some I shall read upon the same principle that led me through Trissino, whenever I am afraid of writing like a child or an old woman."

Nor were outside critics unanimous in recognizing the advent of a new school of poetry. A writer[6] in the *Quarterly*, as late as 1814, says that the term is an " absurd " one ; and De Quincey, who was himself not far from being a " Lakist," makes fun, in his Essay on " The Lake Poets," of the " critics of the day," who, " unaware of the real facts, supposed them to have assembled under common views in literature—particularly with regard to the true functions of poetry, and the true theory of poetic diction. Under this original blunder, laughable it is to mention, that they went on to find in their writings all the agreements and common characteristics which their blunder had presumed ; and they incorporated the whole community under the name of Lake School. Yet Wordsworth and Southey never had one principle in common ; their hostility was even flagrant."

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[1] Chap. vi. (p. 227).

[2] The earliest instances of the use of the words " romanticist " and " romanticism " (in the modern sense) given in the " N. E. Dictionary," are dated 1830 and 1844 respectively.

[3] " Biographia Literaria " (especially chaps. iv., xvii., xxii.).

[4] Ibid. (chap. iv.).

[5] Letter to W. Taylor, Sept. 5, 1798 (Robberds, vol. i. p. 221).

[6] *Quarterly Review*, Oct., 1814 (Art. iii.).

As late as 1834 the term " Lake School," which classed together " two or three poets essentially unlike each other," was termed[1] by one writer a foolish one. But the failure to recognize the " new school " must not be over-emphasized ; there is a great deal of evidence to show that the majority of critics were aware of the revolutionary character of the " Lakist " poetry, and of a similarity in the general tendency of their work. Hazlitt's choice of the title, " The Spirit of the Age," for his critical studies of his contemporaries is in itself significant, showing a realization of the connection between the literary and political movements of the time. It is, moreover, clear that Coleridge and Wordsworth knew that they had much in common as poetic theorists.

Yet, if the " Lake School " was recognized by many critics of the age, only the more far-sighted of them attempted to connect with the Lakists Scott, who added[2] " impulse and area " to the Romantic movement, Byron, " the great master of the romance of travel and of social and religious revolt,"[3] Keats and Shelley, who with Byron introduced[4] Hellenism into English Romanticism.

Blackwood, for instance, insisted[5] that Scott and Byron were not to be associated with the " members of the Lake School "—Wordsworth, Coleridge and Southey,—whose " arrogance " should be contrasted with the " dignified manner " of Scott, Campbell, Byron, and Moore. " Maga " again, is careful to differentiate[6] the " Cockney " and the " Lake " schools, and also refuses to allow Leigh Hunt's claim to " poetical kindred with Byron and Moore." Hazlitt, in his " Spirit of the Age," draws[7] a detailed contrast between Scott and Byron, marking the differences " in their poetry, in their prose, in their politics, and in their temper."

When Shelley and Keats won the attention of reviewers, there was little tendency[8] to connect their work with that of Wordsworth, Coleridge or Southey—though Byron, it is true, contemptuously spoke[9] of Keats as a " tadpole of the Lakes,"—and as late as 1872 the unqualified statement was made[10] that Keats " differed both in thought and style from all his contemporaries; and still more from all his predecessors."

Byron's view of his own position with regard to contemporary poetry is of especial interest in this connection. How utterly he repudiated any connection with the " Lakists " and the " Cockneys " is apparent to every reader of " English Bards and Scotch Reviewers " and " Don Juan," of his letters and his contributions to the Bowles-Campbell controversy on Pope. " English Bards and Scotch Reviewers " contains[11] satire on Southey, on Scott, on Wordsworth, on Coleridge ; in " Don Juan "[12] Wordsworth and Southey are again attacked ; the " Lake School " has banished[13] the poetry of Pope, and for this Byron cannot forgive them. For he was a romantic in spite of himself :[14] he " ever loved and honoured Pope's poetry with his whole soul," though he confesses that he has " shamefully deviated in practice " ; and what he thought of the future reputation of the " Lakers " is shown in the words,[15]—

> " Scott, Rogers, Campbell, Moore and Crabbe will try
> 'Gainst you the question with posterity,"

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[1] *Quarterly Review*, April, 1834 (Art. i.).

[2] Mr. G. Wyndham, in " The Springs of Romance in the Literature of Europe " (Rectorial Address delivered to Edinburgh students, Oct. 28, 1910). I use the *Times* report.

[3] Sir S. Colvin (" Preface to Selections from the Writings of W. S. Landor," 1882).

[4] See " Age of Wordsworth " (pp. 218–20).

[5] *Blackwood*, Oct., 1817 (cf. also, Sept., 1825, " Noctes Ambrosianæ," where Wordsworth is adversely criticized, and Scott declared to be " a Homer of a poet.")

[6] *Blackwood*, Oct., 1817 (vol. ii. p. 38).

[7] In the " Essay on Lord Byron."

[8] For reviews of Shelley, see *Edinburgh Review*, July, 1824 (Art. x.) ; *Blackwood* (" Noctes Ambrosianæ "), Aug., 1834. For Keats, see *Blackwood*, Aug., 1818 ; *Edinburgh*, Aug., 1820 (Art. x.).

[9] " Some Observations on an Article in *Blackwood's Magazine* " (" Works," ed. Prothero, " Letters and Journals," vol. iv. p. 486).

[10] *Quarterly Review*, Jan., 1872 (Art. iii.).

[11] See especially ll. 135–264.

[12] See Dedication and Canto iii.

[13] " Some Observations," etc. (p. 486).

[14] Cf. Macaulay (Review of Moore's " Life of Byron," *Edinburgh Review*, June, 1831).

[15] " Dedication to Don Juan " (Stanza vii.).

which tacitly assume—an assumption elsewhere[1] expressed—that generations to come will find Crabbe and Rogers in the right, and all the rest " in the wrong."

Byron's own view of his relation to the Lakists was usually accepted, and as late as 1876 he could be classed[2] without question among writers in the classical style—a place which he would have been glad to occupy, but which he himself knew was not rightly his.

The causes which led to this failure to see the unity of early nineteenth century poetry are not far to seek : critics were at once unable and unwilling to see it. Their inability to do so was natural, for there are great and important differences between the work of Coleridge and of Scott, of Shelley and of Wordsworth, of Keats and of Byron—differences which twentieth century criticism does not minimize, but which were inevitably more obvious to contemporaries than was the latent "romantic spirit" which we see informing it all. It is not surprising,[3] that Coleridge saw no resemblance between Southey's ponderous epics and his own " Kubla Khan," an "airy nothing," nor that Byron denied any connection between his Eastern tales, filled with passionate emotion, and the philosophic musings of Wordsworth's poems.

The unwillingness of critics to see resemblances between the great poets is equally natural. How could " Maga " be expected to acknowledge a likeness between Coleridge, " the prince of superstitious poets," and a good Conservative in politics,[4] and Keats, the protégé of Leigh Hunt, whom the wits of *Blackwood* chose, largely because of his " Liberalism," to consider a terrible example of poetic and moral depravity ? Or how could Byron, with his reverence for the authority of Pope, link himself with those for whom that authority was null and void ?

