

had founded a school and from whom this or that could be learned, but something more than that: a sort of transference of power, an influx of courage and of joy. Artists of that stamp have a meaning far beyond the height of their personal art. They are life-givers, they increase the fresh force of the intellectual realm of their nation. For they are those that rouse strength in others.

By presenting so sympathetically limned a portrait of Liliencron and dispelling many mythical stories that have sprung up about his character and conduct, this book deserves a special place in the Liliencron literature which is fairly under way.

It is pathetic to see the book by Frau Ebner-Eschenbach, bearing the title "Altweibersommer" (Imported by J. E. Stechert & Co.). For this slim volume of sketches, tales, and fables offers to her readers the fruits of the aged author's experience—winged seeds that are borne along the autumn wind. The rich knowledge and the genial philosophy of life that made her novels an ethical factor in the fiction of her generation are in these stray leaves from her notebooks; and the language is ever the same, marked by a natural dignity and unstudied grace which are becoming more and more rare in modern German prose. Compared with this book of wisdom, the volume of humorous *causeries* by Otto Ernst, "Vom grüngoldnen Baum" (imported by G. E. Stechert & Co.), is of light weight, indeed. It seems as if the author of "Flachsmann als Erzieher" and the creator of *Asmus Semper* were here amusing himself with clever conceits and whimsical fancies while resting from the serious work of recent years. Yet his admirers will recognize in the book the wholesome spirit of the author and will enjoy the informal chat in which the man behind the author appears as a jolly good fellow.

Ludwig Ganghofer is so sympathetic a figure in German fiction that his "Lebenslauf eines Optimisten" (imported by G. E. Stechert & Co.) will be eagerly welcomed. The book covers the period of childhood and begins with those vague earliest recollections that need a mother's memory to be properly dated. There are charming bits of description; old houses, old streets in quaint old provincial towns pass before one's eyes, and even the optimist cannot suppress a little sigh that they are doomed to make way for things of the new time. But the essential note of the book is the tactful frankness and discretion of the author in handling certain difficult situations and incidents which would have given his ultra-naturalistic brethren an occasion for the manifestation of coarseness parading under the guise of truthfulness.

Among the numerous translations that have recently appeared are three new volumes of Lafcadio Hearn in the exquisite edition of his works, translat-

ed by Berta Franzos and illustrated by Emil Orlik, which bears the imprint of Rütten & Loening of Frankfurt. They are "Kwaidan," "Kyushu," and "Buddha." The same firm has just brought out a book by a Danish writer, Jürgen Jürgensen's story of the Congo, "Christian Svarres Kongofahrt," which in its handling of the colonial problem is compared to Multatuli's "Max Havelaar." Among the latest additions to the German edition of George Bernard Shaw are "John Bull's Other Island" and "Major Barbara," like the earlier volumes, translated by Siegfried Trebitsch, who is improving in his work; the publisher is S. Fischer of Berlin. The first of a series of interesting historical novels from the Swedish of Verner von Heidenstam, "Folke Filbyter," is published by Albert Langen of Munich.

A. VON ENDE.

## Correspondence.

### CONCENTRATION AND DISTRIBUTION OF STUDIES IN THE SMALL COLLEGE.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NATION:

SIR: The *Nation* recently characterized the new plan adopted at Harvard for concentration and distribution of studies as a radical and thoroughgoing modification of the elective system, one that "means much to thousands of individual young men whose choice of studies it will directly affect." Does not this make the new rules appear to be more severe restrictions on the elective system than they really are? As a matter of fact, only one-seventh of the men who have graduated with honor from the Harvard Law School during the past decade failed to meet the new concentration requirement. In respect to distribution, the courses of these men were elected very much in accord with the newly adopted principles. The electives of former classes, however, have not been sufficiently interpreted and published to permit such generalizations regarding the influence of the new rules as have appeared in numerous publications. In particular we cannot say to what extent the freedom of choice of the "Gold Coast" population will be restricted. From my preliminary studies, covering thousands of complete programmes, I am convinced that not half the men at Harvard will feel the effects of the new rules, except so far as their attention is called to the fact that a majority of the faculty believe in some degrees of concentration and distribution.

