sible ; one cannot say that the character is ill-drawn—it is not drawn at all. It is an entirely different personage in different chapters ; and it has here and there a very un­pleasant touch which must have come of rapid writing. Yet so admirable are many parts of the book that it can­not be left out of the list of Thackeray’s most considerable works. *Denis Duval,* which reached only three numbers, promised to be a first-rate work, more or less in the *Esmond* manner. The author died while it was in progress, on the day before Christmas day 1863. He was buried in Kensal Green, and a bust by Marochetti was put up to his memory in Westminster Abbey.

Little has yet been said of Thackeray’s performances in poetry. They formed a small but not the least significant part of his life’s work. The grace and the apparent spon­taneity of his versification are beyond question. Some of the more serious efforts, such as *The Chronicle of the Drum* (1841), are full of power, and instinct with true poetic feeling. Both the half-humorous half-pathetic ballads and the wholly extravagant ones must be classed with the best work in that kind ; and the translations from Béranger are as good as verse translations can be. He had the true poetic instinct, and proved it by writing poetry which equalled his prose in grace and feeling.

It is not necessary to discuss the precise place which Thackeray will in future hold, in respect to his immediate contemporaries. What seems absolutely certain is that the force and variety of his genius and art will always hold for him a place as one of the greatest of English novelists and essayists, and, it should be added, as by no means the least of English critics. (w. h. p.)

THALBERG, Sigismond (1812-1871), a celebrated pianist and composer for his instrument, was born at Geneva in 1812 (May 5 or January 7). In 1822 he was taken to Vienna, where, under the watchful care of Count Dietrichstein, his education was completed. There is some doubt as to the masters under whom he studied ; but it is certain that he received instruction from Hummel, and perhaps also from Czerny, and that he took lessons in com­position from Sechter. He made his first appearance as a pianist at Prince Metternich’s in 1826, and published his first composition—a *Fantasia on Airs from “ Euryanthe ”* —in 1828, but it was not until 1830 that he was first fairly introduced to the public, with such brilliant success that from that time forward his only rival was Liszt. In 1834 he was appointed “kammervirtuos” to the emperor of Austria. He first appeared in Paris in 1837; and in 1838 he came to England, astonishing his hearers with the novel effects produced in his *Variations on God Save the Queen,* while he charmed them with his delicate touch and the purity of his expression. Thenceforward his career was a succession of triumphs. In order to disprove the popular idea that he could execute no music but his own, he played Beet­hoven’s *Concerto in C minor* (op. 37) at the London Wednesday Concerts, held in 1846-47 at Exeter Hall, with a keen intelligence which proved his power of inter­preting the works of the great masters to be at least on a level with his wonderful *technique.* Besides his pianoforte compositions, which are almost innumerable, Thalberg pro­duced two operas,—*Cristina,* which proved a complete failure, and *Florinda,* which fared but little better at Her Majesty’s Theatre in 1851. He played in London for the last time in 1863, and afterwards retired to his estate near Naples. He died at Naples, April 27, 1871.

THALES of Miletus (640-546 b.c.), son of

Examyus and Cleobuline, is universally recognized as the founder of Greek geometry, astronomy, and philosophy. He is said by Herodotus and others to have been of Phoenician extraction, but the more common account (see Diogenes Laertius) is that he was a native Milesian of noble birth. Zeller thinks that his ancestors belonged to the Cadmean tribe in Bceotia, who were intermingled with the Ionians of Asia Minor, and thus reconciles the con­flicting statements. The nationality of Thales is certainly Greek and not Phoenician. The high estimation in which he was held by his contemporaries is shown by the place he occupied as chief of the seven “ wise men ” of Greece ; and in later times amongst the ancients his fame was quite remarkable. It is well known that this name (*σoφόs*) was given on account of practical ability ; and in accordance with this we find that Thales had been occupied with civil affairs, and indeed several instances of his political sagacity have been handed down. Of these the most remarkable is the advice, praised by Herodotus, which he gave to his fellow-countrymen “ before Ionia was ruined,”—“ that the Ionians should constitute one general council in Teos, as the most central of the twelve cities, and that the remaining cities should nevertheless be governed as independent states” (Herod., i. 170). It is probable, however, that in the case of Thales the appellation “ wise man,” which was given to him and to the other six in the archonship of Damasius (586 b.c.),@@1 was conferred on him not only on account of his political sagacity, but also for his scientific eminence (Plut., *Solon,* c. 3). To about the same time must be referred his celebrated prediction of the eclipse of the sun, which took place on May 28, 585 b.c. This event, which was of the highest importance, has given rise to much discussion. The account of it as given by Herodotus (i. 74) contains two statements (1) the fact that the eclipse did actually take place during a battle between the Medes and the Lydians, that it was a total eclipse (Herodotus calls it a “ night battle ”), that it caused a cessation of hostilities and led to a lasting peace between the contending nations ; (2) that Thales had foretold the eclipse to the Ionians, and fixed the year in which it actually did take place. Various dates—ranging from 625 b.c. to 583 b.c.—have been assigned by different chrono- logists to this eclipse ; but, since the investigations of Airy,@@2 Hind,@@3 and Zech,@@4 the date determined by them (May 28, 585 b.c.) has been generally accepted. This date agrees nearly with that given by Pliny (*H. N.,* ii. 12). The second part of the statement of Herodotus—the reality of the prediction by Thales—has been frequently called in question, chiefly on the ground that, in order to predict a solar eclipse with any chance of success, one should have the command of certain astronomical facts which were not known until the 3d century B.C., and then merely approximately, and only employed with that object in the following century by Hipparchus. The question, however, is not whether Thales could predict the eclipse of the sun with any chance of success—much less whether he could state beforehand at what places the eclipse would be visible, as some have erroneously supposed, and which of course would have been quite impossible for him to do, but simply whether he foretold that there would be a solar eclipse in that year, as stated by Herodotus. Now as to this there is quite a remarkable unanimity in the testi­mony of the ancients, and the evidence is of the strongest kind, ascending to Herodotus, and, according to the account of Diogenes Laertius, even to Xenophanes, who was an Ionian, and not much later than Thales. Further,

@@@1 Bretschneider (*Die Geom. vor Euklides,* p. 40), without stating his authority, gives “ between 585 and 583 B.c.” as the date of the archonship of Damasius. In this he is followed by some other recent writers, who infer thence that the name “ wise” was conferred on Thales on account of the success of his prediction. The date 586 B.c., given above, which is taken from Clinton, is adopted by Zeller.

@@@2 “On the Eclipses of Agathocles, Thales, and Xerxes,” *Phil. Trans.,* vol. cxliii. p. 179 *sq*., 1853.

@@@3 *Athenæum,* p. 919, 1852.

@@@4 *Astronomische Untersuchungen der wichtigeren Finsternisse,* &c., p. 57, 1853.