

**A CLASSICAL DICTIONARY.
CONTAINING BRIEF AND
ACCURATE ACCOUNTS OF THE
PROPER NAMES MENTIONED IN
CLASSICAL LITERATURE**

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A Classical Dictionary. Containing Brief and Accurate Accounts of the Proper Names
Mentioned in Classical Literature by Edward S. Ellis

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EDWARD S. ELLIS

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THE PROPER NAMES MENTIONED IN CLASSICAL
LITERATURE

Edited with Introduction by
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reclaimed by the 19th century

INTRODUCTION.

THE word classic or classical is defined as pure, refined; conformed to the best and most perfect standard; also pertaining to the ancient Greek and Latin authors, or rendered famous by association with ancient writers, as "classic ground."

The ancient Romans were divided into six classes. Those of the highest class were called *classici*, and from this the term came to signify the highest and purest class of writers in any language, though at first applied only to the most esteemed Greek and Latin authors.

Whether an ancient writer should be ranked as a classic is not determined (as it would seem ought to be the case) by what he wrote, but by the period in which he wrote. The classical age of Greek literature begins with

Homer, the earliest Greek writer whose works are extant, and extends probably to the time of the Roman emperor Antonine, although signs of decadence began to appear about 300 B.C.

The Latin classical period is not so extended, its earliest writer being Plautus, and it came to an end about 200 A.D. There are some, however, who include Claudian, born near 365 A.D., among the classics.

Humanism is that theory of education which aims to give a symmetrical development to the intellectual and moral powers by means of the study of the classical literature and arts, or more largely the study of the classics, or the culture of belles-lettres in general.

The history of Humanism divides itself into four distinct periods.

I. The formative period, extending from the fifth century before to the fifth century after Christ. II. The period of the Middle Ages. III. The Renaissance or revival of learning, extending from the beginning of *the fourteenth* to the end of the eighteenth

century. IV. The period of philological science, embracing a portion of the eighteenth and the nineteenth centuries.

I. *The Formative Period.*—The systematic use of literary studies in education appears to have begun among the ancients about the fifth century B.C. The ridiculed sophists and rhetoricians gave a new direction to education by their attempt to make it more practical, thus greatly helping all the arts connected with literature,—as grammar, rhetoric, logic, lexicography, etc. Studies were expanded after the founding of Alexandria. The scholarly investigation and explanation of the literary monuments of the past began and were pressed by the professors and librarians of Alexandria.

Toward the close of the second century B.C., the Romans began to investigate Greek education, and during the following century the Roman methods were remodeled along the Greek lines. The third and fourth centuries A.D. may be considered the golden age of professors. By the close of the fourth century a regular system had been formulated.

which was accepted everywhere by gentile and Christian, and handed down from generation to generation.

II. *The Medieval Period.*—In the fifth century A.D., the successive barbarian invasions of the ancient world began, and the old order of things was overturned. The Germans destroyed the gentile world, with its philosophers and teachers. Only Christianity and education survived. Education was in the hands of Christians, but it suffered prodigious losses. Schools and libraries were destroyed; scholars decreased, and the civilized world steadily shrank. The rich and cultivated provinces of Africa fell into the hands of the Moslems who overran Spain. The whole Eastern empire was cut off from the West. In the fifth and sixth centuries only a few vestiges of civilization remained in Gaul. At the close of the sixth and the beginning of the seventh century, the remote province of Ireland was the only point where studies and scholarship had a foothold, and from that point went out the first impulses for a *revival of the decaying study of literature.*

England was the first to respond to the impulse, and her people helped the Irish to carry it to the Continent. A revival of encyclopædic learning took place in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, and led to an investigation and study of what may be called the great sources of knowledge.

III. *The Renaissance*.—France held the intellectual leadership of Europe during the Middle Ages. In the fourteenth century, it passed to Italy, and was accompanied by so remarkable an intellectual revolution that it is called a "new birth"—*renaissance*. This revival was marked by an extraordinary enthusiasm for the classics. The first man of the Renaissance, and at the same time the first modern humanist, was Petrarch, born in the year 1304, whose pioneer work in clearing the ground of the "new way" approached the marvellous.

The appointment of Manuel Chrysoloras, a Byzantine scholar, as professor of Greek in Florence, in 1396, brought about as a result a true revival of Greek studies. From him and from his pupils descended the increasing