

Greek and Latin classics were the literary steps during and after the eleventh century by which the revival of learning was reached. From the twelfth and thirteenth centuries—the era of the schoolmen—date twenty universities, including those of Paris, Montpellier, Oxford, Cambridge, Bologna, Padua, Rome, Salamanca, and Lisbon. Many of them were special as to their faculties; Bologna being devoted to law, and numbering 12,000 students at the end of the twelfth century; Salerno made medicine its peculiar province, and Paris was thronged with students who were anxious to probe the border-line on which theology and philosophy met.

Certainly the most interesting of those communities which preceded the Renaissance was that of the Brethren of the Common Life, established at Deventer, in the Northern Netherlands, with affiliated institutions at many other places. Though the rule was to all intents and purposes monastic, yet no vows were taken; and while the instruction given was originally intended to be purely religious, yet the rigorous repudiation of secular learning was afterwards relaxed, and the result of the combined regimen was the formation of such a character as Thomas à Kempis, author of the "Imitatio Christi," whose real name was Thomas Hammerlein, and who entered as a student at Deventer* in the closing years of the fourteenth century. All these types of education, however, disappeared before the Renaissance and the Reformation. It is necessary to keep apart these two distinct events, to which M. Taine applies the names of the Pagan and the Christian Renaissance respectively. The education of the Renaissance is best represented by Erasmus; that of the Reformation by

Luther and Melancthon. Speaking of the new life of this period, Mr. Oscar Browning terms it "the marvellous resurrection of the mind and spirit of Europe when touched with the dead hand of an extinct civilisation." "Then," adds M. Taine, "literature shot forth like a harvest." But we must not forget that our aim is scholastic—let us say in preference *pædagogic*—and not for the moment literary, in the ordinary sense of that word. Two names stand out prominently in this revival of letters, and each has claims upon our consideration. In 1424 Vittorino da Feltre, who died in 1477, had gained fame as the first practical schoolmaster of the Italian Renaissance: and Castiglione, who was born the year after Da Feltre's death, left us in his *Cortigiano* (the Counter) the sketch of a cultivated nobleman of those days. Each of these, however, affects a stratum of society which cannot by any extension of the term be called popular. Erasmus meets us one section lower down. He has left us a minute account of his method. He stands at the very antipodes of Mr. Lowe, for the child is to be formed into a perfect and a pious man by means of Latin and Greek. The Latin, however, that Erasmus would have taught was to be a living, not a dead, Latin, just as the Greek of De Quincey was not a dead Greek when he turned a *Times* leader into it for amusement, or as the Greek of Professor Blackie is not a dead but a living Greek, when, writing to modern Greeks, he cuts pleasant jokes to them on the old language. The great point Erasmus insisted upon was that letters were to be taught *inter ludendum*. The old Roman name for the school was to go back to its original etymology. Before the revival of letters female education had declined, but Erasmus would make the education of girls as important as that of boys. Thus he stands at the very op-

* See for an interesting picture of Life at Deventer, "Christian Schools and Scholars," Vol. II., p. 337, published anon., and by Longmans (1867).