to a new existence. Antonio Canova, born in Possagno in 1757, though weakly in constitution, gave early indications of future excellence. His diligence in studying sculpture was unwearied, and he was distinguished among the Vene­tian artists by a laborious exercise of hand, a restless acti­vity of fancy, and an enthusiastic longing for fame. The people of Venice felt the beauty of Canova’s works. He went to Rome and executed his group of Theseus and the Minotaur, which was pronounced by the first judges as “ one of the most perfect works which Rome had beheld for ages.” From this fortunate hour to the end of his life, he produced a rapid succession of statues and groups, which carried his fame far and wide over the world. Before 1800 he had given to the world some of his most successful per­formances ; the monuments of Ganganelli and Rezzonico ; the groups of Venus and Adonis, and of Cupid and Psyche ; the Hebe, and the Sommariva Magdalene. These statues were entirely by his own hands, unassisted by workmen. When his success produced wealth, his protection of rising merit was admirable. His liberality in this respect was as boundless as his enthusiasm for the arts. He died in 1822, having executed fifty-three statues, twelve groups, and mo­numents, busts, and relievos amounting to the extraordi­nary number of 176 complete works, which are now dis­persed all over Europe. Canova principally excelled in the beautiful and graceful. He never attempted to tread

Di Michel Angeol la terribil via.

Hence his favourite subjects were those of female grace or youthful beauty. Paris, Perseus, Palamedes, Psyche, Hebe, Venus, Nymphs, and Dancers, are the most popular of all his works. In some of these there is an approach to affectation and French taste, especially in the draperies ; and, perhaps, in avoiding the extremes of anatomical force and muscular development, he has too much addicted himself to flowing outline and polished surface. But his taste im­proved with his progress in the art. He felt the superiority of simplicity over affectation, as is visibly shown in the noble productions of his riper years, his Pauline, the mother of Buonaparte, the Endymion, and the recumbent Magda­lene. Although his power of conception was inferior to the illustrious artists of Greece, he nevertheless rivalled them in the vivid grace and exquisite skill of his works. Well did Byron say, in the lifetime of this great artist,

Such as the great of yore, Canova is to-day.

The genius of Canova gave a new impulse to Italian sculpture. Thorwaldsen, though a Dane by birth, may be considered an Italian artist. His Triumph of Alexander, the Mercury, the Night, and Aurora, are works which have sufficiently established the claim of this great artist to the admiration of his own age, and that of posterity. Danneker, the sculptor of the Ariadne at Francfort, seems also to be­long to the existing school of Italy. There are others, whom we cannot enumerate, who are also in the fair road to emi­nence ; but singular to say, few of these are sons of that land which has so well been called

Mother of arts, as once of arms.

IV ENGLISH SCULPTURE.

The Romans, when they withdrew their troops from Bri­tain, left some taste for sulpture behind them, and their suc­cessors the Saxons made attempts to imitate the human form. The Normans introduced a better style of art and the return of the crusaders brought a relish for Grecian statuary into this country. In the reign of Henry III. the works of English artists were characterized by good sense and simple grace, which redeemed the imperfections of workmanship. In the chapel of Henry VII. we see monu­ments carved with great skill. The Protestant religion was

not favourable to the art, and our sculptures, after the Re­formation, were mostly by foreigners. The first English sculptor of note was Gibbons, who, about the close of the seventeenth century, executed many admirable works in wood. About the same time lived Cibber, an artist of ori­ginality and power. The far-famed figures of Raving and Melancholy, carved in stone, are his hest-known produc­tions, and, in spite of Pope’s satirical lines on the “ brain­less brothers,” they stand foremost in conception and se­cond in execution among the efforts of English sculpture. The bas-reliefs on the sides of the monument in London, and some statues at Chatsworth, are from his chisel.

Roubiliac, a Frenchman by birth, was so long resident in England that he has been adopted as a British artist. Although Flaxman has pronounced a poor opinion of Roubi­liac’s works, they have nevertheless taken a lasting hold of public admiration. He was a man deeply imbued with poetic feelings, and had an unbounded enthusiasm for his profession. Some of his works are fanciful and conceited, but others again possess much elegance of action, and all are very beautifully executed. His figure of Eloquence is masterly and graceful. Canova said it was one of the noblest sta­tues he had seen in England. The statue of Sir Isaac New­ton is another of his masterpieces ; Chantrey calls it “ the noblest of all our English statues. There is an air of na­ture and a loftiness of thought about it, which no other artist has in this country, I suspect, reached. You cannot imagine any. thing grander in sentiment and the execution is every way worthy of it.” His most famous work is the monument of Mrs Nightingale, in Westminster Abbey: with some allegorical extravagance, it exhibits feeling and pa­thos, and the workmanship is quite marvellous.

“ Banks,” says Cunningham, “ was the first of our native sculptors whose aims were uniformly lofty and heroic, and who desired to bring poetry to the aid of all his composi­tions.” His groups and statues were, however, coldly re­ceived. His sketches, which are full of vigour and feeling, have been highly esteemed. The statue of Achilles mourn­ing the loss of Briseis has not been excelled for fine action and noble proportions. Nollekens, like Banks, was ambi­tious to introduce a purer and more tasteful style of art but his great works hardly came up to expectation. His busts are however excellent, and will preserve his fame. Cun­ningham, from whose agreeable publication on English art we have already quoted, says, “ the claims of Nollekens to distinction are threefold ; bust sculpture, monumental sculp­ture, and poetic sculpture. He attained to eminence in all, but to lasting fame, I apprehend, only in the first, and even then the permanent meed is secured to him more from the lasting importance of some of his subjects, than from the splendour of the art with which he has invested them.” Bacon infused more English sense into sculpture than any of his predecessors, or his contemporaries Banks and Nolle­kens. His statue of Samuel Johnson, in St Paul’s, is an ex­cellent work ; stern, severe, full of surly thought and con ­scious power. Howard, also in St Paul’s, is expressive of the philanthropic and benevolent man it represents. Bacon had great skill in workmanship, and he never spared his labour. Some of his monuments are rather too much crowd­ed with ornaments and objects of secondary interest.

The most eminent sculptor this country has yet produced, John Flaxman, was born in 1755. “ The elements of his

style,” said Sir Thomas Lawrence, “ were founded in Gre­cian art—on its noblest principles—on its deeper intellec­tual power, and not on the mere surface of its skill. Though master of its purest lines, he was still more the sculptor of sentiment than of form ; and whilst the philosopher, the statesman, and the hero, were treated by him with appro­priate dignity, not even in Raphael have the gentler feel­ings and sorrows of human nature been treated with more touching pathos than in the various degrees and models of