ebb ” (as originally formulated by the present writer in a sonnet on the sonnet, which has appeared in most of the recent anthologies) is strictly observed, and in which, while the rhyme-arrangement of the octave is invariable, that of the sestet is free ; (4) sonnets of miscellaneous structure.

With regard to what is called the contemporary form, —a Petrarchan arrangement with the sestet divided very sharply from the octave,—the crowning difficulty and the crowning triumph of the sonnet writer has always been to so handle the rhythm of the prescribed structure as to make it seem in each individual sonnet the inevitable and natural rhythm demanded by the emotion which gives the individual sonnet birth, and this can perhaps only be achieved when the richness and apparent complexity of the rhyme-arrangement is balanced by that perfect lucidity and simplicity of syntax which is the special quest of the “ sonnet of flow and ebb.”

The wave theory has found acceptance with most recent students of the sonnet, such as Rossetti and the late Mark Pattison, Mr J. A. Symonds, Mr Hall Caine, and Mr William Sharp. Mr Symonds, indeed, seems to hint that the very name given by the Italians to the two tercets, the volta or turn, indicates the metrical meaning of the form. “The striking metaphorical symbol,” says he, “ drawn from the observation of the swelling and declining wave can even in some examples be applied to sonnets on the Shakespearean model ; for, as a wave may fall gradually or abruptly, so the sonnet may sink with stately volume or with precipitate subsidence to its close. Rossetti furnishes incomparable examples of the former and more desirable conclusion ; Sydney Dobell, in *Home in War Time,* yields an extreme specimen of the latter.”

And now as to the Shakespearean sonnet. Some very acute critics have spoken as if this form were merely a lawless succession of three quatrains clinched by a couplet, and as if the number of the quatrains might just as well have been two or four as the present prescribed number of three. If this were so, it would unquestionably be a serious impeachment of the Shakespearean sonnet, for save in the poetry of ingenuity no metric arrangement is otherwise than bad unless it be the result of a deep metrical necessity.

If the prescriptive arrangement of *three* quatrains clinched by a couplet is not a metrical necessity, if it is not demanded in order to prevent the couplet from losing its power, such an arrangement is idle and worse than idle ; just as, in the case of the Petrarchan sonnet, if it can be shown that the solid unity of the outflowing wave can be maintained as completely upon three rhymes as upon two, then the restriction of the octave to two rhymes is simple pedantry. But he who would test the metrical necessity of the arrangement in the Shakespearean sonnet has only to make the experiment of writing a poem of two quatrains with a couplet, and then another poem of four quatrains with a couplet, in order to see how inevitable is the metrical necessity of the Shakespearean number and arrangement for the achievement of the metrical effect which Shakespeare, Drayton, and others sought. While in the poem of two quatrains the expected couplet has the sharp epigrammatic effect of the couplet in ordinary stanzas (such as that of *ottava rima,* and as that of the *Venus and Adonis* stanza), destroying that pensive sweet­ness which is the characteristic of the Shakespearean sonnet, the poem of four quatrains is just sufficiently long for the expected pleasure of the couplet to be dispersed and wasted.

The quest of the Shakespearean sonnet is not, like that of the sonnet of octave and sestet, sonority, and, so to speak, metrical counterpoint, but sweetness ; aud the sweetest of

all possible arrangements in English versification is a succession of decasyllabic quatrains in alternate rhymes knit together and clinched by a couplet—a couplet coming not so far from the initial verse as to lose its binding power, and yet not so near the initial verse that the ring of epigram disturbs the “linked sweetness long drawn out ” of this movement, but sufficiently near to shed its influence over the poem back to the initial verse. A chief part of the pleasure of the Shakespearean sonnet is the expectance of the climacteric rest of the couplet at the end (just as a chief part of the pleasure of the sonnet of octave and sestet is the expectance of the answering ebb of the sestet when the close of the octave has been reached); and this expectance is gratified too early if it comes after two quatrains, while, if it comes after a greater number of quatrains than three, it is dispersed and wasted altogether.

The French sonnet has a regular Petrarchan octave with a sestet of three rhymes beginning with a couplet. The Spanish sonnet is also based on the pure Italian type, and is extremely graceful and airy. The same may be said of the Portuguese sonnet—a form of which the illustrious Camoens has left nearly three hundred examples. (τ. w.)

SOPHIA DOROTHEA (1666-1726), the daughter and heiress of Duke George William of Brunswick-Lüneburg- Celle, was born on September 15, 1666. On November 21, 1682, she was married to Prince George Louis of Hanover, afterwards George I. of England, to whom she bore in 1683 a son, afterwards King George II., and in 1687 a daughter, Sophia Dorothea, afterwards the wife of Frederick William I. of Prussia and the mother of Frede­rick the Great. For her illicit relations with Count Philip Christopher von Königsmark (see vol. x. p. 420) Sophia Dorothea was divorced from her husband the elector in December 1694, and the remainder of her life was spent in a dignified captivity under a military guard at her ancestral seat of Ahlden. She died on November 13, 1726. Her correspondence with Königsmark was dis­covered at Lund by Prof. Palmblad, and published by him in 1847 ; see also the Count von Schulenburg’s *Her­zogin von Ahlden* (Leipsic, 1852).

SOPHISTS. Sophist, or “ man of wisdom, ” was the name given by the Greeks about the middle of the 5th century b.c. to certain teachers of a superior grade who, distinguish­ing themselves from philosophers on the one hand and from artists and craftsmen on the other, claimed to prepare their pupils, not for any particular study or profession, but for civic life. For nearly a hundred years the sophists held almost a monopoly of general or liberal education. Yet, within the limits of the profession, there was con­siderable diversity both of theory and of practice. Four principal varieties are distinguishable, and may be described as the sophistries of culture, of rhetoric, of politics, and of eristic or disputation. Each of these predominated in its turn, though not to the exclusion of others, the sophistry of culture beginning about 447, and leading to the sophistry of eristic, and the sophistry of rhetoric taking root in central Greece about 427, and merging in the sophistry of politics. Further, since Socrates and the Socratics were educators, they too might be, and in general were, regarded as sophists ; but, as they conceived truth—so far as truth was attainable—rather than success in life, in the law court, in the assembly, or in debate, to be the right end of intellectual effort, they were at variance with their rivals, and are commonly ranked by historians, not with the sophists, who confessedly despaired of knowledge, but with the philosophers, who, however unavailingly, continued to seek it. With the establishment of the great philosophical schools—first, of