

CRADLE OF MODERN GERMANY 17

try between what is now Tours and Poitiers, was Charlemagne's grandfather. What is now western Europe, became the home and the consolidated kingdom of the German tribes who had drifted down from the west of the Baltic, and into the Saxon plain. They had become masters in this territory: after victories over the Mongolian tribes, and the Huns under Attila, who had conquered and plundered as far as Strasburg, Worms, and Treves, and were finally defeated near what is now Chalons; after driving off the Arabs under Charles the Hammer (732); after imposing their rule upon the Roman Empire, the remains of which cowered in Constantinople, where the Ottoman Turk took even that from it in 1453, which date may well be taken as marking the beginning of modern history, and became themselves thereafter one of the first powers in Christian Europe; a power which is now, in 1912, the quarrel ground of the Western powers.

These are Brobdingnagian strides through history, to reach the days of Dante, Petrarch, Boccaccio, Chaucer, Froissart, and the first translation of the Bible into a vulgar tongue by Wickliffe, to the days when Lorenzo de Medici breathed Greece into Europe, and the feeling for beauty changed from invalidism to conva-