

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 Odes of Pindar *The Odes of Pindar*, including the principal Fragments. With an Introduction and an English translation by Sir John Sandys (Loeb Classical Series). London: William Heinemann; New York: The Macmillan Company, 1915. 5s.

W. M. L. Hutchinson

The Classical Review / Volume 31 / Issue 3-4 / May 2017, pp 98 - 100
DOI: 10.1017/S0009840X00008878, Published online: 27 October 2009

Link to this article: http://journals.cambridge.org/abstract_S0009840X00008878

How to cite this article:

W. M. L. Hutchinson (1917). *The Classical Review*, 31, pp 98-100 doi:10.1017/S0009840X00008878

Request Permissions : [Click here](#)

rejected. If Ithaca is 'furthest of all to the west,' and distinguished from the other three, the meaning of ἀμφί cannot be pressed against the Leucas-hypothesis. There are islands to the east of Santa Maura and also to the south of it. As the identification of Dulichium with Leucas, proposed by Bunbury and now adopted by Mr. Shewan, is becoming fashionable, it will be well to add a word against it. The three islands are contrasted with Ithaca in α 245 and ι 21: it is plain then they are the νῆσοι πρὸς Ἠλίδος contrasted with Ithaca in φ 346. Now

so impartial a witness as Dr. Barclay Head in his *Historia Nummorum* describes the coins of historic Cephalonia, Ithaca and Zacynthus under the heading 'Islands off Elis.' Secondly in § 334 the Thesprotian ship is said to pass Ithaca on its way to Dulichium: the story is a fiction, but the local colouring must be correct. Thirdly Dulichium is plainly the larger island: it supplies fifty-two suitors (π 247). Cephalonia has 689 sq. kil., Santa Maura only 287.

G. C. RICHARDS.

Oriel College.

REVIEWS

THE ODES OF PINDAR.

The Odes of Pindar, including the principal Fragments. With an Introduction and an English translation by Sir JOHN SANDYS (Loeb Classical Series). London: William Heinemann; New York: The Macmillan Company, 1915. 5s.

THAT this translation is scholarly and dignified goes without saying. Perhaps more could not be looked for under the restrictions imposed by the plan of the Loeb Series, which places text and translation side by side and allows only the irreducible minimum of notes. Excellent for the purposes of the series, this plan doubly handicaps the translator of Pindar. He must be fairly literal to avoid perplexing readers who have the Greek before their eyes, even when the letter killeth understanding; and he is denied the full commentary without which his author must remain often unintelligible, and oftener dull, to the modern mind. The unique splendour of Pindar's poetry is of course incommunicable in any version; but, apart from that, his most baffling quality is his unique allusiveness. Working under the τεθμός of Lyric, he invented and gradually perfected a 'method of allusion,' so to name it; and deals perpetually in references to mythology, to proverbial philosophy,

to the whole range of Hellenic life and ideas, which for us ἐρμένεων χατίζει, though we cannot doubt that they were readily grasped by the public he wrote for. Otherwise, however successful in other branches of poetry, he could never have been a 'best seller' as a writer of Epinicians.

It is, or was, the fashion to assume that Pindar must have been as intrinsically difficult to his contemporaries as he is to us; and that they followed his train of thought only by help of clues in the shape of 'signal-words,' 'metrical respersions,' and the like; in fact, that he used a sort of cypher, the key to which they possessed, but we need to rediscover. But the more patiently and perseveringly one reads him, the more it seems that the true 'Open, Sesame' to Pindar must be sought in another direction; at any rate, that the *via prima salutis* is to reconstruct, as far as may be, the mental standpoint of his audience, and to ask ourselves continually, 'What would this passage have conveyed to the average fifth-century Greek?' And the answer, in many cases, will depend precisely on our seizing the significance of an allusion, which is sometimes given in a single phrase, or even a single word. Take, for illustration, the word γαστήριμαργος in *Ol.* I. 81.

