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DE VRIES' STUDIES IN PALAEOGRAPHY.

Exercitationes Palaeographicas in bibliotheca
Universitatis Lugduno-Batavae iterum inditæ S. G. De Vries. Leyden: Brill. 1890.

This short disquisition of thirty-one octavo pages gives an account of a MS. fragment of Pliny's Letters found by De Vries (the well-known editor of Ovid's Epistulae Sapphici) in the University Library at Leyden. The codex containing it is numbered Voss. Lat. Q. 98, and was written by two different scribes in the ninth century. The interval between these two parts (the former containing S. Augustin de baptismi parwtdorum and de patientia with the six books de Sacramentis ascribed to S. Ambrose, the latter S. Augustin de perfectione viatiae hominis, de natura et gratia, de libero arbitrio with most of his de correctione et gratia), a space occupying fol. 73' to fol. 74', has been filled with a variety of excerpts; our Plinian fragment is on 74'. The fragment extends from the beginning of Epp. i. 1 to niesi tamen auribus nostris in 2, a too insignificant excerpt in point of length to be of much value for the criticism of the Letters, but marked by this singular and unique peculiarity, that much of the writing is in notae Tironianæ.

M. De Vries has appended a photograph in which the strange mixture of early minuscule with the notae is exactly reproduced. To the decipherment of the notae he devoted many hours of his vacation, and in most cases he has satisfied himself as to the meaning of each one of them: in cases where he was in doubt he has taken the opinion of that most skilful of tachygraphical experts, M. Wilhelm Schmitz, on whose labours in this obscure region of palaeography—combined with the great, but in England much neglected, work of Kopp—he has throughout founded his interpretation.

This is the one only specimen as yet discovered of any part of a Roman classicæ written in Tironian symbols. De Vries mentions the other excerpts where they are also employed pp. 19, 20: a fragment of Boethius de consol. philosophiaæ, of Isidorus' Origines, an epigram edited by Hagen from a MS. at Bern, and several extracts from ecclesiastical or medieval writers. From a letter of Cardinal Bombo written Jan. 18, 1513, to Julius II. (Bemb. Epist. Fam. v. 8) it appears that there then existed a MS. of Hyginus 'On the Stars,' written in these characters. Bembo's words are: 'Liber superiorius diebus e Dacia ad te missus est, notis perscriptus cum uetustissimis, tum aetate nostra insitatis atque incognitis, quaque legi posse nullo plane modo uidebantur.....Erat autem quidem liber Higini commentarius de sideribus quaedam portio.'

For this codex Schmitz made a careful search in the Vatican, but in vain. M. De Vries comes to the conclusion that it is doubtful whether such a codex ever existed! Non talem Bembinum novimus. This is much of a piece with the German disparagement of Cardinal Mai. The MS., I do not doubt, existed; but as Bembo does not describe the notae uetustissimæ, we cannot be sure that they were Tironian. Supposing, however, that they were, the Vatican library is a large place, with infinite recesses and possibilities of stowage: may it not be in a corner still?

ROBINSON ELLIS.

PECK'S Suetonius.


We have here an edition of a most interesting author with a commentary adapted in the main to the needs of the American college student; and the volume is the more to be welcomed because it has no predecessor and brings a new author into the circle of those read in our colleges.

Prof. Peck follows Roth's (Teubner) edition closely as to text, differing from it only in some nine instances, all but one of which are noted in the commentary; though it can scarcely be said that all are defended. In Jul. § 2 regi has been omitted after prostratas without comment, and in Jul. § 20 sub fin. the corrupt inductum quendam praemii is the occasion of an unfortunate error. Baum.