

THE BOSTON ADVOCATE, SATURDAY,

Studies in German Literature.—
No. 1.

[R. K. POTTER, OF JEFFERSON CITY, MO.]

An intense interest in German language and literature has within the last few years been manifested not only by those intimately connected with educational institutions, but also by individuals of all classes outside of such institutions. That this interest is of quite recent date is very evident. Carlyle's review for the *Edinburgh Review*, in 1827 makes, in his article entitled, "State of German Literature," this statement: "During the greater part of the last century, the Germans, in our intellectual survey of the word, were quietly omitted; a vague, contemptuous ignorance prevailed respecting them; it was a cinimeral land where, if a few sparks did glimmer, it was but so as to testify their own existence, too feebly to enlighten us." The Germans passed for apprentices in all provinces of art, and many foreign craftsmen scarcely allowed them so much. Madame de Staël, by her writing, did much to stimulate curiosity about the Germans, and researches have brought to light the fact that they are intellectually independent, original and imposing; and that their literature deals and has dealt most profoundly with philology, theology, and philosophy—subjects in which mankind are universally interested; bearing these facts in mind, it is not hard to assign causes for the awakening referred to above, and participated in by scholar and layman.

A distinctly German literature has extended as far back as 360, A. D., between which time and 380, A. D., a great part of the bible was translated into Gothic.

To increase the facility for studying the history of German literature, the time from 360, A. D., until the present has been divided into eight periods. The first, called Old High German, extended from 360 to the eleventh century. The word "German," as commonly used on the continent of Europe, includes only those people whose literature belongs to the High German language. The term *high* is used in opposition to the term *low*, and one of the distinctions between the high and the low German is couched in the different use of consonants, and, in this respect, the low German is more closely allied to the English. This is instanced when *t*, *k*, and *p* are respectively used in the place of the High German *t*, *ch*, and *f*.

High German passed through many changes during the years from the sixth century to the present; changes which entitle it to the distinctions, Old, Middle, and new High German. The forms of these different stages of development differ so widely that the student seems to be considering three different languages. Nevertheless, through all these changes, the German language, as such, preserved its independence. In English, in order to express new combination of thought, we borrow words from the Greek, the Latin, the French, and modify them to suit the circumstances; not so in the German, but usually, by compounds and derivatives of its root words, which are comparatively few, it develops its own resources at the expense of no language other than its own.

The first, or the period of Old High German, was in many respects similar to the corresponding period of English literature.

The work of the last-mentioned writer was expressed in this language.

The Crusades, those wars which, in their effect, so materially changed the life of all Europe, were coincident with the change in the German language, and thus indirectly effected a change in German literature. As churchmen increased in wealth, they became less dependent on secular support, and at the same time intellectually and morally weaker than the monks who had preceded them. Learned men consoled themselves and their learning in the monasteries, while the uneducated became less and less able to grasp the primary truths of morality, even when presented to them in extremely simple forms.

This spring up a language of literature, and an antagonistic language of the common people. Latin was the only vehicle for the best literature for centuries; and even at the close of the seventeenth century the depth and power of the German language had not yet been asserted.

Continued.

THEY SAY

(Specially reported for the Advocate.)

—That you ought to have gone to the Symposium. That half your life is gone if you did not go.

—That the dresses of all the lady artists were handsome. That white cashmere and white satin were the prevailing costumes.

—That the four gentlemen who occupied an up stairs seat in the Globe Theatre two or three weeks ago, looked a little lonesome without any ladies.

—That somebody really thought that at the President's reception the very Venetian supper would be served. That he was all taken back when he found out the nature of the affair.

—That it is better to be eternally forgotten than to be remembered only for evil.

—That Theodore Roosevelt is a brave man. That he was defeated in New York and then sailed to Europe to be married. That he has jumped out of the political frying-pan into the matrimonial fire.

—That a man may sing or a man may whine, or play on the piano all day. That he can't hang a bustle on the back of his spine, because he's not built that way.

—That Mr. Frank Bland, the celebrated tenor, will hold a concert at Tremont Temple next month.

—That the greater part, if not all, of the talent on this occasion will be very distinguished white artists.

—That apparently they are not on good terms. That they both belong to the same up town club. That there is a chance now for somebody in the same up town club to do some good.

—That the beautiful, brilliant, and bewitching young elocutionist of New Bedford has been likened to an imperious queen.

