Homer's Odyssey: A Line-for-Line Translation in the Metre of the Original by H. B. Cotterill
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and biographical of two pieces which on grounds very just, so far as they go, are neglected—the so-called ‘heroic’ play *Tyrannic Love*, upon the martyrdom of St Catharine of Alexandria, and *The State of Innocence*, Dryden’s adaptation of *Paradise Lost* to the stage. *Tyrannic Love*, notwithstanding its gross offences, is not altogether such wild phantasy—I cannot consent to a milder term—as *The Conquest of Granada*. To class Maximin as a character with Almansor, though Dryden does it when it suits him, is not quite fair. But this must be for another time. It would be absurd to suggest that the present editor should or could include either piece in his selection.

Nor will proportion let me say here all that is suggested by Professor Noyes’ remarks upon Dryden and the unities. They are true and clear, but in my opinion they do not lay stress enough—nor does any account of the matter that I know—upon the root of the amazing absurdities and falsehoods with which in the end the Renaissance critics try to harmonize their theories on the subject. Dryden is no better than another and forces a candid reader to ask in many places how a reasonable man came by such monstrosities. In one word it was mainly I think because they took ‘imitation,’ as used by Aristotle, to signify the production of an *illusory* resemblance between the scene and the supposed reality, and then struggled vainly to find a reconciliation between the practical deductions which would have followed from such a theory and those that might be drawn more or less justly from the real position of the Greek critic.

However, this and many another topic of interest, which the editor of this book suggests, we must let pass. It remains only once more to commend it for what it contains and achieves to the student and the reader.

A. W. VERRALL.

CAMBRIDGE.

Homer’s Odyssey: a Line-for-line Translation in the Metre of the Original.

By H. B. COTTERILL. With twenty-four Illustrations by Patten Wilson. London: Harrap & Co. 1911. 4to. xxiii + 335 pp.

This new translation of the *Odyssey* comes out with every advantage of stately form and artistic dress. Other translators have been content to give us their versions piecemeal; Mr Cotterill has preferred to wait till he could issue his complete. It has been a labour of love, and of years. The idea came to him long ago during explorations in Central Africa, making him wish to reproduce in English verse the ‘simplicity, directness, and rapidity’ of the original. He is to be congratulated on having been able to carry out his design in its entirety. As a translation his work has great merit, the difficulty of providing an equivalent for each separate line being got over with remarkable ability. ‘Metre of the original’ must be taken with a qualification, since accent is avowedly substituted for quantity as the primary basis of the verse, though much attention is at the same time given to quantitative values.

M. L. R. VII.

17

There is no attempt at a 'homometric' rendering, as in the case of Cayley's *Iliad*.

A preface of some twenty pages deals mainly with metre. All forms of verse involving rhyme are pronounced unsuitable for his purpose, and a brief examination of others brings him to the 'hexameter,' which is discussed from what may be called an Arnoldian point of view. Little is said about the history of the metre in English, though Sidney and Stanihurst are quoted to show the futility of quantitative verse; recent attempts by one of our chief living poets are not mentioned at all, unless included in the 'few rather grotesque and unreadable experiments' with which the name of Spedding is specially associated (p. xiii). Mr Cotterill says he does not know against what 'barbarous experiments' Tennyson's lines were directed. If he will refer to the *Cornhill Magazine* for December, 1863, where these lines first appeared, he will find a note showing clearly that the reference was to translations of the *Iliad* by Herschel and others. I confess to having but lately discovered this myself. In the absence of any explanation (for this note was not reprinted¹) I assumed—as grammar surely entitled one to assume—that 'these lame hexameters' meant such ones as the poet was writing, and my only doubt was to what German verse allusion was made. The note leaves all clear. Tennyson's satire was aimed at the lumbering accentual hexameters popularized by Voss, Goethe, and Schiller, and copied by Whewell, Herschel, and others; and he cast his protest into a form different from theirs, which he never used again, and ultimately pronounced 'only fit for comic verse.'

