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**Billson's *Aeneid* *The Aeneid of Virgil* with a Translation.  
By Charles J. Billson, M.A., Corpus Christi College,  
Oxford. 10½" × 7½". Pp. v + 309, iii + 335. London:  
Edward Arnold. 1906. 30s. net.**

J. P. Postgate

The Classical Review / Volume 20 / Issue 07 / October 1906, pp 360 - 363

DOI: 10.1017/S0009840X00994939, Published online: 27 October 2009

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**How to cite this article:**

J. P. Postgate (1906). The Classical Review, 20, pp 360-363 doi:10.1017/S0009840X00994939

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is decidedly bold in accepting its reading.

Hosius is not so prone as some are to suspect the genuineness of lines. He is probably right in bracketing ix 83. In the same book v. 86 was bracketed by him in his first edition (as later by Francken); in ed. II he removes the brackets to the following line. It is true that v. 87 is absent from most of the MSS, but the similar endings (*cura, hora*) of 86 and 87 are sufficient to account for the omission,<sup>1</sup> and 87 (*pace* Francken) seems otherwise unexceptionable.

v 53 *Massiliaeque suae donatur libera Phocis*, ought perhaps to be bracketed. It is omitted not only by P but by the very ancient Vienna palimpsest. It comes at the end of a list of allied states on which rewards and distinctions were conferred by the senate, meeting in Epirus. The meaning is, 'and the freedom of Phocis is granted as a favour to her (colony) Massilia.' [The confusion of Phocis and Phocaea occurs also in iii 340.] The line may well have been inserted by some native of Massilia who wished to have some mention of his birth-place in the list of honoured states. We may compare the well-known 'Athenian interpolation' in the *Iliad*.

Considerations of time and space allow only a few more notes on a text which may justly be said to be not only founded on a rational view of the manuscript evidence, but constructed with skill and sound sense.

ii 425 *sq. radensque Salerni | Cultra Siler.*

*Cultra* B Hosius *Tecta* O *Tesqua* Heinsius.

<sup>1</sup> Omission of lines through this cause is not uncommon in the MSS of Lucan. Cf. ii 466, vi 562.

Hosius boldly flies in the teeth of all the MSS that count. I venture to support his seeming rashness by suggesting that the origin of the impossible *Tecta* is a gloss on a false reading *occulta* for *culta*.

v 191 (of the prophetess) *anhelo clara meatu | Murmura.*

*Clara murmura* seems a very unnatural combination. As it is read in N, the corruption, if there is one, must belong to the age of capitals. Many conjectures (*crebra, clausa, caeca*, etc.) have been made. Perhaps ANHELOLARGA would be more easily corrupted to ANHELOCLARA than any of the other emendations proposed. *Largus* occurs several times in Lucan, and is appropriate enough to the volumes of sound issuing from the cavern.

vii 462 One of the most desperate *cruces* in Lucan, as a reference to Hosius' or any other reputable *app. crit.* will show. Without going into details or attempting a solution of the problem it may be suggested that the variants *vultus* and *tempus* could be explained by supposing a gloss (*h*)*ora*. Or did the original text contain the word *ora* (e.g. . . . *spectant atque ora agnoscere quaerunt*)?

ix 805 *om. MP.* Perhaps the line should be bracketed. It reminds us of x 419 as given by MU, which, as Lejay says, 'paraît être la versification d'un titre.'

In reviewing a work of such excellence it may seem trivial to take exception to small points of orthography, but it is owing to that very excellence that such spellings as *littus* offend one's sense of the fitness of things.

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#### BILLSON'S *AENEID*.

*The Aeneid of Virgil* with a Translation.

By CHARLES J. BILLSON, M.A., Corpus Christi College, Oxford. 10½" x 7½". Pp. v + 309, iii + 335. London: Edward Arnold. 1906. 30s. net.

It is the age of the translation. In verse and in prose alike we have supply and demand. So Mr. Justice Ridley's *Pharsalia*, noticed in this *Review* 1897, pp. 270 sqq., has found its way into a second edition; and a bare decade of years sees the completion of three English *Aeneids* in verse and the inception

of another. The first and the fourth of these it will be most natural here to compare.