—That a gentleman said of her, "to know her is to love her, love but her, and love forever."

—That it isn't worth while for him to realize his sentiments.

—That an effort is being made in New Haven to organize the first colored assembly of Knights of Labor in this part of the country.

—That Stewart M. Lewis of Washington, a colored Knight, has been giving lectures in New Haven on the advantages offered by the order, and the first steps to form a local assembly were taken a fortnight ago.

—That colored members of the existing assemblies seldom if ever, propose any of their own people for membership. That nearly all the colored men are ad-

—If you don't want to a whipping all over, be sure that they go "bunk."

—That East Boston will not be left. That he too was at the concert and that he too brought his lady.

—That one of the G. K. G's, stuck to her like grim death. That he gave up the New Bedford-Boston lancers to feast upon her beautiful face.

—That serious rivalry is threatened. That this is entire nous.

—That some one by mistake called her "Miss G—." That was a bad one. It is his name that is Mr. G.

—That a little girl was sitting at a table opposite a gentleman with a waxed mustache. That after gazing at him several moments, she exclaimed, "My kitty has smeller too."

—That Massachusetts has sent no man to congress since Robert C. Winthrop better equipped by study and scholarship than Henry Cabot Lodge.

—That the President's country house will be called "Oak View."

—That there are in the employ of the government 550 Smiths, 360 Browns, 330 Johnsons and 270 Joneses. That the number of those bearing these names that are willing to serve the government have never been recorded.

—That in 1642 there were nine students at Harvard; in 1846 there are 1,666. That in 1642 there was one instructor; in 1846 there are 184.

—That it was only a small party of young people. That the accommodations for a large party, were not extensive enough. That consequently only a few intimately acquainted with each other were present.

—That Boston people are beginning to look upon dinners, parties and teas in the same light that the fashionable New Yorkers regard such events.

—That it is not nearly as pleasant, nor convenient to have a large uncomfortable crush and jam in a small house at a reception, but that it better pleases the guests and is always more successful if several receptions are given during the season, and at each are a small number of people are invited, especially if the circle of friends and intimate acquaintances be very large.

—That in that way every one will have the pleasure of attending at least once, and no one will be slighted, and will have no need to take offense.

—That it works excellently in New York among fashionable people with more conveniences for large accommodations, and that it bids fair to work well in fashionable Boston too.

—That there are people who laugh to show their good teeth. That there are those who seek to show their good heart.

—That it is sweet to be appreciated, and enabling to be loved.

—That Queen Victoria of England, is coarse, avuncular, dictatorial and cordially detested by her children.

—That a lot of first rate brains get out of working order because they aren't used.

—That two of the leading members of the G. K. G. were seen at the Symposium last week, and each time they were unaccompanied by ladies.

—That two other members of the G. K. G. were there, and that their ladies were with them too.

—That a certain number of seats in a certain part of the church last Wednesday night, contained a set that came to support their friends.

—That a certain corner of a certain gallery in the same church on the same occasion, contained a set who came to the support of their friends.

—That a fortnight ago, the students of Andover received the worst defeat that has ever been sustained from Exeter, during a game of football.

—That Andover died hard, pluckily cheering up to the last moment.

The grand historical record of this place during the war, I will not state in this letter, as it has been read by most every child in the land; but to speak of the present costumes of these people is something new. I have traversed o'er this place from sea to sea, and to say that our people are on the march of time and are progressing, is but to say an untruth.

The majority of the population of Key West are the colored people; but they are far behind the age, but not on account of times being dull here, for there is more money here, than there is in any other part of the state. Colored men make and a make from five to ten dollars a day regular, wrapping cigars. Carpenters are also needed here, and will receive high prices, as houses are "all here without any chimneys; brick-layers are seldom needed.

There are three Masonic and three G. U. O. F. Lodges here in a very fine condition. There are also several schools and different denominations of churches among our people, but very little morally seems to be taught in them, for the greatest shame is practiced by the native Cubans from Havana, who have thickly settled here, which makes the town look more like one of those group of islands in the Gulf of Mexico.

Since I arrived, Senorita Josephine Specht, the noted Spanish operatic singer, from Havana, Cuba, arrived in the city and has appeared before us and made a great hit. She is beautiful, and has an exquisite voice, which plainly shows she is gifted with rare talents.

