Review

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while Semele, 'the very wasp of all women,' and the gentle Floscula must surely have been as easily recognisable at the time. But it would be idle to pursue the matter further. The problem of *Endimion* is, I believe, as far from solution as ever. And when someone does propound a theory which commands general acceptance, will the store of human knowledge be appreciably increased? Surely people of M. Feuillerat's powers can find something to do more profitable than making elaborate guesses at the meaning of a court charade by a second-rate writer.

M. Feuillerat's line is so extensive that it would be a wonder indeed if one could not find a weak spot here and there in his defences. And if these have been considered at some length he will not feel, I am sure, that I am wilfully unconscious of the splendid qualities of his admirable book. His survey of euphuism, upon which I have had no time to dwell, seemed to me upon a somewhat cursory reading by far the fullest and most illuminating treatment of the topic yet produced; and I may notice in passing that he will have nothing to do with the Guevara theory here either. The final chapter on Lyly's place in literature is eminently suggestive. Indeed, the whole book displays on every page such careful work, such scrupulous observation of detail, such industry and critical discernment, that it can be safely asserted that M. Feuillerat has not only lived up to the ever-rising standard of Elizabethan scholarship, but has himself helped to raise it very considerably by his example.

The volume is handsome, almost sumptuous. There is only one criticism to be made. It is too bulky. Like Falstaff, it needs levers to lift it.

JOHN DOVER WILSON.

LONDON.

The Cambridge History of English Literature. Edited by A. W. WARD and A. R. WALLER. Vol. IV. Prose and Poetry. Sir Thomas North to Michael Drayton. Cambridge: University Press. 1909. 8vo. xii + 582 pp.

This volume of *The Cambridge History of English Literature* is full of varied interest. The period has already been dealt with to some extent in the preceding volume, and we are told by the editors that the two are to be taken together as covering the sixteenth century and the early decades of the seventeenth, apart from the drama. Readers will perhaps feel the need of some general survey of the literary tendencies of the period. But it may well be that, for the use of students, what we have here is the most wholesome and the most useful provision. Every assistance is offered for the independent study of the literature, and little encouragement is given to the taste for superficial generalisation. Above all the bibliographies, drawn up in each case by the author of the chapter to which they belong, are of almost inestimable value; and on the whole we may very well approve of the decision of the editors, 'to

limit the space devoted to generalisation rather than restrict unduly that required for bibliographies.'

Several of the chapters in the present volume deal with subjects which have a somewhat indirect bearing upon literature in the true sense of the word, and in this respect it is supplementary to the third volume. This is the case more or less with the chapter on Raleigh, and still more definitely with the two which treat of navigation and travels, and with the contributions of Professor Sorley and Dr Cunningham, the first on the philosophy of the period and the second on its politics and economics. It is well that these subjects should be treated of in connection with literature, but under the cooperative system which is adopted in this work the danger is that such chapters may have too much the character of independent essays, and that consequently there may be an absence of vital connexion with the main subject. This danger cannot be said to have been entirely avoided in the present instance, but in themselves these chapters are all valuable and interesting, and we would not willingly dispense with them.

A review of a book of this kind, if it is to have any critical value, must be limited in its scope, and the following remarks accordingly will refer almost entirely to the portions of the volume which have a direct bearing upon literature, and mainly to the three chapters which in the judgment of the present writer have the greatest literary interest and value, Mr Whibley's on the Elizabethan and Jacobean translations, Mr Grierson's on Donne and Mr Routh's on the development of popular literature in London.

The first of these is very ably written, and much of the praise which Mr Whibley metes out is thoroughly well deserved, but in certain cases it needs more qualification than the author has admitted. English prose style owes a considerable debt to North, and his Plutarch is in many ways an admirable book; but a good translation it certainly is not. No question need be raised here about accurate Greek scholarship; for North's original was not the Greek of Plutarch, but the French of Amyot. Nor is there any necessity to insist that it is a translator's duty to render as faithfully as possible, without adding touches of vivid description or pathetic eloquence, which are not to be found in the original; for though Amyot sets up for himself a high standard of fidelity, the Elizabethan idea of translation was a different one, as Mr Whibley points out, and we may reasonably make allowance for this. But it ought at least to be demanded that an Elizabethan who undertakes to translate from French should show himself capable of understanding that language, and of rendering it into English which fairly represents the meaning; and of North it must be said that he blunders far too freely, either making nonsense of what is perfectly intelligible, or omitting valuable details. Take, for example, the beginning of the life of Pompeius. Amyot has

