

cal spirit had spread over other fields of research, we find a similar stimulating audacity in the direction of premature and problematical constructions. A notable example is furnished soon after the Darwinian points of view had gained favour, in such works, *c.g.*, as Haeckel's 'Generelle Morphologie' (see *supra*, vol. ii. p. 347, s. 99). If we now ask the question: What was it that stood in the way of the unimpeded march of the critical spirit, what was it that checked and tempered it in its greatest exponents, we may say that it was the influence of those high ideals which lived in the minds of the great heroes of the classical literature of Germany and which, through their original creations, influenced even those more methodical searchers and thinkers who were most inclined to draw a sharp distinction between the highest fruits of academic method and erudition on the one side and the dilettante creations of the purely literary genius on the other.¹

Alten Geschichte,' 1895, p. 29), had stated already, in the preface to the first edition of his Roman History (1811), that criticism alone was not sufficient. "We must try to separate fiction from falsification, and strain our gaze so as to recognise the lineaments of truth liberated from those retouchings. The removal of the fabulous, the destruction of what is deceiving, may satisfy the critic; he only desires to expose a deceptive story. . . . The historian, however, requires something positive; he must discover at least some probable connection and put a more plausible narrative in the place of that which he has had to sacrifice to his conviction" (quoted by Wachsmuth, *loc. cit.*, p. 28).

¹ See for instance what Niebuhr

himself says, in the year 1826, reviewing his early labours after fifteen years (Pref., p. ix):—

"Towards the beginning of the present century a new epoch dawned for our nation. Superficiality nowhere gave satisfaction: empty words, half understood, had no longer any currency: but neither did mere destruction, in which the past age had indulged, satisfy any longer: we strove for definiteness and positive insight, as our ancestors did; but the latter had to be true instead of illusory, like that which had been destroyed. We now possessed a literature worthy of our nation and language; we had Lessing and Goethe; and this literature comprised, what no other literature had done, a large portion of that of the Greeks and