

criticism, his satiric and macaronic verse indicating the decay of the artistic spirit and ideals on which the naive old narrative poetry of Chaucer and his imitators had subsisted. The latter part of the fifteenth century then shows the spirit and form of the old Chaucerian vein in dissolution. A new impulse and new ideals of art are required to restore the poetic energy of literature. This new impulse came from the study of the Italian literature: a new culture, a new form of idealism derived from Dante and Petrarch entered England with the poetry of Surrey and Wyatt. The teacher may very easily illustrate the character of this new idealism by reading some of Rossetti's translations from the *Vita Nuova* of Dante and the Sonnets of Petrarch, by pointing out the new elegance of phrase, the languid grace of the sentiment and thought in the poetry of Surrey and Wyatt. He may place before them the simple realism of Chaucer's reflective or descriptive vein in such lines as

The smallë softë sweetë grass,
or
Pacience is a vertue hye certayne,

and ask them to contrast it with the new power of idealizing thought in such lines as those of Wyatt to his lute :

Blame not my Lute ! for he must sound
Of this or that, as liketh me ;

or such lines as these from Sidney's sonnet :

With how sad steps, O Morn ! thou climbst
the skies,
How silently, and with how wan a face !

With such examples before him the pupil will readily perceive the distinctive qualities of lyrical poetry and the phenomena which accompany its development. The teacher may then explain the new measures which these and contemporary poets introduced into English poetry, two of which, the

ottava rima (in the modified form of the Spenserian stanza) and the sonnet have since played such a great part in English poetry. He may profitably devote one or two lessons to explain the peculiar development of the sonnet in the hands of Shakespeare, Milton and Wordsworth. The pupil is then in a position to understand the culmination of this style of poetry in Spenser, and the great blossoming period (*Blüthe-Zeit*, as the Germans call it) of lyric poetry in the Elizabethan period in Marlowe, Barnefield, Shakespeare, Jonson and others. And in Surrey's attempt at blank verse, the teacher will also find a starting-point for treating the development of the English drama on this side. The social and intellectual phenomena which contribute to the great literary expansion of this period, and the particular origin of the English drama are too well-known to require notice here. This great epoch is the result of a climax alike in language (vocabulary), art and national growth. But what is not so commonly known is that at this point the teacher will find his best opportunity for explaining the historical development of English versification. Let him compare two or three lines from the blank verse of Surrey or Sackville with a passage from Marlowe, say the famous opening speech of the Jew of Malta ; let him simply note for his pupils the new freedom of accent, and of cæsural position, and they will readily understand the peculiar influence which the blank verse of the English drama has exercised on English versification. And this rhythmical freedom or license of the Elizabethans finds its exact parallel in the freedom of their vocabulary and phraseology, and in the freedom of their thought. After the study of this period which I have sketched hastily in brief and rough outlines, the pupil will understand the variety of literary phenomena