

was written and spoken by the Scottish people, gentle and simple, by peer and peasant, from before the earliest Stuart's time up to the union of the two kingdoms. I have read the statutes enacted by the Scottish Parliament, from the first James' time to the sixth of Scotland and the first of England, and they are all written in the tongue Burns wrote and spoke, only the language is a little more archaic than that used by him. One of the Stuart kings was no mean poet. He wrote a poem called "Christ's Kirk on the Green," which, for point and humorous description of the manners and customs of the age, could not be surpassed. It was the language which Knox spoke and wrote; and when he was a prisoner in France toiling at the oar as a galley slave, one of his guards brought an image of the Virgin to him to worship. The stern reformer called it "A pented bredd," i.e., a painted piece of wood, and contemptuously pitched it into the sea. The great Scottish writers of the eighteenth century—Smith, Hume and Robertson—wrote in English, but they all spoke their native tongue, especially Hume who spoke it with great fluency and force. The Scottish language is no provincial dialect of the English, but a sister tongue. It was the language of Scott's boyhood. He heard no other at Sandy Knowe his grandfather's place, where he spent most of his earlier years. It was spoken by his father and the noblemen and gentlemen of Edinburgh as late as his time, and when the young poet Burns left his plough stilts in Ayrshire and appeared among the cultivated literati of the metropolis, and startled them with his bursts of eloquence and flashes of wit and humour, it was in no vulgar dialect he addressed them, but in a tongue they all understood and spoke. The Duchess of Gordon, who probably had met and conversed with most if not all of the leading men in politics and literature, in both capitals, said that Burns was the only man she ever met whose conversation completely carried her off her feet. He could not have done that had he not spoken in a tongue common to them both. Anyone well read in Scottish literature, has no difficulty in reading Chaucer, which cannot be done by modern Englishmen without the aid of a glossary, and many words in Spencer and Shakespeare, obsolete or their meaning obscure to the English reader, are perfectly plain to the Scottish. The language written in Chaucer's time in both countries, was identical, but it changed much more rapidly in England than Scotland, and after the union of the two kingdoms under one crown, and the translation of the Hebrew Scriptures into that "pure well of English undefiled," the Bible and the book became a sacred treasure and in every home in both countries, English became the predominant tongue and the Scottish virtually ceased to be written. I think it is greatly to be regretted, as all that magnificent literature of heroic song and ballad that when read stirs the blood like the blast of a trumpet, is written in a language that cannot be thoroughly understood and appreciated without study by the great part of the English-speaking race. Yet those splendid lyrics will never per-

ish. Lady Anne Lindsay's "Auld Robin Grey;" that hymn of hope and sorrow by Lady Nairn—"The Land o' the Leal," will embalm the language in which they are written as long as tongue can speak or heart feel. Bruce's Address at Bannockburn, by Burns, unequalled in any language, ancient or modern, that should be sung as Carlyle said, by the "throat of the whirlwind," will never cease to cheer and inspire to heroic action men of the British race in all lands and every clime. Has not "Auld Lang Syne" (a phrase untranslatable into English) become the meeting and parting song of the Saxon kindred wherever they are to be found on this planet. The last great writer who spoke the Scottish language in its purity, was Carlyle, and notwithstanding his long residence in England he continued to speak it to the end of his days, and no reader of his life needs to be reminded of his splendid powers as a conversationalist. W.C.K.

### THE SEARS LIBRARY.

An important event in the library world of the United States, has recently occurred in the city of New York.

The admirable collection of books illustrating the origin, growth and development of The Book in all its phases, including the history of early manuscripts, printing, paper-making, binding, wood and metal engraving, etc., etc., gathered by Mr. George Edward Sears, has passed at private sale, for a very large sum, into the possession of Mr. William Evarts Benjamin, of New York, who is one of the largest dealers in rare and expensive books in America.

Mr. Sears is the son of the late Mr. Robert Sears, sr., of Toronto, and for many years conducted a large printing business in New York. Taking a great interest in the subject, he devoted twenty years of his leisure time to gathering early manuscripts, early bindings, early printed books, and all kinds of typographical curios.

The collection contains one illuminated MS. of the fifteenth century, written on 600 leaves of vellum, and having 350 hand-painted miniatures, valued alone at \$5,000; a complete Caxton, "Tully on Old Age," worth \$2,500. Numerous specimens of all the distinguished presses: Aldus of Venice; Plantin, of Antwerp; Pannertz, of Rome; The Ginttas, of Venice; Elzivirs, of Leyden, etc., etc., from 1470 to 1550.

These precious volumes were kept in an ancient Park avenue mansion, reminding one, as the New York Times expressed it, "of the Christian chapels in the catacombs."

During the past years, many grave meetings were held there by enthusiastic and studious bibliophiles, learned in Gothic and black-letter lore, after the manner of good old Dr. Dibbin.

Mr. Sears had already made two very remarkable catalogues of his collection, one, of the curious and sombre subject of "The Dance of Death," which we have already noticed; the other, upon "The Emblems of Alcibiades," privately printed in editions of 100 copies. The New York Times says "he had formed a perfect chain

of all the links, by which the work of the early monkish scribes, copyists, and book-makers of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries is allied with the work of the publishers and printers of the present day."

Mr. Benjamin is now engaged in classifying the books in chronological order, for a public exhibition to be held in his new and extensive galleries in East 16th in the fall.

Now that Mr. Sears regards his work as fairly finished, and having given up his residence in New York, he decided that it was proper to no longer keep these curios hid under a bushel, but to place them where they might be a benefit, as well as a gratification to other collectors, quarrying possibly in the same field.

It is to be hoped that such a collection as a whole, will not be largely separated, as a similar one will not be easily formed again. Mr. Sears having for nearly a quarter of a century, personally and through agents, searched the various book marts of the world for rare editions and choice specimens of the printer's art, sparing neither money nor pains to achieve his end, the results being the formation of one of the most unique and intrinsically interesting and valuable libraries on the continent.

It may interest our readers to know that Mr. Sears is greatly attached to the old home of his father, and a large part of every year is spent in visiting Toronto.

### ART NOTES.

In the June number of the McMaster University Monthly, Mrs. M. E. Dignam, in an article on "The Development of Art," states a truth which is often lost sight of. "If I were asked what the great need of the day was, I should say, 'Intelligent and critical appreciation of art.' It is a crude idea that such knowledge would be wasted if not practically or professionally applied. Surely a full development of all the faculties, is worth all it costs to the individual, and a diffused knowledge of art, of good taste, is needed, first of all for personal enjoyment, and secondly, to create a demand for what is produced, which can only be through a more cultured appreciation of the masterpieces."

The Galignani Messenger for June 25th, gives the following:

A week or two ago, there was published an article from the Rev. Samuel A. Barnett, of St. Jude's, Whitechapel, in which he pleaded for the establishment and endowment of a permanent Fine Art Exhibition in the East-end. The article was read with interest by Mr. Watts, R. A., who expressed his hearty commendation of the scheme. How far more delightful, he says, are the small private galleries in Italy than the large ones! Why should not small galleries be built in various parts of London? Mr. Tate's Gallery, at Millbank, might serve as a head-centre for them, all circulating pictures and catalogues through them. If the management of the Tate Gallery, undertook also the management of these smaller local galleries, having the responsibility both for hanging and for accepting loans and gifts, much labour would be saved, and the work would be much more thoroughly done. An annex in each case for minor arts and crafts, with special reference where possible to local industries, would be a valuable addition. Mr. Watts himself promises to send some of his pictures to any permanent gallery which may be established in Whitechapel; while another reader of Mr. Barnett's