

will mention only the greatest of the poets of other lands. And first among them Dante, whose "*Commedia*" should be read, if possible, in its own Italian. Of the translations I must still consider Cary's the best, not as giving the most exact rendering of the original, but as best representing its spirit and tone. But the translation of Longfellow should also be read, and his notes are excellent.\* The best commentary and notes are those which accompany Dean Plumptre's translation. In regard to Spanish it is hardly necessary to mention Don Quixote. For those who wish to have some knowledge of the great Spanish drama, without studying the language, Trench's volume on Calderon's play, "*Life is a Dream*," may be highly recommended.

Of German writers it is sufficient to name Lessing, Goethe, and Schiller, all eminently worthy of study. The "*Faust*" of Goethe should, if possible, be read in the original; but the translation of Mr. Bayard Taylor is most excellent, reproducing the metre, and very largely the spirit of the German. Sir Theodore Martin's translation is also very good; and some prefer the generally accurate prose version of Mr. Hayward.

Among French dramatists the names of Racine, Corneille and Molière occur to us at once. They should be read in French; these lose immensely, especially Molière, by appearing in an English dress. Of more modern writers, poets, two stand supreme—Alfred de Musset, whom M. Taine says he prefers to Tennyson, and Victor Hugo.

Among writers of fiction Walter Scott, Thackeray and Dickens must be placed first. But English literature is very rich in this department. We have Miss Austin, George Eliot,

\* Dr. Carlyle's prose translation of the "*Inferno*" is excellent, rhythmical, almost poetical.

Charles Reade,\* Lord Lytton, Anthony Trollope, and many others. French novels, for the most part, are unsuitable for English reading. Yet some of Victor Hugo's and of George Sand's are masterpieces. Perhaps I ought not to pass by "*Corinne*," by Madame de Staël. †

In history again English literature is very rich; and I believe we may say that no reading is so useful and so remunerative as the reading of history. It is enough to mention Gibbon's "*Roman Empire*," Milman's "*Latin Christianity*," Stanley's "*History of the Jews*," Grote and Thirlwall's "*Histories of Greece*," Robertson's "*Charles V.*," the works of Motley and Prescott, the historical essays and other works of Dr. Freeman, the "*History of England*," by Mr. Green, Carlyle's "*French Revolution*." ‡ After perusing the principal works of these writers, the reader may be safely left to find his own way.

Of religious books the name is legion; yet some religious writers should be known by all educated men and women. We have only to mention Augustine, whose "*Confessions*" will be read as long as men have heads or hearts; Thomas à Kempis, whose "*Imitation*" is the most widely circulated book in the world (after the Bible); Jeremy Taylor, the Shakespeare of theology; Hooker, "the judicious" and sublime; Bunyan, especially his "*Pilgrim's Progress*," "*Holy War*," "*Jerusalem*," "*Sinner Saved*," and Keble, whose "*Christian Year*" is in every home.

Of books on subjects akin to religion and philosophy I will mention only a

\* Some critics declare that Reade will survive Dickens. It must be acknowledged that his literary ability is greater.

† As a rule, German novels are not very attractive; yet there are some good ones by Hauff, Freytag, Rodenberg, Ebers, Werner, Fräulein von Hillern and others.

‡ Of foreign writers, I may mention Ranke and Neander, Guizot and Taine.