There can be no better way to consider the need of a small college for such rules as Harvard has adopted than to examine the actual programmes developed under free election. A study of the entire courses of all the graduates of Bowdoin College of the class of 1909 is therefore profitable. This class of fifty-four members took its entire course under an elective system which, for our present purposes, may be regarded as virtually unrestricted. It is true that a concentration requirement existed. Each student was obliged to complete before graduation either one major and two minor subjects or two major subjects. A major sub-

ject was one pursued for three consecutive years. A minor subject was one pursued for two years. A detailed study of all the electives of five classes, however, supplemented by personal inquiry in a hundred cases, revealed the fact that apparently not more than one or two students in any class were limited in their choice by the major and minor rules. Above 90 per cent. of all the students concentrated their work in excess of the prescribed amount. Finally, since every student took more hours in the language and literature group than the rules specified, and since he was at liberty entirely to ignore the other three groups (2. Natural Sciences; 3. History, Political and Social Sciences; 4. Philosophy and Mathematics), we can here discover to what extent the Harvard regulations, had they been operative, would have modified the fifty-four individual programmes, which were, in fact, under no such restrictions.

In the first place, the concentration requirement apparently would have had no calculable effect on the electives of this class. The obligation to choose six courses in one department or in one of the recognized fields for distinction, amounts at Harvard to a requirement of concentration in about 34 per cent. of a student's work. That is to say, each student must take one-third of his work in one department or in closely related departments. For purposes of this study, elementary courses are not counted, but advanced courses in the literatures of cognate languages are regarded as "closely related."

At Bowdoin, without compulsion, all but four of the class chose this degree of concentration. (The student who devoted the smallest proportion of his time to his major group gave 36 per cent. to Natural Sciences and 29 per cent. to Language and Literature.) Three of the four exceptions just noted were students who received honors from the faculty and whose electives would have been approved by any committee instructed "to make exceptions to the rules freely in the case of earnest men."

A significant comparison may be made between the degree of specialization twenty years ago, when the studies were mainly prescribed, and the degree of specialization to-day under free election. Ninety per cent. of the class of 1890 spent only 13 or 14 per cent. on their major subjects. Ninety-seven per cent. of the class of 1909 took above 18 per cent. of their work in their major subjects (not counting closely related subjects). The most highly specialized course under the old régime was more scattered than the most widely distributed course under the elective system. Evidently there was not the slightest ground at Bowdoin for the fear that the new freedom of choice would result in greater scattering of electives.

With reference to the Harvard rules for distribution among the three groups other than the student's major group, the electives of these fifty-four Bowdoin men exhibit the following results:

Four students fell one-half course short of the requirement in natural science.

Four students fell one course short, and one student fell one-half course short of the requirement in history, political and social sciences.

Three students fell one-half course short of the requirement in philosophy and mathematics.

No student failed to meet the requirement in language and literature.

To satisfy the complicated Harvard rule regarding the distribution of the six courses among the three groups, five students would have been obliged to substitute for a choice in literature a course in one of the other groups. Such are the few scattering cases that would have been slightly affected by the new Harvard rules, had these rules been operative, and had the committee not included these few cases within the excuse limits of their liberal instructions. I may add that each of these students could, in my judgment, have presented adequate reasons for his slight departure from the necessarily arbitrary scheme which its devisers agree should be administered with free allowance for individual needs. Even without such allowance, less than 2 per cent. of the units in the total schedules of this class would have been changed by the Harvard rules.

If, therefore, the total experience of the class just graduated is any criterion by which to judge the future—and no better one is possible—the adoption by Bowdoin of the entire Harvard scheme would have only a negligible effect. Nearly, if not all, that the new plan for compulsory concentration and distribution of studies at Harvard aims to achieve is, in fact, already achieved under the much more restricted curriculum and the virtually unrestricted elective system of a typical small college. WILLIAM T. FOSTER.

Teachers College, Columbia University, February 14.

[The article above criticised had no reference to the particular form that the Harvard rules have taken; it appeared in the *Nation* of December 16, on the occasion of the action of the Overseers in pursuance of which the rules were afterwards adopted. What was welcomed as so important was the recognition by Harvard of the cardinal defects of the elective system as hitherto carried on at that university, and the declared purpose of the contemplated change.—ED. NATION.]

