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The *Classical Review* and Anglo-Saxon Classical Scholarship

J. P. Postgate

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THE CLASSICAL REVIEW AND ANGLO-SAXON CLASSICAL SCHOLARSHIP.

THE foundation of the *Classical Review* at the beginning of the year 1887 was not the first or the sole indication of an increased interest in classical antiquity throughout the English-speaking world. In proof of this we may cite the inauguration of the Hellenic Society and the commencement of its *Journal* in 1880, and the establishment in the same year of the *American Journal of Philology* which from the first was freely opened to cis-Atlantic contributions. But these channels, even with the assistance of the long-established *Journal of Philology*, were not enough to carry off the new activities, as Professor Mayor and his coadjutors in the new undertaking rightly divined. The needs which this satisfied and the stimulus which it supplied may perhaps be best gathered from the following figures. The seven volumes of the *Journal of Philology* immediately preceding the date of its foundation contained contributions from some fifty-four English scholars, three or four of whom however wrote on subjects outside the range of classical Philology: to the first seven volumes of the *Classical Review* about 150 English scholars contributed.¹ It may, therefore, be fairly claimed that the hope expressed in the first editorial preface 'that the Review would turn wasted power to account by inducing some who are at present unproductive scholars to take a more active part in promoting the advancement of learning' has been more than fulfilled.

And if not all the anticipations of its founders have been realized and the *Classical Review* of to-day is in some respects different to what they desired and so if it may seem a not unnatural expression of surprise *amphora coepit institui: currente rota cur urceus exit?*, yet let it not be forgotten that the wheel is that of the blind goddess whom none can guide. And accordingly if for example it be thought, as indeed it is sometimes said, that the purging of classical texts occupies too much space in these columns, it should be remembered that the last few years have seen a Herondas, a lost Aristotle and a Bacchylides rescued from the dead and crying for the 'first aid' which was to salve the wounds of age and accident, and that if English scholarship has played a not wholly undistinguished part in rendering this help, the very possibility of its doing so is due to the *Classical Review*.

¹ Names of writers of reviews are not counted in this comparison.

It may well be asked whether this critical activity is a sign of general life or merely the effect of an unhealthy stimulation of a single part of the organism; or, to give the inquiry a wider scope, does the higher classical scholarship of the last fifteen years evince on the whole an advance on the period which preceded it? Without lapsing into optimism I think we may say that in the main it does. The vigour of our archaeological studies cannot be denied: the decipherment and interpretation of papyri is a new and growing department of research in which at the least we hold our own; in Greek and Latin philology in the narrower sense our scholars have not failed to secure recognition in the mother country of that study. History no doubt still languishes somewhat, as indeed has been the case since its remarkable activity in the middle of the century; but there are signs of a revival. But to pass from what the dilettante in classics might call special or technical branches, insufficiently worthy of the attention 'of a scholar and a gentleman,' may we not say that the intelligent appreciation of the literatures has made some noteworthy advance? I do not now refer to professed literary criticism, though here too recent years have given us work of which we may well be proud; but to its practical expression in translations of, and after, the ancient models. If we compare even an average translation of the present day with the bulk of those in Bohn's Standard Library, we see at once how great a change has been wrought by the movement of which the late Master of Balliol was the leading spirit. For this reformation we are indebted in the main to Oxford, though there were Cambridge scholars who early struck in with the movement and forwarded it substantially.² The full value of the reform those accustomed to it can hardly realize—at least not so keenly as one who learned for the first time in the lecture-room of the present Cambridge Professor of Greek, the vast difference which exists between a construe and a translation.

Nor has translation from English into Greek and Latin lagged far behind. The

² In the period with which I am comparing the present Cambridge was ever ready with a certain contempt for the inaccurate freedom of Oxford as Oxford for the stiff grammatical precision of Cambridge. But in the interval each has learned from the other; and accuracy is as much honoured at Oxford as style can be at Cambridge.

volumes of versions recently issued by the two Universities are generally admitted to mark a distinct advance upon their respective predecessors. They show no less spirit and more fidelity: a nicer appreciation of idiom and a more conscientious use of the file.

The source of this improvement must be sought in what is itself a hopeful sign—the improvement in editions, and especially in school editions, of the classics. So marked is this that it is sometimes doubted, and not without reason, whether for educational purposes they are not too good and tend by their very excellence to destroy independence of thought and to engender a groundless feeling of unquestioning security. If so, we may point with some relief to the wholesome corrective supplied by the prevalence of critical speculations in the *Classical Review*.

For this amelioration our thanks are chiefly due to the editors and publishers of the numerous Classical Series: the schools have the passive merit of adopting them. This (and here we have to turn to the darker side of our prospects) is, I fear, the only merit that the schools can claim. For the most part their directors remain still unconscious of their responsibilities and unafraid of the reckoning that must surely come—when the price will have to be paid for blind adherence to obsolete methods and inferior weapons. We know that in the fourfold rôle of hotel-keeper, policeman, patron of sports and educator which custom imposes (not without an adequate consideration) upon the headmaster of a public school, it is not unnatural that the interests of education should suffer; we know the crass ignorance and stolid complacency of ‘the average British parent.’ But if singly headmasters are too feeble to fight their fate, collectively they are strong enough, and may still hope to save an imperilled position if instead of discussions, whose outcome is but further disintegration, and resolutions, the last intention of which is to bind, they will take action in that thorough revision of the modes and materials of classical, and especially elementary classical, teaching which is so urgently needed. Though we of the Universities have a serious grievance against the schools in that they send so many to us mistaught on elementary points and, what is worse, emptied of all desire to learn, we must not forget our own deficiencies. Academical studies are directed too much towards the literary side of antiquity and too little towards its real and tangible life. Our students are left practically without inducement

to think their own thoughts in either Greek or Latin while they are exercised continually in the far more difficult and, under the circumstances, often impossible task of reminding the coinages of modern thought into passable counterfeits of the antique. That most stimulating institution of Germany and America, the professorial *Seminar*, is still a rarity in our teaching. And what of the examinations—to speak of a feature of our educational system which has grown out of all reasonable proportions? It is enough to point to the spectacle of leaders of classical studies at both Universities devoting themselves to the task of maintaining obsolete or inventing temporary compromises between aims and aspirations which were never less easy to reconcile than at the present moment—those of science and those of culture—the thirst after knowledge in itself and the desire for intellectual gratification.

