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Jebb's *Growth and Influence of Classical Greek Poetry* *The Growth and Influence of Classical Greek Poetry*. By R. C. Jebb, Litt. D., M.P. Macmillan and Co. 1893. Pp. xvi. 290. 7s. net.

J.W. Mackail

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esse aperte docent.' Yes, and if I had been in Venice a week before Mr. Schulze and had scribbled conjectures of my own in the margin of M while the librarian's back was turned, Mr. Schulze, who cannot tell one handwriting from another, would have copied them all into his list, and they would now adorn pp. liv—lix of his prolegomena,

and he would be maintaining that M got them from the archetype.

Such are the contents of a book which carries on its title-page the name of Aemilius Baehrens and the monogram of B. G. Teubner.

A. E. HOUSMAN.

JEBB'S GROWTH AND INFLUENCE OF CLASSICAL GREEK POETRY.

The Growth and Influence of Classical Greek Poetry. By R. C. JEBB, Litt. D., M.P. Macmillan and Co. 1893. Pp. xvi. 290. 7s. net.

PROFESSOR JEBB has published in this volume the course of eight lectures on the poetry of Ancient Greece which he delivered in 1892 at the Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore. Beginning with a brief sketch of the rise of Greek civilization, he proceeds to discuss the early epic as it appears in the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* and the Hesiodic poems, the lyric with a special lecture on Pindar, and the Attic drama, concluding with an essay on the permanent power of Greek poetry.

The foundation upon which the course of lectures was delivered is a Lectureship of Poetry, and the subject is dealt with in no narrow or scholastic spirit. That one of the first of living scholars should address himself to a popular exposition, in so clear and simple a form as this, of the principles and masterpieces of Greek poetry, is a sign of the times no less interesting than welcome. The study of Greek in the old sense is on its trial as an important part of humane education; it seems certain that within a few years it will cease to be any necessary part of the best type of school or college course. Those who believe that this change is a change for the better rest their case largely on the broad distinction between scholarship as a means, a set of gymnastic exercises for certain faculties, and scholarship as an end only worth following for itself. The compulsory study of Greek is not so much being forced out or argued down as melting away, but the study of Greek for the mere love of it is making extraordinary advance: perhaps it is not going too far to say that Greek has never been studied so much as now, nor on the whole so well.

And indeed it is when a distinguished scholar steps out of the charmed circle and in some such way as this communicates his results to a larger public than that of scholars, that he puts his own achievement to one of its highest tests. That there is a sense in which the technique of scholarship, like the technique of all acquirements, is an end in itself, an 'energy' in the Aristotelian sense, no one would deny. But it is an energy subordinate and ancillary in its nature, and if pushed higher only develops into pedantry. Scholarship as an end in itself is not a technique, but a spirit; its ultimate value to its possessor no less than to the world at large may be measured by the extent and force of its effect on the whole of life. The power of simple, true, and melodious expression is one of the first ways in which this effect should manifest itself. A life spent among the masterpieces of literature has been somehow spent wrongly if they have not saturated the scholar with something of their own virtue.

But further, it is in such popular treatment of the classics as these lectures supply that even more certainly than in commentaries or technical discussions the distinction is clear between the really fine scholar and the scholar who is only of the second order. The one thing is after all very much a matter of industry, of verifying references, where you can continually approximate to exactness by merely taking pains enough, and even the pastime of conjectural emendation is a game played by strict rule. But to put in intelligible language the exact truth about a Greek author, or about any aspect of the Greek life and spirit, is a work not only of acquirement but of genius. There is perhaps no subject in the world where the inexact truth is so easy to reach; none certainly where, when reached,

it is so useless and so worse than useless. To praise Professor Jebb's scholarship has long been superfluous, and in any case would come ill from one who is little better than an amateur; to say that his book stands this other test is praise neither superfluous nor slight.

