

## Book Reviews

*An Index of the Arthurian Names in Middle English.* By ROBERT W. ACKERMAN. (Stanford Univ. Publications, University Series, Language and Literature. Vol. X. Stanford, Calif.: Stanford Univ. Press, 1952, pp. xxvi + 250. \$3.50.)

An Arthurian onomasticon has long been a desideratum. Miss A. C. Blount started to make one as early as 1898, indexing over 200 writings, but her work was never finished and remains unpublished. In taking up the task, Professor Ackerman has wisely restricted himself to a part of the field. In the present book he gives us an index of the Arthurian names found in twenty-eight English works ("forty separate pieces"). The texts indexed are nearly all dated before 1500 but the 17th-century Percy Folio MS. and the 16th-century print of *Golagros and Gawane* have been included. The title of the book is somewhat deceptive, since the Arthurian names in the Chronicles were left out, but Lagamon (I am glad to report) was reckoned a romancer rather than a chronicler and the Arthurian names he records are duly indexed.

The author tells us that "the only proper names deliberately omitted from the Index are as follows: God, Jesus Christ, Heaven, names of feast days, of days of the week, of the months, and of nationalities like Danes, English, Irish, and Welsh. None of these could be regarded as of great significance to Arthurian studies" (p. xiv). Against each name listed are noted all its occurrences, with line or page citations, except for names that occur with great frequency, in which case "only the inclusive line or page numbers" are given. The standard editions of the works indexed were used, but the author has checked these against the MSS and early prints themselves in order to make sure of the accuracy of the spellings. Variant spellings of the proper names are systematically recorded. Both author and Press are to be congratulated on this index, which will prove a tool valuable to all Arthurians.

KEMP MALONE

*Origines des noms de familles en Belgique.* By ALBERT CARNOY. (Louvain: Editions "Universitas," 1953. Pp. 408.

After having written the *Origines des noms des communautés de Belgique ainsi que des principaux hameaux et rivières* (Louvain 1949), Carnoy was the logical and best qualified author to deal with the family names of Belgium. His present work is mainly an etymological dictionary of such names (note that the 1939 edition of his toponymic book was entitled *Dictionnaire étymologique des noms des communes de Belgique*), and Carnoy himself remarks modestly, indeed over-modestly, that it is no more than a beginning, an introduction to Belgian anthroponymy, "ne fût-ce que pour mettre un frein aux fantaisies des amateurs et satisfaire une saine curiosité du public."

But if used intelligently the book yields a good deal more, though perhaps only the onomatologists, and not the general public, can draw a number of conclusions that go beyond etymologizing names. Much illumination can be derived on the semantic areas from which family names are drawn, how and why they developed as inherited names out of personal names, and at approximately what period this took place. But it is to be hoped that this most interesting information will be collated and presented in an orderly form as a history of Belgian family names. With the material he has assembled in such large quantities, Carnoy should find the task easy and entertaining. The general reader, having his curiosity on the "meaning" of names satisfied, should turn with equal eagerness to their history, which will enlighten him on a vast array of extra-linguistic and extra-onomastic facts and conditions, valid not only for Belgium but also for human societies everywhere at a certain stage of development.

One reason that makes Belgium such an interesting onomastic area is that it is a bilingual region of Romance (French and Walloon) and Germanic (Flemish) dialects. And it becomes evident from Carnoy's adroit simultaneous treatment of both language families that in the matter of naming people, the language of and by itself is not of intrinsic importance, that, in other words, the motives, processes, and etyma involved in the giving and perpetuating of family names transcend mere linguistic boundaries and are rather determined by historical, sociological, and geographic conditions. Some outright translations from Romance to Ger-

manic, and vice versa, do of course occur; but in the vast majority, parallel developments and etyma of identical meanings account for the similarities and congruences of the onomastic lexicon; and since we are moreover dealing with a culture which, apart from its linguistic split, is based on Greco-Roman civilization and on Judaeo-Christian religious tradition, it will not be surprising that names of Greek, Latin, and Semitic origin occur equally in Romance and Germanic. Hence we find side by side *Deschamps* and *Vandervelde*, *Chasseur* and *Dejaegher*, *Piedfort* and *Goedfoet*, *Rossignol* and *Nachtergael*; French *Pierre*, *Pierrard*, *Pierrot*, *Pierlot*, *Pierroux*, *Périn*, *Pernelle*, *Péret*, etc., Walloon *Pire*, *Pirard*, *Pirson*, *Pirot*, *Pirsoul*, *Pirquet*, *Perquin*, *Pietquin*, *Petsin*, etc., occur together with Flemish *Peter*, *Pieter*, *Pie*, *Pien(s)*, *Peer*, *Pergens*, *Pitz*, *Pee*, etc., all of them derived from the latinized Greek *Petrus*, itself a translation of the Semitic *Cephas*, meaning "rock" ("... upon this rock will I build my church...").

Since the book is meant as a dictionary, and for a wider public, Carnoy rightly does not bother with elaborate references and a bibliography. (But I am surprised that the two works on German onomastics he cites, on p. 13, are the old Schönfeld, of 1911, and Förstemann, of 1913-1914. Better and more recent books would have been available here.)

The etymologies are presented in the text under 254 headings, each representing a semantic group or family, whose order and classification can be learned from the *Tables des matières* on pp. 407-408. More importantly, and this makes the book so useful and serviceable to anyone in search of a particular item, there are 110 pages of alphabetic index listing some 6000 names, on pp. 297-406, where each entry is followed by one or more numbers referring back to the appropriate among the 254 paragraphs in which the etymology and related names and forms can be found.

