

The Classical Review

<http://journals.cambridge.org/CAR>

Additional services for *The Classical Review*:

Email alerts: [Click here](#)

Subscriptions: [Click here](#)

Commercial reprints: [Click here](#)

Terms of use : [Click here](#)



The Animals of the Ancients *Die Antike Tierwelt*. Von Otto Keller. Zweiter Band: Vögel, Reptilien, Fische, Insekten, u.s.w., mit 161 Abbildungen im Text und zwei Lichtdrucktafeln. Large octavo. Pp. xv + 617. Leipzig: Engelmann, 1913. M. 17; cloth, M. 18.50.

J. E. Sandys

The Classical Review / Volume 28 / Issue 02 / March 1914, pp 53 - 56
DOI: 10.1017/S0009840X00006740, Published online: 27 October 2009

Link to this article: http://journals.cambridge.org/abstract_S0009840X00006740

How to cite this article:

J. E. Sandys (1914). The Classical Review, 28, pp 53-56 doi:10.1017/S0009840X00006740

Request Permissions : [Click here](#)

that, when Vol. V. is published, we shall have the advantage of all that modern textual criticism can do towards settling the vexed question of the genuineness or otherwise of the various collections going by the name of Heron and providing a thoroughly trustworthy text of those works which satisfy the test.

Heiberg's texts of the Greek mathematicians have in general been accompanied by Latin translations, with all necessary notes, which have not only shown that he has a thoroughly competent knowledge of mathematics, but have probably brought it within the power of most mathematicians to read the treatises for themselves; in the case of Heron, Vol. IV., the translation is in German, doubtless for the sake of uniformity with Vols. I.-III. But in the case of Ptolemy's *Syntaxis* the Greek text appeared alone, without any translation. There was naturally some disappointment on the part of mathematicians, which found amusing expression in the review of the first volume by M. Cantor (*Zeitschrift für Math. u. Physik*, Vol. XLIV., 1879, Hist.-litt. Abt. p. 62-63, who observed that the smile of pleasure with which he greeted the appearance of the volume soon gave place to a more serious expression when he observed the absence of the Latin translation which he had been accustomed to look for in Heiberg's editions.

Heiberg himself in his preface gave the modest explanation that, in view of the difficulty of the subject, he had not ventured to add a translation, either in Latin or in a modern language; astronomers must see to the matter and do it

for themselves if they required a translation. To which Cantor replied by the despairing question, Where is the living astronomer who knows enough Greek, or the Greek scholar (except Heiberg) who knows enough astronomy, to undertake the work? Fortunately the translator has now appeared, and the omission is repaired. The translation is in German, and not in Latin, but that is no real drawback; and as to the competence of the translator no one will feel any doubt who has made the acquaintance of the Greek astronomical works already edited by him, namely, Geminus' *Εἰσαγωγή εἰς τὰ φαινόμενα* (or *Elements of Astronomy*) and Proclus' *Hypotyposis astronomicarum positionum* (Teubner, 1898 and 1909 respectively). The translation endeavours, where possible, by the use of modern notation, instead of the cumbrous Greek terminology, to make the book more readable by mathematicians. The figures of Heiberg are improved and new ones added where a difficult passage could be better elucidated by a figure than by verbal explanations; occasionally sentences are inserted in brackets to make the connexion clear, short notes are added at the foot of the page, and there are longer notes, where necessary, in appendices at the end of the volumes, besides a list of the passages where the text of Heiberg has been departed from. We may say without hesitation that no one could usefully attempt to follow Ptolemy's exposition without having this translation before him; it is therefore with gratitude to the editor and the publisher that we greet its appearance.

T. L. HEATH.

THE ANIMALS OF THE ANCIENTS.

Die Antike Tierwelt. Von OTTO KELLER. Zweiter Band: Vögel, Reptilien, Fische, Insekten, u.s.w., mit 161 Abbildungen im Text und zwei Lichtdrucktafeln. Large octavo. Pp. xv + 617. Leipzig: Engelmann, 1913. M. 17; cloth, M. 18.50.