#### THE OLD LIBRARIAN'S ALMANACK.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NATION:

SIR: In examining "The Old Librarian's Almanack" (the first issue in Dana and Kent's *The Librarian's Series*, printed at Mr. Dana's press in Woodstock, Vt.), several interesting points have come to my attention which are not presented in the brief but serious notices of the work in the *Nation* and elsewhere. The "Almanack" is copyrighted by Mr. E. L. Pearson, who has for several years conducted the "Librarian" column of the *Boston Transcript*. In his preface Mr. Pearson sets forth interesting bibliographical and biographical incidents regarding the Almanack and its composer—the worthy Jared Bean, some century and a half ago, "curator of the Connecticut Society of Antiquarians." These limn for us very neatly the figure of an old-time librarian, a book-lover and book-deliver, reminiscent of that other famous student, Dr. Dry-as-dust; and the characteristics thus outlined stand out more clearly in the pages of the Almanack itself, with their

quaint counsels, distichs, maxims, and verses. A little careful investigation into the "references" cited by Mr. Pearson brings further enlightenment. No mention of the sale of an imperfect copy of the Almanack in 1896, as stated by him, is to be found in "Book Prices Current"; "Mrs. Sarah Gilman Bigelow's 'Literary and Genealogical Annals of Connecticut' (N. Y., 1870)," which is the cited authority for the old librarian's biography, has no existence in trade or library catalogues, and is unknown to students of Connecticut genealogy; the Newburyport Antiquarian Society, in which this treasure is said to repose, is unknown among learned societies, and no trace of the valuable collection of the late "Nathaniel Cutter, Esq.," where Mr. Pearson says he "found" the Almanack, is known to collectors or dealers. To the careful reader of the Almanack these curious facts will come, not as a surprise, but as amusing confirmation of the internal evidence of the book itself.

Mr. Pearson, however, is in error in one statement concerning his bibliothecal hero. He states that Jared Bean "died a bachelor." This is a mistake. The old librarian was married clandestinely, and late in life, to a young English woman, who, finding his attitude toward her sex intolerable, left him within a year, and returned with her infant to her native shores. Matilda Bean, the only child of this ill-mated couple, though descending in the social scale, attained maturity and became well known to a later generation as Mrs. Harris, the familiar friend and confidante of that eminent female practitioner, Mrs. Sairey Gamp.

HELEN E. HAINES.

Pasadena, Cal., January 31.

#### THE CARNEGIE PENSIONS.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NATION:

SIR: Referring to Professor Lovejoy's letter in relation to the service pension of the Carnegie Foundation, printed in the *Nation* of February 3, permit me to say:

The matters noted by Professor Lovejoy were covered in some degree by the following resolution adopted at the same meeting, but apparently not known to him:

It was also on motion, duly made and seconded, resolved that first, the executive committee be instructed to safeguard the interests of the following classes of cases: (a) those who have research work in view and have shown themselves unmistakably fit to pursue it; (b) those whose twenty-five years of service includes service as a college president; and (c) those in whose mind a definite expectation has been created by official action that they will be accorded the benefits of the Foundation within the year 1910; and that, secondly, the executive committee be authorized to formulate regulations in accordance with these instructions.

The retirement of men in good health to pursue their studies unhampered may be regarded as one of the most important functions of the Carnegie Foundation. It seemed, however, financially impossible for the Foundation to meet the demands of an unexpectedly large class of men, professors for twenty-five years, in good health, who have done no important scholarly work in the past, and are planning none for the future.

DAVID STARR JORDAN.

Stanford University, Cal., February 11.

#### ST. PAUL AND MINNEAPOLIS.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NATION:

SIR: Mr. A. T. H. Brown, in your issue of January 27, made the suggestion that St. Paul and Minneapolis should get together and adopt one name. His reason appears to be that the combination would form the seventh largest city in the United States, whereas at present there are two cities ranking sixteenth and twentieth in size. Minnesota now has two "pushing, thriving cities." If they combined, there would be but one. Which is the more desirable, two cities with a combined population of 500,000 persons, or one city with the same half million persons performing the same work, wearing the same clothes, eating the same food, with unchanged ambitions and sentiments? Will the combination produce more enterprising business men, more honest public officials, more beautiful homes, a higher degree of culture, more brotherly love?