Both because they could not see and would not see, the universe of contemporary literature remained for many critics of the early nineteenth century a " mass of little things."

2. The Dawning Conception of the Unity of Early Nineteenth Century Poetry.

It has been suggested above that the critics who failed to recognize in the " Lakists " a " new school " were in the minority. There were many—Jeffrey conspicuous among them—who saw that a new " sect of poets " had arisen. This classing together, partly on political considerations, of Wordsworth, Coleridge, and Southey, formed a nucleus round which—as unsuspected affinities between Wordsworth and Byron, Coleridge and Shelley, Southey and Scott, were gradually revealed—almost all the early nineteenth century poets came to be grouped.

(i) *The Recognition of the Lake School.*

As early as 1798, Coleridge and Southey had been classed[5] together, with others, as a "school." In the first number of the *Edinburgh*, Jeffrey opened[6] battle against the " sect of poets that has established itself in this country within these ten or twelve years." With considerable penetration he analyzed the tenets of these " dissenters fom established systems of poetry and criticism," and found them to be based on " the anti-social principles and distempered sensibility of Rousseau," the " simplicity and energy (*horresco referens*) of Kotzebue and Schiller," the " homeliness and harshness of some of Cowper's language and versification, interchanged occasionally with the ' innocence ' of Ambrose Philips, or the quaintness of Quarles and Dr. Donne." The undoubted talent of these poets made them in Jeffrey's eyes the more dangerous : they constitute the " most formidable conspiracy that has lately been formed against sound judgment in matters poetical." As characteristics of their poetry he enumerates :—

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[1] Letter for Sept. 15, 1817 (" Letters and Journals," vol. iv. p. 169).

[2] See *Quarterly Review*, Jan., 1876 (Art. iv., " Wordsworth and Gray ").

[3] In spite of the recognition of the " Romantic movement," some modern critics dissociate Southey from Wordsworth and Coleridge. " Between his industrious and learned exploitations of the myth and the mystic supernaturalism of Wordsworth and Coleridge there is no affinity," says Mr. Herford (*op. cit.*, p. 189, note 2).

[4] *Blackwood*, Oct., 1819. It should be pointed out that " Maga's " appreciation of Coleridge and the Lake School does not date from the foundation of *Blackwood*. In Oct., 1817, Coleridge was termed " a still greater Quack " than Leigh Hunt; but from 1819 onwards there is a steadily growing appreciation of the Lake School. (See especially the series of " Essays on the Lake School of Poetry.")

[5] *Anti-Jacobin*, July 9, 1798.

[6] In a review of Southey's " Thalaba," Oct., 1802 (Art. vii.).

1. Affectation of great simplicity and familiarity of language ; they disdain to use poetic phraseology, for such phraseology implies poetic " art."
2. Sentiments of " tenderness " and " elevation."
3. Perpetual exaggeration of thought.
4. " Splenetic and idle discontent with existing institutions of society."

Political considerations largely determined Jeffrey's grouping together of Wordsworth, Coleridge and Southey. It is their " splenetic and idle discontent " with society—their Jacobinism —which arouses his most violent prejudices against their work.

This estimate of the " Lake School " fairly represents much of contemporary opinion on their defects, and it will not be necessary to mention many more instances of recognition and criticism—adverse or otherwise—of the School. Byron's many attacks[1] on them, and the somewhat belated appreciation[2] of Coleridge and Wordsworth by *Blackwood*, have already been noticed. Peacock's sweeping criticism of them and their methods has a unique interest, for Peacock, almost alone in an age which insisted on the dignity and moral value of poetry, held,[3] or affected to hold, that poetry is not part of the serious business of life : it is " the mental rattle that awakened the attention of the intellect in the infancy of civil society " ;[4] its influence will become less and less, till the day comes " when the degraded state of every species of poetry will be as generally recognized as that of dramatic poetry has long been." There is enough searching truth in Peacock's caustic comments on the Lake Poets, " that egregious confraternity of rhymsters," to make his attack an effective one, for it was levelled against a certain lack of actuality which was characteristic of the poets of " Nature." Under the influence of the nature poetry of Cowper and Thomson, they, he says, mistook novelty for totality, and reasoned thus : " Poetical impressions can be received only among natural scenes : for all that is artificial is anti-poetical. Society is artificial, therefore we will live out of society. The mountains are natural, therefore we will live in the mountains. There we shall be shining models of purity and virtue, passing the whole day in the innocent and amiable occupation of going up and down hill, receiving poetical impressions, and communicating them in immortal verse to admiring generations. . . . They wrote verses on a new principle ; saw rocks and rivers in a new light ; and remaining studiously ignorant of history, society, and human nature, cultivated the phantasy only at the expense of the memory and the reason ; and contrived, though they had retreated from the world for the express purpose of seeing nature as she was, to see her only as she was not, converting the land they lived in into a sort of fairy-land, which they peopled with mysticisms and chimæras."

(ii) *The Growing Tendency to Associate other Contemporary Poets with the Lakists.*

That there was at first little realization of any connection between the Lakists and other contemporary poets has already been shown : Scott and Byron were the popular poets of the age, Coleridge and Wordsworth appealed to a limited and exclusive audience, and the possibility that there might be real resemblances between them was not seriously contemplated.

This view, however, could not last long ; Byron was himself obliged to admit that his work at least tended in the same direction as that of his contemporaries, and his critics discovered his likeness to the Lakists. In the *Critical Review* for instance, he is said to be one of the " school of modern poetry which, despising rules of art and laws of criticism, relies for defence of its deviations from taste and propriety on the Omnipotence of Genius."[5] This school has relinquished all the advantages of a polished age, and " glories " in a " tame, insipid, or unintelligible story ; quaintness of description, exaggeration of imagery, interspersion of quaint phraseology or miserable doggerel amidst passages of exquisite harmony and sweetness ; continual alteration of ' thoughts that breathe and words that burn ' with prattle of the nursery." No name is given to the " school," but there can be little doubt that the allusion is to the Lakists. Jeffrey again says[1] of Byron that " in his general notion of the end and elements of poetry " his views are more like those of the Lake School than of any other poets, and that some of his later works especially recall their style and manner. Scott points[2] out the resemblance of Byron to Coleridge in some poems, particularly in " Darkness," which " recalls the wild, unbridled and fiery imagination of Coleridge."

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[1] See above, p. 59.
[2] Ibid., p. 60 (note 4).
[3] In the " Four Ages of Poetry " (1820).
[4] " The Four Ages of Poetry " (ed. Works, H. Cole, 1875, vol. iii. pp. 324–338).
[5] *Critical Review*, Feb., 1816 (Art. v.).

Nor did Byron's undoubted imitation of Scott go unnoticed,[3] and this imitation, the kinship between Byron and the Lakists being recognized, brought Scott into literary relationship not only with Byron, but also with Coleridge, Wordsworth and Southey.

The connection between De Quincey and the Lakists also began to be realized : " He's like the lave o' the Lakers," says[4] the Shepherd of De Quincey, " when he wons in Westmoreland, he forgets Maga, and a' the rest o' the civileezed warld." Byron had before this seen[5] in the " Cockney " Keats a " tadpole of the Lakes."

