The Beasts, Birds, and Bees of Virgil: A Naturalist's Handbook to the Georgics by T. F. Royds
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The Journal of Roman Studies, Vol. 4, Part 1 (1914), pp. 117-118

Published by: [Society for the Promotion of Roman Studies](#)

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distinguished personages, whether these were fellow-townsmen or not; and also, by a slight extension of the principle, easily intelligible if we remember his peculiar constitutional position, to the emperor himself. The decay of genuine political activity under the empire, and the consequent intensification of the social side of the position of chief municipal magistrate as a dispenser of hospitality and largesse to his electors, naturally accentuated the tendency to bestow the office upon those from whom most might be expected. It is not surprising to find that the emperor Hadrian, who toured round the empire dispensing "grants in aid," like a perambulating Local Government Board, should have received municipal honours sufficiently often for the fact to have attracted the attention of his biographer.

Even the final sentence of Dr. Magoffin's conclusions, that the title 'quinquennalis' was only adopted by 'collegia' when its original significance had been forgotten, does not appear altogether justifiable. There seems no reason, on the one hand, to suppose that when the 'album' of Canusium, with its careful distinction between 'quinquennalicii' and 'duoviralicii,' was drawn up in 223, the significance of the office had been forgotten, while, on the other hand, the title 'quinquennalis' was already in use ninety years earlier in the semi-servile 'collegium cultorum Dianae et Antinoi' (*G.I.L.* xiv, 2112). The 'collegia,' mimicking as they did the organisation of the municipalities, adopted this title precisely because the 'quinquennalis' was the most important municipal magistrate, although they might not of course borrow as well the functions which gave him his importance.

G. L. CHEESMAN.

THE BEASTS, BIRDS, AND BEES OF VIRGIL: A NATURALIST'S HANDBOOK TO THE GEORGICS. By T. F. ROYDS. 7 $\frac{3}{4}$ x 5 $\frac{1}{4}$, xx + 107 pp. Oxford: B. H. Blackwell, 1914. 3s. 6d n.

This volume is alike useful and interesting to all students of Virgil, and fills a gap that has hitherto been very marked. For the commentators on Virgil have, with very rare and partial exceptions, not been experts in natural history; and treatises on natural history have only made incidental references to Virgil. It is a collection of notes, not a formal treatise; but this does not prevent it from being readable, and indeed fascinating, from the first page to the last. Not only is it, as Mr. Warde Fowler says, in a preface contributed by him, "the best commentary we have for the naturalist, the farmer, and the sportsman," but it gives "substantial help in understanding this life"—the life that runs through and kindles nature—"as Virgil and the old Italians felt it." Thus it has a real bearing on Roman Studies in their fullest sense. It contains, too, illuminating remarks on qualities of the Latin civilisation, as, for instance, where Mr. Royds observes that "ancient sport much resembled the methods of the poacher."

One service that the author has done to Virgil is to bring out, better than has been done before, his great accuracy, born of close and sympathetic observation. He is, not seldom, more accurate than the professed writers of treatises on natural history, from whom it has been the fashion to represent him as ignorantly borrowing. With regard to bees, in particular, he was distinctly in advance of the general knowledge of his time, and is in marked contrast here, as Mr. Royds points out, to Shakespeare, whose famous passage on the bee-commonwealth in *Henry V* is gorgeous poetry, but as natural history is a mass of blunders. Apart from his fundamental mistake as to the sex of the queen-bee, and the misdescriptions consequent on it, and from the legend about the spontaneous production of bees from a putrefying carcase, his errors of fact in the mass of detail he gives are quite wonderfully few. And as to these two, it must be borne in mind that Virgil himself introduces the invention of Aristaeus as something legendary and half-fabulous; and that the sex of the queen-bee remained in dispute until the invention of the microscope enabled Swammerdam to make it certain in the seventeenth century. One error even Mr. Royds continues to attribute to Virgil unjustly: "*Effossis*

latebris, iv, 42, is an error. The honey-bee does not excavate for herself." But Virgil does not say, here or elsewhere, that she does.

It is interesting to notice (pp. 16, 18) that the *bis gravidæ pecudes* in the "Praise of Italy" is true of both sheep and goats. Even more striking is (pp. 40-42) the discovery that *corvorum densis exercitus alis* is not "a mistranslation of Aratus" (Conington), but an accurate description of what Virgil had seen near his native place, and what is still to be seen there, and not in other parts of Italy—the "legioned rooks" that Shelley also saw among the Euganean hills.

Mr. Royds identifies the Virgilian *urus* of *Georgics*, ii, 374, and iii, 532, with the buffalo. This is to say the least very improbable. *Silvestris* would be a very inappropriate epithet for the buffalo, nor can the buffalo ever have been denized in the Tyrolean highlands of the third Georgic. Whether it existed in Italy at all in Virgil's time is doubtful. Humboldt thought that it was not introduced into Europe until the time of the Crusades. Paulus Diaconus, *Gest. Langobard.* iv, 11, under the date A.D. 596, says "tunc primum caballi silvatici et bubali in Italiam delati Italiae populis miracula fuerunt": but it is quite uncertain what these *bubali* were. Pliny, *N.H.* viii, 38, has the observation, "Germania gignit bisontes . . . et uros quibus imperitum vulgus bubalorum nomen imponit"; and apart from this, the name of *bubalus* is used of at least three quite different animals: (1) the buffalo, both the Indian and the African variety, (2) a Mesopotamian animal of the gazelle kind, (3) an African animal of the type of the hartebeeste. The *urus* of Caesar is the now extinct aurochs (*bos primigenius*); but elsewhere the name seems to be used indifferently of any species of the European wild ox, from one or other of which the domesticated cattle of Europe descend. Of these wild oxen Jerome (who calls them *bubali*) says in his commentary on Amos, "tam indomiti sunt ut iugum cervicibus non recipiant, et cum silvestres boves sint, propter feritatem nolint terram vomere scindere." This description corresponds exactly to the *urus* of Virgil. It is practically certain that this *urus* is the bison (*bos bonasus*), which is expressly mentioned by Paulus Diaconus, *op. cit.* ii, 8, as breeding wild in the Tyrol.

Pending the new edition of Virgil, for which the time has now come, no more useful work can be done in Virgilian interpretation than special studies like this excellent little book: the more there are of them, the more will the task of the future editor be made possible.

J. W. MACKAIL.

ROME OF THE PILGRIMS AND MARTYRS. By ETHEL ROSS BARKER. 9 × 5½, xvi + 379 pp. with 6 tables and plans. London: Methuen & Co. 1913. 12s. 6d n.

The object of this book is to give an account of the literary and epigraphical materials for the history of early Christianity in Rome, which include the *Liber pontificalis*, the Itineraries, the *Acta martyrum*, the Martyrologies, and the *Syllogae* or collections of inscriptions. These are described and analysed in a business-like way, and the views of scholars about their origins and dates are clearly summarised. On the whole, the book should be of considerable use to those who are beginning the serious study of the Christian antiquities of Rome, and want a guide to the literature connected therewith; but we fear that Miss Barker is rather optimistic in her hope that it may interest the general reader. It was for the benefit of the latter, we are told, that, with the exception of the inscriptions, only an English version of the passages quoted is given, which we think is a mistake. Translation of a Latin which is by no means always easy to understand might, indeed, be useful even to serious students; but the renderings, though no doubt generally correct, are not impeccable, so far as we have been able to compare them with the originals. Take the Life of pope Cornelius in the *Liber pontificalis* (p. 69): it sounds quite natural to read that he received a letter "which Cyprian had