

II.

What if the mavis sing no more !
 What if the wanton winds deplore
 The wan year's vanish'd grace !
 Glad summer glows within our hearts,
 Wherein time leaves no autumn trace.

III.

What if the palsied branches moan !
 What if the glades be drear and lone !
 Love's tender tendril clings
 Still green about our sunny lives,
 Wherein eternal verdure springs.

 ESSAYS ON MODERN EUROPEAN LITERATURE.—No. 1.

HEINRICH HEINE. — HUMOURIST AND POET.

German literature, which has been very generally studied by thinking men among us since the impetus given first by Coleridge, and still more by Thomas Carlyle, has been characterized by any other quality rather than playful humour. Profundity of thought and research, a restless spirit of speculation and criticism were the chief attraction, and of these even the poetry of Germany partook. Lighter literature had hardly an existence in that cloudy atmosphere of idealism ; novels were few and of an inferior class, and a German comedy in five Acts was so ponderous in its efforts at wit that one endured its progress, with passive submission, wondering whether, by any dispensation of Providence, it would ever come to an end. But here, born at Hamburg "*Bœotum in jure crasso que sub acre natus*," is the author of some twenty volumes of sparkling lyrics, which, sceptical, cynical and sometimes immoral, as they are, have yet won the ear of Europe, as no poetry since Byron's has done, and have exercised a marked influence on the younger poets of our own country.

Heinrich Heine was nephew of one of the partners in the well-known Jewish banking firm of Heine in the free town of Hamburg. "I was born," he says, "in Hamburg, the native city of hung-beef." In one of his ballads he thus alludes to his early days.

My child, we too have been children,
 Young children tiny and gay,
 We made our abode in the hen-house,
 And hid there among the hay.

We merrily laughed and shouted,
 And all that came by that road,
 When we cried "*cock-a-doodle*,"
 Thought the cock had really crowed.