meditations are recorded, and a version, the first into Swedish, of the five books of Moses. This latter was undertaken, at her desire, by her father-confessor Mattias (d, 1350), a priest at Lin­köping. The translation of the Bible was continued a century later by a monk named Johannes Budde (d. 1484).

In verse the earliest Swedish productions were probably the folk-song.@@1 The age of these, however, has been commonly exaggerated. It is doubtful whether any still exist which are as old, in their present form, as the 13th century. The bulk are now attributed to the 15th, and many are doubtless much later still. The last, such as “ Axel och Valborg,” “ Liten Karin,” “ Kämpen Grimborg,” and “ Habor och Sîgnild,” deal with the adventures of romantic medieval romance. Almost the only positive clue we hold to the date of these poems is the fact that one of the most characteristic of them, “ Engelbrekt,” was written by Thomas, bishop of Strengnäs, who died in 1443. Thomas, who left other poetical pieces, is usually called the first Swedish poet. There are three rhyming chronicles in medieval Swedish, all anonymous. The earliest, *Erikskronikan,@@i* is attributed to 1320; the romance of Karl Magnus, *Nya Karlskrönikan,* describing the period between 1387 and 1452, which is sometimes added to the earlier work, dates from the middle of the 15th century; and the third, *Sturekrönikorna,* was probably written about 1500. The collection of rhymed romances which bears the name of *Queen Euphemia’’s Songs* must have been written before the death of the Norwegian queen in 1312. They are versions of three medieval stories taken from French and German sources, and dealt with the Chevalier au lion, of Chrestien de Troyes, with Duke Frederick of Normandy, and with Flores and Blancheflor. They possess very slight poetic merit in their Swedish form. A little later the romance of *King Alexander@@3* was translated by, or at the command of, Bo Jonsson Grip; this is more meritorious. Bishop Thomas, who died in 1443, wrote many political songs ; and a number of narrative poems date from the close of the century. A brilliant and pathetic relic of the close of the medieval period exists in the *Love Letters* addressed in 1498 by Ingrid Persdotter, a nun of Vadstena, to the young knight Axel Nilsson. The first book printed in the Swedish language appeared in 1495.

The 16th century added but little to Swedish literature, and that little is mostly connected with the newly-founded university of Upsala. The Renaissance scarcely made itself felt in Scandi­navia, and even the Reformation failed to waken the genius of the country. Psalms and didactic spiritual poems were the main products of Swedish letters in the 16th century. Two writers, the brothers Petri, sons of a smith at Örebro, take an easy prominence in so barren a period. Olaus Petri (1493-1552) and *The Petri.* Laurentius Petri (1499-1573) were Carmelite monks who adopted the Lutheran doctrine while studying at Wittenberg, and came back to Sweden in 1518 as the apostles of the new faith. Olaus, who is one of the noblest figures in Swedish annals, was of the executive rather than the meditative class. He became chancellor to Gustavus Vasa, but his reform­ing zeal soon brought him into disgrace, and in 1540 he was condemned to death. Two years later he was pardoned, and allowed to resume his preaching in Stockholm. He found time, however, to write a *Swedish Chronicle,* which is the earliest prose history of Sweden, a mystery-play, *Tohiae comedia,* which is the first Swedish drama, and three psalm-books, the best known being published in 1530 under the title of *Någre gudhelige vijsor* (“ Certain Divine Songs ’’). His *Chronicle* was based on a number of sources, in the treatment of which he showed a discrimination which makes the work still useful. Laurentius Petri, who was a man of calmer temperament, was archbishop of all Sweden, and edited or superintended the translation of the

Bible published at Upsala in 1540. He also wrote many psalms. Laurentius Andreae, 1552, had previously prepared a translation of the New Testament, which appeared in 1526. He was a polemical writer of prominence on the side of the Reformers. Finally, Petrus Niger (Peder Svart), bishop of Vesterâs (d. 1562), wrote a chronicle of the life of Gustavus I. up to 1533, in excel­lent prose. The same writer left unpublished a history of the bishops of Vesterâs, his predecessors. The latter half of the 16th century is a blank in Swedish literature.

