

of which may be identified with a certain period or age in the life of either. These three ages we may call, the age of Observation, the age of Speculation, and the age of Action. The rise of the present European nations dates from the year 476, A. D., when the barbarous races of northern Europe, whose original home was Tartary, rolled down in successive tides, and swept Roman arms and civilization before them. Rome, the eternal city, which had for centuries held the proud position of mistress of the world, and the very focus of light and civilization, was compelled to acknowledge the superiority of barbarian arms. The luxurious habits and vicious indulgences of her citizens and soldiers, engendered only effeminacy and idleness, which could offer but a feeble resistance to a race of hardy barbarians, excelling in physical strength, although unskilled in the art of war. The downfall of Rome is an event in history pregnant with meaning. It means not only the destruction of one of the most powerful empires, and the most renowned people of antiquity, but the extinction of literature and the death of civilization. The Roman people, the extent of whose conquests, and whose prowess in arms were wont to inspire the hearts of the surrounding nations with terror, soon began to manifest all the symptoms of decay and approaching extinction, and all that was lofty in literature and noble in art seemed destined to be consigned to a similar fate. New races appear upon the scene, — upon the ashes of Rome, and upon the ruins of Roman art and civilization springs up, as it were, phoenix-like, a new and vigorous life, which, perpetuating its existence to the present day, is destined to extend its influence to all who will come after us, — life begins anew, and the periods of infancy, youth and manhood must be passed through. Knowledge is to be re-acquired, and Nature again subjected to observation and inspection. The accumulated mental wealth of centuries was of little estimation in the eyes of barbarous races, whose tastes were more sensual than intellectual, and whose habits more observant than reflective. The determined hostility which these barbarous tribes exhibited towards Roman literature and art, has been perpetuated by our language in the word Vandal, one of the most powerful of the tribes, and which now means any person who manifests an excessive hostility to the arts and sciences. This new life, whose current we intend to follow, and whose development we are about to indicate, dates its birth from the year in which the Roman Empire was overthrown by the barbarians of the North, chief among whom were the Goths, the Vandals, and the Huns, who now become masters of Europe, and from whom the modern European nations have descended. This date is generally admitted to be the year 476, A. D., from which time Europe began a new life, passing successively through the stages of infancy, youth and manhood, and displaying in its history all the features which we usually associate with these periods. The most striking features which distinguish infancy from the other periods, are the predominant, though subordinate exercise of the faculty of observation, co-existent with a state of ignorance and credulity. Now, if we study carefully the most striking features of