

# Theology on the Web.org.uk

*Making Biblical Scholarship Accessible*

This document was supplied for free educational purposes. Unless it is in the public domain, it may not be sold for profit or hosted on a webserver without the permission of the copyright holder.

If you find it of help to you and would like to support the ministry of Theology on the Web, please consider using the links below:



Buy me a coffee

<https://www.buymeacoffee.com/theology>



PATREON

<https://patreon.com/theologyontheweb>

[PayPal](#)

<https://paypal.me/robbradshaw>

---

A table of contents for *Bibliotheca Sacra* can be found here:

[https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles\\_bib-sacra\\_01.php](https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles_bib-sacra_01.php)

solemn tenderness which has no adequate parallel in their intercourse. In each, alone in the New Testament, is found the word *Τιβεριάς* for the Lake of Galilee, and the word *ὀψάριον* for fish. Probably this amount of coincidence points to something similar in the conditions under which each passage originated; and as we cannot doubt that chap. *xxi.* was an appendix subsequently incorporated, we may reasonably think that chap. *vi.* was a similar insertion. But chap. *xxi.* found its place naturally at the end. There was no such certain clue to the position of chap. *vi.*, and it was perhaps not correctly inserted.

[For some portion of the above argument I am indebted to a paper in the "Journal of Philology," Vol. *iii.* No. *5*, by Archdeacon Nooris.]

---

## ARTICLE VI.

### THE SCHOOL-LIFE OF WALAFRIED STRABO.<sup>1</sup>

TRANSLATED BY PROF. JAMES DAVIN BUTLER, PH.D., MADISON, WISCONSIN.

THIS autobiography of a school-boy, and that of a secular scholar in the second decade of the ninth century, was first printed, in 1857, in the annual report of the educational establishment in a Swiss monastery — die Erziehungsanstalt des Benedictiner-Stiftes Maria Einsiedeln.

The narrative was introduced by the following remarks: "How they taught and learned a thousand years ago, as related by a contemporary of St. Meinrad [founder of Einsiedeln], Walafried Strabo. The church of Christ is the educator of mankind. Her founder opened this school eighteen hundred years ago, and in the end of days he will return in order to hold the final examination. A great portion of the activities of the church for this end consists in teaching and training the young. Every age has, indeed, its

<sup>1</sup> The school-life of Walafried Strabo (der Schielende), and the educational curriculum in the Swiss cloister of Reichenau between the years 815 and 825.—The importance of the present Sketch is seen in a reference to it in the *Bibliotheca Sacra* for July 1883 (pp. 405, 406).

own peculiar development, and yet the church has educational as well as other traditions. 'The earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein.' With this warrant the bride of the Lord, the church, took possession of the inheritance of art and science which Rome and Greece had left to her. Not for one moment did the treasures of classical antiquity remain without a possessor. Not without significance had Christ, the Lord, been portrayed in the Catacombs in the form of Orpheus. In the dark hour when the Roman imperial throne collapsed on which Theodoric the Goth had just seated his teacher Avitus, Manlius Boethius committed his spiritual wealth to the Goth, Cassiodorus, who transmitted it to the sons of St. Benedict, etc. The seed of Christian instruction had been inherited by the sons of St. Benedict from the age of martyrs and holy fathers. Great seminaries were opened at Fulda, Weissenburg in the bishopric of Spire, St. Alban in Mainz, Saint Gall, Reichenau in the bishopric of Constance, St. Maximin and St. Matthias in Treves, etc. To these establishments the sons of the nobility resorted, while the Benedictines were their teachers and fathers. Whoever saw one of these schools saw them all as to everything essential. Accordingly it is our purpose to describe one of them, namely, the school of Reichenau, from which came the founder of Einsiedeln, St. Meinrad, and Walafried Strabo, who was his schoolmate in Reichenau, and who, four years after him, assumed the Benedictine dress.

"The intelligent reader will at once perceive that the narrative is not mere poetry, but is sustained by authoritative documents. Among the authorities to which recourse has been had we mention the works of Walafried Strabo himself (in *Canisii antiquas Lectiones*), *Bibliotheca maxima s.s. patrum*, the works of Beda, Alcuin, Rabanus Maurus, besides the writers of that age, Petz's anecdotes, the histories of St. Gall," etc.

