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ARTICLE I.—*A Discourse commemorative of the History of the Church of Christ in Yale College, during the first Century of its Existence.* Preached in the College Chapel, November 22, 1857. With Notes and an Appendix. By GEORGE P. FISHER, Livingston Professor of Divinity. New Haven: Thomas H. Pease. 1858.

ANY historical review of the course of any department in Yale College for the past century, cannot fail to bring to light facts of great interest and importance. This is peculiarly true of the history of the Christian church and religion in such an institution during a period so extended, so critical, and so formative for all public institutions in our country. Foremost among these is the church, in close relation to which are Christian colleges, which, deriving their sap from the church, seem beyond any other public institutions to partake of its life, vigour, and perpetuity. The history of the church in these seats of learning and culture, serves to illustrate the mutual relation and reciprocal influence of high education and vital Christianity. On these general grounds, therefore, the friends of religion and education will acknowledge their obligations to Professor Fisher for his careful and dispassionate survey of the formation, growth, and vicissitudes of the church of Christ in Yale College, and for the many curious and instructive facts which he has rescued from oblivion in executing the task.

attention. Ever since Bacon made the auspicious marriage between science and labour, civilization has striven too much after the riches of the earth. In some countries a knowledge of physical science and a cultivated literature are rated above civil liberty; and hence such works as "Guizot's History of Civilization," concealing, in a name, the great fact that liberty and progress have not walked together in France. The scientific treatment of politics is absolutely necessary to teach man the grave and binding duties which he takes upon himself when he assumes self-government; as well as to furnish him with the landmarks of political truth and the essential character of civil liberty.

ART. III.—*The Life of Cardinal Mezzofanti; with an Introductory Memoir of eminent Linguists, ancient and modern.* By C. W. RUSSELL, D. D., President of St. Patrick's College, Maynooth. London: Longman, Brown & Co. 1858. Pp. 502.

JOSEPH CASPAR MEZZOFANTI, the son of a carpenter of Bologna, was born in that city, September 17, 1774. He was sent to school before he was three years old—on the barbarous plea of providing a place of safe-keeping for the day. The dame wisely allowed the infant to go free of lessons, but it was soon found that he was catching by ear the recitations of the other children, and was able to repeat them. Upon this discovery he was put into a class, and passed rapidly through the infant school, and afterwards the more advanced academy of the Abate Cicotti, where the peerless linguist made his first acquaintance with a foreign language—the Latin.

The priest, Respighi, observing the uncommon promise of the child's memory, persuaded his father to give him a better education than the mechanic had thought proper for his son, and procured his admission to one of the "Scuole Pie" of Bologna, where the higher studies were cultivated under the tuition of several ex-Jesuits. These teachers, representing various countries, furnished thus early in Mezzofanti's career,

the opportunity and inducement for indulging his natural taste for languages. Father Aponte was a Spaniard. Father Escobar was from South America. Father Thiulen was a native of Sweden, but had lived in Portugal and Spain, as well as Italy. Greek and Spanish were among the earliest languages which the young scholar added to his infantile Latin and vernacular. His memory was from first to last the main prodigy. At school he could repeat a folio page of Chrysostom after a single perusal.

Mezzofanti early preferred the ecclesiastical profession. His religious as well as studious disposition was in this direction, and about the year 1786 he was advanced to the archiepiscopal seminary of Bologna, where he took his degree in philosophy before he was fifteen. His application to books had now so affected his health, that he was obliged to drop study for a time; but in 1793 he began the direct reading of theology under the Canons Ambrosi and Bacciali. The Hebrew, Arabic, and it is supposed the Coptic also, were added to his stock of languages before he was nineteen. French and German were acquired about this time as light tasks compared with the oriental tongues. From its affinities to the German he had no difficulty, after a few days' examination of some Swedish books, in holding fluent conversation with the people of that country.