That these lectures satisfy this test in varying degrees is of course inevitable. There are some parts of Greek literature—their earlier lyric poetry is a notable instance—where the exact truth is unattainable from mere want of documents; and the same is perhaps to some extent true—though the missing documents here are not manuscripts—of the Greek drama. It is not then surprising that the chapters on Homer and on Pindar should stand out very prominently from the rest of the book. It would be impossible to improve upon the sketch here given in the small compass of some fifty pages, of the spirit and substance of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*. One may specially note the careful and discriminating comparison of the Homeric epic and the French *Chansons de Geste*; the extremely fine passage on the characters of Achilles and Odysseus; and that on the social position of women in the world of the *Odyssey*, with the two remarks, so curiously illuminative, on the use of the word *μῆτορας* in *Odyssey* vi. 136 and on the popular version of the meeting between Odysseus and Nausicaa current in Corfu at the present day. Not less admirable is the short essay on the Hesiodic epics with which this chapter concludes; in the contrast between the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* on the one hand and these poems on the other the author has, without forcing the note, skilfully conveyed the curious way in which Homer is at once Greek and not Greek with an exactly true value; for, as he points out, the Homeric epic as we possess it was created by the instinct of the Asiatic Ionians, and the manner of the *Works and Days* was in a sense more purely Greek. Modern criticism is perhaps too apt to gloss over the fact that Homer and Hesiod were habitually bracketed, as it were, by the Greeks themselves; and if as we follow down the history of Greek literature we keep hold in our mind of what one might call the Hesiodic tradition, much of what is difficult otherwise will be a good deal more intelligible, and the hard dry manner which meets us (and sometimes repels us) in much of the Attic drama, or in the prose of Xenophon and the Orators, will take its natural place, alongside of such a phenomenon as their excessive admiration

of Sparta, as part of the curiously narrow ideal of the average Greek *bourgeoisie*; a type far from being either romantic or heroic in its combination of the precisian without moral fervour and the man of the world who never could succeed in being a gentleman.

In the chapter on Pindar Professor Jebb is on ground that he has made peculiarly his own. The description of Olympia at the great festival is extraordinarily vivid and appreciative; and in the masterly analysis of the First Olympian, no less than in the general remarks which follow on the poet's movement and manner, it is 'from out the ghost of Pindar in him' that the criticism comes. Let one brief passage on the Pindaric diction, a model of fine and succinct expression, stand as a specimen of the insight and lucidity which inform the whole:—

'Particular notice is due to the stamp of his diction. Other great poets have been distinguished by more delicate felicity, more chastened beauty of phrase, more faultless and unimpeachable taste. Sappho and Simonides, to take only lyric examples, exhibit even in the few fragments that remain certain charms of this kind which Pindar lacks; but there is one gift in which he is absolutely alone. It is one which could find full scope only within the grand framework of the Dorian choral lyric,—the faculty of shaping magnificent phrases and giving them exactly their right setting in the spacious verse, so that they at once delight the ear and charm the imagination.'

Pindar, fortunately perhaps for himself, is too difficult for use as a schoolbook, and the ground about him is not so clogged with masses of obsolete criticism as it is in the case of his great Athenian contemporary. There is no form of Greek poetry of which we know so much as we do of the Attic drama; 'it is,' says Professor Jebb, 'that which we can hope to see most nearly from the Hellenic point of view'; yet there is no form of Greek poetry of which our knowledge is, on the whole, more confused and ineffective. 'Modern criticism,' he says, 'has pondered particular sayings of Aeschylus, Sophocles, Euripides; it has brought these sayings together, arranged them under heads, digested them into formulas, linked them by ingenious reconciliations, until for each of the three dramatists, it has evolved a certain body of philosophy or theosophy. Such efforts,' he hastily adds, 'have an interest and a value of their own.' Is he

so sure that they have? or did he shrink from breaking with the traditions of the lecture-room? At all events, the inevitable rubric *Ethical and Religious Views of Sophocles* follows in the margin in due course: and in a good deal of this chapter the author seems to be writing without ease, and even with a certain loss of grace. That *Welcker distinguishes two kinds of trilogy used by Aeschylus* may be what Professor Jebb's audience wished and expected to hear; it is not quite what one wishes he had told them. Does it matter, is it really relevant to the growth and influence of classical Greek poetry, what Welcker distinguishes?