As far as the selfish purposes of the politicians is concerned, it seems to me there would be a greater danger in the combination. St. Anthony, as a combination of St. Paul and Minneapolis, could control State politics. The "country" would then always be in the minority or on the "city" side.

May we not call the spirit that keeps up the two city organizations local pride, rather than selfishness? Is there any harm in the little joke of the man from St. Paul who calls your attention to the fact that the railway companies quote rates only to St. Paul, because nobody wants to come to Minneapolis, anyway? I think we can even forgive the man from Minneapolis for the statement that he is willing to unite the cities under a combined name, calling the sum "Minnehaha," the "Minne" for Minneapolis and the "ha-ha" for St. Paul. E. W. HAUCK.

Sutter, Cal., February 15.

#### "THE LAST LEAF."

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NATION:

SIR: Your correspondent, "J. M.," who is puzzled by the "mutilation" of "The Last Leaf," apparently has never seen the poet's own explanation of the revision.

Appended to the illustrated edition of "The Last Leaf," Houghton, Mifflin & Co., Cambridge, 1886, is a history of the poem written by Dr. Holmes and dated Beverly Farms, July 9, 1885, in which appears the following:

The poem as first written had one of those false rhymes which produce a shudder in all educated persons, even in the poems of Keats and others, who ought to have known better than to admit them. The guilty verse ran thus:

But now he walks the streets  
And he looks at all he meets  
So forlorn,  
And he shakes his feeble head  
That it seems as if he said  
"They are gone!"

A little more experience, to say nothing of the sneer of an American critic in an English periodical, showed me that this would never do. Here was what is called a "cockney rhyme"—one in which the sound of the letter *r* is neglected—maltreated as the letter *h* is insulted by the average Briton by leaving it out everywhere except where it should be silent. Such an ill-mated pair as "forlorn" and "gone" could not possibly pass current in good rhyming.



society. But what to do about it was the question. I *must* keep

They are gone!

and I could not think of any rhyme which I could work in satisfactorily. In this perplexity my friend, Mrs. Folsom, wife of that excellent scholar, Mr. Charles Folsom, then and for a long time the unsparing and infallible corrector of the press at Cambridge, suggested the line

Sad and wan,

which I thankfully adopted and have always retained.

JAMES H. PERSHING.

Denver, Col., February 13.

### "IT'S ME."

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NATION:

SIR: The article on "It's me" in the *Nation* of February 10 sent me to my notes, where I find a good many examples from literature. The animadversions of your writer on linguistic principles in general are, in the main, sound, but they are irrelevant and inapplicable to the idiom in question. Professor Jespersen is accustomed to look facts of language in the face, and hence records this familiar locution. "It's me" is a fact of language, just as "c'est moi" is, though of quite independent development. That "It's me" is not "an innovation" is shown by its frequent use in Elizabethan literature, and that its use is not confined to "the small boy" or "the radical" is shown by the following illustrations from Emerson, Browning, Tennyson, Shelley, Byron, and Thackeray, to go no further.

In Emerson's "The Adirondacks" he writes: "So like the soul of me! What if 't were me?" Which recalls Shelley's line in his "Ode to the West Wind": "Be thou me, impetuous one!" And in his "Essays" Emerson writes: "I am not one thing and my expenditure another. My expenditure is me."

Other examples are: "How will He know it's me"—Tennyson; "Is it me thou fearest?"—Byron; "Of course it's me," answers the young man—Thackeray; "'Twas me this day last year at Ravenstein You hurried"—Browning.

Nor is this "a question of temperament"; it is simply in accord with the democratic tendency of the language to use the objective after the verb, whatever the kind, just as the tendency is to use the nominative before the verb; as, "Who did you give it to?" "He was denied admittance," "He was given a dinner." Authors make authority, and when the grammar of grammarians stands in the way of an idiom of the people, grammar is going to get run over.

EDWARD A. ALLEN.

University of Missouri, Columbia, Mo., February 16.

[If authors make authority, certainly the great weight of authority, from Elizabethan days to the present, is for "It is I." Probably there are few idioms, generally regarded as undesirable and likely to remain so regarded, for which testimony could not be found equal to that for "It's me." "He saw you and I" is common in Elizabethan and later writers, but it is scarcely in the way to become good idiom. Perhaps this letter from a teacher of English explains in part the inability of so many college

graduates to write correctly.—ED. NATION.]