In 1795 the future Cardinal received the first sign of the sacred office—the tonsure, and in 1797 reached the priesthood. Although but twenty-three years of age, he was almost simultaneously appointed professor of Arabic in the University of Bologna. He had scarcely commenced his lectures when political events drove him from the chair: for when Bonaparte compelled the Pope to cede Bologna to the Cisalpine Republic, Mezzofanti was too firm a Papist to acknowledge in any manner the unholy usurpation, and was consequently deprived of his professorship.

His parents were dependent on him for their maintenance, and so, in a good degree, was his sister, with her large family. He resorted to private teaching, and soon had for his pupils the sons of some of the most distinguished Bolognese families. His new occupation abridged the time he would have devoted

to his own favourite studies, but was the means of opening access to the library of one of his patrons, which was rich in the languages. The indefatigable linguist turned the martial agitations of the day to another good account for himself. The Austrian army, occupying Bologna for nearly a year after the battle of Trebbia in 1799, a variety of European tongues was to be heard among the officers and soldiers. Mezzofanti was all ear in the midst of Teutonic, Slavonic, Czechish, Magyar, and other foreign sounds. This pursuit of languages, as spoken by, or as found in the books which the strangers carried with them, had doubtless its influence, as well as the obligations of his ecclesiastical office, and the promptings of his natural benevolence, in making him a constant visitor of the camps and hospitals. His services were useful as interpreter, and were in demand as a confessor. "In such cases," he said, "I used to apply myself with all my energy to the study of the languages of the patients, until I knew enough of them to make myself understood; I required no more. With these first rudiments, I presented myself among the sick wards. Such of the invalids as desired it, I managed to confess; with others I held occasional conversations; and thus in a short time I acquired a considerable vocabulary. At length, through the grace of God, assisted by my private studies and by a retentive memory, I came to know not merely the generic languages of the nations to which the several invalids belonged, but even the peculiar dialects of their various provinces." (P. 154.) This was his school for the Hungarian, Bohemian, Polish, and Russian languages, and the Gipsy tongue; and from a young student in the university, he was, about the same time, acquiring the Flemish.

Another source of the polyglot attainments of the insatiable scholar lay in the hotels of his city. Bologna was then on the route to Rome. The innkeepers kept Mezzofanti informed of the arrival of travellers with strange names, and there was usually a mutual desire for an interview, for the fame of the man of many tongues was already spreading, and modest as he himself was, he could not forego an opportunity of learning, pronunciation at least, from the lips of a native. He was sought for as the foreigners' confessor, and doubtless listened

as critically to the sounds, as the sins that were whispered in his ear. If he had first to learn the language of the penitent, it was rather an incentive than otherwise to undertake the spiritual part of the case. If the stranger could read for him the commandments, or creed, or other parts of the common liturgy, he would manage by some instinct of comparative philology to get at the construction of the new language, and make his way to an intelligent hearing and speaking of it. In two weeks he qualified himself to shrive a servant who could speak nothing but the Sardinian dialect, by spending an hour daily in the family to which she was attached.

In January, 1803, the subject of our article attained a position finely suited to his taste. At that date he was appointed assistant librarian of the Institute of Bologna—a name suggestive of very humble literary ideas in our familiar associations of it with circulars, and advertisements, and lectures, but designating, in the present instance, an establishment founded in the seventeenth century, and richly endowed by successive ages with collections and museums of nature and art, and a library of a hundred and fifty thousand volumes. The close of the same year found the librarian restored to the faculty of the University, in the capacity of Professor of Oriental languages: but his most engrossing occupation for two years was the preparation of a descriptive catalogue of the Oriental manuscripts of the library of the Institute. There is no record of the order or rapidity in which he filled up the list of the languages acquired in his lifetime, but in 1805 we find him sending to Professor J. B. De Rossi of Parma, a translation of a Latin sentence in twelve languages; and a book of travels, published at Milan in 1806, refers to Mezzofanti as “commonly reputed to be master of more than twenty-four languages, the greater number of which he speaks with fluency and purity.” Allowances, however, are always due for matters of common repute, caught up by travellers.

