

minutes. For the moment the capital fact is that photography can permanently fix colours. But can it fix, then, the colours of a picture or of a stuff? Yes, as M. Lipmann has succeeded within the last forty-eight hours in taking an impression of coloured stuff, after a pose of three hours, and the tones are of an extraordinary and permanent brilliancy. He is now experimenting on coloured glass church windows and on parrots. Soon the turn will come for the taking of ladies in all the tints of their wardrobe glories, plus their own truly blent beauty of red and white; but only when laid on by "Nature's own sweet and cunning hand." M. Lipmann informs me that the fixation of coloured rays may be compared to the fixation of the waves, or "rays" of sound caught and recorded by the phonograph.

Paris, after all, will delay its Bœuf-Gras procession till mid-Lent. Happily a troupe of Dahomeyans, fresh from their native heath, has arrived at the Jardin d'Acclimatation. The latter speculates in ethnography, as well as in more common-place zoologic matters. It is thus that Parisians have been served up from time to time with specimens of the human race from Indus to the Pole. In winter, Eskimo, Icelanders, etc.; in the dog days, Nubians, Zulus, Kurds and other dwellers beyond Mesopotamia.

The troupe of forty Dahomeyans is farmed by a Hindoo who boasts of being "Europeanized." Naturally, the French were curious about witnessing their latest enemies. There are twenty-four Amazonians selected from the household troops of King Behanzin, a sable majesty to whose civil list the French Government now contributes 20,000 frs. a year on condition that he will abstain from rows. There are only eleven male warriors; their uniform is simple: calico drawers ornamented with cows' tails, and a head dress of horse hair and fur. It is a cheap specimen of a bloated armament. So is that of the lady men-killers: striped cotton pantaloons, a skin corselet ornamented with tiny white shells—perhaps courie cash; a diadem, also, in shells; legs and arms covered with bracelets and bells, composed of bits of old iron, tin, etc. Round their waist is suspended a cartouche box. They are armed with massive flint tower muskets, the stocks of which are ornamented with polished brass and iron nails. These demoiselles—for, like French private soldiers, they must not be married—are commanded by the beautiful Goumah, the Belle Fatina of Dahomey. She looks a goddess and moves a queen in her majestic crimson velvet pantaloons.

Goumah commands not by words, but by gestures; at a look the women fly to arms, at a nod they fall into line; at a wink they carry arms and file past. They are quite familiar with the "goose" step. They form close and open columns; fire at the knee attitude, or fall flat on the ground. All the movements are in unison with a tambourine beaten with two sticks, and a drum struck with the palm of the hand. The Dahomeyan dances are positively graceful, and not on a par with the steps of the ancient Pomare, or the more modern grille d'Egout. M. de Lesseps is not expected to pull through his congestion of the lungs. He is in his 86th year. Z.

THOUGHTS ON THE POLITICAL SITUATION.

IN this the time of harsh unseemly strife,
Fierce party feeling seems to blight the life
Of our young country, and throughout the land,
Friends against friends, brothers 'gainst brothers stand.
From one, with emphasis the story's told,
That men are basely bought by foreign gold;
The other—that the vicious Tory reign—
Brings sad depopulation in its train.
From passion, blind; they storm, recriminate,
Themselves they hurt not, but they wound the State.
To this fair Empire both disloyal are,
Cease! ere ye light the flames of civil war,
Why this unrest? our independence gained,
'Neath Britain's flag, by British force sustained;
For change we care not nor for closer tie,
With other land however near it lie
Love first thy land, then will the country be,
Above all strife, above all calumny.

From far Vancouver on Pacific shores,
To Halifax where wild Atlantic roars;
From ice-crowned mountains with eternal snows,
To where St Lawrence in its grandeur flows;
From Polar North in cold seclusion wrapp'd
To kinder soil by Erie's waters lapp'd;
"For God, for Queen, for Canada" we cry,
We live for them, for them, if need be, die.

Toronto.

E. C. MACKENZIE.

IN Trinidad the other day, according to a local paper. Mr. George Darmany, in company of some other persons along a road, came in contact with a huge snake 25 feet long, in whose coils a pig was imprisoned. The animal at the sight of these people reared itself up some three feet, and Darmany tried to throw a rope over its head, he being unarmed, while one of his companions went for a gun. The snake, frightened at the sight of a dog, let go its victim, and was trying to wriggle into a lagoon near by, when Darmany caught hold of it by the tail, and tried to prevent it from escaping, but so powerful was the brute that it dragged the man who was attached to its tail forward, and would have dragged him into the lagoon had he not let go his hold. Cameron.

SPENSER AND ARIOSTO.