In the eighth or concluding lecture, on the Permanent Power of Greek Poetry, Professor Jebb reaches what is really the most difficult part of his task. The importance of the exact truth becomes here more vital than ever, and any criticism more useless that is dictated by some standard of supposed critical orthodoxy. It is thoroughly satisfactory to find that in the temper and lucidity of his observations Professor Jebb is not hampered by any such dictation, though here and there he adopts a tone towards current conventions that may seem almost needlessly deferential. The antithesis between 'Hebraism' and 'Hellenism,' so light-heartedly laid down by Matthew Arnold forty years ago, was even then only a brilliant and stimulating paradox; with the advance of years it has lost most of its stimulating force and nearly all its gloss. The marriage of Faust and Helena is a piece of imaginative scholasticism which only shows how carefully scholasticism should keep clear of imagination if it does not wish to make itself ridiculous. One of Professor Jebb's predecessors in the chair of Greek at Glasgow published a treatise on Greek syntax with a preface upholding the study of Greek as the true safeguard of orthodoxy in religion and politics, and the bulwark against Jacobinism and atheism. We may smile at this now; we can hardly afford to smile at the phrase *Hebraism versus Hellenism* while scholars and critics continue to repeat it with such imperturbable gravity. Yet this celebrated antithesis was founded on what is really a dexterous confusion of language, and neither logically nor historically will it bear examination. It expressed with added piquancy the supposed antithesis of art and morality, doing so on the large assumption that Greek art does not convey moral ideas and that Hebrew literature is not a form of art. So too with

the specious contrast between classical and mediaeval art as though the two represented opposing forces. One of the chief triumphs of modern scholarship—and one for which it may be forgiven many shortcomings—is that it has worked out the proof line by line of what could before be only held as a matter of instinct and belief, that mediaeval art is the direct and legitimate descendant of Greek art, and that the two speak a mutually intelligible language: nor need we cavil if this capital result has been reached mainly by the irregular troops of the army while its solid phalanx remained drawn up against a line of phantoms. In the history of art there are many periods; every great invention—the dactylic hexameter, the brick arch, the use of oil as a medium for pigments—divides in a sense the art before it from the art after; but before and after, the art is essentially the same. I remember hearing the captain of the famous Oxford Eleven of 1884 remark, when talk was running on the great variety of Mr. Spofforth's bowling, that he really bowled only two sorts of balls, those that were on the wicket and those that were not. There are and always have been two sorts of art; but these are not classical and mediaeval; they are good art and bad. The classics may serve in a way as a touchstone of pseudo-mediaevalism, as the great mediaeval art does of pseudo-classicism. But here too the world moves on. No one of moderate intelligence would now repeat the incredible conduct of Goethe at Assisi; nor has it yet, I suppose, been retaliated by Mr. Schultz or Professor Ramsay visiting Athens and refusing to go to see the Parthenon.

From such contracted views Professor Jebb is as far removed by the temper of his mind as by the width of his knowledge. No more just and appreciative statement could be made of the actual permanent value of Greek poetry than is made in the following words with which these lectures conclude:

'The claims of classical Greek poetry to a permanent hold upon the attention of the civilized world are of two kinds, intrinsic and historical. Viewed in regard to its intrinsic qualities, this poetry is the creation of a people in whom the gifts of the artist were more harmoniously united than in any other race; it bears the impress of their mind in the perfection of its form; it is also the spontaneous and profoundly suggestive expression of their life and thought. Viewed historically, this poetry is the fountain-head of poetical tradition in