Following Myers, who followed Paley, Sir John Sandys translates *γαστρίμαργος* by 'cannibal.' The word, of course, means no such thing, and, if it did, would make nonsense of the context. For the gods did not know it was human flesh that Tantalus offered them; and to accuse Demeter, who alone ate of it before the truth was discovered, of 'cannibalism,' could occur to nobody. Pindar might as well say, 'I refuse to call Thyestes, or Harpagus, a cannibal.' So would everyone else. What, then, does he refuse, with abhorrence, to call the goddess—implying, at the same time, that others did call her so, on the strength of the story he rejects? Simply a 'greedy-belly'—or any other strong term you like for a glutton. The point being that, according to the tale, Demeter had 'wolfed' a whole shoulder of Pelops before the other gods had time to begin their meal. That was why they had to supply him with his famous 'ivory shoulder,' on restoring him to life. There are other traces in myth of a certain greediness being popularly attributed to the Earth goddesses. Persephone, *e.g.*, could not resist eating the fatal pomegranate in the Nether World. Now, remembering the prominence of the Demeter and Kore cult in Sicily, and that Hiero himself was their hereditary priest, we can see the special relevance in this Ode of Pindar's protest against the accepted Pelops legend. He throws it overboard, and invents another version, because it involves the abominable assumption that Demeter was guilty of *γαστρίμαργία*—a vice more repulsive to the Greeks than to us, by whom the virtue of temperance has been so curiously limited that we never think of denying it to the most voracious teetotaller.

Points such as these—and they are legion—cannot be brought out except by ample explanatory notes. It is, then, no disparagement to the present translation to say that it will not help English readers to a fuller comprehension of Pindar's thought; what they will find in it is a version in style resembling that of Myers, but more faithful and less florid, which can be read with pleasure and interest either

alongside the original or independently. This, one takes it, was the object in view; and, if so, the result is thoroughly satisfactory.

A few criticisms may be offered on particular renderings:

1. *Ol. II.* *κεινὰν παρὰ δίαίταν*, 'to gain a scanty livelihood,' *pace* most editors, is indefensible. (α) This use of *παρὰ* is unexampled in Pindar; (β) *κεινός* means 'vain,' 'fruitless,' not 'scanty'; (γ) *δίαίτα* means 'way of living,' not 'means of living,' in ordinary Greek. Read *κείναν*, and translate 'in yonder happy home.' For *δίαίτα* meant also 'dwelling-place,' 'home,' and so came to mean *τόπος ἐν ᾧ εἰς διάγομεν* (Schol. *Nic. Eth.* I. 6. 3). We may suspect that in Orphic or Pythagorean parlance it denoted specially the Underworld Paradise, and does so here. (*Cf.* Aristophon, *Pythagoristia* ap. Diog. Laert. VII., "Ἐφη δὲ καταβὰς εἰς διαίταν τῶν κάτω | ἰδεῖν ἐκάστον. . . .")

2. *Ol. VI.* 60. *αἰτέων λαοτρόφον τιμάν τιν' ἐᾶ κεφαλᾷ*, 'praying that his head might be crowned with honour and with the care of the people.' This misses the force of *ἐᾶ κεφαλᾷ*, 'to be his alone'; *cf.* *Ol. VII.* 66 (*γαίαν*) *ἐᾶ κεφαλᾷ . . . γέρας ἔσσεσθαι*. There, as here, the context suggests that the phrase may have been a formula in solemn covenants. *τιμάν* is not 'honour,' but 'a lordship,' or 'province,' like *γέρας* above; while *λαοτρόφος* is 'folk-nurturing,' *i.e.* well-peopled (*cf.* *πόλιν λαοτρόφον, Ol. V.* 4).¹

3. *Ol. VII.* 5. *συμποσίου χάριν*, 'for the sake of them that sit at meat with him' ('at drink with him,' Gildersleeve). This quotation from St. Matt. xiv. 9 does not strike one as happy, even if the Scholiast is right in taking *συμποσίου* of the guests present, which may be doubted. It suggests that the host, like Herod, acted under fear of censure from them.

