SADAY, JUNE 19, 1897.

NO. 1811, NEW SERIES.

THE ACADEMY.

TERMS OF SUBSCRIPTION.

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The Academy is published every Friday morning.
Advertisements should reach the office not later than 4 p.m. on Thursday.

The Editor will make every effort to return rejected contributions, provided a stamped and addressed envelope is enclosed.

Occasional contributors are recommended to have their MS. typewritten.
All business letters regarding the supply of the paper, &c., should be addressed to the
PENNINGTON OFFICE: 43, Cheapside, E.C.

ON A DIAMOND JUBILEE.

BY SIR LEWIS MORRIS.

TWELVE centuries and more have passed and gone
Since this dear Britain of our love and pride
Her crownéd state and royal robes put on,
And, her seven realms, grown gradually one,
Wield great and glorified.
Year after year, Age after struggling Age,
Broadened her wide imperial heritage,
Until-to-day, safe-thrown beyond the foam,
The greatest Realm beneath the wandering sun.
From North to South, from East to West,
On sea and land, a puissant Queen confess
She rules, a mighty Governor.

Through all the long processions of the years
This solemn pageant of our Island Crown,
Our bright standard, unclouded, or through mists of tears,
Strips still unbroken down.
From Eborac to Victoria, the long line
Of crownéd Sovereigns, never fails to shine
From our dim dawn to this our noontide day,
Always our Kings, our Queens bounteously lay.

Though brief years some, some through a troublous reign
And force fights fought in vain,
Some by mean vices marred and crost,
And surging passions tempest-tost
And gawling sense, untimely slain,
And some through long lives anxious, mixed with pain.
To suffering Age at last, forlorn with doomed brain.

But now, but now, in these our latest days
Of Britain’s chequerd story.
A woman’s blameless hand the sceptre sways
And points the way to glory.

Already three score years, already more
Than any of all that long array before.
The sceptre rests in one beloved hand,
A hundred peoples bow at her command,
Safe-guarded by our crownéd Commonwealth.
From all the lips that mar a nation’s health,
The tyrant trampling Right and fostering Wrong.
Who finds the freeman where he leaves the slave?
And him the cunning glooming knave
Who betrays on the gross ignoble throng.
Oh, halcyon days of civil peace and rest!
Oh, happy, happy race, more than our fathers blest!
Within our memories, who live to-day,
This glorious thing has been.
The girl who, with that fateful dawn in June
Aroused from happy maiden dreams too soon,
Woke to the cares of Empire, she to-day,
Though three score years have fled away,
Rules, our beloved Queen.
Scant change these busy chequered years have brought.
Save haply slower limbs and ripper thought,
Few sorrows save that unbroken loss
Which is her Crown, and was long time her Cross.
The wider sympathy, the piving heart,
Which of the lowest suffering bears a part,
And beats responsive to her people’s pain.
For us alone, after twelve centuries,
Hath Fate reserved this greatest prize of all,
The longest, justest, purest, happiest reign.
"The spacious times of great Elizabeth"
Show narrower far than these.
Fate cannot rob us now, nor Change, nor Death,
Who, whatsoever thing befall
Through three score happy chequered years
Have lived with her and shared both smiles and tears,
Whose eyes have watched so long, and not in vain.
A reign without a blot, a life without a stain.

THE WEEK.

CHRONICLE OF NEW BOOKS.

[This article is a chronicle of books published during the week. Reviews will follow.]

PUBLISHING, like other businesses, is at a low ebb this week. Nor do the books that have come to hand reflect the hour. There is nothing festive about them. It would seem that publishers have put forth this week books that will be sought out by their special public, and that may as well be issued at one time as at another. We do not say that this applies to all the books in our list; but it may be held to apply to an unusually large batch of metaphysical and philosophical works which whisper that Juculosis is not every thing, and that life holds more problems than pages. True, Mr. Riddle’s work, the latest edition in the "Continuatory Science Series," on The Psychology of the Emotions, may be more seasonable than appears at first sight. There is plenty of emotion in London just now, and we hope to see it redoubled on Tuesday; but its source is one of our afterthoughts. Even M. Robert, he of the undercurrent, is a Frenchman. English psychologists are booking seats for the procession. America sends us The Genesis of Social Conscience, by Prof. H. S. Nash, and The Fertility of the Land, by Prof. Isaac Phillips Roberts, of Cornell University, Germany, where philosophers never cease from troubling, gives us, for Jubilee reading, Prof. Oswald Kolpe’s Introduction to Philosophy, a Rationalist’s Manual, by Atheleia, M.D., and Ruskin Revised, by R. J. Muir, M.A. What a time to review Ruskin!