The first half of Mr. Rhoades' version was favourably judged by Mr. T. E. Page in the *Classical Review* of 1893, pp. 415 sqq.: it was completed in 1896: Mr. Billson's appeared in 1905. Both translators spare us the disquisition upon the canons of translation so apt only to set in a clearer light the incongruous aim or the inadequate performance. Three pages sufficed Mr. Rhoades for his prefatory apology. Mr. Billson is more parsimonious still. No word

of preface introduces his stately tomes, nor, save the dedication 'To my daughter Camilla,' two lists of errata, and two spare paper labels providently furnished to repair the ravages of dust or use, is there anything between the covers of the volumes but Virgil and his translator. Fidelity to the original seems to have been the steadfast aim of both the versions. Mr. Rhoades professes it: 'the prime virtue of a translator, namely absolute fidelity to the original—eschewing paraphrase where possible and resisting all temptation to be brilliant on his own account.'

Divers conceptions of this duty of a translator, varying estimates of the higher and the lower fidelity divide our renderers of foreign poetry into three opposing camps. Their differences are accentuated by the fact that they would combine two distinct and not easily united principles. A version may be regarded as a reproduction of an otherwise inaccessible original or as an aid to its better understanding and interpretation. From the first point of view it will be unfaithful in essentials if it strip the metre with all that metre involves and implies from a metrical original. Surrender this, and all that can be claimed for a translation is that it is an aid to understanding, a brief commentary, in fact, a 'crib.' The pretence that such versions can in any way take the place of their originals might be dismissed as an absurdity, but for an

error into which it has unconsciously inveigled more than one living scholar of note. Possessed with the idea that poetry is 'poetry' and prose is 'prose,' and that poetical or rhythmical prose has no place in literature, such translators refuse to avail themselves of the resources of poetical diction and semi-poetical rhythm and vend their versions of poetry as prose, not for literature which they may be, but for translations which they are not. As though an artist when asked to portray an eagle should reply 'I have no skill to limn the flying fowl; but here is the nearest match in quadrupeds.'

From translation proper fidelity demands metre but it does not demand rhyme; and this, Mr. Billson, like most recent translators of Virgil, prudently eschews. A minor fidelity is the lineal uniformity advocated by Lord Bowen in the preface to his 'Virgil in English Verse,' but deprecated by Mr. Rhoades. This Mr. Billson has made a feature of his rendering, wherein with notable courage and candour he prints Virgil's text and his translation side by side, line for line, and even half-line for half-line. The effect of this discrepancy of treatment and the general character of the two versions may be best illustrated by quotation. Here is the beginning of the second Aeneid.

Conticuere omnes intentique ora tenebant.  
inde toro pater Aeneas sic orsus ab alto.  
Infandum, regina, iubes renouare dolorem  
Troianas ut opes et lamentabile regnum  
eruerint Danaï quaeque ipse miserrima uidi  
et quorum pars magna fui. quis talia fando  
Myrmidonum Dolopumue aut duri miles Vlxi  
temperet a lacrimis? et iam nox umida caelo  
praecipitat suadentque cadentia sidera somnos.  
sed si tantus amor casus cognoscere nostros  
et breuiter Troiae supremum audire laborem,  
quamquam animus meminisse horret luctuque  
refugit,  
incipiam.—VIRGIL.

Hushed was each voice and every face intent  
When from his lofty couch the Prince began:  
'Unutterable, O Queen, the pain thy words  
Bid me revive; how Troy's unhappy realm  
Fell to the Greek; what piteous scenes I saw  
And was great part of. Who, in such a tale,  
From hard Ulysses' ranks, what Myrmidon  
Would keep from tears? And dewy Night e'en  
now  
Is riding down the sky, the sinking stars  
Persuade to sleep. Yet, if so strong thy wish  
To learn in brief our woes and Troy's last hour,  
Although my memory shudders and recoils,  
I will assay.'—BILLSON.

All lips were hushed, all eyes attentive fixed:  
Then Sire Aeneas from his lofty couch  
Addressed him thus to speak:

'Unutterable,  
O queen, the grief thou bidst me to revive,  
How Troy's magnificence and royal power,  
Woe worth the day! the Danaï overthrew,  
Thrice piteous scenes which I myself beheld  
And was a mighty part of. Such a tale  
Who or of Myrmidons or Dolopes  
Or stern Ulysses' soldiery could tell,  
And hold from weeping? Now too dewy night  
Adown the sky falls headlong, and the stars  
Sinking invite to sleep. But if to learn  
Our woes such longing take thee, and to hear  
Brief-told Troy's dying anguish, though my mind  
At the remembrance shudders, from the grief  
Recoils, I will attempt it.'—RHOADES.

