

Those who want an example of the general scheme of epicycles taken from the history of art need only look at the School of Sculpture which flourished in the last century under Bernini, and especially at its further cultivation in France. This school represented commonplace nature instead of antique beauty, and the manners of a French minuet instead of antique simplicity and grace. It became bankrupt when, under Winckelmann's direction, a return was made to the antique school. Another example is supplied in the painting belonging to the first quarter of this century. Art was regarded merely as a means and instrument of mediaeval religious feeling, and consequently ecclesiastical subjects alone were chosen for its themes. These, however, were treated by painters who were wanting in earnestness of faith, and in their delusion they took for examples Francesco Francia, Pietro Perugino, Angelico da Fiesole, and others like them, even holding them in greater esteem than the truly great masters who followed. In view of this error, and because in poetry an analogous effort had at the same time met with favour, Goethe wrote his parable *„Pfaffenspiel“*. This school, reputedly capricious, became bankrupt, and was followed by a return to nature, which made itself known in *„genre“* pictures and scenes of life of every description, even though it strayed sometimes into vulgarity.