

The principal historians were William of Malmesbury, born about the time of the Conquest; Geoffrey, of Monmouth; and Gerald Barry. William of Malmesbury's chief work is a history of England, from the Saxon conquest to the year 1120. There is in this work a more exact balancing of facts, and fewer absurd legends than in the histories written previously to his time. Geoffrey of Monmouth's chief work is a history of the British Kings. The history of Arthur, and his Knights of the Round Table, forms the most interesting part of the work. Gerald Barry also wrote a history of the Britons.

In France, the Romance tongues broke into two dialects, named from the words "oïl" and "oc," used instead of our "yes." The language of oïl was spoken in the north, and the language of oc in the south of France. The Langue D'Oc was sung by the famous Troubadours. It was trampled out by De Montfort in his Albigensian Crusade, and exists now only as the rude *patois* of the province that now bears its name. The Langue D'Oïl was introduced into England by the Norman conquest, and has in many ways influenced our English Literature.

ANNA LIVING.

2. Notes on Sir Walter Raleigh, Goldsmith, and Burns.

Sir Walter Raleigh—educated at Oxford, went at seventeen to France as a volunteer, in the cause of the Huguenots. After five years' active service, he returned to England, and went with his half brother, Sir Humphrey Gilbert, to North America. Returning none the richer after two years, he was sent with an army into Ireland, to fight against the rebel Desmonds. He won the favour of the Lord Lieutenant, who entrusted him with despatches to Queen Elizabeth. He soon became a great favourite with the Queen, was knighted, was made overseer of the wine sellers, and received a grant of several thousand acres of Irish land. Upon the accession of James I. he lost favour, and was arrested upon a charge of having taken part in a conspiracy to place Arabella Stuart upon the throne. After a trial at Winchester, he was thrown into the Tower, where he lay for 13 years. During his imprisonment, he wrote his great work, "The History of the World." Commencing with the creation, it ends with the second Macedonian war. It is distinguished by a fine antique eloquence, and a depth of learning which we are not prepared to find in Raleigh. A tinge of melancholy, owing doubtless to the circumstances under which it was written, pervades the whole work. At length, weary of his confinement, he offered to disclose an unwrought gold that he had discovered in one of his expeditions up the Orinoco, as the price of his freedom. Vessels were furnished him, and he set out; but on arriving at the Town of St. Thomas, he found the Spaniards prepared to oppose his landing. An engagement took place, in which Raleigh was defeated; he was, therefore, obliged to return to England. To appease the Spaniards, whom James was desirous of conciliating, he was beheaded, 1618. His other works are a narrative of his cruise to Guinea, and several poems.

ANNA LIVING.

Goldsmith, the son of a Protestant clergyman, was born in Ireland. By the aid of his uncle Contarine, he was educated at Trinity College, Dublin. He was very idle and unruly, and took only a very low B.A. After leaving college, he endeavoured to set up as a doctor, tutor, clergyman, and lawyer. Failing in his attempts, he set off on a pedestrian tour of Europe, and travelled through France, Italy, Switzerland, &c. On his return to England, he made several unsuccessful attempts to set up as a medical man, before he finally adopted letters as his profession. For several years he wrote for the periodicals and magazines of the day. For Smollett's Magazine he wrote many fine essays, also letters describing a Chinaman's impressions of England. The latter attracted considerable attention. About this time he formed the friendship of Johnson, who aided him in many difficulties. Once, when arrested for debt by his landlady, he sent for Johnson, who hastened to him at once. Goldsmith produced his "Vicar of Wakefield," which Johnson (recognizing it as a work of great merit) took to a bookseller, and sold for sixty guineas. Before its publication, however, Goldsmith had become famous by the appearance of the "Traveller." Though the sale of his works now brought him in plenty of money, his extravagant style of living, and his lavish generosity, kept him constantly in debt. To remove the load, he commenced a number of works, a "History of England," "Histories of Greece and Rome," and a successful comedy, "She Stoops to Conquer." At length, with his hands full of unfinished work, and the knowledge of numerous debts, his last illness seized him, and in 1774 he died. His other chief works are, "The Good Natured Man," "Enquiry into the State of Polite Learning in Europe," and "The Deserted Village."