Mezzofanti, in 1808, had another experience of the unsparring jealousy of political power. A year before, the Emperor Napoleon had sought to persuade the preëminent linguist to transfer his residence to Paris. But disaffection to the intruder, not less than attachment to his native city and the

University, made the priest unfavourable to the proposal. When the Emperor made the Pope his prisoner, and occupied Rome with his troops, Mezzofanti, quiet as he had kept himself with his bookshelves and lectures, was not overlooked in the proscription which swept even literary men if they did not bow the knee. He was not expelled, but the Oriental Professorship was extinguished, and the incumbent put upon a pension. He again received private pupils, and found another library to catalogue. In 1812 he was appointed deputy librarian of the University, with whose collections the French had incorporated the library of the Institute. In 1815 he became the chief librarian.

When the Pope was on his return from exile, (1814,) he passed through Bologna, and invited Mezzofanti to accompany him to Rome, and take the office of Secretary of the Propaganda. This position was likely to attract a scholar, on account of the great variety of languages spoken in that vast missionary institution, and to attract an ecclesiastic, from the fact of the office being regarded as in the line of promotion to the cardinalship. But even Rome, and the importunity of a Pontiff, could not draw the student from Bologna; and he more gladly accepted the restoration which the Pope now had it in his power to effect, of his chair of Oriental Languages.

Dr. Russell has collected into his pages a number of testimonies from the printed travels of tourists of various countries, for the purpose of showing in some detail, from different witnesses, the wonderful extent of the attainments reached by the perseverance of this insatiable student, in his favourite specialty. A professor in the University of Breslau testifies to the fluency of his German. He read before the Bologna Academy, a paper on the Wallachian language, another on that of the seven parishes of Vicenza, and a third on a Mexican manuscript. An English author found him not only fluent and correct in the standard language of England, but familiar with the provincial dialects, so as to be able to give ludicrous specimens of the brogue of Yorkshire and Somersetshire. The same visitor found him at home in Welsh. Another literary Englishman heard him tried in Turkish and modern Greek. Lord Byron declared, that he exhausted upon this "monster of

languages, this Briareus of parts of speech," every tongue he had ever learned himself, but that the Italian, who had scarcely been out of Bologna, astounded him, even to his English. The Emperor of Austria had an interview with him, attended by a suite selected to represent the chief languages of his empire, and the Professor replied accurately and promptly in their respective tongues, as they addressed him in German, Magyar, Bohemian, Wallachian, Illyrian, and Polish.

A philologist from Denmark, who spent a couple of hours with him, began the conversation in German, but Mezzofanti immediately replied in Danish, and so continued through the interview. Compelled to spend a few months of 1820 in an excursion for recreation, he made his journey serve the end of learning the Hebrew psalmody, and the accentuation of that language, by visiting synagogues, and conversing with Jews; and the pronunciation of modern Romainic, by mingling with Greek sailors at Leghorn. Von Zach, who made an astronomical visit to Bologna in 1820, was accosted by the learned priest in Hungarian, then in good Saxon, and afterwards in the Austrian and Swabian dialects. With other members of the scientific corps he conversed in English, Russian, Polish, French, and Hungarian. Von Zach mentions that his German was so natural, that a cultivated Hanoverian lady in the company expressed her surprise that a German should be a professor and librarian in an Italian university. Professor Jacobs, of Gotha, was struck (1825) not only with the number of languages acquired by the "interpreter for Babel," but at the facility with which he passed from one to another, however opposite or cognate their structure.

