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The Trees, Shrubs, and Plants of Virgil *The Trees, Shrubs, and Plants of Virgil*. By John Sargeaunt. 8VO. Pp. vii + 149. Oxford: B. H. Blackwell, 1920. 6s. net.

H. P. Cholmeley

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who guaranteed salvation in the life to come. This part of the work shows less understanding of early Christianity than of Orphism; the influence of the latter on the former is greatly overstated, however true it may be that Orphic ideas afforded a soil favourable to the growth of Christianity. This chapter, however, and indeed the book as a whole, contains much useful

material, and the work is well supplied with references; many interesting suggestions are made, and some well-worn problems re-discussed; and if the solutions offered are carefully tested, the perusal of the book is likely to lead the reader to a better comprehension of the subjects with which he deals.

A. W. PICKARD-CAMBRIDGE.

THE TREES, SHRUBS, AND PLANTS OF VIRGIL.

The Trees, Shrubs, and Plants of Virgil.

By JOHN SARGEANT. 8vo. Pp. vii + 149. Oxford: B. H. Blackwell, 1920. 6s. net.

MR. WARDE FOWLER, in his illuminating address to the Classical Association at the recent meeting at Newcastle-on-Tyne, said: 'Roman poetry and oratory need to be more generously and humanly interpreted, now that the texts are becoming more scientifically settled.' No one has done more to bring about this desirable consummation than has Mr. Warde Fowler himself in his three charming studies of *Aen.* VII. (in part), *Aen.* VIII., and *Aen.* XII., and he has found worthy followers in Mr. Royds, who has written on the *Birds, Beasts, and Bees of Virgil*, and in the writer of the book now before us.

The late Mr. H. P. Platt, in his delightful little book, *Byways in the Classics* (p. 123), pointed out the lively way in which scholars tilt at the errors of their fellows, and Mr. Sargeant has no scruples in referring to places where, in his opinion, editors and lexicons are wrong. When I remember my school days, and the way in which the dicta of masters upon points of grammar and translation were regarded as indisputable, it is soothing to compare Mr. Sargeant's note on 'Nux' (*Georg.* I. 187) with Mr. Page's note on the same word. Happy are the students of today, whether young or old, who can read Mr. Sargeant's Introduction, with its lucid explanation of the names of plants and parts of plants, and the signification of the various words for colours before reading the *Georgics*. The note on 'Amellus' (*Georg.* IV.

271 ff.) clears up a passage which used to puzzle me when a boy, and, in fact, most of the book contains information not to be found in the ordinary noted editions of Virgil, or the dictionaries. I would ask Mr. Sargeant, when his book goes to a second edition, to increase the value of it by giving his references for passages quoted from other writers; e.g., in his note on 'Castanea,' he mentions that the timber was useful for building, but that some Roman architects objected to its weight. Who were the architects, and why should they have put forward the weight as an objection? Chesnut is not a particularly dense wood; the weight of a cubic foot is 38 lbs. as against 43 lbs. for ash and beech, 36 lbs. for elm, from 27 lbs. to 41 lbs. for various kinds of pine, and 48 lbs. to 58 lbs. for oak. Chesnut, being practically worm-proof, was much used for roofs in the middle ages (there is a fine example in good condition at Cleeve Abbey), though some authorities say that the wood called chesnut was really the timber of *Quercus sessiliflora*. Concerning the line (*Ecl.* II. 51) *cana legam tenera lanugine mala*, Mr. Sargeant says that it is difficult to make anything. 'The editors say quinces, but this ignores "cana."' Pliny, however (*N.H.* XV. 14), definitely mentions a woolly apple: *Paene peregrina sunt in uno Italiae agro Veronensi nascentia, quae lanata appellantur. Lanugo ea obducit, struthis quidem Persicisque plurima; iis tamen peculiare nomen dedit, nulla alia commendatione insignibus*. These woolly apples would, therefore, not seem to be a valuable gift, but if quinces be meant, I have myself seen in Persia quinces of exquisite colour and fragrance, which

were covered with a curious silvery, flocculent network, which would have made a gift worthy of any lover. In his note on *Georg. I.* 74, '*laetum siliqua quassante legumen*,' Mr. Sargeaunt would appear to go out of his way to find a recondite meaning when he follows Martyn in seeing a reference to threshing the crop. Surely '*siliqua quassante*' only refers to the dry pod rustling in the wind before picking.