Mr Cotterill refers to some renderings from Homer which appeared in *Blackwood's Magazine* for 1846, but does not seem aware that the signature 'N. N. T.' denoted the last letters of their writer's names (John Gibson Lockhart), just as 'M. L.' denoted those of William Whewell, also mentioned. His averment that Lockhart's lines influenced Longfellow's choice of a metre for *Evangeline* needs confirmation, since Longfellow had used this metre several years before in *The Children of the Lord's Supper*, translated from Tegnér, and was certainly familiar with German models.

The preface repudiates the notion of there being anything un-English or unintelligible in the chosen rhythm, and cites once more as a perfect accentual hexameter the oft-quoted

How art thou fallen from Heav'n, O Lucifer, Son of the Morning!

And indeed such cadences are perfectly common in our prose and verse; a Luciferian advocate might urge that they are too common, citing in proof such other lines as

Dearest Louise, how delightful to bring young people together!

The argument is inconclusive either way, and shows merely that the cadences are there to be used, if they can be used to advantage. 'Iambic' accentual cadence is still more common in our speech, still

¹ It may now be read in the annotations to the 'Eversley' edition of the poet's works.

more fit for base as well as noble uses, but a long succession of poets has explored its capabilities, moulded it into various verse-forms, and developed these on truly English lines. The rhythmical movement which is utilised by 'hexameter' verse, on the other hand, was more sparingly handled by our earlier poets, and the particular form of it now in question has seldom been written except in imitation of a supposed ancient prototype. Its natural tendencies, its native excellences and defects, have never had free play. It has rarely if ever been written as a natural English metre, obeying only the laws of English prosody.

Mr Cotterill rightly condemns the accentualists' too frequent disregard of syllabic quantity. His ideal is summed up in the following rules (p. xv). '(1) The accents (stresses) should fall naturally and strongly on the syllables that occupy the places that the "longs" occupy in the old metre. Such a syllable should itself be, as far as possible, long, heavy, emphatic, or weighted with *meaning* when somewhat short in pronunciation. (2) The syllables occupying the places of the "shorts" should be, as far as possible, short, light, unemphatic. (3) The true spondee should be used, especially for the second and fourth feet. The trochee should be eschewed.' As a first sketch of metre, these canons are excellent, except that the third ignores the extent to which, in English verse, silent intervals may count in scansion, as does the caesural pause in that other noble line:

God is gone up with a shout, the Lord with the sound of a trumpet.

Good English verse does not depend merely on counting and weighing syllables. These rules, however, guard against many pitfalls, particularly against the fictitious stresses to which less careful writers are prone. Weak initial syllables are notably rare in this volume. The normal run of the verse is trisyllabic, varied by occasional spondees which are usually compound words such as 'broad-brow'd,' 'swift-wing'd,' 'knee-joint.' A short extract will serve as sample, taken from the beginning of Book XIII, as it is by the second twelve Books that the author wishes his metre to be judged.

Thus did he end; and they sat all utterly silent and speechless,
Holden as 'twere by a spell in the shadowy hall of the palace.
Then King Alcinous outspake and in answer addressed him:
'Since now under the roof of my bronze-floored palace, Odysseus,
Safe thou art come, thou'lt never, methinks, go wandering further,
Ere to thy home thou return'st, however to hardship accustomed.
Now to you all and to each I announce this further injunction,
Each who is wont to partake of the glowing wine of the elders
Here in my banqueting-hall, and to list to the song of the minstrel:
Lo, in a polished coffer the raiment received by the stranger
Lieth, and fair things fashioned of gold, and the rest of the presents,
Which Phaeacian lords of the council collected together.
Come, let us also present him a full-sized tripod and cauldron,
Each of us; then can we later, by making collection in public,
Win us repayment; 'tis hard when the one does favours for nothing.'