Here, like elsewhere, the chief topic is the election, although the smoke of the contest has cleared away. The Knights of Labor, who are the coming power in this state, though not entirely victorious in their first battle, have not surrendered, and are far from being discouraged. They have captured Escambia, Santa Rosa and Monroe. It is proven also that the adoption of the new constitution has weakened the democratic party's strongest fortification. I am sorry to say that the republican party had no ticket in the field—without a head—which reminds me of my own dear state—Louisiana. It is said that many republican citizens voted blank on this account.

We had the pleasure of being introduced to Mr. English, the ex-postmaster, but now holding the honored position of assistant, with other colored dignitaries here, who treated me with the kindest hospitality.

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The old German ballads of this period were principally national war songs, of a weird, savage and pagan character. In one of the songs the slain are represented as recalled to life each night in order that the battle may be renewed on the following day.

These ballads would, in all probability, have been lost to Germany, or, indeed, to the world, but for Charlemagne, zealous for the culture of a national literature, he ordered a collection of old ballads to be made, which caused a reproduction of whatever literature produced in the period was still extant.

Outside of these rude forms of poetry, there was little else from the sixth to the eleventh century, save some translations of creeds, prayers, hymns and passages from the Bible. Among the verse produced at that time, may be noticed the Heiland, a life of Christ in alliterative verse, which sheds some light on the customs of those heathen times. Stories of the Fox and Wolf can be traced back to that time, although the origin of this tale is still earlier.

The chief representative of the literature of this period was Notker, a monk, who died in 1022. His principal writings were translations of the psalms and treatise on Aristotle and Boetius. In the 12th century, the first German authors of whom we hear, Fran Ava, wrote a life of Christ.

During the latter part of the eleventh century, and the first years of the twelfth, a transition in the language from Old to Middle High German took

place. That Theodore Roosevelt is a brave man. That he was defeated in New York and then sailed to Europe to be married. That he has jumped out of the political frying-pan into the matrimonial fire.

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—That colored members of the existing assemblies seldom if ever, propose any of their own people for membership. That nearly all the colored men are admitted on nominations of the white Knights.

—That the New Bedford-Boston-lancers last Friday night fairly made the lookers on tingle to their finger tips with a desire to be "in it."

—That a gayer, brighter, or more witty party of young people than those assembled on that memorable Friday night, does not exist.

—That the guitarist was so bashful of the ladies. That he didn't mind the gentlemen. That the ladies were a little bashful of him too.

—That the music was good and it certainly was invigorating during the dozen repetitions of "swing corners, forward, turn" in the New Bedford-Boston lancers.

—That the chorus of trained voices that echoed and re-echoed "I've had a delightful time" at one o'clock Saturday morning had a good of the air of "I've been-up-all-night-you know" about it.

—That he was leaning on the back of her chair telling about the supper they had at 2 o'clock last Wednesday morning. That she was the guest of his sister on that night. That he finished his remarks with this observation, "It was all in the family you know."

—That some one who knows declares that she is not in the family yet.

—That the Charles St. Church choir is the largest and best trained colored choir in the city.

—That the sound of the orchestra last Wednesday night many hearts beat fast.

—That a certain J. V. C. seems to have a theatre engagement every week.

—That she attended the concert on Tuesday evening escorted by the grand pianist.

—One of the lately married young couples was seen at the concert on Thursday night looking the essence of love and happiness.

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—That Andover died hard, pluckily cheering up to the last moment.

—That in a series of football games with the Harvard Freshmen, Exeter has won five victories and suffered two defeats.

—That the infant, who was so noisy at the concert on Tuesday, received many a blessing from the annoyed audience.

—That chocolate creams were in order that evening.

—That somebody never knows somebody else without being introduced again, each time that they meet.

—That—they say that—O, goodness! they say that you've got to the end.

BERT ISLEW.

From Florida.

KEY WEST, Fla., Nov. 22, '86.
From Tampa, I have sailed upon that fast and beautiful S. S. Whitney, which runs to Key West and Havana. So sublime was the sight of this island, which is known throughout the world as the key which opens the gates to a country, that stands to-day the example of the world. A few months ago, as you have probably been informed, a great conflagration was witnessed in this city, and more than half of the town was destroyed. But I am glad to say, that they are being immediately built up with large tobacco factories and hotels.

The climate here is very warm all the year around; even now while I am writing, it is so warm, that I am compelled to relieve myself of my vest. And then to think of home and other parts, which are as cold and severe as the alabaster lamp that decked the frigid zones.

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