But there are other books. There is Christ in Shakespeare in a "Victorian" edition which appears to contain a good deal of new matter. We say "appears," for Mr. Charles Ellis, its author, has made a first examination of his book sufficiently difficult. Never have we opened a book so soon after its firstavy leaves, its preludes, and proems. Mr. Ellis has five preoms, one of which is part of a sonnet by Wordsworth, and another from the Daily Telegraph. Mr. Ellis’s method is to print a passage from Shakespeare facing a page of texts from the Bible. The passion for representing Shakespeare in new lights and extracting new meaning from his writings has produced some interesting books and some wearisome ones. It may be held, from the test of the value of any sectional treatment of Shakespeare’s works lies in the degree in which it helps the reader to understand and delight in the whole body of his work and the whole quality of his genius.

A likely looking Colonial book is to hand. The stirring events of the Matshobha rebellion of last year have already somewhat faded from the public memory, but there will doubtless be readers enough for a well-illustrated narrative of those stirring days. Mr. Frank W. Sykes served as a trooper in the M.R.F. throughout the operations, and he has told the story of his experiences with Col. Flower’s relief force. In introducing his book Mr. Sykes is careful to emphasize the standpoint from which he viewed the campaign. He says:

"It may be pointed out that military operations, as seen and experienced by a trooper, are not all contare de rox, either at the time or afterwards; no matter what his preconceived ideas of the subject. Again, the trooper’s scope of observation is limited, and opportunities of learning the ‘whys’ and ‘wherefores’ of this and that are not frequent. Hence, to pretend to describe technically the movements and operations of the column would be absurd."

The photographs, sketches, and maps in the book are specially good and interesting.

We began to annoy Brama in 1860, and the stirring events of the Matshobha rebellion. Quite a literature about this ancient and interesting country is springing up. Following Mrs. Ernest Hart’s Pohorrape Brama, published two months ago, comes Mr. George W. Bird’s Wanderings in Brama.
THE ACADEMY.

[Json 1897.

THE ACADEMY PORTRAITS.

X. WILLIAM BLAKE.

THERE have been men who loved the future like a mistress, and the future mixed her breath into their breath and shook her hair about them, and hid them under the understanding of their times. William Blake was one of these men, and if he spoke confusedly and obscurely it was because he spoke things for whose speaking he could find no models in the world about him. He announced the religion of art, of which no man dreamed in the world about him; and he understood it more perfectly than the thousands of subtle spirits who have received its baptism in the world about us, because, in the beginning of important things—in the beginning of love, in the beginning of the day, in the beginning of any work, there is a moment when we understand more perfectly than we understand again until all is finished. In his time mortal poets are content that they amused themselves with books of imagination, but that they "made their souls" by listening to sermons and by doing or by making certain things. When they had to explain why serious people like themselves honoured the great poets greatly they were hard put to it for lack of good reasons. In our time we are agreed that we "make our souls" out of some one of the great poets of ancient times, or out of Shelley or Wordsworth, or Goethe or Balzac, or Flaubert, or Count Tolstoy, in the books he wrote before he became a prophet and fell into a lesser order, or out of Mr. Whistler's pictures, while we amuse ourselves, or, at best, make a poorer sort of soul, by listening to sermons or by doing or by not doing certain things. We write of great writers, even of writers whose beauty would once have seemed an unholy beauty, with wrapped sentences like those our fathers kept for the beatitudes and mysteries of the Church. When we believe with our lips, we believe with our hearts that beautiful things, as Browning said in his one prose essay that was not in verse, have "lain on the divine land." And that when time has begun to wither, the divine hand will fall heavily on bad taste and vulgarity. When no man believed these things William Blake believed them, and began that preaching against the Philistines, which is as the preaching of the Middle Ages against the Saracen. He wrote:

"I know of no other Christianity, and of no other gospel, than the liberty both of body and mind to exercise the divine arts of imagination—imagination, the real and eternal world, of which this vegetable universe is but a faint shadow, and in which we shall live in our eternal or imaginative bodies when these vegetable mortal bodies are no more. The Apostles knew of no other gospel. What are all their spiritual gifts? What is the Divine Spirit? The Ghost other than an intellectual fountain?... What is the life of man but art and science?... Answer this for yourselves among you, and those who pretend to despise the labours of art and science, which alone are the labours of the gospel."

And he wrote:

"I care not whether a man is good or bad, all that I care is, whether a man is a wise man or a fool. Go, put off holiness and put on intellect.""
THE ACADEMY.

The character of a man’s work will be determined, in part, by his friends. The friends of a literary man are his literary output, and the desertion of these whom he regarded as his staunchest friends. Still, though others were worshipers at the shrine, Edmond de Goncourt never for a moment lost sight of his early ideals, and these served as his solace to the end.

