

Sappho. Very little is known of Sappho—the tradition of her passionate friendship for her girl companions seems to be supported by the longest and best known fragment of her verse, which is evidently addressed to a girl. It was translated by Catullus, whose version introduced the Sapphic measure into Roman literature. The form of the metre is dactylic—each line begins with two feet of two syllables each—the first a *trochee*, i.e. one long and one short syllable—the second a spondee, followed by a dactyl and two trochees. The chief feature in the rhythm, however, is the accent thrown on the fourth and sixth syllables. This and the line consisting of not more than eleven syllables is the only rule in modern Sapphics.

As specimens of this metre in English we have some not very successful attempts by Southey, which were parodied by Canning, in the celebrated verses in the *Anti-Jacobin*—

"Weary knife grinder! whither art thou going?
Tears of compassion tremble on my eyelids,
Ready to fall as soon as you have told your
Pitiful story!"

The fourth line it will be seen is a dactyl, followed by a spondee, the exact form of the hexameter from

which this beautiful lyrical rhythm is evidently evolved. Poor Cowper at the paroxysm of his insanity wrote some dreadful verses in this form. They are full of the ghastly doctrinal delusions with which his brain was then clouded. He speaks of himself:

"Darned below Judas, who betrayed his
Master,
Earth disavows and Heaven would now dis-
own me,
Even Hell keeps closed her ever-hungry
mouths, all
Bolted against me!"

Horrible! but with a certain power. The prettiest specimen of English Sapphics is to be found in Mr. Swinburne's first volume, and some charming verses in the same strain by Mr. Charles Roberts, a contributor of verse to *Scribner*, and author of "Orion, and other Poems." But the classical lyric measures did not pass with the Christianized Latin of the Middle Ages into popular use in the modern languages. They were saturated with the sensualism of the ancient culture, and recall instinctively the worship of Apollo and Aphrodite. How the transition from classical Latin to modern metrical forms was in reality effected it may be interesting to inquire in a future paper.

(To be continued.)

AMONG the languages of civilized nations English is the most widely spread. It is the mother-tongue of about 80,000,000 people; German, of between 50,000,000 and 60,000,000; French of between 40,000,000 and 50,000,000; Spanish, of 40,000,000; Italian of 28,000,000; and Russian, of between 55,000,000 and 60,000,000.

In Italy quite a movement is on foot to establish museums in different cities of that country. Rome, Palermo, Caserta, and Genoa have begun the work of organizing such collections, which are designed primarily for the use of teachers and of schools.

WE learn from an Egyptian blue-book that there are in the land of the Pharaohs 5,370 schools, 5,725 teachers, and out of 850,000 children in the country, 140,000 go to school. Almost the whole of the schools are village schools, and the subjects taught are reading by the use of the Koran, the simple rules of arithmetic, and writing.

BELGIUM promises to become the great industrial teacher of Europe. Many foreigners are now attending her schools. She has 59 technical schools, 32 industrial schools and a higher commercial school—all receiving funds annually from the State.