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Dyer's Studies of the Gods in Greece *Studies of the Gods in Greece, at certain Sanctuaries recently excavated.* By Louis Dyer, B.A. Oxon, late Assistant Professor at Harvard University. Macmillan & Co. 8s. 6d. net.

W. Wards Fowler

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tianity in spite of his father's precautions, who had been warned by astrologers at the child's birth that he would become a Christian. The father is distressed and enraged; but Barlaam, who had converted Josaphat, has disappeared. The following scheme is then laid to reconvert the prince. Nachor, an old man who resembles Barlaam, is put up to defend Christianity in open discussion and is to allow himself to be easily refuted, so that the prince may see how worthless a religion he has adopted. But Nachor is made to bless where he had intended to curse, and delivers such a speech that he himself and the king and the people become Christians. *The speech which he delivers is the Apology of Aristides*, with just such modifications as are necessary to make it fit the surroundings. So that here we seem to have the Greek original, with comparatively slight alteration; and as it is a good deal shorter than the Syriac, there is reason for believing that the latter has been freely interpolated. Those parts of the *Apology* which would not suit the story would of course be omitted; but that fact will not account for all the differences.

In marked contrast to the writings of Justin Martyr, the *Apology* of Aristides contains very few references to canonical books, although there are passages which are coloured by N. T. language, especially from the Epistle to the Romans. But some of these references may have been inserted by the author of 'Barlaam and Josaphat,' for they are either less clear in the Syriac or do not appear there at all. Beyond implying a written narrative of Christ's life the *Apology* throws no light upon the Canon. This also is in favour of its authenticity and early

date. Aristides in arguing as a philosopher would not be likely to make much use of Christian writings, and in his time many of the canonical books were not widely diffused.

Mr. Robinson is specially to be congratulated on his identification of Nachor's speech in 'Barlaam and Josaphat' with the much desired Greek text of the *Apology* of Aristides. It has been open to any scholar to make this important discovery ever since Boissonade published the Greek text of the romance in vol. iv. of his *Anecdota* in Paris, 1832; but the glory has been reserved for Cambridge and Mr. Robinson. Boissonade made very inadequate use of the materials which lay ready to his hand, confining himself to four, or indeed mainly two, out of seventeen MSS. which are in the Library at Paris: and there are others elsewhere, amounting to about sixty in all, which Zotenberg has catalogued. Boissonade's faulty text has been reprinted (with fresh blunders) in Migne's *Patrologia Graeca*, tom. 96, in the third vol. of John of Damascus. Mr. Robinson has now given us a newly edited text, with a large number of variants from MSS. which he has collated. As he points out, nothing has been attempted as yet in the way of a genealogical classification of the materials: but whoever undertakes that laborious work will be largely indebted to the present editor for his pioneering.

It is little exaggeration to say that the first volume of 'Texts and Studies' deserves to rank with the *Didache* and *Diatesaron* as among the most important of the many precious recoveries which have been made during the present century.

A. PLUMMER.

DYER'S STUDIES OF THE GODS IN GREECE.

Studies of the Gods in Greece, at certain Sanctuaries recently excavated. By LOUIS DYER, B.A. Oxon, late Assistant Professor at Harvard University. Macmillan & Co. 8s. 6d. net.

How did the average Greek citizen think of his relation to the gods, and what fruit had his religion in his daily life? There is nothing more difficult, even for mature students of Greek thought, than the attempt to answer such questions as these. Young scholars who have completed their course at the university may well feel wholly at a

loss when confronted with them. And no wonder. The religion of the Romans, in spite of all its obscurities, presents no such difficulties; however deeply overlaid by importations from without, it was in the main the religion of a single community, and of a people gifted neither with fancy nor speculative power, who moreover at an early period allowed it to come under the control of a powerful political priesthood. But the religion of the Greeks is like the halcyon's plumage, always changing hue in varying lights; we cannot now reduce it to a system, simply because it never was system-

atized by a priesthood like that of Rome. It varied over the whole of Hellas, and different forms of it confront us even within the walls of a single πόλις. And such material as we have to work on is extremely difficult to deal with. Records of worship in inscriptions are indeed increasing in number, but they are still few and fragmentary; literary allusions are often obscure; the mythological key is exceedingly difficult to fit into the lock.

