

forms me, in England. And is not this as it should be? Historical collections are made for man, not man for historical collections. BURTON ALVA KONKLE.

Swarthmore, Pa., July 5.

ASTROPHEL.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NATION:

SIR: The Oxford English Dictionary in less mature days, culled from two passages in Spenser the word "Astrophel," defining it as the name of a plant hitherto unidentified. Truly, it is of a kind unknown on land or sea, being compounded, as the poet avers, of the personality of Sir Philip Sidney and his lady, love.

It first grows red, and then to blew doth fade,
Like Astrophel which therinto was made.

And in the midst thereof a star appears,
As fairly formed as any star in skyes;
Resembling Stella in her freshest yeares . . .
Spenser, "Astrophel," 174-8.

The transformation of Astrophel into a flower may have been suggested, I submit, by the fate of Adonis, who was likewise slain while hunting (Cf. F. Q., iii, i, 33).

The source of this plant name is diffidently stated by Sir James as "perh. corruption of *astro-phyllum*—star-leaf; Nares suggests of *Aster Tripolium*." The context, however, implies that it was named "for that shepherd's sake." Just how Sidney hit upon his pastoral name, eternized in "Astrophel and Stella," has long remained untaught; for the erstwhile explanation of it as a play upon his name is unanimously passed over by his editors and biographers. Yet as *Phyllisides* is repeatedly used for Philip Sidney, and *sidus* = *αστρον*, the conceit is reasonable—Astrophel, the lover of the star Stella.

Conceivably the name was not original with the circle of Sidney. In Rabelais (iv, xviii), we read of "maistre Astrophile" in connection with Pantagruel's escape from a tempest at sea. The significance of the name to Rabelais is clear from the preface to "Pantagrueline Prognostica":

Jay reoulué toutes les Pantarches des cieulx, calculé les quatratz de la Lune, croché tout ce que jamais penserent toutes les Astrophiles, Hypernephelistes, Anemophylaces Uranopetes, & Ombrophores, & confreré du tout avecque Empedocles.

Ch. Marty-Laveaux, in his glossary, derives this from "αστρον, astre, et φίλος, ami." The word then must have been encountered by members of the Areopagus, and may have been adapted, rather than coined anew, by Sidney. PERCY W. LONG.

Harvard University, July 2.

A FREE ACADEMY OF GRAPHIC ARTS.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NATION:

SIR: Opinions vary as to the respective merits of the several systems of artistic education. The following of an academical course for instance is advocated by some and disapproved of by others. Education in a studio again and private teaching labor under the possible disadvantage of too great a predominance of the teacher's manner. There are partisans of self-education, so-called, who follow no other teaching but that of nature, as the phrase is; and, fourthly, there are those who consider copying the old masters the best education. Each of these systems may be said to have its merits and its defects. In any case and whatever

the system followed, even the best teaching will be rendered futile by a want of receptivity in the pupil. Coöperation of master and pupil is the *conditio sine qua non* of success. Academical education, however, seems desirable to me, though I am ready to admit the objections that can be urged against it. The great advantage lies in the working together of so many young artists, whereby an undue preponderance of the teacher is counteracted, while constant comparison with the work of his co-pupils stimulates ambition and enlarges the horizon. The disadvantage consists in a certain narrowness and dogmatism to which this kind of training is prone; it is apt to confine effort in one direction.

Messrs. Hart, Nibbrig and Moulyn, who intend to open an art school this autumn in Laren (North Holland), aim at combining the advantages of academical teaching with those of a freer and more inspiring study after nature. Mauve's fascinating country will enable them to keep away from their school the depressing influences of academic work. The range of studies can be easily made to comprise the living model and landscape. In order to render the programme as extensive as possible a course in applied art, to be given by Jan Eissenlof-fel, is to be added to those in drawing, painting, etching, and modelling. For the history of art and æsthetics, they have engaged the services of the art critics H. P. Bremmer and Plasschaert, and the well known author Adriaan van Córd, who will lecture on their special subjects.

The American and English art students who resort to Laren should not fail to avail themselves of this opportunity.

AUGUSTA DE WIT.

Amsterdam, Holland, June 30.