In such ways as these—by enlarging the borders of the Lake School, and showing that they were not an isolated group, standing apart from other poets of the age—the conception of the unity of early nineteenth century poetry was made possible.

(iii.) *The Realization of the Unity of Early Nineteenth Century Poetry.*

Even while some critics were pointing out differences between the great poets of the age, others had already found that the trend of modern poetry was in one general direction. The number of these increased as the century grew older.

Hazlitt's realization of the " spirit of the age " has already been noticed, but earlier than Hazlitt, Jeffrey had seen[6] in " strong emotion " the " idol " which contemporary poetry worships. " Instead of ingenious essays, elegant bits of gallantry and witty satires . . . we have . . . the dreams of convicts, and agonies of Gypsey women—and the exploits of buccaneers, freebooters, and savages—and pictures to shudder at, of remorse, revenge, and insanity—and the triumph of generous feelings in scenes of anguish and terror—and the heroism of low-born affection—and the tragedies of vulgar atrocity " ;—modern poetry is concerned with " portraitures of interest to human nature," and Scott's choice of subjects in ages when strong passions were dominant, Southey's choice of passions among the savages of America and the myths of India, Byron's choice of heroes among Turks and Arabs are all due to the " growing appetite " for " strong and natural emotions " which such subjects satisfy.

Byron himself wrote,[7] with the resentment of one who struggles ineffectually against a force stronger than he : " With regard to poetry in general, I am convinced . . . that he [Moore] and *all* of us—Scott, Southey, Wordsworth, Moore, Campbell, I—are all in the wrong, one as much as another " ; *Blackwood* charges[8] all the poets of the present day with having " escaped from reality " ; and Peacock speaks[9] with contempt of contemporary poetry which is composed, " as Mr. Coleridge says," on a " new principle "—" that is, no principle at all." The result is a " modern-antique compound of frippery and barbarism, in which the puling sentimentality of the present time is grafted on the misrepresented ruggedness of the past into a heterogeneous congeries of unamalgamated manners." The "highest inspirations" of modern poetry are the "rant of unregulated passion, the whining of exaggerated feeling, and the cant of factitious sentiment." These are the poetic ideals which have "inspired" Scott to "dig up the poachers and cattle stealers of the ancient border," Byron "to cruise for thieves and pirates on the shores of the Morea and among the Greek islands," Southey "to wade through ponderous volumes of travels and old chronicles, from which he carefully selects all that is false, useless, and absurd, as being essentially poetical," Mr. Wordsworth to "pick up village legends from old women and sextons," and Mr. Coleridge to "harmonize into a delicious poetical compound" the "quadruple elements of sexton, old woman, Jeremy Taylor, and Emmanuel Kant." "Mr. Moore," continues Peacock, "presents us with a Persian, and Mr. Campbell with a Pennsylvanian tale, both formed on the same principle as Mr. Southey's epics."

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[1] *Edinburgh Review*, Dec., 1816 (Art. i.).
[2] *Quarterly Review*, Oct., 1816 (Art. xvii.).
[3] See *British Review*, Oct., 1813 (Art. vii.).
[4] " Noctes Ambrosianæ," Dec., 1829.
[5] See above, p. 59.
[6] *Edinburgh Review*, April, 1814 (Art. ix.).
[7] Letter for Sept. 15, 1817 (ed. cit., vol. iv. p. 169).
[8] *Blackwood*, May, 1819.
[9] Op. cit., p. 325.

I have quoted Peacock at length because, though his judgment is perverse in the extreme, he has seen perhaps more clearly than most of his contemporaries that the poetry of the age is one, and that it is differentiated from eighteenth century poetry by its two main characteristic of sentimentalism and mediævalism—"puling sentimentality grafted on the misrepresented ruggedness of the past."

Eleven years later than Peacock, Macaulay, equally appreciative of the unity of early nineteenth century poetry, wrote[1] in very different terms of the poets of the "great literary revolution." In their works "the eternal laws of poetry" regained their power, and Wordsworth, Coleridge and Byron are writers of the true "correct" style. To Macaulay all these poets are concerned in the "great restoration of our literature," of which Cowper was the forerunner and Byron the interpreter to the multitude.

In 1834 Sir Henry Taylor, one of the few writers of the time with "classical" sympathies, clearly considers[2] all the poetry of the century to be of one general type: it is "highly coloured," marked by great sensibility and fervour, profusion of imagery, force and beauty of language, and peculiarly easy versification.

We have sufficient proof, therefore, that by the thirties the underlying unity of early nineteenth century poetry was a recognized fact.

2. The Avoidance of the Antithesis between Classic and Romantic Literature.

It will have been noticed that no critic hitherto cited in this chapter has styled nineteenth century poetry "romantic." Macaulay talks of the "great revolution" in poetry; Peacock mentions the "new principle" in poetry, but neither of them uses the word "romantic" to define either the "great revolution" or the "new principle." In 1820 Byron had written :[3] "I perceive that in Germany, as well as in Italy, there is a great struggle about what they call 'Classic' and 'Romantic'—terms which were not subjects of classification in England, at least when I left it four or five years ago. Some of the English scribblers, it is true, abused Pope and Swift ; . . . but nobody thought them worth making a sect of." . . . The terms did not become "subjects of classification in England" in Byron's time, nor for more than twenty years after.

This neglect of the distinction seems to be more than accidental. In contexts where the introduction of the antithesis might seem particularly appropriate it is not mentioned. In an article in the *Quarterly Review* for April, 1838, for example, there is a long passage dealing with the "two forms of Poetry." The "two forms" are evidently the subjective and objective (though these terms are not used), and the whole treatment of the subject, with its insistence on the subjective nature of modern poetry and the importance of Christianity in relation to this subjectivity, is reminiscent of Coleridge and Schlegel; but there is no mention of the terms "classic" and "romantic." Much later Ruskin, whose opportunities for making effective use of such an antithesis were almost unlimited, never did so. He distinguishes poets not as "Classic" and "Romantic," but as " Creative " (Shakespeare, Homer, Dante), and " Reflective " (Wordsworth, Keats, Tennyson) ;[1] he significantly divides[2] the history of art into the periods of " Classicalism, Mediævalism, and Modernism " ; he groups[3] together " Scott, Byron, Wordsworth, Keats, Shelley, and finally Tennyson "—the " descendants of Mrs. Radcliffe and Rousseau "—not as " romantic " poets, but as writers " all agreeing more or less in their love for natural scenery."

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[1] *Edinburgh Review*, June, 1831 (Art. xi., Moore's "Life of Byron).

[2] Preface to "Philip van Artevelde" (ed. 1901, p. vii.).

[3] Letter for Oct. 14, 1820 (ed. cit., vol. v. p. 142).

Only once, indeed, between the years 1825 and 1850, have I been able to find any clear use of the antithesis between classic and romantic art, and not until after 1850 any attempt to term the poets of the early years of the century " romantic " in the sense in which the term is generally used.