It is true enough that in standard works like those of Schömann, Hermann, Lobeck, Preller, and Maury, a vast amount of material has been brought together, and in Roscher's *Mythological Lexicon* this material is now being sifted and made more easily accessible, and also largely increased by the results of more recent discoveries. But none of these works have ever been translated into English. Parts both of Hermann and Schömann have appeared in an English form, but not those which deal with religion. And though our younger scholars very quickly acquire a working knowledge of German, when once they are free from the trammels of examination, it must be confessed, on both sides of the Atlantic, that we are sorely in need of a really good book on this subject in our own tongue. We have valuable fragments, but nothing comprehensive. Sir Charles Newton, Professor Jebb, Mr. Pater, and several others, have contributed, and recently Miss Harrison has produced a volume of real importance. Scattered up and down Professor Freeman's new *History of Sicily* are many useful facts and suggestions bearing on the religious ideas of the Sicilian Greeks. It is possible, and most earnestly to be hoped, that a collection of representative religious inscriptions may appear ere long, compiled by the one English scholar most amply qualified to edit it. But as yet there is no comprehensive attempt to bring the Greek religion before us as a whole; and we may welcome all the more kindly any scholarly and sympathetic essay towards a better understanding of any one side of it.

The book under review is just such an essay, or series of essays. It is scholarly, because its author has Greek literature at his fingers' ends, and knows how to go to work upon it; and it is sympathetic, because he knows and loves both Greece and the Greeks. We may get the scholarship at home, but it may be doubted whether we can get the sympathy without something more than a hurried journey to Greece. Mr. Dyer was a student of the American School

at Athens, and it is impossible to read his book without feeling the immense advantages which these Schools offer to scholars, by bringing them into contact with their fellow-workers of other nationalities, as well as by giving them the chance of making themselves at home in the country whose history or thought they are studying. Such a book as Mr. Dyer's could not possibly have been written without a prolonged residence in Greece: and though it is not a product of the British School, we may venture to think that it will help to convince the British public that there is really something in the movement which that ill-supported institution represents in this country.

The book consists of eight lectures given in the United States after Mr. Dyer's return from Greece. These are addressed to students rather than to professors, and matters of research are wisely relegated to appendices, or are simply hinted at in suggestive notes. The general object of the lecturer is to inspire sympathy with one particular aspect of Greek religion, by carrying the reader to certain famous sites which have recently been the scenes of excavation. As Professor Freeman has lately made us feel at home in the Greek sites of Sicily, so Mr. Dyer takes us to Icaria, to Eleusis, to Delphi, Epidaurus, and Delos, and compels us to share the enthusiasm which he drew from the scenery and the classical remains which excavators have brought to light. His enthusiasm is genuine and delightful, and the language in which he expresses it is full of a certain honest fervour, which, in spite of an occasional tendency to be rhetorical, seems exactly to answer its purpose of rousing interest and sympathy. It is clear that Mr. Dyer's mind is naturally rather poetical than critical; it may even be said that his feeling occasionally gets a little the better of his reasoning. But it is exactly feeling that we want just now, in an age when we are almost overwhelmed with critical detail in every department of antiquity. It is a real pleasure to put the critical spirit clean away for once, and to drink full draughts of exhilarating Greek air from each successive chapter of this book.