Europe; it has supplied the typical standards of form, it has also furnished a varied wealth of material and illustration; even where it has not given a direct model it has operated by the subtle diffusion of an animating spirit; it has become blended with various other influences of later origin, and to every such alliance it has contributed some intellectual distinction which no other element could have supplied. So far from being adverse to those religious and ethical influences which are beyond the compass of its own gift to modern life, it is, rightly understood, in concord with them, inasmuch as it tends to elevate and to refine the human spirit by the contemplation of beauty in its noblest and purest form. On the high places of Greek literature, those who are worn with the troubles or disturbed by the mental maladies of modern civilization can breathe an atmosphere which, like that of Greece itself, has the freshness of the mountains and the sea. But the loneliness of Oeta or Cithaeron is not there; we have around us, on those summits, also the cheerful sympathies of human life, the pleasant greetings of the kindly human voice. The great poets of ancient Hellas recall to one's mind the

words in which Aeschylus described the kinsmen of Niobe who worshipped their ancestral deity on the mountain-heights of Mysia:—

The seed of gods,
Men near to Zeus; for whom on Ida
burns,
High in clear air, the altar of their Sire,
Nor hath their race yet lost the blood
divine.

Humanity cannot afford to lose out of its inheritance any part of the best work which has been done for it in the past. All that is most beautiful and most instructive in Greek achievement is our permanent possession; one which can be enjoyed without detriment to those other studies which modern life demands; one which no lapse of time can make obsolete, and which no multiplication of modern interests can make superfluous. Each successive generation must learn from ancient Greece that which can be taught by her alone; and to assist, however little, in the transmission of her message is the best reward of a student.'

J. W. MACKAIL.

SITTL'S EDITION OF FIRMICUS.

Iulii Firmici Materni matheseos libri viii.
Primum recensuit CAROLUS SITTL. Pars I.
Libri 1—4. Teubner, bibliotheca scr. gr.
et lat. 1894. 2 Mk. 40 Pf.

THE editor truly says of this book, almost unknown to scholars owing to the scarcity of copies, what holds equally of a Greek book, treating also of a mock science, the *Oneirocritica* of Artemidorus,¹ 'silvam rerum et sententiarum memorabilium libri continent.' I myself watched the market for many years before I secured one of the old editions. Of late Bonnet, Jahn, Haupt, Chr. Kelber ('Anfang eines Wörterbuchs z. d. libri math. des Firmicus, 1883'), H. Dressel ('lexikalische Bemerkungen zu Firmicus Maternus, Zwickau, 1882') have bestowed pains on Firmicus. Usener, with his usual sagacity, has discovered fragments

of Sallust in the prologue, which have already found a place in Maurenbrecher's edition of the histories of that author.

It is to be hoped that some one will undertake a lexicon to Latin astrological writers, including not merely Manilius and Firmicus, but portions of the Clementine recognitions, and other writings bearing upon the subject.

The belief in the influence of the stars on human destiny has coloured modern languages to an extent of which we are scarcely conscious. Firmicus is represented to some degree in our current lexicons, but new words, or new senses of old words, have still to be gleaned from his pages.

Take a few specimens: *altitudo* ii 3 §§ 1 bis 2 bis 4 5. c. 8. 23 § 11. 27 § 21 bis. *cardo* ii c. 13. 27 § 23. *domicilium* ii 2 §§ 1 3 bis 5 6 7 9. 3 §§ 5 bis 7. *domina* ii 24 § 2. *dominus* ii 2 § 3 bis. 23 §§ 2 bis 11 bis. 24 §§ 1 4 5. 26 § 3. *domus* i 5 § 7. ii 2 § 8. 3 § 7. c. 8. 23 § 11. 27 §§ 24 quater 26 bis (also in Clem. recogn. ix 17 bis 21 f. 23 bis. 24 bis 32). *dodecatemorion*

¹ See Reichardt in comm. philol. Jenenses, v (1894) 109—152, who finds traces of Stoic teaching in Artemidorus; a glance at Rigault's notes will show how much antiquaries owe to a writer now little read.