HOFRATH OTTO KELLER, formerly a Professor in the Universities of Freiburg, Graz, and Prag, and now residing at Stuttgart, is well known as one of the editors of Keller and Holder's critical recension of Horace. He is a leading authority, not only on the textual criti-

cism of Horace, but also on the animals of the ancient world. In 1887 he published a series of monographs on the ape, the camel, the buffalo, the chamois, the deer, the bear, the tiger, the panther, the hyaena, the wolf, the fox, and the jackal; the seal, the hippopotamus, and the dolphin; and, lastly, the eagle, the woodpecker, the goose, and the night-ingale. These monographs, which included quotations from *loci classici*, and were embellished with fifty-six illustrations, formed a volume of 488 pages, published by Wagner at Innsbruck under the title of *Thiere des classischen Alterthums in culturgeschichtlicher Beziehung* (M. 10.80). Shortly afterwards Professor Keller was associated with Imhoof-Blumer in the preparation of a comprehensive collection of twenty-six plates, comprising no less than 1,352 reproductions of ancient coins and gems, exhibiting representations of animals and plants, with descriptive letterpress. This interesting and important work was published by Teubner in 1889 as *Tier- und Pflanzen-bilder auf Münzen und Gemmen des klassischen Alterthums* (M. 24). In 1906, while he was still a Professor in Prag, he kindly wrote at my request a very brief survey of the fauna of the old Roman world, which, as translated by myself (with the aid of several eminent zoologists), filled some eighteen pages of the *Cambridge Companion to Latin Studies* (revised edition, June, 1913).

Professor Keller has followed up his *Thiere des classischen Alterthums* by an important work on a far ampler scale, under the title of *Die Antike Tierwelt*. The first volume, dealing with the *Mammalia* in 434 large octavo pages, with 145 illustrations and three photographic plates of coins, was published in 1909 (M. 10; cloth, M. 11.50). It was noticed by the present writer in the *Cambridge Review* for December 8, 1910. The work is now completed by a second volume, including birds, reptiles, fishes, insects, spiders and scorpions, worms and caterpillars, crabs and lobsters, starfishes and sea-urchins, jelly-fishes, corals, and sponges.

The Birds fill nearly half the volume. The survey begins with eagles, falcons, vultures, owls, and parrots. Next in

order come the *Scansores* or *Picariae*, including the woodpecker, the wryneck, the kingfisher, the hoopoe, the cuckoo, the blue roller, the goat-sucker, and the bee-eater. Under the general heading of 'song-birds' we have thrushes, wrens, wagtails, larks, finches, sparrows, and starlings; crows and ravens; jackdaws and jays and magpies; swallows and fly-catchers; tomtits and orioles. Then follow pigeons and doves, fowls and pheasants, peacocks and guinea-fowls, the ptarmigan, the partridge, the quail, and the woodcock; the *brevipennes*, including the ostrich, the crane, the stork, the ibis, the heron, and the flamingo; the *natatores*, including the swan, the goose, the duck, and the coot; and, lastly, among the sea-birds, the pelican, the cormorant, the stormy petrel, and the various kinds of gull.

The ancient lore of all these birds is fully set forth. Thus we incidentally learn that, in Assyria and Egypt, the vulture was once considered a sacred bird, a character in which it was gradually superseded by the eagle. The wryneck (*iunx torquilla*) is recognised as a magical bird in Greek literature alone, but is completely ignored in Latin. While the Latin writers make no mention of the magical bird, it may here be noticed that they occasionally refer to the magic wheel—the *amoris rota* of Plautus, *Cist.* 207, the *turbo* of Horace's *Epodes*, xvii. 7, and the *rhombus* of Martial ix. 29, 9. The bird is, at the present time, rare in Greece but common in Italy, and it may here be suggested that possibly its rarity (apart from its other peculiarities) made it specially suited for magic rites. The kingfisher (*ἀλκυών*) necessarily leads to a discussion of the 'vulgar error' of the 'halcyon days.' It also reminds the author of his former home in Prag, where the kingfisher is conspicuously visible as the crest of the King of Bohemia, Charles IV., on the tower at the Altstadt end of the Karlsbrücke.