ATTENDANCE AT FRENCH UNIVERSITIES.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NATION:

SIR: The recent report of the minister of public instruction of France gives some interesting statistics concerning the sixteen universities of that country. On the 14th of January, 1910, the total number of students in attendance at the French universities was 40,131. Paris leads the universities of the world with an enrolment, excluding students in the lycées—which correspond to our colleges—as well as those in the technical and summer schools, of 17,512. The provincial universities rank as follows: Lyons, 2,922; Toulouse, 2,828; Bordeaux, 2,552; Montpellier, 1,965; Nancy, 1,899; Lille, 1,675; Rennes, 1,602; the new university of Algiers, 1,442; Aix-Marseille, 1,236; Grenoble, 1,156; Poitiers, 1,111; Dijon, 992; Caen, 722; Clermont, 275; and Besançon, 242. Of these 40,131 students, 7,038 are foreigners, of whom 3,500 are in the University of Paris. Of the 17,512 students in this university, 7,688 are taking law, 3,115 are in literature, and 1,845 in the sciences. Another noteworthy fact is the remarkable increase in the number of women studying in the French universities. There are 3,830 women enrolled, of whom 1,300 are studying in Paris; while of the 7,038 foreign students, 1,707 are women.

The Parisian newspapers take especial pleasure in noting the remarkable increase in the number of foreign students in the University of Paris, which now leads the universities of the world in that re-

spect. Twenty years ago (1888-89) there were 457 foreigners enrolled in this university. Ten years later (1898-99), the number had increased to 1,174, while five years later (1904-05), there were 1,633; and in 1908-09 the number was doubled (3,326). The 3,500 foreigners now studying in Paris are apportioned as follows: England, 115; United States, 107; Egypt, 165; Rumania, 233; Germany, 231; Austria-Hungary, 139; Russia, which has the largest delegation, 1,356. South America, as well as Mexico and Panama, Turkey, and the Orient are also well represented. Among the reasons for this astonishing affluence of foreign students to Paris are the exceptional library facilities—there being sixteen libraries, of which at least six contain more than 200,000 volumes each—excellent laboratories, and free tuition to all.

JOHN L. GERIG.

Columbia University, New York, July 2.

Literature.

RECENT VERSE.

The Younger Choir. New York: Moods Publishing Co.

The Frozen Grail and Other Poems. By Elsa Barker. New York: Duffield & Co.

The Poems of James Ryder Randall. New York: The Tandy-Thomas Co.

Flower o' the Grass. By Ada Foster Murray. New York: Harper & Bros.

Monday Morning and Other Poems. By James Oppenheim. New York: Sturgis & Walton Co.

The Enchanted Island and Other Poems. By Alfred Noyes. New York: Frederick A. Stokes Co.

Odes on the Generations of Men. By Hartley Burr Alexander. New York: The Baker & Taylor Co.

New Poems. By Madison Cawein. London: Grant Richards.

The Shadowy Garden and Other Plays. By Madison Cawein. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons.

Happy Ending: The Collected Lyrics of Louise Imogen Guiney. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co.

Mingled Wine. By Anna Bunston. New York: Longmans, Green & Co.

Verses and Sonnets. By Julia Stockton Dinsmore (F. V.). New York: Doubleday, Page & Co.

It was a good idea to issue, under the title of "The Younger Choir," a small selection of more or less representative verse by the new poetic generation. Such a mode of publication has one advantage so obvious that it is surprising not to find it used more often. It spares the poet with one or two good verses the embarrassment of putting out an entire book; and, what is even more to the point, it saves the reader the trouble of ransacking the whole haystack. To be sure, Mr. Markham's "word of introduction," with its references to the "Ly-

rical Ballads" and "The Ancient Mariner," is not particularly felicitous. But prophecy is rash work at best; and it is enough to say that the spirit of the affair is a kind of modern romanticism—neo-romanticism, we are learning to call it—in which the nerves are beginning to predominate over the senses. From among the work of such contributors as Zona Gale, Elsa Barker, Viereck, Ridgely Torrance, Lewisohn, and Richard Burton, whose name in this connection sounds like an anachronism, a single sonnet by George Sterling will serve as an illustration of the skill and the disposition of the group.

Sargon is dead, Semiramis a clod!