Dr. Tholuck heard him converse in German, Arabic, Flemish, Swedish, English, and Spanish, received from him an original distich in Persian, and found him studying Cornish. He heard him say that he had learned, to some extent, the Quichua, or old Peruvian; and he was then employed upon the Bimbarra. Dr. O'Connor, now of Pittsburgh, witnessed Mezzofanti's first visit to the Propaganda, and saw him address the Turkish, Greek, Romainic, English, and other students, as he met them, in their respective languages; and adds to his testimony, that during the many visits he subsequently made to

the institution, Mezzofanti never failed to remember the vernacular of each student whom he had previously addressed, though the whole community had been presented to him. "Having spoken," says an English traveller in 1834, "in French, English, Spanish, Portuguese, German, and Dutch, I said at last, 'My friend, I have almost run out my stock of modern languages, except some which you probably do not know.' 'Well,' said he, 'the dead languages, Latin and Greek, are matters which every one learns. We shall not mind them. But pray tell me what others you speak.' 'I speak a little Welsh,' I replied. 'Good,' said he, 'I also know Welsh.' And he began to talk with me at once, like a Welsh peasant. He knew also the other varieties of Celtic, Gaelic, Irish, and Bas-Breton." Maltese visitors, like so many others, needed an interpreter. Anecdotes abound of his accurate grammatical knowledge of many of the languages he read, wrote and spoke, not unfrequently detecting errors in the pronunciation or orthography of natives themselves. His readiness, too, is shown by a number of examples of appropriate contributions to albums, and replies to compliments. "He can distinguish," says a German, "the Hamburg and Hanoverian German very well. Even of Wendish he is not ignorant." A native Armenian scholar testifies that he "spoke the vulgar Armenian with perfect freedom, and in all its dialects." Dr. Wiseman met him on his way to give a lesson in California Indian to some natives of that country, having first learned the tongue for himself from their own conversation, and now teaching them the unwritten grammar. In like manner, he heard for the first time the patois called "Nigger Dutch," from a Curaçoa mulatto, and in less than two weeks wrote a short piece of poetry for the mulatto to recite in his own rude tongue. From an ex-missionary he learned the language of the Algonquin Indians. He "knew something," according to his own modest terms, "of the Chip-pewa and Delaware," and had read the works of Mr. Duponceau of Philadelphia on Indian philology. A Ceylon student gave him his first introduction to Cingalese, and in a few days he was able to repay him by assisting the youth in getting up a speech for a public exhibition. This witness remembers many of the strangers with whom Mezzofanti was in the habit of con-

versing in the Propaganda, those whose vernaculars were Peguan, Abyssinian, Amarina, Syriac, Arabico-Maltese, Tamulic, Bulgarian, Albanian, besides others already named. The facility with which he accommodated himself to the tongue of each new colloquist, justifies the epithet of one of his encomiasts—"The chameleon of languages." From this variety, the Congo, Angolese, and other African dialects were not missing, nor the languages of Oceanica. "The Romanic of the Alps and the Lettish," writes a correspondent of a German journal in 1842, "are not unfamiliar to him; nay, he has made himself acquainted with Lappish, the language of the wretched nomadic tribes of Lapland. He is master of all the languages which are classed under the Indo-German family, the Sanscrit and Persian, the Koordish, the Armenian, and the Georgian. He is familiar with all the members of the Semitic family, the Hebrew, Arabic, Syriac, Samaritan, Chaldee, Sabaic, and even the Chinese, which he not only reads, but speaks. As regards Africa, he knows the Coptic, Ethiopic, Abyssinian, Amharic, and Angolese." The quickness of his ear to pronunciation, the flexibility of his organs of speech, and his amazing memory of words, enabled him to enjoy the diversity of sounds which are given to the same letters by speakers of different nations—as, for example, the English and Irish. He had this knowledge of the diversity of pronouncing the dead languages. "One day," says Dr. Russell, "I was speaking to him in company with Guido Gorres, [of Munich,] when he had occasion to quote to me Horace's line,

"Si paulum a summo decessit, vergit ad imum.

He turned at once to Gorres, and added—

"Or as you would say:

"Si paulum a soommo detsessit, verghit ad imum.

introducing into it every single characteristic of the German manner of pronouncing the Latin language. 'O!' said Mezzofanti to a Burgundian, "you have two Burgundian dialects; which of them do you speak?" 'I know,' replied our friend, 'the patois of Lower Burgundy.' Thereupon the Cardinal began to talk to him in Lower Burgundian, with a fluency which the vine-dressers of Nantes or Beaune might envy."

