

that it does not secure the men whom it is most desirable to honor." We read also, "During the school-boy period the distinction between different individuals is a distinction of learning, and an examination is not unfitted to discover the boy who deserves reward. But learning is not the quality which a state needs to make it great. Casaubons are not the kind of men who have built up English science. The qualities which ought to be encouraged, and which it should be a nation's delight to honor, are qualities too subtle to be detected by a competitive examination."

For the benefit of our transatlantic brethren, we may as well state the facts as we know them. For reasons into which we need not enter here, as they do not affect the question at issue, nearly forty years ago the Royal society determined to limit the yearly admissions to fifteen; and to throw upon the council the responsibility of selecting the fifteen who are to be nominated for election, a general meeting of the society reserving to itself the right of confirming or rejecting such nomination. It may be instructive to remark that for thirty years that right has not been exercised.

The way in which the matter is worked is as follows: The friends of a man, who are already in the society, and who think he is entitled to the coveted distinction, prepare a statement of his services to science, in many cases without consulting him in any way. This paper, thus prepared, is sent round to other fellows of the society, who are acquainted with the work of the candidate, and who sign it as a testimony that they think he is worthy of election. In this way, when the proper time arrives, some fifty or sixty papers are sent in to the council for their consideration. In the council itself we may assume that the selection of the fifteen is made as carefully as possible, in view not merely of individual claims, but of the due representation of the different branches of science. It is not for us to state the safeguards or mode of procedure adopted, but we think we may say that the slightest action or appeal to any member by the candidate himself would be absolutely fatal to his election. Finally, we may say that, years back, when a heavy entrance-fee had to be paid, there were cases in which the question had to be put to one whose friends were anxious to see him elected, whether he would accept election. The small yearly subscription of £3, now the only sum payable, makes even this question unnecessary at the present time.

[How does it happen that our English contemporary makes no allusion whatever to Professor Chrystal's address to the British association, which, as printed in *Nature*, gave rise to all our animadversions? — Ed.]

HISTORY OF ANGLO-SAXON.

PROFESSOR WÜLKER, although literary executor of Grein, and editor of the new 'Bibliothek,' has nevertheless found time to prepare a most useful book for all students of English literature and English philology. Ten Brink's excellent history was purely literary; something of the same kind, though less able, was Earle's 'Anglo-Saxon literature,' published last year. Quite otherwise with Wülker: he furnishes a supplement, not a rival, to Ten Brink's book, paying little attention to actual contents, but giving the fullest account of the new literature which has grown up by way of comment on the old. Ten Brink gave us a description: Wülker gives us a guide-book, — a much-needed help for the student, and a basis for all new work. Wülker's tone is judicial and dignified; his decisions are as impartial as one could expect; while the enormous labor involved in sifting so many dust-heaps — dissertations, programmes, etc. — cannot be praised too highly: for, though it is true that for one man who is able to write literature there are a thousand who can judge and classify facts, it is equally true that the thousand are sure to scorn facts, and rush into original work.

The first section of the book contains an account of Anglo-Saxon philology in different countries. From the first steps under Elizabeth and Archbishop Parker, from the worthies who thought that Anglo-Saxon was the speech of Adam in Paradise, the growth of this study, at first under legal and theological shelter, is carefully traced to our own time. Wülker's criticism of the earliest efforts is properly indulgent; otherwise with modern failures, as where Loth's 'Grammar' (1870) is neatly despatched with the remark, "What is right in the book is old, and what is new is wrong." We have pleasant glimpses of a woman, Elizabeth Elstob, editing and translating Aelfric's 'Homilies,' having audience of Queen Anne in the interests of Anglo-Saxon, and afterwards (1745) publishing the first Anglo-Saxon grammar written in English. A century later Miss Gurney makes the first English translation of the 'Chronicle.' For American scholarship Wülker has encouraging words, and remarks that Anglo-Saxon is much more studied here than in England.

The second section gives a list of all books which aid in the study of Anglo-Saxon philology and literature; and here one feels afresh the enormous preponderance of German scholarship. Aside from living scholars, what would our philology be

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without the labors of Grimm, of Grein, and of Koch? Wülker's lists seem here and there somewhat meagre. Under 'Metrik' (p. 108) we miss Schmeller's 'Ueber den versbau der allitirierenden poesie' (München, 1839), although this is mainly concerned with Old Saxon; and Lanier's 'Science of English verse' (New York, 1880), which sets forth at length a theory of Anglo-Saxon versification. That the theory is untenable does not matter; for Wülker includes in his various lists quite worthless books (cf. p. 175). Further, we fail to find mention of Ellis's 'Early English pronunciation,' in which pp. 510-537 treat the pronunciation of Anglo-Saxon.