The idea which most occupied his mind during his last days was the formation of an academy, to be called the Académie des Goncourt, for the support and encouragement of independent artists among the young writers of talent. The two brothers had talked over its details a thousand times. It was to consist of ten members only: politicians, noblesse, poets, and officials were to be deported from membership.

Many were the names of those whom Edmond de Goncourt, at one time or another, added to his list of prospective members and then crossed off. MM. Zola, Claudet, Pierre Loti and Henry James figured upon it. Sometimes one of these would seek admission to the rival Académie Française, whereupon Edmond de Goncourt’s sadness would grow deeper: and at the same time he would begin to suspect that his dearest friend, M. Alphonse Daudet, also intended to abandon him.

Upon the Goncourt’s death, nearly a year ago, his will was found to contain full particulars in regard to the suggested academy. The names of eight out of ten members were given—Alphonse Daudet, Leon Hennique, Jo. Karl Huysmans, Octave Mirbeau, Rossy ainé, Rosny jeune, Paul Marguerite, and G. Geffroy. The proceeds of the sale of his collections, and the proceeds at an auction of the Goncourt, the best historical work, the best collection of short stories. A little time after the death of the author of Gervaise Lavender, I remember having a conversation with one of a select group of members, in which a doubt was expressed as to whether the Académie des Goncourt would ever be founded:

"Somebody will probably be found to purchase Edmond’s collections," said my friend, "but it will be many, many years before the person willing to pay the price comes forward. I do not think we shall ever receive a penny of the income of 6,000 francs."

The master, however, was right, after all, in his estimates. The collections of books, paintings, pictures, drawings, engravings, and art furniture, to which his own was added, were all sold for an enormous sum. The auction at the Hotel Drouot brought 863,000 francs. When this sum is added 500,000 francs, which is the total of the private income of Edmond de Goncourt, and the estimated value of the house at Auteuil, still to be sold, it will be seen that, all expenses having been paid, the amount will be sufficient for the formation of the Académie des Goncourt.

In a recent conversation M. Alphonse Daudet, who with M. Leon Hennique is an executor under the will, the author of Sappho spoke at some length on this subject. It must be remembered that M. Daudet in no way agrees with academies, and he would not have undertaken the formation of the Académie des Goncourt had it not been the wish of his friend that he should carry out all the necessary arrangements. He considers that Edmond de Goncourt named his idea falsely.

"He should not have called it the Académie des Goncourt," said M. Daudet, "but, what would have been much better, it should be named the Académie des Jules, for that it will really only be the members meeting once a month to dine together at the rate of twenty-five francs a head. Many times did I try to persuade him to give up the idea of making the Académie des Goncourt a rival of the Académie Française: but he only answered, ‘I wish this academy to be what my brother and I dreamed it would be, and such it shall be.’ At one time he did seriously think of changing the name, but a scruple held him back. Had his brother been living, it might have been otherwise. Edmond used to say that the Académie Française did not know how to find out men of talent, and that his prize of five thousand francs would render famous services."

M. Daudet went on to explain that, according to the ideas of Edmond de Goncourt, if the sum realised by the collections and the house at Auteuil, added to his personal fortune and the proceeds from his books and plays, was not found sufficient for the carrying out of all his ideas, the academy was nevertheless to be founded.

"We shall, first of all," said M. Daudet, "have to appoint two members to make up the number to ten. Then we shall probably start by offering a prize of 5,000 francs for the best piece of work of fiction, afterwards extending it to works in other branches of literature. Do not let us forget, however, that we are threatened with a law suit. Certain of the cousins of the late Edmond de Goncourt, who was ignorant of their very existence, have announced their intention through an ‘agent d’affaires’ of starting an action for the annulment of the will. Of course, the whole thing is practically hopeless. Everybody, years before Edmond’s death, knew his wish in regard to the academy, and it cannot, therefore, be said that we in any way influenced him. The plea, however, will probably be that undue influence was brought to bear on the testator, which contains some vice de forme—some error in its construction."

M. Leon Hennique and M. Huysmans echoed M. Daudet’s words.

In conclusion may be given the opinion on this question of one who, although not a member of the new academy, was nevertheless a constant visitor to the ‘Grenier’ at Auteuil. M. Paul Alexis writes to me:

“IT is possible that the will of Edmond de Goncourt may be found to contain certain imperfections of form, but should it be annulled, whatever the expression of the same desire—the foundation of the Académie des Goncourt—a desire which is the only one that really exists, and that of Jules, who died a quarter of a century before. And everything, in their journal, in their entire work, in their habits of life, loudly and very nobly proclaims the constant and ardent wish of the two brothers, the intention of realising the great literary ideal of their whole existence.”