In view of this statement one is at first inclined to set down the narrative of Walafried as an historical romance;

yet one hopes that new discoveries of diaries by that monk may be embodied in the above-mentioned "ancient readings of Canisius." Such findings must have been made if Kellner had reason to write as follows: "Walafried Strabo hat über seine Studien in Reichenau ein Tagebuch geführt welches in der neuern Zeit aufgefunden und veröffentlicht worden ist. Es liefert ein so lebendiges und frisches Bild des damaligen Unterrichts- und Erziehungswesens in dem Klosterschulen, dass wir es unseren Lesern nicht vorenthalten können, und in einem besonderen Abschnitte folgen lassen."<sup>1</sup>

The Benedictine abbey of Reichenau (rich meadow) was founded by St. Perminius in the year 724, perhaps an earlier date than any other Alpine monastery except St. Gall can show. Its site was in the northwest of Switzerland, on an island in Untersee, a lakelet—possibly a cove once—on the west end of Lake Constance. The islet is rather more than three miles long and somewhat less than two broad. The estates with which the abbey was at length endowed became so vast and numerous that, as common speech had it, the abbot on his way to Rome need not sleep a single night out of his own domains.

Reichenau was the asylum where Charles the Fat, a grandson of Charlemagne, when deposed, retired to die in 888 A.D. His tomb is still to be seen in the minster, which was commenced in A.D. 806, and frequent mention of which occurs in the following narrative. The original tower and nave have outlasted well nigh eleven centuries, and stand to this day in good condition.

Among the treasures in the reliquary travellers are asked to admire an emerald weighing eight and twenty pounds, a present from Charlemagne, which he no doubt gave supposing it a priceless jewel, though it is now ascertained to be glass. But the most venerated relic is one of the water-pots used at the marriage in Cana. No doubt this pottery was, with equal fulness of faith, brought from Palestine and wel-

<sup>1</sup> *Skizzen und Bilder aus der Erziehungsgeschichte.* Essen (1862), Vol. i. p. 182.

comed in Reichenau. It attests mediaeval intercourse with the Holy Land. The abbey long outlived the Reformation, its revenues not being sequestrated till A.D. 1799.

In the year 842, Walafried, of German origin, after a brilliant career at Fulda with Rabanus Maurus, became abbot of Reichenau, where he had been educated, but after only seven years of abbacy, died there, in 849. Among his writings Gieseler (Vol. ii. p. 82) enumerates the following: 1. De exordiis et incrementis rerum Ecclesiasticarum; 2. Glossa ordinaria in Biblia: 3. Vitae S. Galli, Othmari, et al. He was by way of eminence a chronicler of saints.

*Walafried's Narrative.*—I was altogether ignorant, and hence much amazed when I came in sight of the vast claustral buildings in which I was thenceforth to dwell, and it delighted me to see the crowd of schoolmates and playmates who gave me a hearty welcome. I was in turn, however, the means of much sport to them. As everything seemed to me new and strange, my imitations of what I saw others do were awkward and unseasonable or out of place.

But after a few days I found myself more at home, and as soon as I could adapt myself to the established regulations, the head master committed me to a teacher under whom I must learn to read. I was not alone, for there were several other boys under his charge, some of high and some of low degree, but all were further advanced than I was. My helpful teacher and my own ambition alternately spurred me on to do my best, and at the end of a few weeks I had so far succeeded that I could readily read not only what was written for me on my wax tablet, but also the Latin book which was put into my hands. Then I received a German primer, which to be sure cost me more pains to read, but which yielded me a heartfelt joy; for as soon as I had learned to read it I could understand it too, which had not been my experience in Latin. At first, accordingly, I wondered greatly how any one could at once both read and understand what he read.

In autumn, at the time of first harvest, there was no school

for several days. Then, with our teacher, we rambled to our hearts' content along the lake shore, or gathered apples from the richly-laden trees which encircled the cloister. These joy-days once over, I was obliged to copy on my wax tablet the letters which I had now learned to know and to combine, — a task which did not please me much. My work being irksome my attention wandered. I teased my schoolmates, and so incurred the master's hard words and sometimes blows. Notwithstanding, I was learning to write throughout the winter, and so in the spring of the year 816 I came under Master Gerhard, the teacher of grammar.

Year 816. — My first business was to learn by heart sundry Latin phrases, that I might be able to make myself understood in Latin by my associates. Most of my fellow pupils were already far advanced in grammar, some being in their second, others in their third or fourth year. Accordingly, they must always, except in hours of recreation, speak Latin with each other. We beginners, on the other hand, were allowed to use German so far as was necessary.

