

from the shelter and the warmth, chose to face the inclement night rather than listen to their gross and blasphemous discourse. \*

One more example must suffice. St. Anselm met a boy in the pleasant Kentish meadows, playing with a bird, which was attached to his wrist by a string. "Ah! I wish thou wert free," exclaimed Anselm, half involuntarily, and straightway (so ran the legend) the bird flew away into the woods.†

Was not this enough to make any man reflect on the sanctity of life and liberty, even among the animal creation, then so grievously oppressed by hawk and hound; all the spare energy of man being centred on forest pleasures, and all his harshness occupied in devising forest laws.

Regarding the early legends in this light we can see that they were calculated to convey moral lessons which could in no other shape have been rendered acceptable to the people, but at the same time we must not forget that in so far as they usurped the place of true historical literature, they deserve all the censure which our author has heaped upon them. Growing up a rank and tangled herbage, they choked not only history, but all forms of literary work, and in many cases were perpetuated on parchments from which the great works of classical authors were expunged for their reception.

I have not attempted to give in this short paper the minor laws which Buckle evolved from his study of the

French, Spanish, and Scotch civilizations. Some of these have been attacked, but as a rule criticism has rather attempted to impugn the illustrations and instances with which he enforced his conclusions, than the soundness of those conclusions themselves. It is probable he may have erred in the application of his own general rules, but the spirit of those rules will, in my opinion, govern the future of historical literature, which, ever pushing onward into the region of science and determinate laws, will abandon that style which loved to linger in Courts and Camps and to picture the rise and fall of nations as dependent upon a favourite's caprice or the accidents of a foughten field.

In that higher, purer atmosphere none but large minds will breathe with pleasure,—but to them, how exalting and mentally invigorating will be the prospect! Nor need smaller capacities complain, for, far below those glittering heights, rose-red in the flush of morning, there will be ample space left for the petty crowd, who will find in their memoirs, chronicles, court calendars, genealogies, and Dryasdust biographies a congenial field for the exercise of their feeble capacities. No longer usurping the place of history, these minor studies will at once take up their true position as its feeders and gazetteers, and, with an irony not unfrequently seen in events, will furnish materials for those wider generalizations by which they themselves are doomed to be superseded.

\* Guizot's "History of Civilization in France," vol. ii. (Bogue's Edition—Lecture 17, where the above examples will be found).

† Vide Eadmer's *Life of Anselm*, or Berington's "Literary History of the Middle Ages," p. 176.