This solitary use of the antithesis occurs in the *Edinburgh Review* for July, 1840, in an article on Ranke's " Zur Geschichte der Italienischen Poesie." It is significant that even here the antithesis is suggested not by the reviewer but by Ranke ; for, as the former points out, the central thought of the book is concerned with the fusion " of the conflicting elements of the classic and romantic " in Italian poetry.

Since, therefore, it cannot be supposed that the critics of the mid-century were unaware of the distinction which had been drawn between classic and romantic art, it must be assumed that from a distaste for the distinction, or for other reasons, they deliberately refrained from using it.

The preoccupation of the age with questions of real life, and consequent indisposition to dwell on purely abstract questions, has already been pointed out. But even were this sufficient to account for the temporary disappearance of the antithesis from literary criticism, it does not satisfactorily explain why English critics were so slow in adopting the convenient and, as it would seem, obvious epithet " romantic " to describe early nineteenth century poetry.

Their reluctance may perhaps be due to the following causes :—

1. An inadequate realization of the connection between English and German poetry in the early nineteenth century.
2. A distrust of French and German " romanticism."
3. A dislike for disputing about mere terms.

1. The remark made in the *Edinburgh Review* for December, 1802, that the poetic taste of Germany and England is " fundamentally different " has already been quoted.[4] This is, of course, an extreme instance of critical blindness : many contemporary critics were prepared to admit some affinities between German and English literature, and no one with any pretensions to a knowledge of contemporary literary conditions could fail to be aware of the influence which such works as " Goetz von Berlichingen," " Die Raüber," and Bürger's " Lenore " had exerted on English literature at the close of the eighteenth and in the early nineteenth centuries.[5] Coleridge's indebtedness to German philosophy was also recognized. But that there was, apart from direct borrowing on one side or the other, a resemblance between English and German poetry due to the homogeneity of European literature, does not seem to have been generally observed. Byron writes :[6] " . . . What have I to do with Germany or Germans, neither my subjects nor my language having anything in common with that country ? " And it is noteworthy that in an article[7] in the *Quarterly Review* dealing with Heine's " Die Romantische Schule " there is no suggestion—when, if the idea were a common one, some such suggestion might have been looked for—of any movement in England corresponding with the German " Romantic School."

2. But much more effective in preventing the adoption of the term romantic as a fitting designation for the early nineteenth century poets was the current distrust of French and German romanticism.

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[1] " Modern Painters," part iv., chap. xii. (ed. 1888, vol. iii. p. 161, note).

[2] " Pre-Raphaelitism " (delivered as a lecture, Nov. 18, 1853, published in " Lectures on Architecture and Painting," 1854 (ed. 1891, p. 187).

[3] " Turner and His Works," Nov. 15, 1853, published with the above (p. 163).

[4] See above, p. 47.

[5] For an account of the German influence at this time, see Prof. Walker, op. cit., chap. ii. pp. 23–27.

[6] Letter to John Murray, Aug. 4, 1821.

[7] *Quarterly Review*, Dec., 1835 (Art. i.).

"The immediate influence of the French romantic school upon English poetry," says[1] Mr. Beers, "was slight. Like the German school, it came too late." In the twenties, when the French romantic school was engaged in fierce warfare, the romantic spirit in England had won its victory. The differences between French and English romanticism are—and were—clearly apparent: there is nothing in the history of English literature analogous to the violent quarrels over "Hernani," and such quarrels would be viewed with suspicion by Englishmen. Since, therefore, the term "romantisme" was associated with what Carlyle terms[2] "the beggarliest form of Werterism yet seen"—a "turbid fermentation of the elements"[3]—it would have little attraction for English critics.

German romanticism[4] was perhaps even more suspect to the Englishman, its reactionary tendencies having been from the first clearer. In 1827 Carlyle finds it necessary to refute[5] the current objections of "Bad Taste" and "Mysticism" which are made against German literature in general, and apparently against the writings of the "romantic" critics in particular; in 1848 an article[6] in the *Edinburgh* describes a German Romanticist from the English point of view. The description brings out the reactionary aspect of the movement which made it specially distasteful to the Whig writer of the mid-century: "Poets who see poetry only in the Middle Ages, who look upon fairy tales and legends as treasures of the deepest wisdom; painters who can see nothing pictorial in the world around them; theologians who see no faith equal to the deep reverence of saint-worship, who see no recognition of the Unspeakable except in superstition, who acknowledge no form of worship but the ceremonies of the early church; politicians who would bring back 'merrie England' into our own sad times by means of ancient pastimes and white waistcoats:—these are all Romanticists."

That with such a conception of German romanticism which, even when viewed dispassionately, was in many ways extravagant and in many ways different[7] from the corresponding English movement, critics should hesitate to apply the words "romantic," "romanticist" to English poets, is not surprising.

3. A third reason for the avoidance of these terms—in the discussion of which we are brought at length to the re-introduction of the antithesis between classic and romantic literature into criticism—seems to have been a dislike for what was thought to be a dispute about mere words.

In 1830 a critic writing[8] in the *Edinburgh* dwells on the evil effect which Madame de Stäel's introduction of the terms "classic" and "romantic" has had on French literature. The distinction, the critic says, is a "fanciful" one, "but the watchwords which she had suffered to escape were caught up, and the literature of France began peremptorily to designate works of imagination as either classiques or romantiques; and they were admired or ridiculed, accordingly, much more with reference to these distinctions than to their more intrinsic qualities." The reviewer goes on to notice Victor Hugo's assertions in the Preface to "Odes et Ballades," that "en littérature, comme en toute chose, il n'y a que le bon et le mauvais, le beau et le difforme, le vrai et le faux," and that the quarrel between the supporters of classic and romantic art is a futile question of terms only, with the comment, "to us such passages are truisms."

Carlyle, in his essay[9] on Schiller, speaks of Schiller as "the pattern and great master" of "the Romanticist class—a sort of ambassador and mediator, were mediation possible, between the old school and the new,"—and continues, "we ourselves . . . are troubled with no controversies on

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[1] "Hist. of Romanticism in the 19th Century," chap. v. (p. 226).

[2] Essay on Scott (1838).

[3] Essay on "The State of German Literature" (1827).

[4] Heine's "Romantische Schule" (1833), translated into English in 1836, perhaps helps to explain the unfavourable opinion formed in England of German Romanticism.

[5] "State of German Literature."

[6] *Edinburgh Review*, July, 1848 (Art. iv.).

[7] See Mr. Beers, op. cit., chap. iv. (pp. 133–138).

[8] *Edinburgh Review*, April, 1830 (Art. xi.).

[9] Published in *Fraser's Magazine*, No. 14 (1831).

Romanticism and Classicism—the Bowles controversy[1] on Pope having long since evaporated, without result, and all critical guild-brethren now working diligently with one accord, in the calmer sphere of vapidism or even nullism." In spite of his contempt for the " peaceful sloth " of contemporary critics, who are not " troubled with controversies on Romanticism and Classicism," Carlyle here seems to dismiss the controversies they ignore with scant respect.

Something of the same impatience with mere words seems to underlie Landor's " Epistle to the Author of Festus."[2] But Landor, though he reads his own interpretation into the terms, actually makes use of the antithesis between " classic " and " romantic," and with him, therefore, we reach its re-introduction into English literary criticism.