After some little time the grammar of Donatus was handed me, and an older scholar was appointed to examine me in it until I had memorized the eight parts of speech and all the rules respecting their modifications. For the first two hours the master himself took pains to show me how I must proceed in order to learn these words and word-forms. Afterward his habit was to come only at the close of school hours for inquiring of the monitor how I had done my duty. Nor had he reason to be dissatisfied with my progress in Donatus. The questions and answers I always knew, all of them, but I had leisure enough left to play all sorts of tricks, and so to pester my schoolmates. The scholar who taught me, as I very well knew, was not permitted to give whippings, and he was too fond of me to report against me to the master at evening. Now and then, however, it happened that I carried the matter so far that the higher classes, in another portion of the hall, seeing and laughing at my roguery, betrayed it to the teacher who was busy with them. The first time I

escaped with a frown, the second time he stepped up and asked if I had so far forgotten myself, or threatened me with up-lifted forefinger. When all this was not enough, he cut me off from half of my dinner, or took down the rod from the wall.

Every afternoon we had to apply the rules which during the morning we had committed to memory. The process was as follows: The monitor, or sometimes the master, dictated to us, in German, phrases of more or less length which we must on the spot write down in Latin on our waxen tablets. The words themselves were known to us from Donatus or from daily conversation, and we also had leave to ask our teacher about them. After all, as we wrote from hearing, and without seeing the words, I at least wrote them down oddly enough. At evening some passage of biblical history was narrated in our hearing, and we had to give a repetition of it next morning.

While we were reviewing Donatus for the second and third time the building of the church close by us was completed. That lordly minster towered just between our school-house and the cloister. At the time of my arrival in Reichenau the structure was already erected, but the brethren still wrought unceasingly on the ornamentation of the interior. At last came the much wished-for day of the dedication of the magnificent pile. Countless crowds had flowed thither to the festival. Even two days before, the lake was covered with boats in which knights and lords from far and near were hurrying, as well as the common people, to the scene. Several bishops and delegates from the imperial court of Louis had arrived, for the abbot had been a good friend of Charlemagne, his great father. The minster was dedicated in honor of Mary, our dear Lady, by the abbot and Bishop Hatto in the presence of all the bishops, who, arrayed in full regalia, shared in the solemnity. It was for me a sight of strange beauty. Seven hundred brethren, one hundred scholars of the inner school, and four times as many of the outer, formed a choir such as I had never seen nor

heard of. At high-mass all the multitude responded to the prayer of the bishop. There, for the first time in my life, something unutterable moved in my heart, — a measureless sadness (*wehmuth*) overcame me. God's greatness and goodness filled my soul, and I then and there made the resolution to dedicate myself to his service wholly and unreservedly. From this era onward my whole demeanor was more sober and quiet, so that my teachers, and especially Master Grimald, rejoiced, and my companions wondered.

It was the desire of Bishop Hatto, before returning to his episcopal residence at Basel, to attend our examinations. My answers pleased him well. I spoke with childish boldness to the friendly man whom a few days before I had beheld so grand and lordly among bishops, counts, and knights, and who now sat among us like a kind father. He commended me for special attention to Master Grimald.

Year 817.—Throughout the winter following we were occupied with the second part of grammar and with orthography, or writing correctly (*Rechtschreibekunst*), and henceforth we must always speak in Latin, an exercise in which many things befell that greatly amused our teachers, and us scholars as well. A section of the Psalter was daily read to us, and we wrote it down on our wax tablets. Next, each of us must correct his neighbor's blunders, and the results were afterward inspected by a student who had finished his fourth year. The passage was then gone over word by word, and all having been explained, we must next morning learn it by heart. Thus in the course of the winter and next summer we had imprinted the whole Psalter on our memories.

Foward from this date we, like others before us, were permitted to participate in the choir singing of the brethren. Yet this privilege was vouchsafed us scholars of the outer school only on Sundays and festivals, while the boys of the inner school, like the brethren themselves, and banded with them in twenty-four relays, or sections (*Abtheilungen*), sang in turn the praise of God throughout the entire day. Those boys could stand in the church choir itself; our place, on the

other hand, was only next to it, and not in 'it, because we did not wear the dress of the order, and no one without that might tread either the choir or the cloister.

Year 818.—In this year also was the first grape-vine planted on the island. In our examinations, which were conducted before Master Erlebald, head of the inner school, we stood well, and our reward was permission to taste the first grapes. With new delight we applied ourselves to Alcuin and the distichs of Cato, which now made it necessary for us to learn metrics. The book furnished me contained the grammar of Alcuin and the metric of Beda, both together. The books of the other scholars had the metric of Victorin. Hence we had to discourse with each other before our teacher respecting the rules of prosody and at length respecting the art of versifying. We scholars, in pairs, read the poems of Prosper and Juvenius as well as of Sedulius. We tried and tested our rules by them, and our recollection as well, for at evening we must by turns give an account of them to our instructor. In the line of improving memory, we were required to learn by heart the church hymns for festivals, and also those for the hours of the day. These hymns, indeed, through frequent repetition had already become pretty well known to us.