In crypts profaned the moon at midnight peers;

The owl upon the Sphinx hoots in her ears,

And scant and sear the desert grasses nod Where once the armies of Assyria trod,

With younger sunlight splendid on the spears,

The lichens cling the closer with the years,

And seal the eyelids of the weary god.

Where high the tombs of royal Egypt heave,

The vulture shadows with arrested wings

The indecipherable boast of kings,

As Arab children hear their mother's cry

And leave in mockery their toy—they leave The skull of Pharaoh staring at the sky.

Heroism, it may as well be acknowledged, is not much in the way of this youth. Their tone is either *mol* or mutinous. It is only exceptionally that the austere virtues—fortitude, endurance, "and courage never to submit or yield"—find such celebration as Elsa Barker in her "Frozen Grail" reserves for the adventure of the pole:

What shall prevail against the spirit of man,

When cold, the lean and searching wolf of hunger.

The threatening spear of ice-mailed Solitude,

Silence, and space, and ghostly-footed Fear Prevail not? Dante, in his frozen hell Shivering, endured no blackness like the void

These men have warmed with their own flaming will,

And peopled with their dreams. The wind from fierce

Arcturus in their faces, at their backs The whip of the world's doubt, and in their souls

Courage to die—if death shall be the price Of that cold cup that will assuage their thirst,

They climb, and fall, and stagger toward the goal,

They lay themselves the road whereby they travel,

And sue God for a franchise. Does He watch

Behind the lattice of the boreal lights?

In that grail-chapel of their stern-vowed quest,

Ninety of God's long paces toward the North, Will they behold the splendor of His face?

As for war itself, once the school of

manly virtue, it is slightly out of fashion just now; but none the less are the robust sentiments of a war-poet like James Randall a good deal of a relief after sundry of our modern chorusing. Randall, it will be remembered, was the author of "Maryland! My Maryland!" And while his polemics do not, as a whole, meet the expectations raised by this popular and spirited performance, the admirers of "the Poet Laureate of the Lost Cause" will be glad to have all that survives of his writing. Of his more pacific manner, which is very much that of his period, the following stanza from "Silver Spring" will give a pretty fair idea:

When the sad and solemn moon
Muses o'er the lone lagoon,
And laughs the melancholy loon;
When the crooning winter breeze,
Hapless from the Hebrides,
Chafes the dead cathedral trees
'Mid the vultures' muffled wails,
Stifled by the panther-halls
Shuddering up palmetto trails;
When the globe is wrapt in sleep,
And the gnomes their vigils keep
By the mountain and the deep—
I can fancy phantom things,
On their thunder-tarnished wings,
Soaring with a fallen grandeur over
these enchanted springs!

This is not wholly unfamiliar; but it is as far away from our peculiar preoccupations as crinoline and hoopskirts. After all, if there is any poetic movement in progress among us just now, as many are inclined to doubt, it would appear to consist in an effort on the part of the muse, like Browning's person of quality, to leave the country and establish herself in town. On the one hand there is a certain impatience and distrust of solitude and the rural deities, the familiars of wood and water and field, even among those who still sing them, albeit rather despondingly, like Miss Murray in her "Flower o' the Grass":

Are these the glad young deities we knew
Long, long ago in the world's dawning day—

These pallid shapes that wander here astray

In the gray vapors and the glimmering dew?

Where are the forms of satyr, nymph, and fay,

The flash of wings in the descending blue,
The wild enchantments that about us grew
When first we heard the pipes of Pan
aplay?

Silent is Ida with great Jove asleep;

No more a garlanded, soft-footed throng
Thrills the wild aisles with laughter,
dance, and song;

Naiad and faun their dreaming vigils keep.
Dried are thy dews, Olympus; dust is deep

On Enna's fields, and where the gods so long

Held their young sway—how jubilant and strong!

Vague shapes and ghostly, alien shadows creep.