4. *Pyth. III.* 20. *ἤρατο τῶν ἀπείοντων*. 'She was enamoured of an absent love,' is quite wrong, as the context makes obvious. The *δαίμων ἕτερος* (l. 34)

¹ We have the same conception of Heroic kingship in *Ol. IX.* 100—*πόλιν δ' ὄπασεν λαόν τε δαίταν*. In *Ol. VI.* Apollo responds to the prayer of Tamos for such kingship by summoning him *πάγκοινον ἐς χώραν* (109).

which led Koronis to sin is certainly not a 'hateful doom'; perhaps the nearest we can get to it is 'her evil genius' (see 6 *infra*).

5. *Pyth.* IV. 227. The subject of *πέλασσεν* is not Jason, but Aeetes, clearly. L. 293, *εὔχεται ποτὲ οἶκον ἰδεῖν*, can hardly mean 'the exile *ανοιθεῖ* that he shall see his home again.' Such an assertion would be utterly out of keeping with what precedes, and ill-calculated to conciliate Arcesilas.

6. *Nem.* V. 40. 'The natal star,' for *πότμος συγγενής*, is perhaps a little misleading. A man's *πότμος συγγενής*, or *δαίμων*, is the Greek equivalent of the Roman 'Genius,' and *συγγενής* is simply 'born along with.' 'Birth-Spirit' partly gives the idea; but here again translation must fail without a note.

7. *Nem.* VI. 25 f. *ἕτερον οὐ τινα οἶκον ἀπεφάνατο πυγμαχία <πλέονων> | ταμίαν στεφάνων μυχῶ Ἑλλάδος ἀπάσας.* 'No other house hath the contest in wrestling (*sic*) proclaimed the possessor of more crowns in this inmost place of Hellas.' The sense is missed by neglecting the metaphor. The Bassids are stewards to that wealthy dame, Pygmachia, who *makes them give account* from time to time of the crowns in their storechamber. With *ταμίαν* and *μυχῶ* close by, it is strange enough that the force of *ἀπεφάνατο* should be

overlooked; but it is almost incredible that editors and translators should agree to take *μυχῶ* with "Ἑλλάδος ἀπάσας. Yet they do, only differing as to whether Nemea, Corinth or Aegina is the *μυχός*.¹ 'Ἑλλ. ἀπ. rounds off Pindar's 'mighty vaunt,' which is that the Bassids' crowns are more than all Hellas besides can show in any one clan.

The treatment of the text is—most wisely under the circumstances—eminently conservative. Of 'the few emendations for the first time admitted into the text,' Bergk's τ' *ελαφρόν* (for *τε λάβρον*, *Nem.* VIII. 46) commends itself least. It is an anti-climax after the mournful and solemn *οὐ μοι δυνατόν*, just preceding. One could wish such an outrage to Pindar as *δρθιον ὄρυσαι* (*Ol.* IX. 109) had not passed unchallenged. Sir John Sandys has made several proposals for filling the lacunae in some of the recently discovered Fragments; and the inclusion of these Fragments, along with a translation, adds not a little to the interest and value of this book.

W. M. L. HUTCHINSON.

¹ I ought to have excepted Fennell, whom I have looked at since writing the above. He writes 'the phrase is intolerable'; and explains the whole sentence as I do, noting that *ἀπεφάνατο* is 'gnomic aorist and causal middle.'

GALEN ON THE NATURAL FACULTIES.

Galen on the Natural Faculties. With an English Translation by ARTHUR JOHN BROCK, M.D. (Loeb Classical Library). One vol. 12mo. Pp. xxxix+339. London: Heinemann; New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1916.

THIS volume is one more instance of that intelligent interest in Galen, and new understanding of him, which during the last half-century has followed the destruction of a servile idolatry. If we overlook a little mathematics, a little astronomy, and some Arabian chemistry, Galen, who flourished under Marcus Aurelius, was the last, as with all his

faults he was one of the greatest, men of science until Roger Bacon. Two or three editions of single treatises of Galen I have noticed before in the *C.R.* and have taken occasion to point out the need of a modern edition of his works with full and constructive commentaries. For the history of science, literature, and philosophy the works of Galen are full of matter. With these studies philology must of course go hand in hand; but the labours of Helmreich and others (*Corpus Medicorum*—International Association of Academies) have already done much to establish a text which before could hardly be said to exist; the standard edition,