From this summer onward we, like those who had gone before us, were directed, each in his turn, to read aloud at table,—a service for which we prepared ourselves beforehand. Here, for the first time, a feeling of timidity overcame me, so that I fell into many mistakes, and the censor, who left not even the least of them unrebuked, set me right so often that I almost lost heart.

Just at this time Master Grimald was removed from the headship of our school, and together with Master Tatto, another of our teachers, was sent by Abbot Hatto to the cloister of Aniane. On his farewell I addressed to him my first Latin letter, expressing my childish love and gratitude, and closed with a painfully elaborated couplet (*mühsam zusammengestoppelten*). He presented me with a copy of

Virgil's eclogues, which at spare moments I ever and anon studied, and read through again and again.

Master Watin, Grimald's brother, now became head of the school, and continued so until his death, the memorable particulars of which I set forth in hexameters, as I will relate by and by.

Year 819.—In order to complete our grammatical studies, we were throughout the winter commissioned to teach the newly-entered scholars in speech and writing, in the same way in which others had done that service to us. This business I engaged in with equal zeal and success, and thus gained in no small measure the favor of Master Watin. At this same period Grammar-master Gerhard made us acquainted with rhetorical figures and tropes. His method was, in the first place, to point them out to us in Holy Writ, and afterward to require us to produce for him parallel passages and examples out of the poets we had already read, as well as from Statius and Lucan that we were now reading.

Those of us who felt neither taste nor talent for teaching others, worked under the direction of a teacher, transcribing the grammarians Priscian, Marius Victorinus, and Cassiodorus, or exercised themselves in the preparation of extracts derived either from daily life, biblical history, or the books they read. In this matter we could avail ourselves of the dictionary of synonymes which Master Gerhard had drawn up for us, and which also afforded us invaluable assistance in verse making.

In the midst of such studies the time arrived when all those who would pass on from grammar to rhetoric—numbering thirty-two—must undergo their final examination. In view of this we reviewed with our teacher the three parts of grammar, namely, etymology, orthography, and metric, as well as the doctrine of figures and tropes. On a certain day Master Erlebold, with the other teachers of the inner school, came into the great hall of our building, and proposed to each one of us several questions concerning the branches we had studied and the authors which we had

read. From these authors we were called upon to show authorities for every rule. A report was also exacted in relation to the biblical history of the Old and New Testaments, which we had heard during these four years, and also concerning its sense and importance. Those who turned out deficient in every point were advised to inform themselves better concerning it, and such as showed any negligence or indifference received a sharp rebuke from Master Erlebald, who then proved himself strict and in earnest. It was not all of my fellow-scholars who passed on with us into rhetoric; several young nobles returned home, or were sent by their parents to become squires and learn knightly arts, for which there was no opportunity in the cloister-school. Every day, it is true, we saw knights and counts dismount at the guest-house close by us, yet we had no intercourse with them. Only priests and bishops now and then came into our apartment to examine us, or to amuse themselves with our joyous sports. I remember to this day how ashamed I once felt when in a foot-race which we ran in presence of a bishop, I slipped down on the ground, and was laughed at. That sort of recreation, onward from that moment, pleased me no more, but I preferred to amuse myself with dice and quarter-staff.

During the holidays, which this year were the more agreeable, thanks to little excursions among the farms which belonged to the cloister, the two teachers, Master Grimald and Master Tatto came back to Reichenau, to our great joy. The former was authorized to introduce in the claustral arrangements those reforms which, after his experience at Aniane, he judged necessary. Tatto's task, on the other hand, was to initiate us into the mysteries of rhetoric.

Year 820.—On the memorial day of Saint Perminius, our saintly founder and first abbot, the third of November, we commenced our rhetorical studies. Our class-book was Cassiodorus, who was already known to most of us, because we had received his writings on grammar, and had been requested to read them. We also interpreted and read in the

school the rhetorical works of Cicero, but the reading of Quintilian was left optional. Up to this time, aside from some brief letters, we had been obliged to make no compositions; but now we must, almost every day, learn to illustrate the different varieties of style as they came up for study in our class-book. These labors occupied us the whole winter through. In spring began the study of history, in which we had already learned something from the martyrology, meal-time readings, and conversation with our teachers. Our text-book was the Chronicle of Beda, and for reference there was granted us a book in which the librarian Reginbert had written together the Chronicles of Eusebius of Caesarea, St. Jerome, Prosper, Cassiodorus, as well as of bishops Jornandes and Mellitus. In the school we read, first Sallust and then Titus Livy, in which we were required to point out the rhetorical rules and forms. In these days too, by Tatto's advice, I read Alcuin's Dialogue on Rhetoric and the Virtues, which Master Tatto had brought with him, and I found there equal pleasure and profit.