THE name of Edmund Spenser closes the roll of the poets of chivalry. But no great poet stands alone. The development of Spenser's genius was affected by the Italian writers, and particularly by the "Orlando Innamorato" of Boiardo, and the "Orlando Furioso" of Ariosto. "In these two poems," says Gravina, a celebrated Italian critic, "is seen the true system of honour, known by the name of chivalry." The spirit of that system is found in Spenser's poem, the "Faerie Queene."

The "Orlando Innamorato" was the work of Matteo Maria Boiardo, Count of Scandiano, who was born about 1430. He was educated at the University of Ferrara, and, after some years passed at the court of the Dukes Borso and Ercole d'Este, was made governor, first of Reggio, and afterwards of Modena. He died at Reggio in 1494, leaving his great work unfinished. It was published for the first time in 1495, and republished sixteen times during the next fifty years. Although received with great favour, it was severely criticized by Florentine judges, who objected to the dialect of Ferrara, in which it was written. Several attempts were made to rewrite it in the Florentine dialect. Of these the "Riformazione" of Ludovico Domenichi differed little in substance from the original, but Francesco Berni, in his "Rifacimento," which was published about 1545, completely altered and remodelled Boiardo's poem. It soon entirely replaced the original work, and is the one at present best known. Le Sage published a French prose translation of the poem early in the 17th century, but no complete English translation has ever been produced, and it is consequently less generally known than the poem of Ariosto.

The "Orlando Innamorato," which is based on the early romances and ballads of chivalry, begins with the arrival of Angelica, daughter of Galaphron, king of Cathay, at the court of Charlemagne, accompanied by her brother, Argalia, who offers to meet in the field any of the French knights, on condition that all those he vanquishes shall be his prisoners, while Angelica is the prize offered to the victor should he himself be conquered. The combats of the various knights, the passion inspired in them by Angelica, the exploits of Orlando and the other paladins of Charlemagne, and the two invasions of France by Agrican, king of Tartary, and Agramante, king of Africa, are the chief subjects of the poem. There is no attempt at unity, and the poem breaks off abruptly in the middle of a description of the siege of Paris by Agramante. Most of the characters reappear in the "Orlando Furioso," of Ariosto, which takes up the story at the point where it is dropped in the "Orlando Innamorato." Boiardo, like Ariosto, intended that his poem should have an allegorical meaning:—

Questi draghi fatati, questi incanti
Questi giardini e libri, e corni, e cani
Ed huomini selvatici e giganti
E fieri, e Mostri ch'hanno visi umani
Son fatti per dar pasti agli ignoranti
Ma voi ch'avete gl'intelletti sani
Mirate la dottrina che s'asconde
Sotto questo coperto alto e profondo.

—Ber. Or. Inn., B. I., c. xxv.

(These wondrous dragons, these enchantments, these gardens, books, horns, hounds, these savage men, these giants, beasts, and monsters, formed with human faces, are designed to delight the ignorant; but ye who have a higher intellect than they mark well the teaching that lies hid beneath these coverings deep and high.) The allegorical meaning is, however, continually lost. The "Orlando Innamorato" is a long poem of sixty-nine cantos. It abounds in the extravagant and the incredible, and although it contains many fine passages, is, on the whole, tedious and feeble. It would have little interest for the student of English literature, were it not for the picture presented of the customs and times of chivalry, and for the connection between Boiardo's poem and those of Ariosto and Spenser.

Ludovico Ariosto, the author of the second poem referred to, was born at Reggio in 1474, his father being at the time governor of that city. He was from boyhood an earnest student of Latin literature, and of the French and Spanish romances. The father of Ariosto was at first resolutely opposed to his literary pursuits, but at length, principally through the intercession of a friend and kinsman, Pandolfo Ariosto, reluctantly consented to allow his son to follow his natural tastes. To Pandolfo Ariosto the future poet owed much in the way of influence and encouragement. He guided his young kinsman in his classical studies, and was his firm friend and trusty adviser for many years. Ariosto's study of the Greek language, also begun at the instigation of this friend, was rudely interrupted by his father's death, which left him the eldest of ten children, and with the cares of a household on his shoulders. He had by this time gained considerable reputation by his poems and comedies, and he now devoted himself more vigorously than ever to literary work. His career, in some respects, resembled that of Spenser. Like him he was happy in obtaining the favour of an eminent and influential patron, and it was at the court of the Cardinal Hippolito d'Este, at Ferrara, that Ariosto wrote his great work, the "Orlando Furioso." It was first published in 1516, seventy-five years before the publication of the "Faerie Queene." It was at once received with the greatest enthusiasm, not only by literary critics, but by the Italian people in general. During Ariosto's residence at the Cardinal's court, he also came under the notice of Alfonso, Duke of Ferrara, to whom, when a disagreement

with the Cardinal ended a friendship of fifteen years, he transferred his services. Three years were afterwards spent in the mountainous district of Garfagnana, whither he was sent to restore peace and redress grievances. The remainder of his life was spent at Ferrara, except on the rare occasions when he visited Rome on business for the duke. He never married, but devoted himself to his literary work and to the care of his little estate. He died at Ferrara in 1534. His great poem, the "Orlando Furioso," is known to English readers in three translations, the first by Sir John Harrington, published in the reign of Elizabeth, the second by John Hoole at the close of the last century, and the third by W. Stewart Rose about thirty years later, but no one of these three translators has succeeded in doing justice to the beauties of the original work. The translation by Rose is generally preferred.