A great number of American family names of German, French, Walloon, Flemish, or Dutch origin are discussed in the book. One may learn that *De Pauw* comes from "peacock"; *Stassen* is derived from St. Eustachius, the patron saint of hunters; *Pierpont* means "stonebridge"; *Wan(n)emaker* is a "vanmaker" (*van* here an agricultural instrument); *Stuyvesant* names "one who makes the dust fly," hence a "horseman"; *Cabot* is a "fathead"; and *Gudde* is derived from Germanic *god-* "good" or *God-* "God."

*Studi di Antroponimia Fiorentina. Il Libro di Montaperti* (An. MCCLX). By OLOF BRATTÖ. (Göteborg, Elanders Boktryckeri Aktiebolag, 1953. Pp. 224.)

The basis for this doctoral dissertation written under the guidance of Prof. Karl Michaëlsson of the University of Göteborg is implied in its sub-title. It is the *Libro di Montaperti* compiled in 1260. From this document, which contains 6207 names extant at the time in Florence and its environs, Dr. Brattö chooses 203 onomastic groups, collectively 80 per cent of all the individuals mentioned in it or 5005 out of 6027. This means that they take in the bulk of the medieval population of the city, specifically the plebians as opposed to the aristocrats.

As might be expected in a territory kept under century-long Teutonic domination names of Germanic origin show up with the greatest frequency. They obviously stem from tradition rather than hero-worship, a cult which was to come into being somewhat later. In this latter category the only epic hero who was incontestably popular enough to give rise to namesakes was Roland (Orlandus). The case for Mainettus, recalling the youthful Charlemagne, and Fortebraccius, is not quite so strong. I should hesitate to accept any epic origin for Vivianus and Spinellus at this time on the ground that these secondary knights of romance were most likely to produce namesakes only during a period of considerable vogue for this type of appellative. Along with these one other name of possible epic derivation is cited, Galganus (= Gawain). Its uniqueness as a representative of the Arthurian cycle, as yet weakly diffused in the Tuscan area, tends to make this source rather dubious.

It is quite surprising to find that saints' names, including those derived from the Bible play such a minor role percentage-wise despite the fact that Jacobus and Johannes numerically rank first and second in the list. The author seems to be a bit overcautious in accepting Isaccus as a name borne by some Italian Jews, though there is nothing inherently illogical about it. Possible derivation for Saccus, Sachus, Sachettus (bracketed with Isaccus, p. 149) from Germanic Sacco (Förstemann, I, 1247) is not mentioned.

Names continuing the Roman tradition which superficially appear to be negligible are, in fact, abundant as witnessed by many of the augurial names which turn up during this century: Bonfilliolus, Guadagnus, Bonamicus and the like. At the same time they

reveal the tender love and affectionate concern of the medieval Florentines for their offspring. Other types of names are, of course, represented. A striking feature of the Montaperti list is the wealth of hypocoristic names (shortened forms and forms with suffixes), which amount to approximately one half of the total.

One wonders whether, in addition to linguistic data, recourse to socio-historical documents such as information on the influx of non-Tuscans and foreigners beyond the Italian borders, inter-marriages between townspeople and others, etc., might not have shed light on at least a few of the names on the list. But perhaps this type of material is not readily available.

As the author correctly remarks in his introduction, the majority of studies on Italian names to date have been of a diachronic character. His contribution is, in contrast, synchronic, and constitutes a really exhaustive and learnedly mature investigation of considerable value. Before any definitive scientific account of Italian names and surnames can be given to the world we stand in need of many similar studies in this extremely rich but as yet poorly exploited field.

JOSEPH G. FUCILLA

*Nicknames of American Cities, Towns, and Villages, Past and Present.* By GERARD L. ALEXANDER. (New York: Special Libraries Association, 1951).

This eighty-eight page lithographic booklet presents a collection of some fifteen hundred city, town, and village nicknames, gathered from printed sources and through correspondence.

In the fourteen page Introduction, an over-generous four containing acknowledgments, Mr. Alexander discusses various topics, among them the origin of the term nickname (from Old English *ekenname*, later *nekenname*, "additional name"). America's use of nicknames for places is almost without parallel, there being only a few in other parts of the world. Nicknames should be brief, graphic, and fitting. While they express many sentiments, a great number of them stem from presumptuous pride, local patriotism, and extravagant claims.

Forty-five pages are devoted to the listing of the names under states and sub-listed under cities. This is followed by twenty-nine pages of alphabetical listing of the names themselves.

Several of the larger cities sport a great number of nicknames, led by the national capital with forty-eight, followed by Chicago with twenty-seven, and Hollywood with twenty-four. As may readily be imagined, many of the names are hardly distinctive, outstanding, or well-known. As for Chicago, "Windy City," for Boston, "Hub of the Universe," and for Philadelphia, "City of Brotherly Love" are generally known, but hardly any of the others. There is also a great deal of duplication, the name "Queen City" being especially numerous.

While most names are flattering or picturesque, such as Dodge City's "The Buckle on the Kansas Wheat Belt," Jordan, Montana, calls itself modestly "The Lonesomest Town in the World." It certainly seemed that way fifty miles distant from the railroad when forty years ago I did missionary work in Montana.

The compiler himself disclaims completeness of entries. In fact, "the list might conceivably reach dimensions astonishing even to its compiler, despite his laborious and comprehensive toil." About the "toil" the reviewer has no doubt, since in writing *College Names: Their Origin and Significance* he had a similar task. Some states are only thinly represented, suggesting that many other names could be added. Just to cite a local example, Hickory, N.C., is known as "The Best Balanced City."

It might have been better if all cities had been contacted for possible inclusion and nicknames from more cities had been listed instead of so many inconsequential ones for single cities. Also in some cases the origin and significance of really meaningful and picturesque nicknames might have been given. Perhaps in the future the compiler will find occasion to expand the scope of his study.

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