These citations will give some idea of the authority on which the statements of Mezzofanti's gifts are made, and of the extent to which they were manifested. We shall consider the sum total after resuming the thread of his biography, at the date of his reinstatement as Professor.

The life of Mezzofanti was thus far busily occupied in the duties of the Professor and Librarian, in teaching various languages to private pupils, in pushing his own linguistic researches and multiplying his tongues, in priestly visits to the sick, confessing foreigners, and receiving curious travellers, as the chief curiosity of Bologna. Pius VII. had more than once renewed his efforts to draw him to Rome, and his successor, Leo XII., respecting his partiality for his home, gave him an honorary ecclesiastical office in Bologna. It was the friendship of Cardinal Capellari, however, that at length drew Mezzofanti to the capital. Soon after he had become a Cardinal, Cappellari was placed at the head of the Propaganda, and in that character had a correspondence with the great scholar of Bologna, in reference to an oriental manuscript. Mezzofanti was so useful in this matter, that the Cardinal's previous admiration of him was increased, and their friendship confirmed. When Cappellari became Pope Gregory XVI., Mezzofanti was one of the three delegates sent by Bologna to present the congratulations of the city. The Pope at once appointed him "domestic prelate and proto-notary apostolic;" and after long persuasion, he consented to take up his residence in Rome, which he effected in October 1831, and had his abode in the Quirinal palace. He was soon made a canon.

The College of the Propaganda probably presented stronger attractions to the great linguist than St. Peter's or the Vatican. More of the tribes and tongues of the earth are represented in the missionary candidates of that school, than in any other spot in the world. In one year there were specimens of forty-one distinct nations in the hundred and fourteen students then in attendance. The Chinese, however, was missing—the pupils of that country being then educated in the college at Naples, founded for them specially. Unwilling to lose a chance for this mine, Mezzofanti paid an early visit to the Neapolitan institution, and was initiated, or more properly,

initiated himself, in the celestial language, which a subsequent transfer of some of the native Chinese to the Propaganda, enabled him to complete; so that he actually preached in Chinese, and spoke not only the Mandarin, but other dialects.

Besides the classes of the Propaganda, the various convents, colleges, seminaries, communities and foreign embassies of the Papal city, supplied the self-teaching scholar with living appliances for his special pursuit. At the great College, he mingled freely and daily with the students, listening, talking, inquiring, teaching, and correcting. One day the Pope (who called him "a living Pentecost") amused himself with contriving to have a select number of the young men of many countries come suddenly upon Mezzofanti during a private walk with the pontiff in the gardens of the Vatican, and each to address the librarian in his own dialect, and all at once. The subject of this ordeal was not intimidated, but poured forth his multilingual replies without delay or mistake.

In 1833, the priest who seemed most at home and best content as a plodding investigator of grammars, and as an oral learner of new forms of speech, was promoted to be Chief Keeper or Prefect of the Vatican Library, (in succession to Angelo Mai,) and also to a canonry in St. Peter's. There was no doubt now that the Pope was preparing him for the highest rank below his own. The actual librarian of the Vatican is always a Cardinal, and usually the Cardinal Secretary of State. This office is honorary, and the work is done by two keepers and seven secretaries. Mezzofanti stood on the next step to the office that was considered fit for a Cardinal. He was also made Rector of the College for the Education of Ecclesiastics attached to the Basilica of St. Peter's; Consulter of the Sacred Congregation for the Correction of Oriental books, and a Censor of the Academy. In 1838 he attained the purple and the hat.

The business of the Roman Church, as administered by the Pope, the College of Cardinals and Prelates, is distributed among twenty congregations, or committees. The prefect of each congregation (or chairman of the committee) is usually a Cardinal. They all hold stated meetings, and submit their minutes to the approval of the pontiff. Mezzofanti was put

into several important congregations, viz. the correction of the Liturgical Books of the Oriental Church; of Studies; of the Propaganda; the Chinese Mission; the Index; Rites; and examination of Bishops. He was also President of an hospital, and Visitor of the House of Catechumens.