Lesbia's *passer* is here (as in the *Companion to Latin Studies*) identified with the blue thrush, the Italian *passere solitario*. The raven and crow and the other *Corvidae* are dealt with in more than twenty instructive pages. On p. 83, in the notice of the wren (*regulus*), the

author repeats the singular suggestion made by himself in the *Archiv* for Latin lexicography (iv. 139), that, when (in Pliny's *Letters*, i. 5, 14) Modestus denounces Regulus as *omnium bipedum nequissimus*, he is playing on the word *regulus*, one of the Latin names for the wren—'the most minute and contemptible of birds.' This suggestion is rightly rejected in Merrill's edition, p. 178. In Lewis and Short's Dictionary, by the way, *regulus* is vaguely rendered 'a small bird,' and the reference is wrong; it should be 'Auct. Carm. Phil. 43' (not 13), *regulus atque merops et rubro pectore progne* ('Carmen de filomela,' no. 762, l. 43 in Riese's *Anthologia Latina*). On p. 86 we are told that probably the original name of the finch (*fringilla*) was *akalanthis* (where we should have expected a reference to the *Pax* and *Aves* of Aristophanes), and that this name is found as late as Paulinus of Nola, *Carm.* 23, 12, 'vere novo resonant acalanthida dumi'; but surely this is only a fresh proof that Paulinus, the pupil of Ausonius, was familiar with his Virgil, and accordingly remembered and reproduced the last three words of the line in the *Georgics*, iii. 338, 'litoraue alcyonen resonant, acalanthida dumi.' Again, on p. 215, the author states that the legend of the Song of the Dying Swan is not found earlier than Plato, whereas a glance at the *loci classici* in Dr. D'Arcy W. Thompson's admirable *Glossary of Greek Birds* (a work which the author often quotes), would have reminded him of the celebrated simile, applied to Cassandra in line 1,444 of the *Agamemnon* of Aeschylus, *κύκνου δίκην, τὸν ὕστατον μέλψασα θανάσιμον γόνον*.

Under the heading of Reptiles (pp. 247-322) we have adequate and comprehensive notices of tortoises and snakes, frogs and toads, the crocodile, the lizard, the chameleon, and the salamander.

Fishes are comparatively briefly dealt with in little more than seventy pages, of which as many as thirty form a general introduction, followed by a summary conspectus of the principal kinds, with the Greek and Latin names of each, and concluding with a fuller treatment of a few of the more interesting varieties: the eel, the murrey, the mullet, the turbot, the salmon, the carp, the stur-

geon, the ray, the shark, and the tunny, this last being the most important fish in the Mediterranean trade, and accordingly filling more than twelve pages of text.

Under Insects (pp. 395-460) a special interest attaches to the pages on ants and bees and wasps; silkworms and moths; the grasshopper and the locust; the cricket and the mantis. Butterflies are figured on several Egyptian monuments (as in Wilkinson's *Ancient Egyptians*, iii. 41, 42, 52, ed. 1842), but are apparently never mentioned in extant Greek poetry, though they might easily have supplied a tempting theme to writers of Anacreontic verse or to the epigrammatists of the Greek Anthology. On p. 419 the author vaguely refers to the latter for an epigram on some clever ants who ferried themselves over on bits of straw to a jar of honey which a rustic had placed in the middle of a pail of water. Some of his readers would have welcomed the exact reference, ix. 438, or (at least) the first two words of the epigram, *βαλοτόμοι μύρμηκες*. He is equally vague in stating, in general terms, that the incident agrees with the evidence of modern observers. It is therefore perhaps necessary to point out that the evidence is definitely quoted (and is also disputed) not only in Lubbock's *Ants, Bees and Wasps*, pp. 239-247 (a work well known to Professor Keller), but also in a less familiar treatise, Wasmann's *Psychology of Ants* (E. T. 1905), pp. 131-139.