Et au contraire, i'amaïs Romain n'eut l'amour du peuple si uehemente, ne qui commenceast de si bonne heure, qui plus florist en sa prosperité, ne qui plus constamment perseuerast en son aduersité, comme l'eut Pompeius.

North translates thus:

Contrariwise, neuer any other Romane (but Pompey) had the peoples earnest goodwilles so soone, nor that in prosperitie and adversity continued lenger constant, then unto Pompey.

Can anything be worse? Anyot's finely balanced sentence becomes a shapeless and ungrammatical medley in the hands of his translator. Again,

aians les miseres passees reduit la uille de Rome à ce poinct, que n'esperant pas de pouuoir iamais recouurer la liberté, elle ne cherchoit plus que la plus douce et plus equitable seruitude.

For which North has this:

for their citie was brought into such miserie, as hoping no more to see Rome recouer her lost libertie, they desired yet a more tollerable bondage.

The translator again makes absolute nonsense of the story about Flora and Geminus; mistranslates almost every clause in the account of the charges brought against Pompey on the death of his father; renders 'il les mena battant iusques en des lieux dont il estoit impossible que gens de cheual se peussent tirer,' by 'he draue them into such places, as was almost impossible for horsemen to come into'; and when Amyot rightly explains 'Imperator,' 'qui est à dire, Capitaine en chef,' North chooses to make it 'as much as Emperour or souveraine Prince,' the very mistake against which he was warned.

The case of Florio is still worse. Many have praised his Montaigne; but these surely must have paid attention mainly to the fact that he writes idiomatic Elizabethan prose, and little to the question how far he represents or misrepresents his author's meaning. Yet it is impossible to read Florio without being constantly pulled up by sentences from which no meaning whatever can be extracted, and which can only be understood by reference to the original. In fact, it may fairly be said that without the original he is unreadable; and his style has no such distinguished merit as to compensate for his incorrectness, though its eccentricity is by no means so great as the uninstructed reader will gather from Mr Whibley's account of it.

North's Plutarch, on the other hand, is a leading document of English prose style in the period to which it belongs. In eloquence, in picturesqueness of phrase, and above all in rhythmical cadence his style is superior to that of any other contemporary writer; but it must be remembered that the balance of the sentence, upon which its rhythm chiefly depends, is usually taken from Amyot, whose balance and rhythm, as we have seen, he sometimes destroys. In fact generally the praises of North by English critics have been given to a great extent at the expense of Amyot, to whom is due not only all the scholarship, but a very large part of the literary merit; and justice to Amyot, whose work is a classic of French prose, requires that this should be acknowledged.

No chapter dealing with poetry in this volume is so valuable as Professor Grierson's account of Donne, as the poet who challenged and broke the supremacy of the Petrarchian tradition. It will suffice to quote two suggestive passages, one near the beginning and the other towards the end of the chapter.

For evil and for good, Donne is the most shaping and determining influence that meets us in passing from the sixteenth to the seventeenth centuries. In certain aspects of mind and training the most medieval, in temper the most modern, of his contemporaries, he is, with the radically more pedantic and neo-classical Jonson, at once the chief inspirer of his younger contemporaries and successors, and the most potent herald and pioneer of the school of poetic argument and eloquence (p. 198).

And again :

The relation of Donne to Elizabethan poetry might, with some justice, be compared with that of Michael Angelo to earlier Florentine sculpture...Just as the grace and harmony of earlier sculpture were dissolved by the intense individuality of an artist intent only on the expression in marble of his own emotions, so the clear beauty, the rich ornament, the diffuse harmonies of Elizabethan courtly poetry...disappear in the songs and satires and elegies of a poet who will not accept Elizabethan conventions, or do homage to Elizabethan models, Italian and French ; but puts out to discover a north-west passage of his own, determined to make his poetry the vivid reflection of his own intense, subtle, perverse moods, his paradoxical reasonings and curious learning, his sceptical philosophy of love and life (p. 222).