The third section, which takes up four-fifths of the book, considers Anglo-Saxon literature, and whatever has been written about it. The arrangement is arbitrary, 'Cædmon' and Cynewulf taking precedence of the heathen poetry. As regards the famous hymn in Northumbrian dialect written at the end of the Cambridge manuscript of Bede (*Hist. eccl. gent. Angl.*), Wülker recedes from his sceptical position of eight years ago, and joins Zupitza and Ten Brink in believing this text to be Cædmon's own, or at least to have passed as such so early as the eighth century. Wülker admits the personality of Cædmon, but accepts as his work nothing save the hymn; whereas Ten Brink was inclined to credit Cædmon with a part of the 'Genesis.' Cynewulf is treated at length. While the 'Phoenix' is assigned to him, and the end of 'Guthlac,' Wülker brings forward fresh arguments against the Northumbrian origin of the poet, and discourages the tendency to ascribe poems to Cynewulf on no better basis than general resemblance to his undoubted works. Proceeding to the smaller and lyrical pieces, Wülker concludes with Leo that 'The ruin' refers, not to a castle, but to the city of Bath.

For the heroic and heathen poetry, we find, besides much other matter, sixty pages of well-sifted information about 'Beowulf.' Wülker thinks the original heroic poetry was in the shape of ballads; and he decides for the theory that 'Beowulf' was composed about the middle of the seventh century, by a poet-monk, on the basis of these old songs. The summary is very thorough; but Garnett's translation is wrongly stated to be in prose; on p. 268, Ten Brink ought to be named as agreeing with Müllenhoff in regard to the mythology in 'Beowulf;' and Wülker might have added, as usual, his own decision. So rich a display of poetic talent brings the author to the question whether there are any dramatic elements in Anglo-Saxon literature. We have always regarded Ward's denial of any such elements (*Hist. Eng. dram. lit.*, vol. i. p. 6) as an ungrounded statement. Wülker more justly shows that not only

in the 'Seafarer,' but also in 'Christ,' there is a strong dramatic element; while, on the other hand, he proves that these elements were never developed, and never came to a regular representation.

At last we reach Anglo-Saxon prose. With regard to Aelfred, Wülker puts the 'Cura pastoralis' first among the royal translations, the 'Boethius' and the 'Soliloquies' last; while he leaves undecided the authorship of the 'Metra.' With Aelfric, and the review of various prose fragments in theological and quasi-scientific fields, the book comes to an end. An index is added which might be much more exhaustive. Several names are omitted; e.g., Professor Johnson, whose work is mentioned with praise (pp. 438-440). Some misprints occur here and there, and a few harmless mistakes, such as *Siebenzeiligen* (p. 308) for *Siebenfüssigen*.

Wülker's book leaves one full of respect for the author's patience, accuracy, and diligence. We may and do disagree with some of his conclusions; but that matters little, since the opposite conclusion, and the arguments for it, are carefully given. Another impression is a renewed sense of the small part played by Englishmen and Americans in the study of their own tongue. One cannot resist the conviction that we in America should do well to abandon in part the mediaeval discussions which so often fill our teachers' 'institutes' and conventions, and to encourage the modern and scientific spirit which devotes its energies to the patient investigation of facts. The field is open: an immense amount of work is to be done before the history of our literature can be written. Let teachers of English in academies and schools throw themselves into the actual study of the language rather than into discussions about system and method, — discussions sometimes useful, but often mere rhetoric, theorizing, and waste of time for all concerned.

GEOGRAPHICAL NOTES.

HEINRICH ENTZ and August Mer have recently independently studied the voyage of Hanno, the Carthaginian. Both agree that its termination was at the Island of Fernando Po, in the Bight of Biafra, called by Hanno the Isle of Gorillas. The colony of Thymaterion is identified by them, as by most authors, with the town of Mazaghan, and the promontory of Soloé with Cape Cantin. The river Lixus is regarded by Mer as the Senegal for weighty reasons, though Entz and others have favored the Wadi Draa, much farther north.

Hanno's Island of Cerné was probably Goree, and his Western Horn (or bay) was the Bight of