Mr. Billson's theory of line for line translating has at first sight much to recommend it. It preserves proportion and it checks diffuseness, perhaps the most dangerous weakness to which the translator is exposed. But before applying it we must be sure that the metrical units have what we may call the same cubical capacity. English expression is amongst the most concise that the world has seen and those who doubt its superiority in this respect to Latin may amuse themselves by endeavouring to render Scott's

For talents mourn untimely lost  
When best employed and wanted most

into an elegiac couplet or, failing that, into the equivalent number of syllables. So long then as transmutation is possible, the English ten-syllabled heroic can give a wary translator of the Latin hexameter as much or nearly as much room as he desires. But if the form of the Latin (as with proper names) has to be taken over, the case stands otherwise. Here compression is impossible and if the lineal correspondence is preserved, something has to go.

Thus in the passage quoted Mr. Billson's translation of *quaque ipse miserrima uidi | et quorum pars magna fui* is superior to Mr. Rhoades': for the *ipse* which Latin usage requires is no necessity in English. But in English *Danai* and *Dolopes* will take nearer a third than a sixth of a line and so in Mr. Billson's translation the first becomes 'the Greek' and the second disappears. Probably also Mr. Billson would have preferred 'sire Aeneas' to 'the Prince' as an equivalent of *pater Aeneas*, if he could have found the room. How much is lost in such cases varies with the context; but that there is net loss cannot be gainsaid.

I pass to another class of cases. Everyone will feel that Mr. Billson's rendering of lines 4-5 is inadequate. The metrical effect of the close of v. 4 with its infinite suggestion of overpowering calamity is as much beyond reproduction as the great wizard's soporific cadences five lines below. But the spirit of *lamentabile regnum* can be caught and Mr. Rhoades has caught it. 'Unhappy realm' shows no trace of it.

The lines that follow lend themselves more easily to Mr. Billson's method. His version runs.

War-shattered, foiled by Fate,  
As the long years roll on, the Danaan chiefs,  
By Pallas' sacred art, build mountain-high,  
Ribb'd with sawn fir, a Horse; a votive gift  
For safe return, they feign; so rumour spreads.  
Men chosen by lot in its blind flanks are hid

In secret, and with armed soldiery  
The monstrous cavern of its belly filled.

I will now take a passage of a different kind from the famous description in the 6th Aeneid 268 sqq. *ibant obscuri sola sub nocte per umbram*.

Darkling they fared, in desolate dim night,  
Through ghostly homes and shadowy realms of Dis;

Like men in forests, when the inconstant moon  
Throws peevish rays, and God has darkened heaven,

And sombre Night despoiled the hues of Earth.

Before the Porchway, in Hell's very throat,  
Lay Grief, and pale Diseases, and Remorse,  
And sad old Age, and Want, that counsels ill,  
Fear and gaunt Famine—dreadful shapes to see!—  
And Death, and Pain, and Death's twin-brother Sleep,

And sinful Lusts of Soul. And full in face  
Right in the gateway lay the slaughterer, War,  
The Furies' iron cells, and Discord wild  
With blood-stained fillets round her snaky hair.

And in their midst an immemorial elm  
Spreads shadowing arms, where idle Dreams are lodged,

That cling beneath each leaf. And many forms  
Of monstrous Beasts are there: within the gate  
There stable Centaurs, Scyllas double-shaped,  
Briareus, the hundred-fold, and Lerna's Worm,  
Dire-hissing, and Chimaera, armed with flame,  
Gorgons, and Harpies, and the tri-form Ghost.

As a translator's work is most fairly judged by specimens, I will give two more of Mr. Billson's. *Aen.* v. 632-640 Iris in guise of Beroe urges the Trojan matrons to burn the ships:

O Fatherland! O Housegods saved in vain!  
Shall not a Troy be told of? Shall I see  
Simois no more and Xanthus, Hector's streams?  
Nay, up! and burn with me the accursed ships!  
For while I slept, Cassandra's boding shape  
Gave me these brands. 'Here seek your Troy,'  
said she,  
'Here is your Home.' The hour is come: delay  
Such portents brook not. Lo, yon altars four  
To Neptune! God himself lends heart and fire.

*Aen.* x. 259-276 the return of Aeneas with his fleet:

No more he spoke: and when the darkness fled,  
And light returning orb'd to perfect day,  
He taught obedience, bidding all prepare  
For battle, and dispose their hearts for war.  
Then, standing on the stern, now full in ken  
Theleagu'd Trojans scanned. His flaming Shield  
He lifted high. The Dardans, with new hope  
Fanning their wrath, fling missiles, and to heaven  
Upraise their cries; as when Strymonian cranes  
Fly, shrilling signals, from the roaring South,  
And trail harsh music through the storm-black sky.

