

IT IS A MELANCHOLY reflection that the great author of these essays has fulfilled his appointed life-work, and that his resistless energy, his profound scholarship, and his wondrous versatility and fecundity, which so long made him a foremost, if not the foremost, figure in English historical thought, have gone the way which is appointed for all mortal effort and for every mortal gift.

No historian can be found who does not owe a deep debt of gratitude to Dr. Freeman. Even those who held theories opposed to his must acknowledge that their conviction of the truth of their own beliefs has been accentuated by his sturdy and scholarly opposition. An opponent frequently proves to be an invaluable means of enlightenment in regard to the strength or weakness of one's own case, and in no respect can Dr. Freeman be said to have conceded the convictions that he held, nor to have spared the weak points of an adversary. The whole world of letters owes him an incalculable debt, if for nothing else than his great work upon the Norman conquest and his *Life of William Rufus*. For many decades he has been a power in the literary world. Not content with the writing of long histories he turned his attention to lesser things. History in its wider, not in its narrower, sense was the goddess whom he worshipped; to him the site of *Aquæ Sextiæ* and the surroundings of Orange were suggestive of the past, and the glories of earlier centuries lingered around the ruins of Carthage and the desolation of Spolato.

The wonderful historical sympathy of Dr. Freeman is well illustrated by the variety of subjects which engaged his pen. In the volume before us—a compilation of articles published in the English periodicals—Carthage, *Aquæ Sextiæ*, *Périgneux* and Cohors, the Augustan Ages, the English Civil Wars, Archbishop Pauler, the Constitution of the German Empire, the House of Lords are but a few of the subjects which his varied knowledge and his strict historical conscientiousness have treated with a touch of strength and grace. Few men possess like learning, and fewer still know how to use the learning they possess. The breadth of his mental grasp was characteristic of him only among historians of this century, Ranke alone excepted. The central sun of his system, broadly considered, was the 'Unity of History,' and he glorified this source of historical light and energy by his masterly knowledge of the great principles which have directed the development of European history, and by that minute acquaintance with the history of towns and institutions which gave him the means of illustrating the truth of the broader principles. There is no doubt as to Dr. Freeman's love of learning, nor as to his genuine scholarship, which the Germans themselves acknowledge; but none of his theories, strongly marked as they are, have brought him into collision with other schools. His warfare against Mr. Froude is well known, and, even with those who in general were of his own way of thinking, his special and peculiar views came sometimes into collision. One has only to read his works to see that this is the case in regard to

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Bishop Stubbs and Mr. Green. As he was not careful of his criticism so he was himself criticised, yet few cared to encounter the directness and weight of his well aimed and well considered blows. Strong personality as he was, he has left in English scholarship a vacant place which no English historian of to-day can fill. The appointment of Mr. Froude to the chair which Dr. Freeman's death has left vacant at Oxford is an appointment which all will regret who place the weight of one against the weight of the other. Had Lord Salisbury named Prof. Gardiner to the Regius Professorship he would have avoided any discourtesy to the memory of Dr. Freeman, and would have paid a higher compliment to the Republic of Letters.