spiritual poems were the main products of Swedish letters in the 16th century. Two writers, the brothers Petri, take an easy prominence in so barren a period. Olaus Petri (1497-1552) and Laurentius Petri (1499-1573) were Carmelite monks who proceeded in 1516 to Witten­berg to study theology under Luther, and who came back to Sweden 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 found time, however, to write a *Chronicle,* which is the earliest prose history of Sweden, a mystery-play, *Tobie 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”). Laurentius Petri, who was archbishop of all Sweden, edited or superintended the translation of the Bible published at Upsala in 1540. He also wrote many psalms. Laurentius Andreæ, who died in 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 Vesterås (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 The same writer left unpublished a history of the bishops of Westerås his predecessors.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 Buræus (1568-1652), formed a link between the age of the Petri and that of Stjernhjelm. Buræus 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. But he was a patient anti­quarian, 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 Astero- pherus (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, having been discovered plotting against the Government during the absence of Gustavus in Russia, was condemned to im­prisonment for life—that is, for twenty years. Before this disaster he had been professor 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 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 Catonius (d. 1655) wrote a fine tragedy on the Trojan War, *Troijen- borgh,* 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.* 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 Ægidius Girs (d. 1639), deserve mention.

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 (1598-1672). This extraordinary man was born at Wika in Dalecarlia on the 7th of August 1598. He took his degree at Greifswald, and spent some years in travelling over every quarter of Europe. On his return he attracted the notice of Gustavus Adolphus, who gave him a responsible post at Dorpat in 1630, and raised him next year to the nobility. After the king’s death Christina attached him, as a kind of poet-laureate, to her court in Stockholm. His property lay in Livonia, and when the Russians plundered that province in 1656 the poet was reduced to extreme poverty for two or three years. He died at Brunkeborg in Stockholm on the 22d of April 1672. Stjernhjelm was a man of almost universal attainment, but it is mainly in verse that he has left his stamp upon the literature of his country. He found the language rough and halting, and he moulded it into perfect smooth­ness and elasticity. His master Buræus had written a few Swedish hexameters by way of experiment. Stjern­hjelm took the form and made it national. His greatest poem, *Hercules,* is a didactic allegory in hexameters, written in very musical verse, and with an almost Oriental splendour of phrase and imagery. In its faults as well as its beauties the style of Stjernhjelm reminds us of that of his great Dutch contemporary Vondel. He was certainly influenced by a writer a few months older than himself, the German poet Martin Opitz. The *Hercules,* which deals with the familiar story of the dispute for the hero between Duty and Pleasure, was first printed, at Upsala, in 1653, but was finished some years earlier. *Bröllops- Besvars Ihughommelse,* a sort of serio-comic epithalamium in the same measure, is another very brilliant work of Stjernhjelm. His masques, *Then fågne Cupido* (“ Cupid Caught”) (1649), *Freds-afi* (“ The Birth of Peace”) (1649), and *Parnassus Triumphans* (1651), were written for the entertainment of the queen, and have a charming lyrical lightness. He can scarcely, however, be said to have been successful in his attempt, in the first two of these, to introduce unrhymed song-measures. Stjernhjelm was an active philologist, and left a great number of works on language, of which only a few have ever been printed. He wrote letter A of the earliest Swedish dictionary, published in 1643, and a work on mathematics entitled *Archimedes Reformatus.* No brighter intellectual figure arose in Sweden till the beginning of the 19th century.

The claim of Stjernhjelm to be the first Swedish poet may be contested by a younger man, but a slightly earlier writer, Gustaf Rosenhane (1619-1684), who was a reformer on quite other lines. If Stjernhjelm studied Opitz, Rosenhane took the French poets of the Renais­sance for his models, and in 1650 wrote a cycle of one hundred sonnets, the earliest in the language ; these were published under the title *Venerid* in 1680. Rosenhane printed in 1658 a “Complaint of the Swedish Lan­guage ” in thirteen hundred rattling rhyming lines, and in 1682 a collection of eighty songs. He was a metrist of the artistic order, skilful, learned, and unim­passioned. His zeal for the improvement of the litera­ture of his country was beyond question. Most of the young poets followed Stjernhjelm rather than Rosen-