For change of studies we translated certain portions of Virgil's Aeneid as well as of Prudentius and Fortunatus, and from time to time we ourselves composed little Latin poems. To this last performance, however, all were not bound. But I engaged in it with such delight that I neglected other duties for the sake of it. Finally, every one of us must copy one of the Chronicles in order to have it always at hand in case of future need.

Year 821.— All the next winter we were busy with Dialectic under Tatto's guidance. His teaching was according to a work of Alcuin, which he had brought with him out of France. Of this work, however, only one copy was for some time within our reach. Hence, Cassiodorus and Porphyry's Introduction were put into our hands, and later, Boethius, with Beda's writings regarding the Dialectic of Aristotle. It now devolved on us to hold discussions with each other concerning the various topics of dialectic. Tatto's favorite method was to make each of us give his own definition of the same

object, and then defend it against the attacks of opponents. When our strife thus waxed too hot, the disputation was at once broken off, and not renewed until the next day. In logic what pleased me best, and so attracted me oftenest, was looking up other authorities or illustrative passages, in addition to those which Alcuin had adduced from the Poems of Virgil. In this effort I was encouraged by Tatto. The reading of the poets and the study of history still went on, and a report concerning both of them was obligatory on every student upon an appointed day every week.

All summer Tatto was making us acquainted with *legal codes*, that they might introduce us to real life, and at the same time supply us with copious materials for rhetorical and dialectical exercises. Some of us who had lost their way in the maze of dialectics had even sooner taken up these collections and carefully perused the law-books of Theodosius, the Salic and Ripuarian (Rhenish) Franks, (*Lex Salica et lex Ripuariorum*) as well as of the Longobards. These treatises were now once more thoroughly studied by all of us, and meantime Tatto, out of his rich experience, opened to us masterly commentaries. His youth had been spent in the imperial palace; hence his fund of facts was inexhaustible. Thus he made everything clear to us, and added sage counsels for the future. Among the many priests and bishops who this summer visited our school, was Thegan, choir-bishop of Treves,<sup>1</sup> who was an old friend of our Abbot Hatto, and who was wont to pay a visit to Reichenau every two or three years.

Year 822.—The entire winter was devoted to practice in the rules regarding rhetoric and logic which we had heard and committed to memory during the last two years. Our exercises were of two sorts—oral and written. Subjects in history, in daily life, or in legal codes were pointed out to us, and we had to treat of them in speeches and counter-

<sup>1</sup> *Choir-bishops* (*chorbischöfe* *χρησιμονοχοι*?) were junior or assistant bishops in large dioceses, chiefly employed in inferior duties, or in distant and out-of-the-way places, — and hence, further on, styled *country bishops*.

speeches. Usually we must first lay our arguments before the teacher in naked logical form, and afterward clothe them in rhetorical dress. Here it was also required that we should know how to express the same idea equally well in six or seven, and even more shapes. The life-history of saints we had sometimes also to narrate freely, or to write and deliver in public eulogies or delineations of character. From time to time we likewise composed German verses, after the pattern of popular songs and sagas, collections of which Tatto read before us. Abbot Hatto had been often ordered by Charlemagne to give more prominence to the German tongue in the cloister-school. In conformity with this injunction Tatto now gave us opportunity to draw up in German, first vocabularies, and then translations and speeches, and it turned out that some of us spoke better in the vernacular than in Latin. In orthography, and there only, did we fail, because many German sounds cannot be expressed by Latin letters, and every one of us according to the section where he originated, had a pronunciation, and hence a mode of spelling, of his own. So it came to pass that we could deliver a fluent discourse in the German tongue much sooner than we could write a German translation or composition.

Meantime the crisis was approaching that must carry us over into a new circle of studies. We had still first to stand one more examination, which an event totally unexpected by us made to assume a special importance. We learned that Abbot Hatto who from the year of my birth (806) had managed the cloister, would put his Episcopal crosier into younger and stronger hands, in order that in a quiet cell he might dedicate the remnant of his life solely to the service of God and to the healing of his own soul. So it was the last time that he attended our examinations, and after we had all given our answers, in both Latin and German, concerning grammar, rhetoric, and logic, he asked us: "For what purpose we would use all that we had now acquired?" Then he said: "Only in the service of God can you employ your talents and knowledge for your own happiness and for

the good of others. No might nor glory, no wealth nor sensualities, can give your hearts peace."