## Literature.

### THE PSYCHOLOGY OF A PEOPLE.

*The American People: A Study in National Psychology.* By A. Maurice Low. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co. \$2.25 net.

The fruit of more than twenty years of residence and nine of study, this attempt to trace the formation of American nationality evidently deserves serious consideration. Mr. Low approaches his subject quite in the spirit of Taine. The human product emerges, he assumes, along a line which is a resultant between the stresses of inner character and outward circumstance. In this first part of a comprehensive study the formative process is followed to the eve of the Revolution. That America has produced a new race is the point of departure: "America is no longer England, or even a reflex of England. America is American; and if the character of the American people is to be understood and their civilization is to be correctly interpreted, they must be measured by their own standards, and not weighed in the scales of foreign make." Just what the American character is Mr. Low's enthusiastic rhetoric indicates only in broad and rather vague lines. We hear of the indomitableness of the democratic spirit, of the fluid condition of our social and public life, of a national vitality still too high to have reached "that stage when imagination makes a greater appeal than action." The sketchiness of the treatment is probably due to the fact that Mr. Low means to build up his picture *a posteriori*.

That the Puritan is at once a much-maligned type and the very heart of American nationality is the main contention of this book. That the Puritan was gloomy, hated the arts specifically, affected sombre colors, was fanatical beyond the wont of the age, Mr. Low brings abundant evidence to disprove. Many of the repressions which have passed for fanatical were directed against overt disorders or immoralities, or otherwise based on sound public policy. The Puritan, who must be carefully distinguished from the milder and relatively ineffectual Pilgrim, was a person of influence and education, a persistent rebel, but also a shrewd man of affairs. In a passion for knowledge he contained the dissolvent of the tyrannical theocracy he aspired to found. Practically our early history is one effort towards education, with intermittent rebellion against the pretensions of the crown, and frequent unopposed secessions of discontented or oppressed

sectarians. Boston became another England, pushing off her best into the wilderness. By a sound practical sense, curiously opposed to his theoretic intolerance, the Puritan managed to live at peace with neighbors of liberal views. Thus the Rev. Thomas Hooker's settlement at Hartford managed to set up a real democracy, the harbinger of the liberation to come, between the stern theocrats of Boston and New Haven. Roger Williams's eccentric refuge at Providence Plantations was unmolested, and he, while admitting all innocuous vagaries among his fugitives held them strictly to decent conduct. In a word, the Puritan persecuted no one who was not under his nose or otherwise troublesome, and in this was far in advance of his age. Possibly, Mr. Low here credits too much to character what really was due to inaccessibility. The Bostoners were simply too busy to bother about the remote subversive Hookers and Williamses. But the general truth that the Puritan régime steadily made for self-government and individualism is incontestable. Mr. Low's conclusion is that the Puritan's virtues were largely his own and rapidly intensified by opportunity and necessity, while his faults were merely those of his age.

We cannot follow the details of the argument. It is always ingenious and usually sound. The assertion of the isolation and relative unimportance of the Mayflower compact and the Plymouth Colony will doubtless be unpopular, but we doubt if it can be shaken. Possibly the importance of the Hartford colony is exaggerated, though in view of the marked influence of the Connecticut system upon the constitutions of other colonies and that of the nation one must welcome the prominence given to Hooker's constitution. In dispelling certain discredited but stubborn misconceptions about the Puritans, Mr. Low has done good service. Most people probably still believe that the "sad" color worn by the colonists was funereal in effect. As a matter of fact, it included a wide range of those subdued shades which persons of taste still affect. "Liver colour, tawney, russet, French green, deere colour, orange colour" are called "sadd" in a contemporary list of dyes. Obviously a city thus habited would have presented no monotonous aspect. Of course, readers of Samuel Sewall's diary, or even of Mrs. Earle's pleasant books, knew all these things, but they have to be repeated. We are still in a stage where many intelligent persons believe our forefathers pronounced Ye (the) as they did the personal pronoun. On the value of what seem the portentous church hours, as intellectual recreation, and on the usefulness of the Sabbath rest, Mr. Low is amusing and persuasive. The Indian he treats almost as summarily as the colonists did. He was the "whetstone" on which wars