The aspect of Greek religion to which Mr. Dyer has almost entirely confined himself is one about which most of us have a very scanty knowledge. The ideas of immortality, of the mystery of suffering, of holiness, of purification in a spiritual as well as in a ritualistic sense, of comfort in trouble—bodily and mental—coming from a divine source, are all il-

lustrated in the worship of the deities whom he selects for study. The reader is made sensible of the force of a certain under-current of Greek religious feeling, which had its source partly in a primitive nature-worship, partly in the later feeling of kinship or unity with nature. This force was one acting rather on the people than on the aristocracy, and it therefore does not make itself felt either in literature or politics until comparatively late. There is little trace of it in Homer. The fierce Homeric deities, of whom Mr. Gladstone complains that they were all behind Eumæus in goodness, were not those who really ruled the hearts of the mass of Greek 'folk.' 'The quality of Greek deities,' says Mr. Dyer, 'was that of *mercy*'; and in order to understand this we must leave Homer, and see what can be learnt from Demeter and Dionysus, Apollo and his son (or double) Aesculapius, and even Aphrodite herself, at the shrines where they ministered some strange and unfathomable comfort, not only to the rich and noble, but to all who sought their help.

This leading idea, that the Greeks conceived of their gods as merciful, and as a consequence that they had a religion not so far removed from our own as we are apt to fancy it, is enunciated in the introductory lecture and worked out in the others. The reader should therefore, when he has finished the book, go back to the first chapter, and consider whether the illustrations have confirmed the thesis. He will probably come to the conclusion that they have done so in great measure, and that the most famous shrines in Greece were seats of something approaching to pure and undefiled religion; and he may also conclude that relics of savage custom, such as Mr. Lang delights to discover in Greece, had no more really to do with the religious ideas of the later Greek, than the survivals of Paganism in the Roman Catholic Church have to do with the Christianity it represents.

Mr. Dyer naturally starts with the Eleusinian deities. With Demeter he has a comparatively easy task. He wishes to show that she was a tender, loving, homely deity, the friend of all women who have had sorrow like her own; he therefore puts Homer aside, analyses the Homeric hymn (after Wegener), and passes thence to the Cnidian statues discovered by Sir C. Newton. The exposition of the hymn is perhaps a little wanting in clearness, for Mr. Dyer's power clearly does not lie so much in treating mythological difficulties, as in enforcing his own impressions. But the value of the

chapter lies in the lessons drawn from the statues. Here, as throughout the book, the power of the Greek to purify and ennoble rude ideas is brought out with skill, and with that touch of imagination which illumines the whole book. The scientific critic may possibly deride; but if we are to learn anything from archaeology about the Greeks as human beings, we must have teachers of imagination as well as knowledge. This lecture, taken in this light, is a most useful commentary on the article in Roscher's *Lexicon*.

Before we pay a visit to the most famous site of Demeter's worship we are taken to Icaria, the earliest scene of the cult of Dionysus in Attica, which has been investigated by the American School. Mr. Dyer does not tell us much of what was found there (though he has placed the beautiful ivy-wreath on the cover of his book), but he draws inspiration from the scene. We follow Dionysus from Thrace to Icaria, and from Icaria to Eleusis, and mark how he undergoes 'a triple probation,' never indeed losing his wildest traits altogether, yet gradually becoming changed under the magic influence of the Greek into the 'god-head of the widest and best worship known to the best spirits in the best days of the best community in Hellas.' Naturally enough the details of this transformation are as baffling to Mr. Dyer as to every one else. Dionysus would not explain himself to the Greek, much less can he be explained by the modern. The Thracian god of the nether-world, where alone existence is real, becomes the god of all *real* things (p. 96), i.e. wine, water, fire, and flashing gold; and so he passes to Greece as a fluid deity of many sides, such as rhythmic motion, poetry, prophecy, and inspiration. But when Mr. Dyer thus tries to trace a single current in the growth of this bewildering god, he does so with an obvious feeling that he is trying to solve the insoluble. But he so far becomes possessed of the god, that he contrives in his very struggles to impress us with some real sense of his extraordinary nature. And this impression he fixes by an elaborate and most instructive analysis of the *Bacchæ* of Euripides, at the end of his fourth lecture; not forgetting his main thesis, but showing how amid all the wild frenzy of the Bacchic worship, there is still an element of mercy and humanity in the god, and how it was even possible for a Christian poet (Nonnus) to find in his worship a foreshadowing of 'the mysteries of faithful sorrowing.'