His meaning I did not yet understand; but on the next day when I saw the old man in the minster-choir step down from his throne, seize the hand of Erlebald, lead him up, put into his hands the wand and mitre amid loud cries and sighs of all that were present, and then retire to the ranks of his brethren with a joyful glance and a cheerful face, and when I saw the stern Erlebald weeping, then was there light in my soul; I recognized the nothingness of all things earthly as never before; and I felt in myself strength for a similar renunciation and a similar sacrifice. In after times it often happened that I sat late at evening in our garden with my fellow-students, who told me about their towers and castles, as well as concerning the lordly palaces of princes and dukes, and of gorgeous feasts and tournaments. At such moments I gazed in silence out on the tranquil surface of the lake in which the steady sickle of the moon, or the twinkling evening star mirrored itself, and thought on God — on the God of my heart,— and the farewell words of the gray-haired abbot rang again in my soul.

Some of us wrote verses regarding the change of abbots, and brought them forward at the feast, accompanied with music and song. Thereupon Tatto resolved to send these effusions to Thegan, the country bishop of Treves, to whom indeed, during his visit in autumn, he had promised some such missive. We dispatched him our poems the more readily, knowing him to be an old and cordial friend of our dear Abbot Hatto. At the bidding of my teacher I wrote a brief epistolary introduction to the verses. Thegan made answer in verse, and the result was that our poetical commerce and correspondence were kept up until his death, which followed soon after.

About this time, and also through the agency of Tatto, I came into similar relations with Agobard, archbishop of Lyons, to whom I had been introduced at his visit two years before, and that through no merit of my own. I also sent

him a letter in hexameters which found a flattering reception. All these things combined to fill me with a love almost passionate not only for poetry, but for science. With such feelings I now, in the summer of 822, began under the guidance of Tatto the study of arithmetic. He first taught us the books of the consul Manlius Boethius concerning the several sorts (Arten) and partitions, as well as the significance of numbers. Then we learned to reckon with the fingers, and the use of the abacus (Rechentisch) according to the books which Boethius and Beda have written on that subject.

The Hebrew, Greek, and Roman divisions of time, and the introduction of the golden number, the epacts, and the indication for calculating the church calendar, claimed a great deal of our time and study. For change and recreation we solved the mathematical puzzles which Alcuin had prepared for the great Charles. Later I myself undertook to devise riddles of that sort, and have dressed up several of them in hexameters. Many scholars were not able to go through with all the calculations; and likewise, before we went on to geometry, all those fell out of the course who had decided henceforth to devote themselves to the study of medicine, law, or the arts of painting and sculpture. Students of the last class went over, the next spring, to the brethren who had their studios (Werkstätten) on another side of the cloister, and remained with them two more years. Such, however, as wished to learn medicine (Arzneikunde) received their subsequent instruction from Master Richram, who dwelt in a house of his own on the outside of the abbot's residence, and sedulously attended to the garden of simples (Heilkräuter). Great was his tact in preparing potions and balsams, and his skill, aided by other brethren, in caring for the sick.

Year 823.—After this separation our number was still about twenty, and we pushed on in our study of Boethius. Our first business was with his three books on geometry, but several other geometrical treatises were at our command. After we had learned to know the figures and their qualities,

we must ourselves learn to draw and define others like them. Later we undertook the mensuration of lines, superficies, and solids. We measured not only the estates of the cloister on the island and their distances, but also the height of the buildings and of the towers.

Our chief study was learning to know the earth and its different divisions, lands, and seas according to their nature and productions — as stones, metals, plants, and animals. It is true that we had before gained a good deal of information regarding these matters; but now they were more fundamentally proved, established by calculation, and explained according to their causes.

Our text-books in this department were the Itinerary of Antoninus, the Cosmography of Ethicus, Beda's writings on these subjects, and the work of St. Isidore. The maps and figures, with which we were well supplied, gave us most pleasure. It often happened during our playtime that we tried to sketch on a grand scale in the sand of our playground outlines of the lands, and continents, the surface of the earth, as well as its zones, rivers, and mountain ranges. All disclosures concerning natural phenomena and their causes were most welcome to us, and of all studies none was so often the subject of our conversation, and of our questions to our teacher, Master Tatto. Many a time was I amazed at the patience and alacrity with which he always answered our questions, and I felt myself strangely attracted by the peacefulness which lay in his lineaments, beamed from his eyes, and sounded from his mouth. This peace of God had a sort of magic influence on our fermenting heads and unquiet hearts, so that when we were most uproarious, so soon as he appeared or spoke to us all was quiet in our circle. His skill was also equal in keeping humble, by well-considered questions and remarks, those of us who had most genius, and encouraging those who were weaker and less gifted by questions that were easier and advancing step by step (*stufenweise vorgehende*).