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[1] It is of interest to notice that Byron also (see above, p. 63) had tentatively associated the " Bowles controversy on Pope " with the classic *v.* romantic dispute, although there was no general contemporary use of the terms in this connection.

[2] Published in " The Last Fruit off an Old Tree " (1853). Bailey's " Festus " appeared in 1839 ; so it is possible that the poem was written considerably before 1853, though from the opening lines of the " Epistle " this is unlikely.

Chapter VII.

THE INCREASED IMPORTANCE OF THE WORD IN LITERARY CRITICISM IN THE LATER NINETEENTH CENTURY.

THE THEORY OF " CLASSIC " AND " ROMANTIC " ART, AND THE CONNECTION OF THE TERM " ROMANTIC " WITH NINETEENTH CENTURY POETRY.

(*a*) THE RE-INTRODUCTION OF THE ANTITHESIS INTO LITERARY CRITICISM.

The old distinction reappeared clearly in English literary criticism in the work of Landor and of Matthew Arnold. Whether the fact be significant or not, it is at least interesting to note that both these critics were " classical " in sympathy : Landor, as we have seen, had been a " classicist " even at the height of the romantic revival ; and though he " strove with none," he was aware of his isolation from the romantics ; he knew that his poetry was of a different kind from that of his contemporaries—" diaphonous," in days when " poetry . . . is oftener prismatic than diaphonous."[1]

Matthew Arnold, of a later generation than the great " romantics," saw where they had fallen short, and, though " romantic " enough to refuse[2] to Pope the title of poet, was sufficiently " classic " to deplore[3] the predominance of the " fantastic " and the lack of " sanity " in modern poetry.

Landor's poem is at once a recognition of the contemporary use of the distinction between classic and romantic—ancient and modern—literature, and a protest against that distinction.

> " We talk of schools . . . unscholarly ; if schools
> Part the romantick from the classical.
> The classical like the heroick age
> Is past ; but Poetry may reassume
> That glorious name with Tartar and with Turk,
> With Goth or Arab, Sheik or Paladin
> And not with Roman and with Greek alone.
> The name is graven on the workmanship."

That is to say—" romantic " material need not prevent a poem from being " classical " ; for " workmanship " is all—the right to the name classic depends on qualities of form and style.

This brings it about that Collins, though " heart-bound to Romance," was classical, and that Wordsworth " in sonnet is a classick too."

Yet, despite our modern " classics,"

> " The Ancients see us under them, and grieve
> That we are parted by a rank morass,
> Wishing its flowers more delicate and fewer . . . ; "

the " romantic "—formless, lacking symmetry, overcharged with imagery[4]—is characteristic of modern poetry ; we cannot see the Grace's lovely form for the overblown roses that clamber over the paths of Poetry.

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[1] Preface to " Hellenics " (1846).
[2] In the " Introductory Essay to Ward's English Poets " (1880) ; (reprinted in " Essays on Criticism ").
[3] Preface to second edition of " Poems " (1854).
[4] See ll. 22–33.

To M. Arnold also a " classic " is " a work of the very best "[1]; he, like Landor, is somewhat impatient of the talk about schools, though he recognizes[2] the " classical " and the " romantic "—and that England has been the " stronghold" of the latter. He points out the differences[3] between the poetry of the ancients and of the moderns: the ancients were concerned with the action itself—we are concerned with the " separate thoughts and images " which occur in the treatment of the action; they regarded the whole—we regard the parts; with us expression predominates over action—with them the reverse was the case, yet their expression was absolutely adequate.

With Landor and M. Arnold it will be convenient to take Walter Bagehot, whose essay[4] on " Wordsworth, Tennyson and Browning; or, Pure, Ornate and Grotesque Art in English Poetry," is dated 1864.

Bagehot identifies " pure " with " classical " and " ornate " with " romantic " art—though he objects to the terms classical and romantic;—but the division of art into three classes instead of two makes it impossible that the terms can exactly correspond.

To Bagehot ornate art is a lower form than pure art. Its defect is a want of simplicity which arises from its method: " it works not by choice and selection, but by accumulation and aggregation. The idea is not, as in the pure style, represented with the least clothing which it will endure, but with the richest and most involved clothing that it will admit."[5] The justification for the use of romantic art lies in the fact that it does what pure art cannot do: it " gives romantic unreality to what will not stand bare truth."[6]

Bagehot's sympathies were plainly with Landor and M. Arnold on the side of classical restraint against romantic exuberance. Walter Pater, whose theory of romantic and classic art must now be considered, is the great late nineteenth century defender of " the strangeness added to beauty, that constitutes the romantic character of art," and of " the addition of curiosity to the desire of beauty, that constitutes the romantic temper."[7]

In the view of contemporary " conservative " critics, Walter Pater was " the most thoroughly representative critic that the romantic school has yet produced."[8] From him, therefore, we might expect an adequate interpretation of romantic art. We get more than this. For, despite his predilection for the romantic method which unconsciously reveals[9] itself here and there, he had an exquisite appreciation of the products of Greek art, " ideal "[10] in their perfection of form, and of the spirit of Hellenism, with its " supreme characteristics " of " Heiterkeit—blitheness or repose, and Allgemeinheit—generality or breadth."[11] And so he was able to apprehend the excellences of both artistic forms—to go back to the standpoint of Schlegel, and insist[12] that " to the critic all periods, types, schools of taste, are in themselves equal," and to describe with greater suggestiveness than any other English critic has done the " temper " and the " character in art " of the romantic and the classic, without claiming superiority for the one or the other.

In the essay[13] on Winckelmann are found all the essential features of his theory which was later elaborated in the essay[14] on " Romanticism " (1876). Chief among these is the insistence on the fact that the romantic and the classic are permanent influences running through literature—that the " Romantic spirit " was at work in the minds of Greek artists—that the " classic " is not altogether synonymous with the ancient, nor the " romantic " with the modern.

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[1] Introductory Essay to " Ward's English Poets."
[2] Preface to " Merope " (1858).
[3] Preface to " Poems " (1853.) Reprinted in " Irish Essays," 1882.
[4] Printed in " Literary Studies."
[5] " Literary Studies " (3rd ed., 1884, vol. ii. p. 362).
[6] Ibid., p. 375.
[7] Pater, " Postscript " to the "Appreciations " (3rd ed. p. 246).
[8] *Quarterly Review*, Jan., 1876 (Art. iv., " The Prose Works of W. Wordsworth ").
[9] See, e.g., the comparison between classicists and romanticists (" Postscript " to " Appreciations," pp. 257–8).
[10] Winckelmann (" Renaissance," ed. 1910, p. 206).
[11] Ibid. (p. 213).
[12] Preface to " The Renaissance " (p. x.); cf. " Schlegel's Lectures " (translation, ed. Bohn, pp. 18–19).
[13] This essay appeared originally in the *Westminster Review*, Jan., 1867.
[14] This essay was afterwards published as the " Postscript " to the " Appreciations."