While still upon the cult of Dionysus, Mr. Dyer incidentally touches on a point of great historical interest. In a useful note (p. 125) he has put together the heads of evidence for the connexion of Pisistratus with the organized Bacchic worship at Athens, improving on a paper by Otto Ribbeck, which appeared as far back as 1869. Pisistratus had a special connexion with the hill-men of Attica, among whom the worship of Dionysus first took root; if therefore it can be shown that the organization of the Dionysiac festivals was his work, we may look on it as a victory of the religion of the people over that of the aristocratic clan. The point needs more ample working out than Mr. Dyer had space for; the religious history of Attica in the sixth century, when the Demos, aided by the *τύραννος*, was gradually breaking down the exclusiveness of the old gentile associations, has never been adequately investigated. Even the genius of De Coulanges has missed the point here. One thing at least seems certain—that the century in which Epimenides, Solon, and Pisistratus worked for Athens, saw some re-construction of the religious system; and as in Greece religious and political development everywhere go hand in hand, we need not be surprised to find that this change consisted of the admission into the state calendar of popular worships of an individualistic type, as distinguished from the strictly local worships which were the property of aristocratic families. An obvious parallel may be found at Rome in the development of plebeian worships in the third and fourth centuries.

Mr. Dyer's last three lectures are perhaps hardly so interesting as the earlier ones; they deal with three distinct deities and sites, instead of with a group of deities eventually brought together at a single site (Eleusis), and especially in the last, on Apollo and Delos, we finish the chapter with a great desire for more on the same subject. We may hope that more will ere long be given us; for Mr. Dyer manifestly has the power of making us understand what are really the fruits of work such as that of M. Homolle at Delphi and Delos. Even as they stand, these chapters are of real educational value, so greatly do we need some one to tell our young scholars what archaeologists are really doing. And in each of them Mr. Dyer continues to enforce

his main thesis, that the religion of the Greeks was real, and that their gods were merciful. In that on Aesculapius, which takes us for a too brief visit to the health-giving site above Epidaurus, he endeavours to show that religion and the science of medicine worked hand in hand. In that on Aphrodite, the epithet *Sosandra* is insisted on, as representing a beneficent aspect of the goddess which has not been sufficiently noticed. This last indeed seems to us the weakest of all the lectures, for the author is of course embarrassed about the vexed question of the origin of the goddess, and we are glad when he returns at the end to show how the Eastern conception of her, be it Phenician or Hittite, became purified and ennobled in the mind of the wonderful Greek. This chapter is followed by three appendices, the third at least of which shows that Mr. Dyer can undertake a difficult piece of research with success, and can bring to bear on it a vast amount of reading both ancient and modern.

We conclude with a single note on the view of Greek religion which the book enforces. Mr. Dyer earnestly entreats us in his first chapter to banish from our minds all modern religious ideas, if we would understand those of the Greeks. Truly the advice is good, for how, for example, can we otherwise ever hope to reconcile the Dionysus of the Mysteries with the Dionysus whom Aristophanes' audience delighted to see made an object of sublime ridicule? Yet one may ask how far Mr. Dyer's own views of the 'piety' of the Greeks (the word is his own) are not reflections from our modern sunlight. We can only see in the light which is given us. But if the attempt to rid ourselves of modern notions is a hopeless one, it is at least consoling to reflect that there is a certain unity in the history of religion, as in all other history; and that the Greeks *sought* at least, at certain times and places, to get from their religion something not far removed from that comfort and consolation which we expect from ours. *Seekers* they were essentially, as Adolf Holm so truly says in the preface to his *History of Greece*; and as St. Paul himself recognized this fact at Athens, we perhaps need not too hastily conclude that their world of religious thought was wholly different from our own.

W. WARDE FOWLER.