

soon in tears, it was watered by the blood of martyrs, the warm sunshine of God's smile shone upon it, and it grew and greened and ripened into a glorious harvest-field—the religious and intellectual Reformations of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Those Reformations meant emancipation from spiritual and mental bondage, the dawn of a day for which the heart of the world had long been yearning—the loosing of the shackles of ecclesiastical oppression and tyranny.

Then did the twilight which, for centuries, was spreading and brightening, melt away into the clear, bright light of day; the storm-cloud which had for centuries been gathering over the head of the Church, growing denser and blacker, at length burst forth with terrible fury, shaking it to its very foundations and inspiring the hearts of men with foreboding and fear; the tide of truth which had long been at its lowest ebb, was now advancing to its spring-tide height, and before its surging waves, the lofty edifice of ecclesiastical tyranny was fast crumbling away, and shewing how powerless it was to resist the onward march of Truth; for Truth must live, she is immortal and has an invulnerable life. From the fiery furnace of persecution she has come forth purified from her dross, and bright with a heavenly radiance; the storms which have raged around her have only tested her power of endurance, filled her sails, and caused her to speed on with a swifter, statelier tread, on her heaven-directed course, victorious over every wave of trial.

"Truth crushed to death, shall rise again,
The eternal years of God are hers,
But error wounded, writhes in pain,
And dies, amid her worshippers."

The Reformation under Luther and that under Bacon may be regarded as different aspects of the same tidal wave which, in that period, swept

over the face of Europe, different harvests of the same sowing, different hues of the same rainbow. The same influences which led to the one also led to the other, for whatever went to weaken the influence of the Church, went also to weaken the influence of Aristotle, whom the Church set up as the infallible teacher of scientific truth. When Luther, hero that he was, came forth and questioned the infallibility of the Pope, the way was opened up for questioning the infallibility of Aristotle. The same blow which was dealt out to the one, was dealt out with equal force to the other, and *vice versa*. The liberty to read an open Bible paved the way for opening the Book of Nature and reading her ample page, while, on the other hand, the liberty to open the Book of Nature which was claimed by the intellectual heroes of the preceding century, by Roger Bacon, Copernicus and Galileo, prepared the way for Luther and for the liberty of reading an open Bible. The Reformation under Bacon again, like that under Luther, was *gradually* brought about. The age was moving Bacon-ward long before it became Baconian. By those who went before, by men who, in the face of trial, persecution and death itself, dared to be true to themselves and to the cause of truth, was the way prepared for the advent of Bacon. There was thus intellectual life before Bacon, as there was spiritual life before Luther; a spirit of investigation had been inspired, and many here and there were found opening the Book of Nature and unfolding her laws. And, at length, when all things were ready, when every influence previously operating had performed the work assigned it, and men's minds seemed prepared by the training and discipline of centuries, for brighter gleams of light and greater advances in knowledge, Francis Bacon arose to sys-