Master Grimald also, though he was no longer our teacher,

had looked in upon us now and then to satisfy himself of our progress, and to cheer us up; but this winter he was summoned to Aix-la-chapelle, to the court of the Emperor Louis, and retained there as arch-chaplain. We continued, as far as possible, in lively intercourse with him, and I sometimes sent him some of my verses. As he showed them to the bishops who made inquiries about our institution, it came to pass that I was constrained to bestow some of my society verses on them too. One poem of this sort I addressed to Ebbo of Rheims, when he was on the eve of setting out as a missionary for Denmark, and another to Drogo, bishop elect of Metz, whom a strange change of fortune was to befall. I had been made known to Modorin, bishop of Autun, by his nephew, who had begun his studies at Reichenau at about the same time with me, and was my next friend. To this bishop also I wrote letters at a later period.

With Easter in the following year we began the study of Music. Though my practical tact in this art proved very small, my taste for it possessed me like a passion. Accordingly I studied the musical books of Boethius and Beda with double zeal. Tatto was himself a musician of renown, and composed various songs and hymns. He delivered us extended lectures touching the succession and reciprocal relations of tones, and on the laws of composition. Moreover, he unfolded to us the nature and use of different instruments, the rules of singing, the manifold notes or signs, their gradual rise, and present significance.

Almost every one of us had, years before, learned either to sing or to play on some instrument. One performed on the organ, which was used only as an accompaniment to the singing in the minster, another struck (schlug) the harp, a third blew the flute, or trumpet and trombone (Posaune), some played the guitar or three-stringed lyre. All in turn received special instruction, and spent much of their time perfecting themselves, each in his own speciality.

As for myself, however, in spite of earnest endeavors I could not master any one of these instruments, though I did

know how to join in psalm singing. Having a good deal of leisure I spent it in trying to set sundry songs to music. Master Tatto dissuaded me, but I begged him till he admitted me to the musical lessons which he gave to the other scholars. I learned his rules of composition, and applied them with success — as I fancied. When, however, the chorister had one of my tunes sung it sounded so harsh and preposterous that I gave up all musical aspirations from that hour.

Then Master Tatto proposed that I should study Greek, and, as he himself had no time to spare, he requested Master Wetin to teach me that language. His request was at once complied with, and eagerness to make a trial of Greek seized several of my companions. Within two or three weeks their hearts failed them, so that I alone stuck steadily to my resolutions. Wetin took all possible pains to render the study easy and agreeable to me. When I had fixed in memory the most important inflections according to the grammar of Dositheus, I began to read Homer. Master Grimald, who loved Homer so well that he had assumed his name, presented me with his own Homeric manuscript which he had bought at Aix-la-chapelle of a Greek from Constantinople. Aside from this gift we could not have lacked copies of Homer, since Abbot Hatto and Erlebald had purchased several thirteen years before, when they were ambassadors of Charlemagne to the Greek Emperor in Constantinople. So I consumed the long winter evenings in Greek. With Wetin I read the first books of that Homeric poem which bears the title Iliad, and Master Wetin gave me instruction in the same style in which he himself and Erlebald had received it from the Scotchman, Clemens, to whom Hatto had sent him.

Wetin informed me how this Clemens and his companion Dungal had come to Charlemagne in Gaul. These two men whose learning in secular science and Holy Writ was incomparable, landed on the shores of Gaul in company with British merchants. Yet they set forth no merchandise but

cried to the crowd who came for purchasing; "If any man longs for wisdom let him repair to us and receive it, for that is the article which we have to sell." Their words were "*to sell*" because they saw that people sought nothing that was offered gratis, but only costly wares. The aim of the new comers was either to rouse the natives to deal in wisdom as in other things, or rather to move their wonder at such a proclamation. Their outcry lasted so long, that through those who deemed them crazy it reached the ears of Charlemagne, who always felt great love and longing for wisdom. Having hastily summoned them before him, he asked whether they in truth, as he has heard it reported, brought wisdom with them. Their answer was; "We have it indeed, and are ready to bestow it on all who worthily crave it in the name of the Lord." When he further inquired on what terms they sold, they answered: "Receptive souls in a fitting place, and what pilgrims must needs have, food and clothing." Then he was glad, and for a time detained them both by himself; but when he was obliged to go forth campaigning, he bade one (Clemens), Wetin's instructor, to settle in Gaul, and commended to his charge a great number of boys, high and low, granting them a dwelling, and directing that all their wants should be supplied. The other, Dungal by name, he dispatched to Italy, to the cloister of St. Augustine in Pavia, in order that all who were so disposed might assemble there as his disciples.