It is in this particular that Pater chiefly differs from the critics of the early nineteenth century. Schlegel and Coleridge had tended to identify ancient with classical and modern with romantic art, though it would be too much to say that they did not admit the possibility of classical art among the moderns and romantic art among the ancients. On the whole, however, they regarded the boundary between the two as fixed : " the classical like the heroick age is past."

We have seen how Landor protested against this idea. But Landor's conception of the classic and the romantic was peculiarly his own—less comprehensive and less subtle than Pater's. To him the term "romantic" could, in speaking of literature of the first class, be applied only to the subject-matter ; the treatment, the style of all good literature will be according to the same principles—will be " classical." He admits no two spirits, no two moods in the greater literature. But to Pater classicism and romanticism are[1] " tendencies really at work at all times in art, moulding it, with the balance sometimes a little on one side, sometimes a little on the other, generating, respectively, as the balance inclines on this side or that, two principles, two traditions, in art, and in literature so far as it partakes of the spirit of art."[2] It is Pater's reiteration of this fundamental idea, found in almost all subsequent English criticism on the subject, that makes him of importance in connection with the history of the word " romantic."

The conception of the romantic principle as a permanent one in human nature and in art, varying in intensity but always present in some degree, causes his treatment to diverge in other particulars from that of earlier critics. With his deep knowledge of Greek culture, Pater will not, as Schlegel does, insist on the " mere cheerfulness " of the Greek religion, to the neglect of its sadder aspects. " This conception," he says,[3] " leaves in Greek culture only negative qualities. The Legend of Demeter and Persephone is enough to show that the ' worship of sorrow ' had its function in Greek religion." Nor does he admit[4] the total absence of subjectivity in the Greeks, as Schlegel and his followers would seem to do : " The Greek mind had advanced to a particular stage of self-reflexion, but was careful not to pass beyond it."

At the same time there are many points of contact between Pater and the earlier critics : he, like them, notices the harmony of spirit exemplified in the art of the Greeks, he speaks of the " Hellenic ideal, in which man is at unity with himself, with his physical nature, with the outward world[5] " ; he points out the characteristic subjectivity of modern art—the " consciousness brooding with delight over itself "—and its striving[6] after the inexpressible ; he speaks[7] of the " happy physical conditions " of the Greeks, and the influence of environment on them and on their art,—of " that air ' nimbly and sweetly recommending itself ' ' to the senses, the finer aspects of nature, the finer lime and clay of the human form, and modelling of the dainty frame-work of the human countenance." With these phrases may be compared Schlegel's statements :[8] that " the whole of their [i.e., the Greeks,] art and poetry is the expression of a consciousness of this harmony of all their faculties,' " that " the feeling of the moderns is . . . . inward, . . . their thoughts . . . contemplative," and their endeavours directed " after what is infinite " ; that the Greeks " of a beautiful and noble race . . . lived and bloomed in the full health of existence ; and, favoured by a rare combination of circumstances, accomplished all that the finite nature of man is capable of."

The influence of Schlegel and German criticism is most apparent in the Winckelmann essay. In " Romanticism " Pater is more indebted to Sainte Beuve and De Stendhal. De Stendhal's theory " that all good art was romantic in its day " has considerable attraction for Pater ; he likes to think[9] that " in the beauties of Homer and Pheideas, quiet as they now seem, there must have been, for those who confronted them for the first time, excitement and surprise, the sudden unforeseen satisfaction of the desire of beauty."

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[1] " Postscript " to " Appreciations " (p. 247).
[2] Ibid. (p. 250).
[3] " Myth of Demeter and Persephone " (first published 1876 ; " Greek Studies," 1895, p. 111).
[4] Winckelmann (p. 206).
[5] Ibid. (p. 222).
[6] Ibid. (p. 205).
[7] Ibid. (p. 207).
[8] " Lectures on Dramatic Art and Literature " (ed. cit., pp. 24 and 27).
[9] " Postscript " to " Appreciations " (p. 258).

Yet in the end Pater comes[1] back to the point from which he started—" explain the terms as we may, in application to particular epochs there are these two elements always recognizable; united in perfect art—in Sophocles, in Dante, in the highest work of Goethe, though not always absolutely balanced there; and these two elements may be not inappropriately termed the classical romantic tendencies." With the power of a great stylist Pater coins haunting phrases to express the subtleties of his thought, which have passed into use in literary criticism, and so affected the meaning of the terms in the interpretation of which he applies them. Thus the antithesis he suggests between " order in beauty," and " strangeness added to beauty," though possibly not expressing[2] a wholly new idea, added a new shade to the meaning of the word " romantic."

Such passages as the following, indicating a connection between the romantic and the grotesque, and developing somewhat the idea of " strangeness," illustrate the kind of suggestion with which Pater enriched the conception of " romantic." " It is the addition of strangeness to beauty that constitutes the romantic character in art . . . With a passionate care for beauty, the romantic spirit refuses to have it unless the condition of strangeness be first fulfilled. Its desire is for a beauty born of unlikely elements, by a profound alchemy, by a difficult imitation, by the charm which wrings it even out of terrible things. Its eager, excited spirit will have strength, the grotesque first of all—the trees shrieking as you tear off the leaves . . . then, incorporate with this strangeness, and intensified by restraint, as much sweetness, as much beauty, as is compatible with that."[3] And again,[4] " A certain strangeness, something of the blossoming of the aloe, is indeed an element in all true works of art: that they shall excite or surprise us is indispensable. But that they shall give pleasure and exert a charm over us is indispensable too; and this strangeness must be sweet also—a lovely strangeness."

In Pater, therefore, we have perhaps the most suggestive treatment of the distinction between the classic and the romantic, a distinction with him of principles rather than of literatures. Later critics have amplified Pater's ideas, but his definition of the antithesis—the classic " order in beauty," the romantic " strangeness added to beauty "—remains the one that seems to sum up the suggestions of earlier writers, while it is free from their vagueness and misleading comparisons of ancient and modern art.

(*b*) The General Application of the term " Romantic " to early Nineteenth Century Poetry.

It has already been stated[5] that, in the work of Matthew Arnold and of Pater the term " romantic " was applied to the poets of the early nineteenth century: in 1858 M. Arnold, in his Preface to " Merope," recognized in England the " stronghold of the romantic school "; in 1868 Pater, in his essay on " Æsthetic Poetry,"[6] connected the English romantic school with that of Germany, and spoke of the " Æsthetic School "[7] of poets as an " afterthought " of the " Romantic School."

Arnold's use of " romantic " as the designation of a school of poets is the first use of the kind which I have been able to find on the part of English critics. The epithet had, however, found its way into text-books considerably before this. As early as 1848, T. B. Shaw, in his " Outlines of English Literature,"[8] had recognized the " Romanticists, the greatest of whom was Byron "; Taine, in 1863, noted the English romantic school, and its resemblance to the French in " doctrines, origin and alliances, in the truths which it discovered, the exaggerations it committed, and the scandal it excited " ;[1] Dr. Smith, in his " Smaller History of English Literature," 1869, notices the " romantic " nature of the early nineteenth century literature.

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[1] " Postscript " to " Appreciations " (p. 260).

[2] Cf. Coleridge's idea of the union of the heterogeneous in romantic art (see above, p. 53).

