

the middle of the eighth century, who made abstracts of some of Aristotle's works, and introduced the study of the author into theological education. These two writers lived under the patronage of the Arabs; the former was favored by Amrou, the conqueror of Egypt; the latter was at first secretary to the Caliph, but afterwards withdrew to a monastery.¹⁰

At this period the Arabians became the fosterers and patrons of philosophy, rather than the Greeks. Justinian had, by an edict, closed the school of Athens, the last of the schools of heathen philosophy. Leo, the Isaurian, who was a zealous Iconoclast, abolished also the schools where general knowledge had been taught, in combination with Christianity,¹¹ yet the line of the Aristotelian commentators was continued, though feebly, to the later ages of the Greek empire. Anna Comnena¹² mentions a Eustratus who employed himself upon the dialectic and moral treatises, and whom she does not hesitate to elevate above the Stoics and Platonists, for his talent in philosophical discussions. Nicephorus Blemmydes wrote logical and physical epitomes for the use of John Ducas; George Pachymerus composed an epitome of the philosophy of Aristotle, and a compend of his logic; Theodore Metochytes, who was famous in his time alike for his eloquence and his learning, has left a paraphrase of the books of Aristotle on Physics, on the Soul, the Heavens,¹³ &c. Fabricius states that this writer has a chapter, the object of which is to prove, that all philosophers, and Aristotle and Plato in particular, have disdained the authority of their predecessors. He could hardly help remarking in how different a spirit philosophy had been pursued since their time.

4. *Greek Commentators of Plato and others.*—I have spoken principally of the commentators of Aristotle, for he was the great subject of the commentators proper; and though the name of his rival, Plato, was graced by a list of attendants, hardly less numerous, these, the Neoplatonists, as they are called, had introduced new elements into the doctrines of their nominal master, to such an extent that they must be placed in a different class. We may observe here, however, how, in this school as in the Peripatetic, the race of commentators multiplied itself. Porphyry, who commented on Aristotle, was commented on by Ammonius; Plotinus's *Enneads* were commented on by Proclus and Dexippus. Psellus¹⁴ the elder was a paraphrast of Aris-

¹⁰ Deg. iv. 150. ¹¹ Ib. iv. 168. ¹² Ib. iv. 167. ¹³ Ib. iv. 168. ¹⁴ Deg. iv. 169.