This is a specimen of ordinary narrative. The verse is rather less trisyllabic than usual. The first line is hard to scan, since neither 'end

and they' nor 'they sat all' makes a good dactyl, nor would 'sat all' be a satisfactory spondee. In the eighth line, 'glowing' is an accentual trochee. The twelfth line begins with a weak syllable for once, 'which' not being interrogative. The name Alcinoüs is to be pronounced *A'lcino-üs*. This license is frequently used in names like Telemachus, Eurymedon, Hermione, etc., and will puzzle English readers, while others will instinctively expect rules of quantity to be followed, and will be put out by 'Alcinoüs outspake,' 'Telemachüs addressing.' If Arete or Tydides be a molossus, they will wonder to find Aëgisthus, and not to find Philoctetes. Apart from proper names, too, the reliance on syllable-quantity in some cases and disregard of it in others is somewhat confusing, so that after getting accustomed to real spondees one begins to ask whether 'shadowy' is a proper dactyl or 'palace' a proper trochee, and whether 'arrogant suitors,' 'savages wanton,' 'roseate-fingered' are euphonious dipodies. The contrast jars. Quantity is not so much 'counterpointed' to accent as brought into sharp collision with it. Verse that is based sometimes on quantity alone, sometimes on accent alone, will be apt to fall between the two stools. This from the merely metrical standpoint; but other aspects need consideration.

Rapid, simple, and direct—Matthew Arnold claims these qualities for Homer's verse, but adds a fourth; it is also noble. 'Never for a moment,' he says to the wouldbe translator, 'suffer yourself to forget our fourth fundamental proposition, *Homer is noble*.' Mr Cotterill seems to think that this is put too absolutely, and would have us recognise many different levels of Homeric diction (p. xvii, footnote). When the killing of a pig is described, or even the getting ready a boat for sailing, it would certainly be absurd to expect elevated language; yet, as he truly says, the description never 'sinks into banality.' And one thing may fairly be claimed from every translator of the *Odyssey*, that he shall make us feel we are reading a great poem. No translation is really faithful which does not give that impression; much inadequacy otherwise will be pardoned in one that does. Pope, with all his faults, gives it in his bravura passages; Maginn, *pace* Arnold, gives it in the best of his ballad versions; Worsley gives it in the lingering lusciousness of Spenserian stanza. How far does this new translation meet the test? Not, I think, in the passages of highest elevation, in the lines that describe the home of the gods or the Elysian land that is to receive Menelaus, in the interview between Odysseus and his mother, in the great scene where Odysseus reveals himself to the suitors. It is best in more pedestrian passages, in lines like

Set was already the sun, and darkened was every roadway,
or in the ship *cliché*:

Raising the pine-wood mast to its height, in the notch of the cross-bar
Firmly they fixed it, and bracing it taut to the prow with the forestays
Hoisted the fair white sails with the ropes tight-twisted of oxhide.

Such lines carry us pleasantly along, and the immortal story unfolds itself in them without intrusion of an alien personality. They should be

read in bulk, rather than in detached portions. A noteworthy letter by the late Alexander Macmillan, quoted near the end of the preface, shows how easily a non-classical ear accepts such verse, and would welcome 'a powerful and effective metre analogous to the hexameter and suited to the genius of the English language.' This latter we shall probably not get till some poet of the first rank takes it in hand. Longfellow, Clough, and Kingsley—not to mention lesser lights—were hardly strong enough for the task. Perhaps in Swinburne's 'Evening on the Broads' some hints and premonitions for such a freer treatment may be found. As yet, it must be confessed, we have hardly got beyond mere versifying; the bones are not clothed with flesh and blood. Even so, however, English readers take kindly enough to verse of this kind, and Mr Cotterill's translation should be acceptable to many. While hardly capable of being used as a *crib*, it keeps wonderfully close to the original, and adds no factitious graces. Whether it adequately reproduces the 'surge and thunder of the *Odyssey*' may be more open to question.