[3] " Postscript " (pp. 247–8).

[4] " The Poetry of Michelangelo " (1871; " The Renaissance," p. 73).

[5] See above, p. 67.

[6] This Essay, though written in 1868, was not published till 1889 in " Appreciations." It was omitted by Pater from the edition of 1890, and does not occur in subsequent editions.

[7] I.e., W. Morris, Rossetti, etc.

[8] It may be worth noting that Shaw, who was Professor of English at the Imperial Alexander Lyceum, St. Petersburg, wrote his book for the use of Continental students, to whom the term " romantic " was probably a very familiar one.

By " romanticism " these writers appear to have meant what Carlyle calls[2] " Götzism and Werterism "—the literature of passion and sentiment, with its " affectionate, half-regretful looking back into the past." For Shaw, Macpherson's " Ossian " and Chatterton's Poems were the most significant heralds of romanticism ; Scott was " the type, sign, or measure of the first step in literature towards romanticism, or rather of the first step made in modern times from classicism—from the regular, the correct, the established " ; Moore marked an advance on Scott ; and Byron was " the greatest of the romanticists." Neither Coleridge nor Wordsworth is included among the Romanticists : the " Lake School " (not including Southey) are " the Quietists, the Mystics and the Quakers of the poetic fraternity," and their work a " species of metaphysical quietism." The difficulty of classing Shelley is pointed out—he is not placed among the romanticists ; and Keats, " one of the most distinguished of modern minor poets," is dismissed as an imitator of Shelley, precluded from rising above mediocrity by his want of " depth and sincerity of feeling." Smith's " History of Literature " is based on that of Shaw, and there is, therefore, nothing original in his view of romanticism. Taine appears to class practically all the early nineteenth century poets together as " romanticists," with little care as to the exact meaning of the term.

Critics gifted with deeper insight than these possessed were needed to see the expression in the defiant egoism of Byron, the mystical naturalism of Wordsworth, the mediævalism of Scott, the idealism of Shelley, the transcendentalism of Coleridge, and the æstheticism of Keats, of one underlying principle of " romance."

M. Arnold saw it ; Pater saw it : the early nineteenth century was to them both fundamentally romantic, though for Arnold its romantic character lay[3] principally in its care for " separate thoughts and images " at the expense of the " character and conduct " of a poem, whereas for Pater " that inexhaustible discontent, languor, and home-sickness, that endless regret, the chords of which ring all through our modern literature,"[4] mark it as romantic. Arnold stressed the formal aspect of romanticism, Pater its spiritual aspect. A writer in the *Quarterly* for 1876[5] considers that the assertion of the absolute independence of individual imagination is the fundamental principle of romantic art. The question at issue between the classical and romantic schools is, he says, that of the liberty of the imagination, which classical poets consider restricted by sense and subject to reason, while the romanticists maintain that it is paramount, that it has " modifying " and " creative " power, that it can " abstract qualities " from any object of sense, and " confer " others upon it. For this writer Wordsworth is the leader of English romanticists.

But the question as to which poets are romantic remains a vexed one to the close of the century.

We have seen that for Shaw, in 1848, Scott and Byron were the greatest romanticists, while for the *Quarterly* critic Wordsworth is their leader. To Sir Sidney Colvin, Wordsworth[6] seemed in 1882 truly classical in much of his writing, and in another part " suggestive and adumbrative," but not romantic. Professor Brandl thinks[7] that only Wordsworth, Coleridge, Southey and Scott should be called " romantic " ; for Byron, Shelley and Keats—though " imbibing from the Romantic School a warmer form of thought and feeling, and some productive impulses—still regarded the antique as their parent," whereas Wordsworth, Coleridge and Scott " may be said to have taken nothing, whether in the form of translation or imitation, from classical literature ; while they drew endless inspiration from the Middle Ages." Within the last few years Mr. Beers has attempted to exclude not only Wordsworth and Shelley, but also Byron from the number of the "romantics." This disagreement among critics over the membership of the romantic school is inevitable. It springs from the constantly changing conception of romanticism— a subject which will be shortly discussed in the next section.

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[1] " History of English Literature." The English translation (by H. van Laur) was published in 1871.
[2] Essay on Scott (*Westminster Review*, 1838).
[3] See Preface to " Poems " (1853).
[4] Essay on Coleridge (" Appreciations," p. 104).
[5] *Quarterly Review*, Jan., 1876 (Art. iv.).
[6] Preface to " Selections from the Writings of W. S. Landor " (1882).
[7] " S. T. Coleridge and the English Romantic School " (1886) ; translated by Lady Eastlake, 1887 (pp. 219–223).

(c) SOME MODIFICATIONS IN THE MEANING OF THE TERM IN LITERARY CRITICISM SUBSEQUENT TO PATER.

1. The Distinction Between "Classic" and "Romantic."

From the time of Pater the distinction between the "classic" and the "romantic" is regarded no longer as one of literatures, but as one of tendencies in literature. Pater's work was the precursor, if not the cause, of much criticism on the lines which he had suggested.

Allusion has already been made to Sir Sidney Colvin in connection with the "Romantic School." In his Preface to "Selections from the Writings of W. S. Landor" (1882), he deals with the classic and romantic in a way which recalls[1] Pater's treatment of the subject. The "temper" of the romantic writer is said to be one of excitement, that of the classic writer one of self-possession. The virtues of the classic style are strength of grasp, clearness, justness of presentment, and those of the romantic style glow of spirit, magic, and richness of suggestion.

Mr. Courthope's "Liberal Movement in English Literature" (1885) is based on a similar conception of the characteristics and mutual relations of romanticism and classicism, though his identification of the "liberal spirit" in poetry with romanticism, and his view of the relation of the movement to other contemporary movements, are not generally accepted.[2] Articles by Professor W. D. McClintock ("The Romantic and Classic in English Literature"[3]) and Dr. F. H. Hedge ("Classic and Romantic"[4]) exhibit the same point of view; and in still more recent works the same distinction is made. Professor Walker, clearly recalling Pater, writes:[5] "The division of 'romantic' and 'classical' is permanent and world-wide: as it showed itself at the beginning of the last century, it is only a particular illustration of a divergence which never ends, and which is always beginning anew."

2. The Application of "Romantic" to Nineteenth Century Literature.

The use of the term "romantic" to define the great movement in thought and literature now traced back to the mid-eighteenth century, which, in spite of the protests of isolated writers such as Mr. Beers,[6] has become more and more general, has also, as different aspects of the movement are emphasized, given different shades of meaning to the term itself. As the critic is "classic" or "romantic" in sympathy, and as his conception of the romantic movement is a wider or narrower one, so the term, as he uses it, varies in suggestion. To R. L. Stevenson[7] the romantic movement is the "movement of an extended curiosity and an enfranchised imagination;" to Professor

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[1] Sir S. Colvin quotes Landor's line, "the name is graven on the workmanship," in support of the statement that the distinction between classic and romantic is one of treatment rather than of subject. It should, however, be noticed that Landor's idea of "classic" treatment is a different one from that of Colvin. He appears to admit only one true artistic method, the classical; while Colvin recognizes the romantic, differing from, though of equal value with, the classical method.