The salary of a Cardinal-resident is less than forty-five hundred of our dollars. His household must contain a chaplain, secretary, and servants. Mezzofanti cared nothing for equipage, and saved all he could for charity. A nephew and niece resided with him; and he had other relatives whom he assisted. Forty-three (on another page the number is given as fifty-three, pp. 379, 394) students of the Propaganda came to greet him on his accession, and though no two spoke the same language, the new Cardinal found no difficulty in replying to each. His new occupations and increasing age (he was about sixty-four) did not prevent his making additions to the stock of his vocabularies. One of the most formidable of the new acquisitions was the Basque; which has eleven moods and a great variety of tenses. In this instance, as in many others, his study of the principal language was extended to its various dialects. A couplet which he wrote in the Basque was criticized by two eminent authorities, both of whom agreed that "Zu" would have been better "Zure," but native Guipuscoans to whom it was referred, declared in favour of the Cardinal's "Zu."

The death of Pope Gregory, in 1846, was a great blow to the heart of our amiable and affectionate Cardinal, as a strong personal attachment existed between him and the illustrious defunct, but it made no change in the routine of his employments. The political events of the new reign involved all the institutions of Rome in their turmoil. The Cardinal refused to leave his post, and follow the flying pontiff to Gaeta; but the confusion of the times wore upon his strength and spirits, and in the beginning of 1849 an attack of pleurisy, followed by gastric fever, gave him intimation that his time was coming to an end. He gave his mind to the prescribed devotions of his faith; was earnest in prayer for his soul, his country, church, and Pope, and on the night of the 15th of March, (the text says 1849, the epitaph 1848,) died, after speaking his last dis-

tinguishable words in his native Italian, "I am going—I am going—soon to Paradise." His family declined the public funeral offered by the anti-Papal (Republican) authorities, and the Cardinal was buried in the most private and simple manner, in the same church where lie the remains of Tasso.

That which made Mezzofanti in the eyes of the world, a prodigy, was the number of languages he acquired. It is not as a grammarian, a lexicographer, a philologist, a philosopher, or ethnologist that he is famous. He contributed nothing to any of the departments of the "study of words." His publications of all sorts did not extend beyond half a dozen papers. One discriminative critic says he never had an original thought. The only permanent value of his literary existence will be found in the specimen which his peculiarities add to the psychological museum. But even in this character too little is known to be of practical use. He has not told the world the secret of his art. He probably had none to tell. The capacity he possessed was a natural endowment, and could not be taught. The wonderful talent of his specialty was of little more use to mankind than to enable him to serve as an interpreter while he lived. Had his mind been less of a Babel, and given itself to the comparison of the structure of languages, he might, by confining himself to the generic few, have established some great principles for the study. But he was just a *helluo linguarum*. If he searched into the grammatical niceties of a language, or studied its analogies, it seemed to be less for the scientific discovery of the principles, than for the utilitarian purpose of helping himself to add it to his accumulations in the shortest time.

Dr. Russel has made a careful estimate of the actual number of the Cardinal's trophies. He adopts as his definition of a thorough knowledge of language, an ability to read it fluently and with ease, to write it correctly, and to speak it idiomatically. Judging the subject of his biography by this standard, he comes to the following result—his work giving the details at length:

1. Languages frequently tested and spoken with rare excellence—thirty.

2. Stated to have been spoken fluently, but hardly sufficiently tested—nine.

3. Spoken rarely, and less perfectly—eleven.

4. Spoken imperfectly; a few sentences and conversational forms—eight.

5. Studied from books, but not known to have been spoken—fourteen.

6. Dialects spoken, or their peculiarities understood: thirty-nine dialects of ten languages, many of which might justly be described as different languages.

This list adds up *one hundred and eleven*, exceeding by all comparison, (as is shown by the learned introductory memoir prefixed to the life,) everything known in history. Jonadab Almanar and Sir William Jones are not claimed to have gone beyond twenty-eight: Mithridates and Pico of Mirandola have been made famous by twenty-two.