ANNA LIVING.

Burns was an Ayrshire ploughman. When eleven years of age, he was taken from the village school to aid his father on their little farm. From the time of his leaving school, with the exception of a fortnight's French, and a quarter at land surveying, he received no instruction but what he drew from his scanty library. At length, finding it impossible to make a living off their barren soil, he determined to go to Jamaica. In order to raise funds, and prevent his name from being quite forgotten, he had several hundred copies of his poems printed and scattered through the bookseller's shops. The sale of the book was rapid, and when all expenses were paid, twenty guineas remained for Burns. His passage was taken, when a letter from a literary man in Edinburgh, praising his work highly, induced him to alter his plans, and set out for Edinburgh instead of Jamaica. On his arrival in Edinburgh, he was patronized and caressed by all the literary men of the day. Dinners were made in his honour, subscriptions raised for a second edition of his works, and then the novelty having worn off, he was neglected and forgotten. The rest of his life was sad. Debt pressed upon him heavily. He gave way to intemperance, and sank into an early grave. Burns is chiefly remembered for his songs. His best poems are, "To a Daisy," "To a Mouse," "The Cottar's Saturday Night," a beautiful picture of domestic life, and "Tam O'Shanter."

ANNA LIVING.

4. Brief comments on "The Rape of the Lock," "The Task," and "Clarendon's History of the Great Rebellion."

"The Rape of the Lock," an epic in miniature, presents the finest specimen of the mock-heroic style to be found in English verse. A desire to break down a coolness that had arisen between two lovers, by the cutting off of a tress of the lady's hair by her lover, caused Pope to write this work. The machinery of the poem he borrowed from the Rosicrucian doctrine, that the four elements are inhabited by gnomes, sylphs, &c. Most comically he brings this to act upon the story which reaches its climax, when an unfortunate sylph, in her eagerness to save the imperilled lock, gets between the blades of the scissors, and is snipped in two. After a fierce conflict, the tress flies up to heaven, and takes its place among the stars.

"The Task" consists of six books. It was written by Cowper, for a lady who asked him to write her some blank verse, and gave him the sofa as a subject. In the first book he proceeds from a humorous historical description of the gradual improvement in seats to describe the pleasures of a country walk, and contrasts rural and city life, giving loving praise to the former. The second book, entitled "The Timepiece," begins with a just denunciation of slavery, and shows the blessing and need of peace. The other books, entitled "The Garden," "The Winter Morning," "The Winter Morning Walk," and "The Winter Walk at Noon," all show the innocent recreations and gentle loving nature of the author.

"Clarendon's History of the Rebellion" is not in all things a true history of the civil war, as he was absent from England during the greater part of the struggle. It is very unequally written. In some parts are passages of glowing eloquence, while in others sentences are tangled together in utter defiance of the rules of grammatical construction. Yet, even in these, the sense is never obscure. As a specimen of historical portrait painting, it stands unrivalled.

ANNA LIVING.

HISTORY.

- Q. 6. (a.) Describe the circumstances under which the institution of the class of magistrates, called Tribunes of the Plebs, took place. What was the number of the Tribunes? How long did they hold Office? What powers and privileges did they possess?
- (b.) What concession was made to the Plebeians by the Licinian Rogation?
- (c.) Describe the part taken by Tiberias Gracchus in the struggle between the masses of the people and the nobility.
7. Give an account of the career of Philip, Father of Alexander the Great.
8. Give a sketch of the reign of Henry IV. of France.
6. (a.) There were in Rome at this time, two classes, the Patricians and the Plebeians. The latter were driven to madness almost, by the oppression of the Patricians, who were their creditors. At length the Plebeians, rather than take the field against the Volscians, seceded to Mons Sacer, where some talked of founding a rival city. The Patricians, in alarm, granted their demands. Slaves for debt were set free, and, greatest privilege of all, two of the Tribunes were henceforth elected from the Plebeians. The number of Tribunes of the Plebs was two. This was afterwards increased to ten. They held office for one year, during which their persons were sacred, and by the word "veto," I forbid it, they could annul any decree of the Senate.
- (b.) One of the two consuls was appointed from the Plebeians after the passing of the Licinian Rogations.