

brilliant period of Rome's history. The elder Cato, Cicero and Sallust were also eminent statesmen and men of letters; but the names of these and others need not be recalled to the memory of the student of classic literature.

Let us now come down to later times, when the empire of Rome had been shattered into fragments, and new nationalities and states were in process of formation throughout Europe. Charlemagne, emphatically a man of action, had his hours of study, whether in the camp or court, and is said to have formed his courtiers into an academy, with the view of interesting them in literary pursuits. Alfred of England, a truly great man, was not only an eminent statesman and law-giver, but a scholar and author of high attainments, having translated Boethius on the Consolations of Philosophy, and written other works in Saxon. To the princes and nobles of Europe must be awarded the praise of having fostered poetical literature in those ages when learning was confined to the clergy, and printing had not been invented to spread knowledge and create a love of letters among the masses. Many of the Troubadours were knights and men of noble birth, who sang the praises of some fair lady, or told in stirring strain of chivalrous deeds; it was, in fact, one of the rules of chivalry that the nobles should keep open house for all the wandering followers of war and minstrelsy. Richard Cœur de Lion is generally remembered for his heroic deeds; but he was also famous in his day for his wit and eloquence in song. The illustrious Florentine family, the Medici, have ever associated their name with the patronage of art and literature. Machiavel, the author of that curious work, "the Prince," which has so long afforded a prolific theme for political essayists, was an exceedingly astute statesman, who did good service for his country during his public career.

Previous to the sixteenth century, the principal offices of the state in England had been generally filled by men famous in war or in the church; but during the reign of Elizabeth, there appeared for the first time the professional politician. He did not belong to the church—he was not connected with the leading nobility; but he was highly educated, and sought in public life that preferment which was not attainable, so far as he was concerned, by any other avenue. Prominent among these men was one who, with all his weaknesses, occupies a place in the estimation of his countrymen which few Englishmen have ever held. No man in ancient or modern times can be brought forward as a more striking illustration of the versatility of commanding genius than the illustrious Bacon. As a lawyer, he will be ever famous for his labours in arranging and reforming the laws of England; as a statesman, he took a conspicuous part in bringing about the union of Scotland and England—a measure which all Englishmen and Scotchmen will now willingly confess has conducted greatly to the interests of both sections; as an historian he will be known for his clear and succinct history of the reign of Henry VII.; as a philosopher he towers above all who have preceded him. He was the author of many admirable treatises which, in themselves, would have entitled him to fame; but his ablest work was the *Novum Organum*, in which, to quote