

[Continued from page 194.]

There are instances in which one art has been adequately interpreted in terms of another—for example, Keats's *Ode to a Grecian Urn* or Homer's description of the Shield of Achilles. But it is noticeable that in each case the description is in terms appropriate to poetry. The sculptured ornaments of the Shield are described as if they were actual scenes in nature. The fact takes no thought of the limits of the sculptor's art. As another instance may be cited Paul Veronese's use of sculpture in one of his paintings. The statue in the background of his picture is found to be "picturesque"—designed with another motive than that of pure form. It is employed simply as an accessory for pictorial ends.

A similar aim underlies the best illustrations of literary masterpieces. The tribal pride, exhaustless animal spirits and a simple, tender sentiment.

The poetry of ancient Babylonia which has been preserved, consists almost wholly of religious verse—prayers, hymns, and penitential psalms. But under the grip of a priestly formalism, their poetry tended to become barren and mechanical. An occasional noble passage is the most of which this poetry can boast. It is interesting chiefly because of its effect on the Hebrew lyric.

The Hebrews were of a naturally poetic temperament. Their common life found a full expression in song and a large body of their folk literature has been lost. The Old Testament bears record of the popularity of wedding songs, elegies, songs of pilgrimage, riddles and the like. They also passed easily from prose to poetry and lyrical passages are scattered through the entire Bible.

In form the lyric was often elaborate. Assonance is common. Acrostics and similar features are often found. But the one needful acquisition for him who would understand Hebrew poetry is an appreciation of parallelism. This is the formative principle of their poetry. It arises from a feeling that repetition in another form adds force to the thought. Its simplest form is a parallelism in couplets, but it may affect combinations of couplets or even a whole psalm. The parallelism often becomes antithesis, one half of a couplet being the direct opposite of the other. An appreciation of this characteristic furnishes a key to many of the psalms. But the Hebrew lyric is best judged by its content. The poet was more concerned with thought than with form. In his sympathy with things Divine and human the Hebrew perfected the lyric of aspiration—only given in all its power to those who look into the face of God.

PROF. GOODELL'S LECTURE.

The second lecture in the series on Lyric Poetry was given Wednesday evening, January 31, 1900, in the Art School—the subject *The Greek Lyric*. A brief summary of the lecture follows:

The body of verse that may be included under the title of Greek lyric poetry is the product of more than ten centuries, beginning as early as 700 B.C. Its character and poetic quality are about as various as the character and poetic quality of English lyric verse. The whole gamut of human emotions here found expression in the various dialects of the race.

The names in this field of which we hear oftenest are probably Sappho and Anacreon. The latter may stand as the type of the gentlemanly voluptuary; pleasure, love and wine are his favorite themes, treated so delicately and with such a wealth of humorous fancy that his songs were imitated and his suggestions elaborated by like-minded successors without end. Of Sappho it

may be said that no ancient name looms up so large on so small a basis of real knowledge. One complete poem of twenty-eight lines, sixteen lines of another that seems nearly complete, one or two perhaps complete in four lines and a few scraps of varying interest—that is all we have. Yet even that is enough to show her extraordinary power as a poet of love and nature. The peculiarity of her love poems to us is that their glow of passion is lavished upon women. This seems strange to us because such friendships between women have so little place in our literature. Sappho's work shows a delicate harmony of tone-color and phrases of remarkable directness of imaginative power in the use of imagery from nature.

The choral poet chose an elaborate and massive metrical structure. The accompanying rhythmic motions combined with the music to make the elaborate structure intelligible and impressive. The prince of choral poets is Pindar, and the lack of both music and dance increases our difficulty in understanding his poetic form. His sentences are often complicated; he is a cunning workman in language, the style adapted to public musical rendering and very little adapted to reading. The epinikian odes of Bacchylides, though graceful and perhaps more popular, did not equal those of Pindar in that field.

The Greek tragic choruses contain a peculiarly full and varied expression of humanity. A character or group of characters utters in appropriate lyric form the sentiment or the emotion that grows naturally for such characters, out of the dramatic situation. The first requisite for understanding most of the Greek dramatic lyrics is the power of entering into the mental and moral attitudes of chorus. The whole range of thoughts and feelings that arise when the spectacle of life on its more serious side is reflected in a contemplative and poetic soul—that is the manifold subject of the choral song in all three tragedians.

Sustained elevation of thought and feeling requires a putting forth of energy beyond what the mass of men undergo willingly; and the delights which require strenuous effort for their attainment seem too severe. It is therefore not surprising that Greek letters attract in general only the more aspiring and at the same time stronger spirits, and that Greek lyric is the last to attract the student of Greek letters. Yet there will always be those to whom the severe and strenuous joys yield a satisfying reward. The ultimate aim of a university is to increase their number.

Change in Law Journal Elections.

The method of choosing the editors of the *Yale Law Journal* on the basis of a thesis competition, which has been used for a number of years, has been done away with and a new one substituted. By the new plan the Faculty of the school will recommend to the Senior Board, early in March each year, 15 Juniors who have done the most efficient work in class. These men will be asked to compete for the Board by writing digests and comments on the cases assigned to them, and early in June eight will be chosen, if the competition warrants the election of that number.

Kent Club Officers.

The officers of the Kent Club have been elected for the ensuing term and are as follows: President, L. E. Hubbard; Vice-President, C. P. Kitchel; Secretary, C. T. Lark; Treasurer, T. J. Hickey; Executive Committee, C. P. Kitchel, H. B. Agard and A. B. Aubrey.

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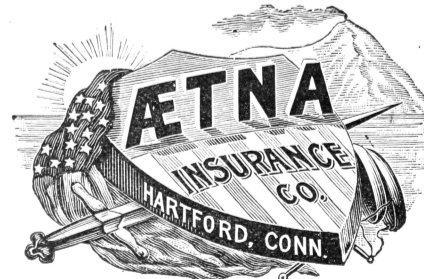
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