

BOOKS AND THEIR MAKERS DURING THE MIDDLE AGES. A Study of the Conditions of the Production and Distribution of Literature from the Fall of the Roman Empire to the Close of the Seventeenth Century. By George Haven Putnam, A.M. Volume I. 476 1600. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons. 1896. \$2.50.

The author of *Authors and Their Public in Ancient Times* here continues a work which is truly monumental, which has not been done before, and which will hardly need to be done again. We who live in an age when all our culture and most of our information come from the printed page can hardly picture to ourselves the condition of men's minds when not only books were few, but when copies of those that existed were very few and methods for their circulation almost non-existent. We can certainly not easily divine how it was that under such circumstances there were so many intelligent, well informed, thoughtful, even cultured people as there surely were, though the means of culture were so hard to come at, or, at least, were come at by such different methods from those known to us. Much of this was explained in the former work, which was concerned with classic authors and their readers. The present volume tells how, after the disappearance of the civilization of the Roman State, the fragments of classic literature which we now have were preserved; it tells of the part played by the scribes of the Roman Church in the literary activity of the Middle Ages; of the organization of the book trade of Bologna and Paris in early times, and the part taken by the universities in the production and disseminating of books; of the noted dealers in manuscripts before the invention of printing, and of the revolution wrought by that invention. A study of the conception and growth of the idea of property in literature was to have been expected from one who has been as active as Mr. Putnam in the promotion of international copyright, and the concluding chapter is devoted to this subject. The work is very serious, but not in the least dull. Those who care about the subject will indeed find it a work of great fascination. And as is eminently proper, the volume is an admirable specimen of book-making. The one thing lacking is an index. In a work of this kind each volume should have its own.