

Review

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A *Book of German Verse from Luther to Liliencron*. Edited, with Introduction, Outlines of German Versification and Notes. By H. G. FIEDLER. Oxford: Clarendon Press. 1916. 8vo. lxiv + 394 pp.

This useful anthology is about half the size of the author's *Oxford Book of German Verse*. It contains sufficient material to form a very acceptable text-book for University classes. The omission of names like Neander, Brockes, Feuchtersleben, Dreves, Allmers, Leuthold, etc. is not a matter for much regret. New numbers, notably Meyer's *Der gleitende Purpur* and Simrock's *Der Rattenfänger von Hameln*, are very welcome. We regret the retention of comparatively immature work like Schiller's *Die Schlacht* and *An die Freude*, especially when *Das Lied von der Glocke* and *Die Erwartung* had to be cut out. The intention is obvious, but one really cannot, in a book of this compass, give any idea of the development even of the greater poets. The Volkslied is somewhat sparsely represented, and Mörike has been reduced from twenty-eight to twelve numbers. The compression, of course, had to be accomplished somehow, and on the whole it is ably done. We would suggest, for a second edition, a few examples from Liliencron's successors, notably Nietzsche, Dehmel and Hofmannsthal. The notes are the work of a skilled hand. Some few are superfluous: 'güld'nen = goldenen'; 'die Strasse ziehen = auf der Strasse gehen'; 'erbleichen = sterben'; 'Sünden erlassen = Sünden vergeben'; 'den Schöpfer dein = deinen Schöpfer'; but on the whole the editor gives just what is needed, accurately and without wasting words. The introductory sketch of the growth of the German lyric forms interesting reading. That on German metre, which differs, as the author says, in many points from the traditional view, will probably be received with some reserve. The stumbling-block to many will be the extent to which Fiedler carries the use of Auftakt. German blank verse is to him, without exception, 'ein fünftaktiger Vers mit Auftakt.' He scans Lessing's line

thus:  $\begin{array}{c} \text{Von Vorurteilen freien Liebe nach} \\ \times / ' \times / ' \times / ' \times / ' \times / ' \end{array}$

In lyrical measures, also, Fiedler introduces Auftakt wherever possible, and consequently dispenses with, or changes radically, what the old metricists called the iambic line. His reason for so doing is that the old system leads 'zu einem unnatürlichen Zerreißen der Wörter.' That, we think, is an exaggerated description of ordinary division of syllables. The examples quoted by Fiedler generally support his view, but as many more could be quoted against it. Division of syllables, in fact, cannot be avoided, and it is not so serious a matter as an unnatural division of words, as in Fiedler's scansion of the line :

Mein Vater, mein Vater, und hörest du nicht  
 × / ' ×    × / ' ×    × / ' ×    × / ' ×

There are two points, we think, which Prof. Fiedler has not sufficiently

considered. First, there is an inherent, perhaps subtle, but very important difference between the iambic and the trochaic measures of the great poets. We see them passing, in the same poem, from the one to the other consciously and with telling effect. We hold that so-called iambic movement, even in its simplest form, as in the beat of a hammer on an anvil, is different both in itself and in its effect upon the ear, from so-called trochaic movement. And this difference is not adequately or correctly represented by saying that the one measure has *Auftakt*, while the other is without it. In the second place a system of German metre cannot disregard historical practice. When, for example, Schiller frankly speaks of the blank verse of his *Don Carlos* and *Wallenstein* as 'Die Iamben,' is it scientific or helpful to say, 'Oh, no, these are not iambs, but *fünftaktige Verse mit Auftakt*'? We cannot always find out how a poet scanned his lines, but when we do know, then that settles the question for most lovers of poetry.

JOHN LEES.

ABERDEEN.

*Goethe's Poems.* Selected and annotated, with a Study of the Development of Goethe's Art and View of Life in his Lyrical Poetry. By MARTIN SCHÜTZE. Boston: Ginn and Co. 1916. 8vo. lxxx + 277 pp.

This selection of Goethe's poems is arranged in a capricious order under such groupings as 'The Twelve Greatest Songs,' 'Songs of Individual Import,' 'Gesellige Lieder,' 'Folksongs,' 'Narrative Poems' (beginning with ballads and ending with *Alexis und Dora*), 'Odes' (which include the *Elegie*), 'Man and the Universe' (including poems of all kinds and periods), 'Sprüche,' etc. To say nothing of the mixture of English and German titles, this scheme leads to chaos in the study of Goethe's development. The reason given by the editor is that 'the imaginative and spontaneous reader who is forced to travel by the chronological road is fatigued before he completes the first stage of his journey.' In that case he had better leave the serious study of Goethe alone. Most readers, we should fancy, will be more fatigued by the eighty pages of Schütze's Introduction. All through the book the author's language is frequently non-English, frequently unintelligible. Speaking of Goethe in the social milieu of Lili Schöнемann, he says, 'He was often imposed upon and silenced.' Is the writer thinking of *imponieren*? He calls Mignon an 'exquisite waif' and the 'guiltless result of an offence against nature.' *Hermann und Dorothea* is a 'burgher idyl.' He speaks of 'Goethe's gift of assimilating and transforming into beauty the intimations and failures of others.' Does 'intimations' stand for *Eingebungen*? Contrasting the songs of the Strassburg and the Weimar periods he says of the latter, 'Less momentous in substance, though not in subjects, they push further the subjective pressure of their modes of statement.' Or again, 'Goethe has not