

THE VERSE OF THE FUTURE.

BY C. CROZAT CONVERSE.

I BELIEVE that it will be euphonic,—not metric—and that it will gradually free itself from rhythmic metes and bounds, because its art should be free, untrammelled.

Rhyme surely is not verse's highest, best form; and rhyme's bonds have marred some of the grandest of verse-thoughts; or have been substituted for all thoughts, as witnesseth Sir T. Elyot, who says: "They that make verses expressynge therby none other lernynge but the crafte of versifieng be not of auncient writers named poetes, but only called versifiers."

Blank verse, with its ten-syllabled lines, is not free, as see Browning, in his exceptional eleven-syllabled lines; which exceptions sustain my present belief; as does Dryden, in his "Essay on Dramatic Poetry," when deriding a poetaster of his time as "creeping along with ten little words in every line."

The English poet, Cowper, chafed under its bonds, saying: "I do not intend to write any more blank verse. It is more difficult than rhyme; it requires so close an attention to the pause and the cadence, and such a peculiar mode of expression, as render it, to me at least, the hardest species of poetry that I have ever meddled with."

That there were attempts, in verse's early days, to free it, the works of the classic writers, Cadmus and Perecydes, prove; in which these poets gave up its metre, while retaining its other poetic features.

Cowper, too, hews to the line of verse-reform when saying: "Blank verse is susceptible of a much greater diversification of manner than verse in rhyme; and why the modern writers of it all thought proper to cast their numbers alike I know not."

Free all verse—blank and rhyming—from metrical uniformity, making euphony its dominating feature,—that feature which dis-

tinguishes it from prose,—and it will then be free indeed, and completely fit for every use of the imagination; and—as an art—as obedient to it as is the art of painting.

Mr. Converse has written for this magazine and other publications, in that form which he advocates, and which he illustrates in this:

SELF AND UNSELF.

I

The years are in their thousands,
 And the rule for loving is old;
 Yet self, to-day, is not unself,—
 And not love.

2

Paul philosophized charity,
 And Peter idealized giving;
 Yet who, of us, gives as they gave,—
 And in love?

3

The years are in their thousands,
 And the rule for loving is old;
 So when will self unself itself.
 And be love?