We have indicated, in passing, some of the methods practised by Mezzofanti in his favourite, it might be said, exclusive pursuit. It was not, however, only from the conversational phrases of foreigners, learned and illiterate, in palaces and hotels, hospitals and confessionals, that he picked up his multifarious vocabulary. He was a painful student of grammars and lexicons, paradigms and "praxes." He had to drudge it like the dullest of us. "I made it a rule," he said, "to learn every new grammar, and to apply myself to every strange dictionary that came within my reach. I was constantly filling my head with new words."

He seems to have had no order or method in his studies that would help others in following him. For years he scarcely allowed himself a reasonable amount of food, sleep, fuel, or exercise, that he might devote his utmost time and means to the one object. He attributed part of his success in quickly catching a new language to physical advantages: "In addition to an excellent memory, God had blessed me with an incredible flexibility of the organs of speech." At another time, he said that the ear and not the eye was for him the ordinary medium through which language was conveyed. He studied a language by its rhythm, as containing the principle of its inflexions and of its changes of letters, according to the organs called into use.

The comparative ease with which he made his own way from one tongue to another, made him think less of the wonder in himself, which astonished every one else; and less of the importance of ascertaining and communicating whatever of science was in his method. "He positively assured me," says a learned writer, "that it was a thing less difficult than was generally thought; that there is in all languages a limited number of points to which it is necessary to pay particular attention; and that, when one is once master of these points, the remainder follows with great facility. He added, that when one has learned ten or a dozen languages essentially different from one another, one may, with a little study and attention, learn any number of them." But all this is very tantalizing while he keeps from us the lessons of his experience. He probably would have said to all inquirers, as he did to one, "I cannot explain it; of course God has given me this peculiar power; but if you wish to know how I preserve these languages, I can only say, that when once I hear the meaning of a word in any language, I never forget it."

In reference to the faculty of using many languages in succession without confusion, he used this illustration. "Have you ever tried on a pair of green spectacles? Well, while you wore these spectacles, everything was green to your eyes. It is precisely so with me. While I am speaking any language, for instance Russian, I put on my Russian spectacles, and for the time, they colour everything Russian. I see all my ideas in that language alone. If I pass to another language, I have only to change the spectacles, and it is the same for that language also." This illustration, Dr. Russell adds, "perfectly describes the phenomenon, so far as it fell under observation; but so far as I am aware, no one has attempted to analyze the mental operation by which these astounding external effects were produced. The faculty, whatever it was, may have been improved and sharpened by exercise; but there is no part of the extraordinary gift of this great linguist so clearly exceptional and so unprecedented in the history of the faculty of language."

He also possessed the power of thinking in his various languages in succession. That his acquisitions were principally

through memory, and not made on any communicable system, is implied in the regret he once expressed, that his youth had fallen upon a time when languages were not studied from that scientific point of view from which they are now regarded. "What am I," he would say, "but an ill-bound dictionary!" He quoted a saying ascribed to Catherine de Medici, when told that Scaliger knew twenty languages—"That is, twenty words for one idea; for my part, I would rather have twenty ideas for one word." "You have put your knowledge of languages to some purpose," said he to the author of *Horæ Syriacæ*; "when I go, I shall not leave a trace of what I know behind me."

Dr. Russell has studied the intellectual phenomenon with the aid of the few facts which exist to form an opinion, and his conclusion appears to be, that Mezzofanti's great power was mainly a gift of nature; that his faculties of perception, analysis, judgment and memory, were each extraordinary, and in a perfect balance; that his memory was that faculty in its spontaneous, intuitive exercise, rather than that of elaboration or reminiscence; that his power of analysis enabled him at once to seize upon the whole system of a language, while his ever-ready memory supplied the analogous materials out of each department of his mental stores, *ad libitum*. This being the inward process, the practical power of utterance was owing to a remarkably delicate organism of the ear and tongue, which not only assisted him in pronunciation, but in some inexplicable way suggested to his mind the secrets of the structure and philosophy of the language.