This survey of the past and the present, short and imperfect as it is, must not omit a reference to the country whose contributions have helped since 1889 to make our Review what it is. I trust that our American friends will excuse and supply the inevitable deficiencies of the notice. The Classical Scholarship of America is the daughter not of England but Germany: and England can view with no touch of maternal jealousy the great and rapid growth of the progeny.

Two features in this development at once arrest attention, the prosperity of its schools of archaeology whose active centres are Athens and Rome; and the increase in its output of classical publications. As at present America does not itself offer much encouragement to the pursuit of classical archaeology, those Americans who have devoted themselves to it abroad drift on their return into more literary and philological studies to the great advantage of these latter. The American translation of the *Schulkommentar* is becoming a thing of the past; the annotated edition which has supplanted it is no doubt too often marked by crudity and immaturity: but it shows at least a healthy independence. The increase in the number of academical publications, including monographs, is no less noteworthy: it promises to constitute ere long a veritable *embarras de richesse*.

American scholarship has always leaned towards syntax and in particular towards the statistics of syntax. These otherwise somewhat arid regions supply a crop of convenient subjects for investigation in the

Seminar and, provided the winnowing is intelligently done, of very useful ones. There is however a certain danger of excess. Principal B. J. Wheeler in a very suggestive address to the first meeting of the Philological Association of the Pacific coast Dec. 30, 1899 says, 'The exaggerated attention paid to syntax at present in American class-rooms of Greek and Latin constitutes the severest menace to the usefulness and therefore to the continuance of classical study which now exists,' and again 'In the philological class-rooms of Germany and America pure literary study has been reduced dangerously near to a minimum...On every hand one marks the effort to establish aesthetic criteria by measuring and counting and classifying.'

Possibly Mr. Wheeler somewhat over-

states the evil. At any rate there are indications of counteracting tendencies, first in the recognition, which has been very plain in certain recent syntactical work, of the paramount importance of the context for determining the essential character of an idiom; and secondly in the growth of a school of refined and sympathetic interpretation, to which the *Nation* of Dec. 27, 1900 in a review of Prof. Smyth's Greek Melic Poets refers in words which may fitly close this article. 'Here is a book displaying an erudition and thoroughness which we usually call German, a lucidity, neatness, balance and judgment which we may fairly call French, associated with a breadth and delicacy of literary culture which we expect from Cambridge and Oxford.'

J. P. POSTGATE.

THE NATURE OF THE ANCIENT HOMERIC VULGATE.

I RETURN from the mediaeval text of Homer, its content and the manner of its formation, to the third century B.C. and the times of the Alexandrians. Here I wish to consider the ordinary or common text.

In a previous article (October, 1899) I endeavoured to find methods by which the readings of this text, so neglected in our sources,¹ might be recovered. I suggested that beside the thirty-one² cases in which the *κοινή* is distinctly mentioned, its reading was (I) the opposite of that offered by *ἅπαναι, αἱ πλείους*, and other expressions for the majority, (IIa) the opposite of Aristarchus' reading where Aristarchus only is mentioned, or where the non-Aristarchean reading is attributed to *ἄλλοι, τινές*, etc., (IIb), the non-Aristarchean reading held by a single critic provided it is found in the

majority of our MSS. Experience since writing that article inclines me to put *ἄλλοι, τινές*, etc., on the level of the single individual, i.e. into class IIb, and to require MS. backing before I reckon their reading as the *κοινή*. With this alteration I maintain the rule.

The readings ascertainable as the result of these methods give us the *κοινή* as far as it can be recovered. Though a good deal has been written about the ancient vulgate, and Ludwig in his well-known book has vindicated its age, and though we have adequate accounts of the changes undergone by the early Homeric written text in general (e.g. in Cauer, *Grundfragen der Homerkritik*, p. 35 sqq.), no attempt has been made to represent the intrinsic character of the Vulgate. This I wish to consider here.

The total of readings which results from putting these rules into operation is over 600, far too great a number to be exhibited or discussed in a magazine-article. I will content myself with giving specimens from two books, and collecting classes of characteristics, premising explicitly that I nowhere aim at exhaustiveness, nor enter into greater detail than is necessary to permit of a general conclusion.

I mark the readings according to the classes given above; an asterisk implies an explicit statement in the scholia.

¹ We have, strictly speaking, no direct information about the Homeric text. The two grammarians on whom we mostly depend are entirely concerned with Aristarchus; one ascertains his readings, the other assigns meanings to his signs. The real text, from which Aristarchus differed, and to which his signs referred, did not interest them; moreover it was common property, in the hands of everyone. Aristarchus himself assumed it, dealt with it, scarred it with obeli, and imported endless readings into it, but rarely mentions it by name, and is never content with its authority. Therefore it is that our scholia are taken up with everything else but the *κοινή*, and our direct references to it are survivals of obiter dicta of commentators on Aristarchus.

² Really 32; I omitted T 189 in B.