(*Ecl. II.* 18), '*Alba ligustra cadunt*.' I am entirely at one with Mr. Sargeaunt in his detestation of privet. Its only redeeming feature is that it is the food of the larva of one of the most beautiful of our Lepidoptera, *i.e.* the privet hawk moth, but the Romans, as well as Tennyson, seem to have admired the hue of its flowers, *e.g.* Martial *I.* 115, '*puella candidior ligustro*.' On pp. 87 and 89 Mr. Sargeaunt talks of 'the heaviness' of the under-surface of the leaves of both olive and oleaster. Should not this read 'hoariness'? He has made an obvious slip on p. 97, where he says that the capsules of the poppy abound 'in opium or hashish.' The drug hashish is derived from *Cannabis indica*, and has nothing to do with the poppy.

Georg. I. 266: '*Nunc facilis rubea texatur fiscina virga*.'

Mr. Sargeaunt discusses Servius's reading, '*Rubea*,' and the reference to Rubi. He also tells us that Pliny says, 'the withies of the bramble with the prickles removed were used to make baskets.' I have been unable to trace this reference, but I did find a passage (*N.H.* XVI. 69) where he says that they were used for tying up vines: '*recisisque aculeis rubi alligant*.' That anyone

should try to make baskets from bramble shoots seems to me incredible, although possibly not more incredible than the use of Butcher's Broom (*Ruscus aculeatus*) for tying up vines, as Mr. Sargeaunt points out in his note on that plant. Wild Butcher's Broom is common in South Devonshire, and in my undergraduate days there used to be plenty of it in Magdalen Walks.

Ulva, Georg. III. 175, *et al.* Mr. Sargeaunt identifies this plant as *Cladium mariscus*—the fen sedge. His description of the plant certainly suits all the passages which he quotes, but, on the other hand, both Pliny *XVII.* 35, and Columella *IV.* 13, mention it as being used for vine ties, and both lay stress on the fact that the ties made therefrom are soft, and so do not injure the young shoots.

The description of *Cladium mariscus* does not seem to fit these facts, so may not '*ulva*' be used at times for different kinds of sedge, despite Mr. Sargeaunt's dictum? The notes on '*Vitis*' are most informing, and I would beg Mr. Sargeaunt not only to bring out a second edition of his book, but also to bring out an annotated edition of Keightley. He would do it admirably, and the book would be valuable.

In 1530 Sir Thomas Elyot published a book on educational reform, called *The Boke of the Governour*, wherein he remarks, 'Lorde God! howe many gode and clene wittes of children be now a days perished by ignorant scholemaisters!' So long as schoolmasters exist who can write like Mr. Sargeaunt, this sorrowful complaint will not be heard.

H. P. CHOLMELEY.

DE HERCLE, MEHERCLE, CETERISQUE ID GENUS PARTICULIS.

De Hercle, Mehercle, ceterisque id genus particulis. By Dr. ANDERS GAGNÉR. Greifswald, 1920.

THIS is a thoroughly sound and scientific piece of work, such as we have learned to expect from Sweden: the writer is a Docent in the University of Uppsala. He discusses the origin, prosody, and use of the words *hercle*,

pol, and the compounds *mehercle*, *edepol*, *medius fidius*, *ecastor*, *mecastor*; also *edi*, *medi* (Titinius iii.). The derivation of some of these swearing formulae is notoriously difficult, in Latin as in other languages (*cf.* p. 44, n. 9). But I have no fault to find with Gagnér's derivations: the *me* he regards not as a vocative (for *mi*, Skutsch), but as the accusative—the full expression being, as