The "Orlando Furioso," taking up the story of the "Orlando Innamorato," was necessarily, to a great extent, modelled upon it, although the genius of Ariosto was too original and brilliant to be tied down to any copy. In the "Orlando Furioso" there is at first sight a lack of unity. The main subject of the poem is the war of Charlemagne with the Saracens, who have besieged Paris under Agramante, king of Africa. Agramante is at first victorious, but Charlemagne, with the help of his paladins, finally defeats him, and compels him to return to Africa, with the small remnant of his army. Agramante, despairing of raising another army, challenges Orlando and two other Christian knights to end the struggle by a personal encounter with himself and two Saracen chiefs. In the conflict which ensues, Agramante is killed, and the war ends in favour of Charlemagne. Two other stories of more particular interest are interwoven with the main narrative: the story of Orlando and Angelica, and the story of Ruggiero and Bradamante. The plot is complicated by a host of minor incidents, and by the habit common to both Ariosto and Spenser, of suddenly changing the scene of action. The uncomfortable sense of confusion, which is felt at the beginning of the poem, is however lost as the reader advances, and finds himself under the spell of the vigorous and animated verse. The principal characters gradually assert their own individuality, and stand out with distinctness amid their brilliant and dazzling surroundings.

The story of Orlando and Angelica turns upon the madness of Orlando, Count of Anglante, who is the hero of the "Orlando Furioso," and the most renowned of Charlemagne's knights. His character, which is generous, courageous and noble, presents Ariosto's conception of the ideal knight. He is enamoured of Angelica, the pagan princess of Cathay, in whose honour he has already achieved great deeds in foreign lands. His passion increases to frenzy as its object continually escapes him, and ends in madness when he discovers that she is in love with a young pagan knight, named Medoro, with whom she has returned to her father's kingdom. He casts away his armour and roams about the country, killing whoever opposes him, and leaving ruin wherever he passes. His senses are afterwards restored by Astolfo, another famous Christian knight, who, by the favour of St. John, is allowed to visit the kingdom of the moon and bring back the lost wits of Orlando. The knight returns to his right mind, completely cured of his love for Angelica, and once more takes his place among the paladins of France. Angelica, though in some respects the most important female character of the poem, is not an ideal heroine. "Flippant, vain, inconstant, childish, proud, and full of fancies," her fickleness and insensibility are in marked contrast with the devotion of Bradamante, and the madness of Orlando is sent to him as a punishment inspired by her charms is always baneful in its results, as when Orlando, in his pursuit of her, is led to forsake the knightly camp at a critical moment, and thus fails in his duty to the king. Ariosto severely blames Orlando for this breach of trust, which is one of few instances of the kind recorded, though he confesses with great naïveté that he would have done the same under similar circumstances.

The story of the Christian maiden, Bradamante, and the Saracen knight, Ruggiero, is one of the most attractive in the poem, and is full of passages of great pathos and beauty. Bradamante, who is the prototype of Spenser's Britomart, may be considered the real heroine of the poem, and is a beautiful conception of the warrior maiden. Beneath her warlike garb beats a gentle and womanly heart, and her constancy and unselfishness of her love for Ruggiero are full of charm. The course of true love, traditionally rough, was never more so than in the case of these two warrior lovers. Brought together repeatedly, only to be separated again, and subjected to fresh trials of valour and endurance, they meet at last, and set forth to Vallombrosa where Ruggiero has consented to be baptized previous to his marriage with Bradamante. "So dear he held her that, for her sake, he would have been baptized not with water but with fire." But peaceful days are not yet for them. Summoned during their journey to the assistance of a distressed damsel, a call which no true knight could leave unheeded, they are once more parted, and it is long before the lovers meet. The interest of the narrative deepens as troubles thicken round the faithful pair. Bradamante, after a vain endeavour to find Ruggiero, returns to her father's castle at Montalban to await her lover's arrival. But meanwhile, Ruggiero, his work of rescue accomplished, has heard of the failure of the Saracen cause. A fierce struggle takes place in his mind, as he