But on Ausonia's captains and the Prince  
Fell wonder; till they turned and saw the ships  
Steered shoreward, and the whole sea sailing in.  
The helmet blazed, and from its crest a flame  
Streamed, and the golden targe was spouting fire;

As blood-red comets on the lucent night  
 Cast baleful gleams, or as the Syrian<sup>1</sup> Star  
 Springs, when his angry glare brings thirst and  
 pain  
 For woeful men, and saddens all the sky.

These extracts will probably convey to the reader a truer and more real notion of Mr. Billson's work than any words of mine. But I will add the sum of my own impressions. It is a version of more than average merit, highest in the most elevated passages but not sufficiently sustained throughout. Its author is seen to have a competency of knowledge, insight and poetical feeling. The

metrical handling has strength but hardly enough variety. The verbal execution is somewhat unequal: a searching revision of details would much enhance its effectiveness. For example in *Aen.* ii. the somewhat prosaic translations of *tantus amor* l. 10 and of l. 11 might easily be improved.

It should be added that the print and get up of the book are fine and even sumptuous. The price however I fear will limit the number of purchasers. If a new edition is demanded, Mr. Billson will be well advised to print in a cheaper form and to leave out the Latin original.

<sup>1</sup> A lapsus calami for *Sirian*.

J. P. POSTGATE.

#### JAMES' CATALOGUES OF MSS. IN CHRIST'S AND QUEENS' COLLEGES.

- (1) *A Descriptive Catalogue of the Western Manuscripts in the Library of Christ's College Cambridge.* By MONTAGUE RHODES JAMES, Litt.D., F.B.A., Provost of King's College, Cambridge: Director of the Fitzwilliam Museum. Cambridge: University Press. 1905. 8vo. Pp. vi. + 36. 5s.
- (2) *A Descriptive Catalogue of the Western Manuscripts in the Library of Queens' College, Cambridge.* By MONTAGUE RHODES JAMES, Litt.D., F.B.A., Provost of King's College Cambridge: Director of the Fitzwilliam Museum. Cambridge: University Press. 1905. 8vo. Pp. vi. + 29. 3s. 6d. net.

OF the two libraries which the Provost of King's here adds to his admirable collection neither contains any manuscript of direct importance for the study of classical texts. Queens' has a sixteenth century copy of Ptolemy's *Almagest* and a fifteenth-sixteenth century text of certain Greek rhetorical *réçvay*, copied from a MS. extant at Paris; Christ's an eleventh century Greek evangelistarium and a twelfth century Acts and Epistles, which have both been collated by Scrivener. Nevertheless the reader of this *Review* will have been insufficiently humanised by the classics if he finds nothing in either library to interest him. Christ's is however decidedly the more important and the very large proportion of space which Dr. James devotes to two out of its twelve MSS. is fairly justified. One of these is liturgical, a book of Hours written probably for one of the children of Robert de Vere, Earl of Oxford, and Alice de Sanford his wife (d. 1371) and interesting

for the historical matter in the calendar as well as for the prayers themselves and the ornament. The other has more claim to notice here in connexion with the subject, still curiously obscure to us, of the history of scholarship in the middle ages. It is only a commentary on the psalter, but it differs *toto caelo et animo* from the generality of its kind in that the author busies himself mainly with the *sensus literalis* of the text, and strives to elucidate it mainly by the aid of two Hebrew MSS. equipped (according to the form of such works of that time as still survive) with an interlinear Latin gloss or 'superscriptio.' There can be no reasonable doubt that Dr. James is right in identifying their author, the Franciscan Henry of Costessey (or Cossey, near Norwich) with the teacher who died in 1336, and not with the Master of Gonville Hall of the same name who died in 1483, although the MS. is of the middle of the fifteenth century or later. Hence we must regard him as a product of that fitful interest in scholarship which was possibly inspired by Roger Bacon, and at any rate showed itself in the well-known decree of the council of Vienne in 1312 for establishing Greek, Hebrew, and other teaching at the four principal universities. He specifies the two Hebrew books which he uses by their owners, viz. *domini Lincoln.* (perhaps a contemporary bishop or earl, not Robert Grosteste) and *magistri Johannis dudum conversi.* Readers of M. Berger's tract on Hebrew in the Middle Ages will readily identify the latter as *Johannes Salvati de Nova Villa Regis, clericus Belvacensis*