On the other hand, there is a gradual yielding to the lure of the city—a manifest admiration, in the manner of Mr. Lewisohn, for its ready impressionism, its violent contrasts and spectacular inversions of drab and purple, of glare and obscurity—or, more significantly still, a dim instinctive yearning to the masses of street and slum, the vague unrest of the animal in the presence of the herd. Such is the burden of Mr. Oppenheim's "Monday Morning." Listen to the crude appealingness, the elementary pity of his rhythms in "An Italian Funeral":

Humbly, O humbly, in slow procession, the
hearse and horses, the drivers and
mourners

Trail between tenements hung with dark
faces and eddying crowds at the
gray street corners—

Clouds hold the skies in, the gutter is
muddy, workmen are ripping the
streets for a sewer,

And lo, to a drum-throb musicians are
leading the dead, the dead to a
church of the poor.

And lo, to that music yon swarthy Italians
between them are sawing a pine-
beam in half,

The dead-march rhythm runs through their
labor; they swing, they sweat, they
grumble and laugh;

Hurrying men greet each other and jostle
on errands of business: all are
alive:

But the dead trails through the red storm
of living, and the mourners are
dumb in the loud man-hive.

He is gone: one mouth less now to be
filled; but, oh, one toiler less: he is
gone!

A month shall you nearly starve for the
burial: you must pay, pay dearly
for leave to mourn.

And why do you do it? Is there love among
shadows, in cellars; have you
dreamt of eternal life?

Were you led, after all, by the flaming
Vision O son, O brother, O mother,
O wife?

That, like it or not, is the most significant verse that gets written nowadays—and the amount is constantly increasing. Even Mr. Noyes in his new volume has abandoned his lofty rhyme to some extent for the elegy of the streets, as thus of the "Rank and File":

Drum-taps! Drum-taps! Who is it marching,

Marching past in the night? Ah, hark,

Draw your curtains aside and see

Endless ranks of the stars o'er-arching

Endless ranks of an army marching,

Marching out of the endless dark,

Marching away to Eternity.

Count as they pass, their hundreds, thousands,

Millions marching away to a doom

Younger than London, older than Tyre!

Drum-taps, drum-taps where are they
marching—

Regiments, nations, empires, marching

Down through the jaws of a world-wide tomb,

Doomed or ever they sprang from the
mire.

Wearing their poor little toy love-tokens
Under the march of the terrible skies!
Is it a jest for a God to play?
Whose is the jest of these millions marching,
Wearing their poor little toy love-tokens,
Waving their voicelessly grand good-byes,
Secretly trying, sometimes, to pray.

Marching out of the endless ages,
Marching out of the dawn of time,
Endless columns of unknown men,
Endless ranks of the stars o'er-arching,
Endless ranks of an army marching
Numberless out of the numberless ages,
Men out of every race and clime,
Marching steadily now as then.

The most thoroughgoing attempt, however, to write the epic of humanity is that of Mr. Alexander in his "Generations of Man." In spite of a certain clutter of materials, unavoidable, perhaps, in such a plan, Mr. Alexander has a breadth of horizon, an acquaintance with the shifting symbols in which human experience has successively clothed itself, and a power of abstraction, which give the varying movements of his poem something of the impressiveness of a vast cosmology. A quotation from his second ode, which has to do with the development of the religious feeling, will supply as good an instance of his style as can be expected of a short extract:

Strange prayers ascending up to God
Through all the aching æons, year on year;
Strange tongues uplifting from the sod
The old antiphony of hope and fear:
Strange if He should not hear!

Aye, men have prayed
Strangely to God:
Through thousand ages, under thousand
skies,
Unto His thousand strange theophanies,
Men have prayed
With rite fantastic and with sacrifice
Of human treasure; scourged with the
heavy rod
Of their own souls' torment, men have
prayed
Strangely to God
East, North, South, West,
The quartered Globe,
Like a prone and naked suppliant whose
breast
A myriad stinging memories improbe—
Hurt of old faiths,
And the living scars
Of dead men's anguish, slow-dissolvent
wraiths
Of long-gone yearnings, and delirious dream
Of sacrificial pomp and pageant stream:
Gods of the nations and their avatars!—
East, North, South, West,
The suppliant Globe
Abides the judgment of the changeless
stars,—
Abides the judgment and the answering aid
Of Heaven to the prayers that men have
prayed
Strangely to God.

Naturally this anthropological and sociological verse is liable at times to

strange mishaps. Its pursuit requires an imperturbable gravity, a stern insensibility to the suggestions of humor, which occasionally exposes it to the levity of the Philistines.

