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The Classical Review / Volume 10 / Issue 07 / October 1896, pp 330 - 330

DOI: 10.1017/S0009840X00204563, Published online: 27 October 2009

Link to this article: http://journals.cambridge.org/abstract_S0009840X00204563

How to cite this article:

W. Ray (1896). Note on Vergil, *Georgic* II. 501–502. The Classical Review, 10, pp 330-330
doi:10.1017/S0009840X00204563

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NOTE ON VERGIL, *GEORGIC* II. 501—502.

'Non ferrea jura,
Insanumque forum aut populi tabularia
vidit.'

It is obvious that a literal translation such as 'public archives' produces a sad anti-climax, and spoils a noble passage. *Happy and innocent the peasant's life: he has never known the miseries of a great city; never seen the iron rigour of the law, the mad turmoil of the forum, or the public archives.* It sounds like saying, 'Happy the rural swain who has never known London; never seen the iron rigour of its law-courts, the mad uproar of its Stock Exchange, or—the Rolls Office.' This is surely a case where translation must give place to paraphrase; where for the word itself, so pointless in English, we must substitute the cruelties denoted by the word. Indeed, the fact that Vergil places *tabularia* last among the three evils of city-life is not more significant of the hateful sense it bore to him, than the

omission of any adjective such as he felt to be needful to lend ferocity to the two previous evils.

Yet Conington's Prose Translation has 'public archives': and Mr. Mackail is content with 'the archives of the people.' Moreover, neither the edition of Conington, nor that of Mr. Sidgwick, offers any answer whatever to the natural, the inevitable question, 'Why the Rolls Office?' And I find the same curious silence in three or four other editions. Yet Forbiger had long ago given the necessary explanation in his note *ad locum*: 'hoc est, nullum vectigal, nec portorium, nec pascua, a populo publicanus conduxit, quarum redemptionum tabulae, publica instrumenta, in tabulario servabantur.'

A translation might therefore run: 'who has never seen the iron rigour of the law, the mad turmoil of the Forum, or the grinding injustice of the tax-farmers.'

W. RAY.

LEO'S *PLAUTUS*.

[*Plauti Comoediae*, recensuit et emendavit FRIDERICUS LEO; volumen prius (*Amph.—Merc.*) 1895. Pp. viii., 478. 18 M.; vol. alterum (*Mil.—Truc. Vid. Fragm.*) 1896. Pp. 575. 20 M. Berlin: Weidmann.]

PROF. LEO'S *Plautinische Forschungen* appeared last year along with the first volume of the critical edition of the text and was noticed in vol. x. p. 206 of this Journal. The second volume of text, which has just come from the press, completes the handsome contribution of the Göttingen Professor to the study of Plautus. Plautus students may now congratulate themselves on the possession of three excellent editions, each with characteristics of its own; first, the large edition by Ritschl's pupils, Loewe (now dead), Goetz, and Schoell, the last volume of which appeared in 1894; then the small Teubner text by Goetz and Schoell (Leipzig, 1893-6); and now the edition of Prof. Leo. I hope that so generous provision may attract to this field of study many scholars who have hitherto been deterred by the difficulty of

the subject. It is the field which of all others is most in need of workers and where the richest harvests are to be reaped.

The chief characteristic of the new text will, I think, be acknowledged to be its close adherence to the MSS. Leo spares his readers the necessity of constant reference to the critical apparatus in order to guard themselves against accepting as Plautine what is merely 'editors' Plautus.' Since Ritschl's time the conviction has been growing stronger and stronger that it is in adherence to the MSS. that safety lies, and that in particular no reading which is supported both by the Ambrosian Palimpsest and by the other MSS. should be lightly set aside. Goetz and Schoell on the completion of their larger edition, the earlier volumes of which suffered from the want of that full knowledge of the readings of the Palimpsest which was supplied by Studemund's *Apograph* (1889), have met the demand for a less vigorously edited text. Their small Teubner edition is little more than a reproduction of the text of the MSS. with no emendations save such as are or seem indubitably correct