[2] Professor Herford has pointed out ("Age of Wordsworth," Introd., p. xxi., note) Mr. Courthope's "singular disregard for the conservative aspect of Romanticism," which alone makes possible the application of the term "liberal" to the romantic movement; cf. also an article in the *Edinburgh* (April, 1886, Art. vii.).

[3] Published in *The Chatauquan* (Nov., 1891).

[4] Published in *The Atlantic Monthly* (March, 1886). Mr. Beers gives an account of Dr. Hedge's theory in "English Romanticism in the 18th Century" (pp. 11–13).

[5] "Literature of the Victorian Era" (1910, p. 933; cf. also p. 963).

[6] Mr. Beers, going back to Heine, defines romanticism as "the reproduction in modern art and literature of the life and thought of the Middle Ages (' Hist. of 18th Century Romanticism," p. 2), and bases his Histories of Romanticism on this definition."

[7] "V. Hugo's Romances" (May, 1874); later published in "Men and Books" (ed. 1906, p. 3).

Herford[1] Romanticism is "an extraordinary development of imaginative sensibility, . . . impregnated with speculative elements" and embracing in itself both "romantic idealism" and "romantic realism"; to Professor Vaughan[2] "the sense of mystery, the instinct of discontent with the world of 'dry light" of pure intellect . . . . lies at the root" of Romanticism; to Professor Walker[3] also the foundation of Romance is mystery; to Mr. Courthope[4] romance is the "embodiment in poetry of the spirit of liberty."

3. Attempts to Define the Essence of Romance.

With the increased interest in Romanticism as a literary movement, there has been also a tendency to analyze the charm of romance in and for itself—apart from its literary relationships.

M. Arnold attempted[5] to express the peculiar charm of the "romance touch" by the phrase "natural magic"—a quality which he conceives to be especially characteristic of the Celtic genius, but he seems to be conscious that, although he can give examples of lives "drenched and intoxicated with the fairy dew of natural magic," he cannot easily say how that "natural magic" is produced.

Mr. Andrew Lang hints at the elusiveness of romance when he writes:[6] "There is, there can be, no Romantic School. . . . Romance bloweth where she listeth"; Professor Ker insists on the same point:[7] "Sometimes one is inclined to think that Romance, like Happiness, is 'there where thou art not;' if it were real, would it be romance? Is it not all vague, impalpable—less true to its own nature in the 'Rime of the Ancient Mariner,' which is a complete and reasonable thing, than in the music of 'Kubla Khan'? . . . . Sometimes one is inclined to take Romance as a name for the most subtle spirit of imagination, for the quintessence of poetry." . . . . And Professor Raleigh writes[8] of romance that it "makes its most irresistible appeal neither to the eye that searahes for form and colour, nor to the reason that seeks for abstract truth, but to the blood, to all that dim instinct of danger, mystery, and sympathy in things that is man's oldest inheritance—to the superstitions of the heart."

4. "Romance" in Connection with the Novel of Adventure.

The recent revival of the novel of adventure in the works of Stevenson, Rider Haggard, Rudyard Kipling, etc., has not been without effect on the meaning of the word "romance." Through this revival there has come back to it something of the suggestion of stirring adventure and excitement which it carried with it in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.

The revival led also to an emphasizing of the antithesis between romanticism and realism, owing to the fact that it followed on the vogue of realistic fiction in the third quarter of the century. In the words of Mr. Andrew Lang's poem,[9] "The Restoration of Romance":

"King Romance was wounded deep,
All his knights were dead and gone,
All his court were fallen on sleep,
In a vale of Avalon! . . .
Then you came from South and North,
From Tugela, from the Tweed,
Blazoned his enchantments forth,
King Romance is come indeed!" . . . .

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[1] Op. cit., Introduction.

[2] "The Romantic Revolt" (1907), p. 4.

[3] Op. cit. (p. 21).

[4] Lecture delivered at Oxford, June, 1896 (published in the *Nineteenth Century* for Aug., 1896).

[5] "Study of Celtic Literature" (1867).

[6] "Realism and Romance" (*Contemporary Review*, 1887); cf. also Prof. Ker, "Epic and Romance," p. 325.

[7] "Romance" (a lecture delivered to the English Association, Jan. 5, 1909).

[8] Essay on "R. L. Stevenson" (1895).

[9] Published in "Ban and Arrière-Ban," 1894, and dedicated "to H. R. H., R. L. S., A. C. D., and S. W."—cf. also an article in the *Contemporary* (Nov., 1887), in which Mr. Lang says that in "Treasure Island" Stevenson "restored romance."

Mr. Lang refers[1] again to the antithesis in the same connection, more definitely declaring that "if the battle between the crocodile of Realism and the catawampus of Romance is to be fought out to the bitter end—why, in that Ragnarôk, I am on the side of the catawampus." Many other instances[2] might be quoted showing the tendency to emphasize the antithesis at this time.

It is as the adventure story, different in spirit from other forms of fiction, that R. L. Stevenson, about the time[3] that he was writing "Treasure Island," discusses romance in his "Gossip on Romance." He defines romance as the "poetry of circumstance" and the romantic interest as the "pictorial" interest in art. Scott, a "great day-dreamer, a seer of fit and beautiful and humorous visions," is for Stevenson "out and away the king of the romantics." "Pure romance" has, in Stevenson's eyes, "nothing to do with character." To illustrate his point he contrasts the first meeting by the river of Richard and Lucy, in "The Ordeal of Richard Feverel," with their last interview: the first is "pure romance"—"the poetry of circumstance"; the second is "pure drama"—"the poetry of conduct."

5. Revival of the Distinction Between Epic and Romance.

Literary criticism in one other direction has affected the meaning of the word "romance"—i.e., by the revival[4] in a new form of the distinction between "Epic" and "Romance." This distinction, by pointing out certain differences between the mediæval romance and the "epic nature" of various groups of "works belonging to the earlier Middle Ages and to the mediæval origins of modern literature," has given a new definiteness to the word "romance" as applied to mediæval narrative.

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It would be arbitrary to bring the history of the word "romance" to an end with the close of the nineteenth century, for the word is a living one, and is, as the notes on recent literary criticism show, still undergoing modifications of meaning—a fact which is in itself an illustration of the truth of which this whole study is a proof: that words, like books, are "not absolutely dead things, but do contain a potency of life in them"—a life which reflects changing conditions of thought, and in no small degree shows "the very age and body of the time, his form and pressure."

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[1] "Realism and Romance" (*Contemporary Review*, Nov., 1887).

[2] E.g., "English Realism and Romance" (*Quarterly Review*, Oct., 1891); "The Confession of a Lover of Romance" (*Atlantic Monthly*, Aug., 1897); "Romance Realisticised" by H. D. Traill (*Contemporary Review*, Feb., 1891).

[3] November, 1882 (*Longman's Magazine*). The "Gossip" was afterwards published in "Memories and Portraits" (1887).

[4] In Professor Ker's "Epic and Romance" (1896).

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[1] The date given is, in general, the date of publication. The list is not exhaustive.

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