Scholarly exactness of rendering is noticeable throughout. But in III, 450, does not *ὀλόλυξαν* mean a solemn sacrificial cry rather than merely 'wailing'? In v, 281, regret may be felt that the 'shield' meaning of *ῥιόν* is discarded. In *ibid.*, 428, Odysseus is made 'suddenly forward to dart'—this when he was being carried along on a wave—but is rightly shown as clutching 'a boulder,' not 'the rock.' Surely the sense is that he hastily (*ἐπεσσύμενος*) grasped some outlying projection, and so escaped being dashed against the cliff; then, when torn from his hold by the receding wave, he must have dived through or under the next breaker, so as to rise (*ἐξαναδύς*) on its further side and swim along to the river-mouth. VIII, 124, is literally translated, but hardly seems to make sense, since 'the length of a furrow that mules might draw in a fallow' is not a definite measure of any kind; may not the reference be to mules as compared with oxen? In XII, 89, Scylla's twelve feet are merely 'waving suspended'; surely *ἄωροι* means more than this, though its exact signification may be doubtful. The plan of the Homeric palace (p. xxi) makes an ingenious contribution to a difficult problem by placing both the two 'thresholds' and the 'postern' at the lower end of the great hall, with a covered way on each side leading to the armoury and sleeping chambers. On this showing, Odysseus would shoot from the lower end, guarding the exit, as certainly seems probable. On the other hand, it is difficult to see why (XXIII, 88) Penelope should have gone round by the covered way instead of descending into the hall by the stairs at the upper end.

The figures in the illustrations seem hardly so successful as the landscapes, and are not always in keeping with the text. Why is the 'good old swineherd' made so youthful-looking on his first appearance? Why are the Sirens perched high on a rock, and did Homer conceive of them as winged? The Cyclops is a veritable 'man-mountain,' whom no cave could well have contained. 'The arrival at Ithaca' is finely designed, but the cliffs seem almost too imposing for reality.

The publishers deserve great credit for the way in which this sumptuous edition has been got up, and it will be strange if a cheaper popular one is not soon called for by students and general readers.

T. S. OMOND.

TUNBRIDGE WELLS.

Frederick James Furnivall: A Volume of Personal Record. London: Frowde. 1911. 8vo. lxxxiv + 215 pp.

This volume is a tribute of the best kind to the memory of one who not only did work which is known to all the world in one particular department of literary scholarship, but also threw himself with characteristic energy into every kind of human interest which lay in his path, and made friends in the most diverse quarters by his ever active sympathy and his impulsive readiness to help where help was needed. The book consists of a biography by Mr John Munro, and a series of 'Memories of F. J. Furnivall' written by a number of those who knew him or were associated with him in his varied activities. Mr Munro's biography is simply and truthfully written, as its subject would have desired. He presents the picture in its entirety, and does not omit or slur over the faults which led sometimes to regrettable episodes of violence in controversy, or to ill-considered and hasty action—faults which sprang from the same impulsiveness and the same eager irrepresible spirit which lay at the root of his success.

The storms for which Furnivall was responsible in the early days of the Working Men's College illustrate, as his biographer says, 'a fact which was characteristic of Furnivall to the end, that he never succeeded in accommodating himself to the regulations and restrictions which every institution, necessarily dependent for its success upon compromise, imposes upon its members. He always succeeded best as an adventurer, proceeding by his own initiative, and unimpeded by the discretion and the reticence of more reflecting and calculating minds.' And again: 'He never understood, or attempted to understand, the quality of tact. It was a species of dishonesty. What he held to be true was to be enounced in the face of all opposition, with unflinching directness and clarity; what he held to be false was to be denounced with Athanasian intensity and resolution.' The two sides of him are summed up at the end of Dr Henry Bradley's appreciation:

Furnivall had faults, as we all have, and he concealed them less than most. Where he thought he saw empty pretence of knowledge, hypocrisy, or self-seeking under the mask of zeal for scholarship, he could be a bitter enemy; and his harsh judgements were not always just..... Many who knew little of him saw in him only a man of extravagant animosities and unbridled violence of expression. To me and to many others his name stands for an ardour of unselfish kindness and a laborious helpfulness to which we have known no parallel.

This book very happily exhibits the many-sided activity of its subject by the number and variety of the contributors to it, and by the different