Ten pages on spiders are followed by as many more on scorpions, in the course of which the testimony of two English travellers is quoted on p. 472 in support of the belief that scorpions commit suicide when tortured by fire. The true explanation may be found in Mr. R. I. Pocock's article in the current edition of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*:—the animal dies, not from a self-inflicted wound, but really in consequence of the heat, which incidentally provokes it to brandish its tail right and left in attempting to drive off the unseen enemy.

In the rest of the work the most interesting articles are those on the polypus and the cuttle-fish, on the three varieties of shellfish used in the manufacture of

purple dye, and on pearls, and oysters. Even fossil shells are not omitted.

In the present, as in the former volume, we have frequent mention of ancient superstitions, and various points of folk-lore, together with many topics on which the statements of ancient writers are either corrected or confirmed by modern research. Thus the description of the pigmies, given by Herodotus and others, is, in a general way, confirmed by the discovery of the Akkā of Central Africa; and the account of the capture of birds by the Thracians of Kedreipolis, with the aid of flocks of wild hawks, as stated in the *Historia Animalium*, ix. 36, is supported on p. 24 by the observations of a recent traveller in Central America. The account in the *Historia Animalium* is here attributed to Theophrastus, who, on p. 507, is also credited with the singularly accurate description of the molluscs and other marine animals in the immediately following chapter. I do not know how far those who attribute these descriptions to Theophrastus have taken into consideration the fact that Aristotle himself lived for three years (347-343 B.C.) at Atarneus, in full view of Lesbos, so that he may have been almost as well informed about the fauna of the neighbourhood as his pupil, who was a native of the Lesbian town of Eresos. Details as to the Euripus of Pyrrha in the island of Lesbos are not confined to the above passage in the *Historia Animalium*, which is ascribed to Theophrastus. They may also be found in v. 12 and 15, and in viii. 20; and *De Partibus Animalium*, iv. 5, p. 680.

The highest praise must be given to the excellent illustrations, which are largely due to the author's own enterprise. Many of them are selected from the author's above-mentioned work on coins and gems, from Wilkinson's *Ancient Egyptians*, from vases and sculptures in the British Museum, and from the mosaics of Pompeii or of Northern Africa. In one of the Pompeian mosaics, here published for the first time, no less

than twenty-three kinds of fishes can be distinguished and identified. The illustrations deserve to be recorded in a separate list, with an exact statement of the source of each. A fuller list of the Greek and Latin names of the animals described in the two volumes would have been a welcome addition to the index. As it is, if we wish to look up the account of the hoopoe, we find neither ἔποψ nor *upupa*, but only *Wiedhopf*.

The author is specially interested in matters of Etymology, and derives some of his elucidations from Semitic, as well as Egyptian, sources.

His work might have been made more uniformly easy to read, if all the references now embedded in the text (as well as the 431 notes at the end of the book) had been transferred to the foot of the page. The unfortunate result of the adoption of another method may be seen, in an extreme case, in the following paragraph on p. 43:

Die Eule ist eben überhaupt in der ganzen Welt gewöhnlich ein sehr trauriges Vorzeichen, im Rigveda (X. B.) so gut wie bei den alten Griechen (Hipponax 54, Artemidor III. 65) und Römern (Ammian. Marcell.), bei den Neugriechen (Schmidt, Volksleben I. 136), Wenden (Veckenstedt, wend. Sagen 316), Russen (de Gubernatis, mythol. Zoologie, deutsch S. 529), Polen (H. Sienkiewicz, Gegenwart 1893 S. 105), Ungarn (Wislocki 73), Talmudisten (Lewysohn, Zool. des Talmud 163) usf²² (a reference to a note at the end of the book).

Daremberg and Saglio's *Dictionnaire des Antiquités* has long shewn scholars of all nations a more excellent way.

As a whole, however, Keller's *Antike Tierwelt* is undoubtedly an interesting as well as an important work. It deserves to be warmly welcomed by the student of folk-lore, by the zoologist, and by every classical scholar who wishes to realise for himself the Fauna which formed part of the life, and often found a place in the literature, of the ancient Greek and Roman world.

J. E. SANDYS.

St. John's House, Grange Road, Cambridge.