With the accession of Charles IX., and the consequent develop­ment of Swedish greatness, literature began to assert itself in more vigorous forms. The long life of the royal librarian, Johannes Bure or Buraeus (1568-1652), formed a link between the age of the Petri and that of Stjem- hjelm. Buraeus studied all the sciences then known to mankind, and confounded them all in a sort of Rabbinical cultus of his own invention, a universal philosophy in a multitude of unread­able volumes.@@4 But he was a patient antiquary, and advanced the knowledge of ancient Scandinavian mythology and language very considerably. He awakened curiosity and roused a public sympathy with letters; nor was it without significance that two of the greatest Swedes of the century, Gustavus Adolphus and the poet Stjernhjelm, were his pupils. The reign of Charles IX. saw the rise of secular drama in Sweden, The first comedy was the *Tisbe* of Magnus Olai Asteropherus (d. 1647), a coarse but witty piece on the story of Pyramus and Thisbe, acted by the schoolboys of the college of Arboga in 1610. This play is the *Ralph Roister Doister* of Swedish literature. A greater dramatist was Johannes Messenius (1579-1636), who was the son of a miller near Vadstena and had been carefully educated abroad by the Jesuits. Being discovered plotting against the government during the absence of Gustavus in Russia, he was condemned to imprisonment for life—that is, for twenty years. Before this disaster he had been professor of jurisprudence in Upsala, where his first historical comedy *Disa* was performed in 1611 and the tragedy of *Signill* in 1612. The design of Messenius was to write the history of his country in fifty plays; he completed and pro­duced six. These dramas@@5 are not particularly well arranged, but they form a little body of theatrical literature of singular interest and value. Messenius was a genuine poet; the lyrics he introduces have something of the charm of the old ballads. He wrote abundantly in prison ; his magnum opus was a history of Sweden in Latin, but he has also left, in Swedish, two important rhyme-chronicles. Messenius was imitated by a little crowd of playwrights. Nikolaus Holgeri Catonius (d. 1655) wrote a fine tragedy on the Trojan War, *Troijenborgh,* in which he excelled Messenius as a dramatist. Andreas Prytz, who died in 1655 as bishop of Linköping, produced several religious chronicle plays from Swedish history. Jacobus Rondeletius (d. 1662) wrote a curious “ Christian tragi-comedy ” of *Judas redivivus,* which contains some amusing scenes from daily Swedish life. Another good play was an anonymous *Holofernes and Judith* (edited at Upsala, 1895, by O. Sylwan). These plays were all acted by schoolboys and university youths, and when they went out of fashion among these classes the drama in Sweden almost entirely ceased to exist. Two historians of the reign of Charles IX., Erik Göransson Tegel (d. 1636) and Aegidius Girs (d. 1639), deserve mention. The chancellor Magnus Gabriel de la Gardie (1622- 1686) did much to promote the study of Swedish antiquities. He founded the College of Antiquities at Upsala in 1667, and bought back the Gothic *Codex argenteus* which he presented to the university library.

The reign of Gustavus Adolphus was adorned by one great writer, the most considerable in all the early history of Sweden. The title of “ the Father of Swedish poetry ” has been universally awarded to Göran Lilja, better known by his adopted name of Georg Stjernhjelm (*q.v*.; 1598- 1672). Stjernhjelm was a man of almost universal attain­ment, but it is mainly in verse that he has left his stamp upon

*@@@1 Skanska folkvisor,* edited by E. G. Geijer and A. A. Afzelius (3 vols., Stockholm, 1879).

@@@2 See Cederschiöld, *Om Erikskrönikan* (1899).

@@@’ Editions of these chronicles and romances have been issued by the “ Svenska Fornskrift Sällskapet ” (Stockholm) : *Ivan Lejon- riddaren* (ed. Stephens), *Hertig Fredrik of Normandie* (ed. Ahistrand) *Flores och Blancheflor* (ed. G. E. Klemming), Alexander (ed. Klem- ming), Carl Magnus (ed. Klemming, in *Prosadikter från medeltiden).*

@@@4 Selections from his writings were edited by G. E. Klemming, (Upsala, 1883-1885).

@@@5 Edited for a learned society (Upsala, 1886, &c.) by H. Schück.