But, fortunately, there are other voices—feebler, perhaps, but insistent, like the faint familiar sounds of nature, with the still persuasiveness of old association. In particular, Mr. Cawein has a way of quickening inanimate objects with a kind of fanciful spell, of awakening silence and peopling solitude with a swift and transient spirit:

I saw the acolytes of Eve, the mystic sons
of Night,
Come pacing through the ancient wood in
hoods of hoddin-gray;
Their sombre cloaks were pinned with stars,
and each one bore a light,
A moony lanthorn, and a staff to help him
on his way.
I heard their mantles rustle by, their sandals'
whispering, sweep,
And saw the wild flowers bow their heads
and close their lovely eyes:
I saw their shadows pass and pass, and
with them Dreams and Sleep,
Like children with their father, went, in
dim and ghostly guise.

Something of this same attitude toward "our mother the earth"—a spirit at once earnest and playful like a ripper childhood—has always made one of Miss Guiney's attractions, though touched in her case with something more of a Celtic melancholy:

Open, Time, and let him pass
Shortly where his feet would be!
Like a leaf at Michaelmas
Swooning from the tree.

Take him, weak and overworn:
Fold about his dying dream
Boyhood, and the April morn,
And the rolling stream.

He hath done with roofs and men.
Open, Time, and let him pass,
Vague and innocent again,
Into country grass.

The line where this feeling for nature passes over into a kind of symbolism, is hard to define. It is then that objects begin to take on a life of their own, independent of ours or even hostile to it, and that poetry retraces the steps of mythology, or shelters under its images, as in Miss Bunston's "Ad Extremas Tenebras:"

I hear the lapping of the waves of death
In Stygian wells,
I see the white-winged moths that bring
the breath
Of Asphodels;

Yet if, oh dread Aidoneus, one like me
May ask a boon,
I pray it may not be Persephone
Who meets me soon:

She doth but winter in thy realms, O Dis,
Not nest with thee.

Her regal mouth still haunted by a kiss
Would weary me.

But let there meet me one, too poor for
scorn,
Dim-eyed and hoar,
Wan as Demeter when she sat forlorn
By Celeus' door.

And let Tiresias come, who, shrinking,
knows
A woman's heart,
To guide my feet where Lethe coldest flows,
And pitying yew its deepest covert grows
Far off, apart.

It is rather odd that in spite of the recent fad for the dramatic mould current verse should show so few dramatic effects, even of the simpler and more incidental sort. Confrontation, *mise-en-scène*, situation, passion, are uniformly weak or bungled. All is subjective, self-communing—and not only so, but there seems to reign a kind of divine confusion upon the poet's composition as upon his spirit. Now and then, however, it is possible to find a pretty good lyric impersonation, such as Browning well nigh turned into a poetic convention. Miss Dinsmore's "Verses and Sonnets" contain several, of which the best is probably "Sappho:"

How I could love, if gods but walked this
shore,
And I might meet them wandering, face
to face!
But when I speak of it with awe profound,
They mock me with "Too late" and
"Nevermore."

Too late—alas! What do vain words avail?
"The gods themselves cannot their gifts recall."

Wail, ineffectual lyre, a last, long wail:
There is no place for me—earth is too
small—

But toward the immeasurable regions of
the dead,
One open, trackless way remains to tread
That leaves no trace behind: the bound-
less deep

Shall roll its shelter o'er my homeless
head.

There shall my lyre with me in silence
sleep—

Our fire quenched in death's tranquillity.
I, who have borne the earth, why should I
dread

The awful, the immitigable sea?

CURRENT FICTION.

Fortune. By J. C. Snaith. New York: Moffat, Yard & Co.

The moving finger of Mr. Snaith has so long been accustomed to write in unwonted ways that no whimsical novelty on his part should amaze the reader. It was a far cry from "Fierceheart the Soldier" to "Broke of Covenden," although the two Spartan fathers furnished in some sort a bond of unity. It was yet further from the gloom and bloodshed of both to the gentle if somewhat satirical cream-bun cheer of "Araminta"; and one opens "Fortune" with that sense of entire uncertainty what to ex-