Many a similar incident did Wetin relate to me from the exhaustless riches of his experience. Honoring and loving him as a father, I could never be weary of hearing his words; yet was he all too soon about to be torn from me.

On the thirtieth of October in this year he, feeling unwell at evening, drank a medicinal potion, which, however, affected him so unfavorably that he died on the fifth day. In these last five days he had a vision. His guardian angel conducted him through heaven, hell, and purgatory, and caused him to behold things full of wonder and mystery. He added warnings and charges which Master Wetin, when

he awaked again, related before Bishop Hatto, Abbot Erlebald, the honorable senior Thegamnar, and our Master Tatto. As mine was the welcome office of caring for the patient, I witnessed whatever befell, and wrote it out at Easter of the next year, as desired by the Arch-chaplain Grimald, who was anxious for an exact report of the vision and death of his dear brother. My account was a poem of some length which I will not here repeat.

In my agony I then wrote to Master Grimald, as I announced to him the sad news as follows :

“ Why write I? Our writer, alas, is dead !  
Enriching our hearts, the building eternal  
He strove to complete with all treasures of wisdom.  
But death-struck his hand could not artist-like lay  
Our temple's topstone in the height of heaven.  
A teacher of heaven so sure we earthlings deserved not,  
Yet tearful eyes are in our loss his tribute.  
The furrows for springtime seeds he made ready,  
That from them a harvest to God's garner bringing,  
Himself thus a workman's wages might win.  
Behold his wish, his prayer, his steadfast endeavor.

Year 825.— The impression which Wetin's last days made on me was altogether unique. I seemed myself to die with him. Long had I borne in heart the belief that I was called to serve God in Reichenau [that is to become a monk]. The resolution was now ripened all at once, and I begged of Abbot Erlebald to be received into the number of the brethren. He judged it best for me first to finish the study of the mathematical sciences. Accordingly, during the next winter and spring, I attended the astronomical lectures of Tatto. But I was all the while full of other thoughts. However fascinating the subject had been to me at other times, it could not now fix my attention. Hence, afterwards in Fulda, I was forced to beg my Rabanus to give me special teaching in this branch. Master Tatto also could no more bestow on us so much time as he wished, because he must both take Wetin's place, and manage the whole school. Notwithstanding, he explained to us the elements of Boethius

and Beda's writings touching the courses of sun, moon, and planets; taught us the constellations, the zodiac, the causes of eclipses, the use of the astrolabe and horoscope, the sundial, and the tube (tubus). He also made us draw figures. At night, when the stars came out clear, he observed them himself with us, and summoned all the students to watch, both at their rising and setting, the oblique paths of the stars in the different regions of the firmament.

---

## ARTICLE VII.

### SOME NOTES ON RECENT CATACOMB RESEARCH AND ITS LITERATURE.

BY REV. PROFESSOR SCOTT, CHICAGO THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY.

MODERN Catacomb research may be said to have gone through three stages of development: the first, ending about thirty years ago, was unscientific and dogmatic; the second, still surviving, is scientific and dogmatic; the third, just making itself heard, claims to be scientific and historic.

The unscientific period though dead is not wholly buried, and quite a number of traditional errors still encumber the path of archaeological studies. The Catacombs — as Marchi showed — were not ancient sand-pits which the Christians occupied for burial purposes. This mode of sepulture was not an invention of the early church, for it was perfectly familiar to the heathen, and Jewish catacombs have been lately investigated in Rome. These underground cemeteries were not places of retreat concealed and remote. A solitary inscription refers to taking refuge in such caves: "O tempora infausta quibus inter sacra et vota ne in cavernis quidem salvari possimus." On the contrary the Catacombs were often entered from the public highway, and their portals were at times imposing works of art (cf. Schultze, "Die Kirchliche Archäologie," 1879, 1880, in the *Zeitschrift für Kirchengeschichte*, p. 444, note 2, 1882 — an article which has been of great use in preparing these notes — where a number of inaccuracies in Merz's article "Katakomben" in the new edition of Herzog's *Encyklopädie*, 1880, are corrected). These homes of the dead were not usual places of worship; hence the theory of Kraus (article "Altar" in his *Real-encyklopädie*) that the church altar arose from the so called *sepulcro a mensa* and presupposes communion services in the Catacombs is imaginary. The present stone altar is of heathen origin. The early church had only a simple table. On the other hand,