Baron Bunsen's opinion is, that "his linguistic talent was that of seizing sounds and accents, and the whole (so to say) idiom of a language, and reproducing them by a wonderful, but equally special, memory. I do not think he had ever his equal in this respect; but the cultivation of this power had absorbed all the rest."

It would be unjust to leave the impression that Mezzofanti knew nothing but words; that, according to one sarcasm—he spent his life in making keys for rooms he never entered; or, according to another—that, with all his languages, he never said anything. There is abundant evidence that his literary

knowledge, though not profound, was extensive and varied. Authors of all countries, in poetry as well as prose, grave and gay, were known to him. His English list was not confined to Chaucer, Milton, and Gray, but included *Hudibras* and *Moore's Melodies*. He read Cooper's novels. His biographer gives many incidental proofs that he was much better acquainted with the biography, history, and literature, both of the ancient and modern world, than would seem to be possible to a mind so full of the mere signs and expressions of knowledge. An eminent scientific Italian was surprised, on the incidental mention of a Hindoo treatise on mathematics, to hear Mezzofanti converse for half an hour on the astronomy and mathematics of the Indian races, "in a way which would have done honour to a man whose chief occupation had been tracing the history of the sciences."

The personal character of this remarkable man transpires through his biography in such a way as to draw to him the affection as well as the admiration of the reader. Gentle, humble, modest, humane, he seems to feel himself most at home in the seclusion of the library, or by the pallets of the sick and dying. The reader wonders how such a quiet, plain, unambitious person could have got into a path the history of which would come out in binding of scarlet and gold, stamped with the insignia of one of the proudest stations open to the envy of mortals. He was, after the manner of Rome indeed, but as it clearly appears, with a sincere heart, a devout man. "Ah, Don Ubaldo, give thyself entirely to the Lord!" if this were his exhortation to a novice in the priesthood, we may trust it was the principle of his own soul. If he spoke of the blessedness of that same friend and pupil, on his early death, as consisting in being "close to the Divine fountain, and then admitted to the hidden source of the divine oracles, to the study of which he addressed himself here with such indefatigable application," we may trust that those oracles were much more than scholastic studies to himself. "Alas! what will all these languages avail me for the kingdom of heaven, since it is by works, not words, that we must win our way thither!" this exclamation of his, in reply to a compliment to his talents, may be interpreted by Protestant charity to be as consistent with the doctrines of

grace as “not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven:” then we may trust that the paragon of languages has attained that state so appropriately designated in the motto of the great Bible-publishers of London:

Πολλὰ μὲν θνητοῖς γλώτται, μία δ' ἀθανάτοισιν.

Multæ terricolis linguæ, cœlestibus una.

Earth speaks with many tongues, heaven knows but one.

ART. IV.—*A Treatise on the Greek Prepositions, and on the cases of Nouns, with which these are used.* By GESSNER HARRISON, M. D., Professor of Latin in the University of Virginia. Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott & Co. 1858.

It is a remarkable fact, and one, which the public ear may be slow to admit, that modern scholarship has done more for the philosophical exposition of the Greek language, and possesses larger and juster views of its structure, than did the Greeks themselves. With all their acumen, the ancients were poor etymologists. The best of them could derive a primitive word from one of its own derivatives: and although they had juster ideas of syntax, even those were comparatively superficial. Language was to them a practical instrument or the vehicle of art, which the spontaneous, but unanalyzed dictates of their spiritual nature disposed of with the most delicate sense of fitness; but the anatomy of what went to constitute that fitness they never comprehended. Of course, its idiomatic proprieties were felt and understood by those to whom it was native, with a degree of truth and discrimination which can never be recalled; but in as far as pertains to the structure of the language, the philosophy of its syntax, the system of its etymology, its ethnological relations, and the laws which governed its whole development, modern scholarship is instructed to a degree that certainly was never dreamed of by the greatest analyst of ancient times. Moreover, this result, though one of