

of his modern representative, but how he became a progressive being we have no data to denote. We have to take what Mr. Herbert Spencer terms "the developing man" very largely on trust. That great philosopher has, however, shown how, by a careful and logical use of the scientific imagination, we may arrive at a probable solution of the problem. "There remains," he writes, in discussing the factors of social phenomena, "in the group of derived factors, one more, the potency of which can scarcely be over-estimated. I mean that accumulation of super-organic products which we commonly distinguish as artificial, but which, philosophically considered, are no less natural than all others resulting from evolution. There are several orders of these. First come the material appliances which, beginning with roughly chipped flints, end in the complete automatic tools of an engine-factory driven by steam; which, from boomerangs, rise to thirty-five ton guns; which, from huts of branches and grass, grow to cities with their palaces and cathedrals. Then we have language, able at first only to eke out gestures in communicating simple ideas, but eventually becoming capable of expressing highly-complex conceptions with precision. While from that stage in which it conveys thoughts only by sounds to one or two other persons, we pass through picture-writing up to steam-printing, multiplying indefinitely the numbers communicated with, and making accessible in voluminous literatures the ideas and feelings of innumerable men in various places and times. Concomitantly there goes on the development of knowledge, ending in science. Counting on the fingers grows into far-reaching mathematics; observation of the moon's changes leads at length to a theory of the solar system; and, at successive stages, there arise sciences of which not even the germs can at first be detected. Meanwhile, the once few and simple customs, becoming more numerous, definite and fixed, end in systems of laws. From a few rude superstitions there grow up elaborate mythologies, theologies, cosmogonies. Opinion getting embodied in creeds, gets embodied, too, in accepted codes of propriety, good conduct, ceremony, and in established social sentiments. And then there gradually evolve also the products we call æsthetic, which of themselves form a highly complex group. From necklaces of fishbones we advance to dresses elaborate, gorgeous, infinitely varied; out of discordant war-chants, came symphonies and operas; cairns develop into magnificent temples; in place of caves with rude markings, there arise at length galleries of paintings; and the recital of a chief's deeds, with mimetic accompaniment, gives origin to epics, dramas, lyrics, and the vast mass of poetry, fiction, biography, and history."¹

I have quoted this passage, so charged with meaning and suggestion as to the whole vast field of mankind's development, as well for its inferential bearing on the earliest stirrings of human aspiration as (and more especially) for the light that it sheds on the first promptings of the poetic spirit. Although it is not the express aim of this paper to trace the progress of poetry from its rude beginnings to the beauty and majesty of its maturity, it is impossible to avoid noticing the many and manifold illustrations of such progress that one meets with in a study of this kind.

Signor Tito Vignoli who, though a disciple of Mr. Spencer, differs from him as to the sequence of certain stages in man's spiritual development, has also attempted to solve the problem of his first intellectual movements on purely evolutionary grounds. According to Signor Vignoli, the unseen wind, the moving cloud, the lightning flash, the thunder

¹ The Data of Sociology, part i. chap. ii. § 12.