The sixteenth chapter, by Mr A. V. Routh, deals with the popular literature which grew up in the social atmosphere of London between 1584 and 1630. This chapter is most interesting, and the bibliography connected with it contains a wonderful collection of miscellaneous books. Some overlapping was perhaps inevitable with the chapter in the third volume entitled 'Elizabethan Prose Fiction,' which includes also a review of the pamphleteering work of Greene and Nashe. It is, in fact, impossible to isolate prose fiction at this period from other kinds of miscellaneous literature. But Professor Routh dwells principally upon the element of social satire. Here Nashe receives something like his due, but more with regard to substance than style. Attention is not sufficiently drawn to the development of his style from the stilted euphuism of the *Anatomie of Absurditie*, to the vigorous and idiomatic English of *Pierce Penilesse* and the succeeding pamphlets, so that he could write boldly, 'Is my style like Greene's?... Do I talk of any counterfeit birds or herbs or stones?...This I will proudly boast, that the vein which I have...is of my own begetting, and calls no man father in England but myself, neither Euphues nor Tarlton nor Greene.' Nashe, in short, had deliberately thrown over the style with which he began his literary career under the influence of *Euphues*, which had moved his enthusiasm when he was an undergraduate ; and instead of the elaborate balance of sentences and the artificial similitudes which are characteristic of euphuism, had adopted the rival plan of enriching the vocabulary by coining and compounding, while holding to simplicity in sentence structure¹. From the social satire of Greene and

¹ See the passage on this subject in *Christ's Tears over Jerusalem*: ed. McKerrow, p. 183 f.

Nashe Professor Routh leads us on, with a passing glance at the evolution of formal verse satire, to the character-book and the essay, concluding with a lively account of the pamphlets and rogue-books of Jacobean London, and particularly of the popular work of Dekker and Rowlands.

Besides the three chapters to which attention has especially been called, there are others on which it would have been a pleasure to dwell, if space allowed; and it must not be supposed that there is any failure to appreciate the merits of Professor Cook's account of the Authorised Version of the Bible, Mr Child's chapters on the Song-books and Miscellanies, and on Drayton, Mr Vivian's account of Campion, Mr Hutchinson's excellent review of the preachers from Fisher to Donne, or Professor Bensly's chapter on Burton and on the contemporary writers in Latin, John Barclay, author of *Argenis*, and Owen the epigrammatist. The volume concludes with two important and interesting chapters on the external conditions and circumstances of literature during this period, one by Mr Aldis, Secretary of the University Library, on the book-trade, and the other by Mr Bass Mullinger on the foundation of libraries. Mr Aldis in a chapter of about forty pages has skilfully brought together a very large number of facts with regard to the circumstances under which books were published and sold, which certainly cannot be found in so convenient a form elsewhere, and it is not surprising that his contribution should already have been brought out in a separate form. Mr Mullinger has special qualifications to write the early history of the College and University libraries, and the association of his name with the library of St John's College, which so beautifully reproduces and preserves the original characteristics of a College library, makes the selection peculiarly happy.

On the whole this volume fully maintains the standard which had been established in the preceding three.

G. C. MACAULAY.

CAMBRIDGE.

The Literary Profession in the Elizabethan Age. By PHŒBE SHEAVYN. (Publications of the University of Manchester. English series, No. 1.) Manchester: University Press, 1909. 8vo. 222 pp.

This study relates itself closely to two other recent books dealing with conditions of authorship in Elizabethan times—*Government Regulations of the Elizabethan Drama* (1908), by Virginia Crocheron Gildersleeve, and *Shakespeare Folios and Quartos* (1909), by A. W. Pollard; its interest is centred, however, upon material which they have treated somewhat secondarily. It contains, besides an Introduction dealing with the economic, legal and social features of the time, seven chapters treating of the Elizabethan author in relation respectively to his patron, to his official censors, to his publishers, to the theatre, to his supplementary means of support, to his fellow-authors, and to his