

P VERGILII MARONIS AENEIDOS LIBRI VII-VIII with a commentary by C.J. Fordyce O U P for the University of Glasgow, 1977. £7.95 ISBN 0-19-713309-6.

An 'Oxford Commentary' on Virgil's complete works, the second volume (by R.G. Austin) to cover *Aeneid* 1-6 and the third (by C.J. Fordyce) to cover the second half of the *Aeneid*, had been planned but *Deo aliter visum*: C.J. Fordyce died in September 1974, and Austin a few weeks later. The project was therefore abandoned, though it has certainly not been without fruit.

After the publication of his *Catullus* in 1961 (a work of very long gestation), C.J. Fordyce turned his attention to Virgil, and at his death had virtually completed his commentaries on Books 7, 8 and 9; Books 10 and 11 were fully drafted but awaited revision, while Book 12 had scarcely been started. John D. Christie, who often discussed the notes with Fordyce, has edited this volume, incorporating material from the draft commentaries on 9-11, and P.G. Walsh, Fordyce's successor in the Glasgow chair, has contributed a very useful introduction.

As a scholar Fordyce was exact and cautious, penetrating analysis rather than original interpretation being his forte. His critical powers were keen and incisive, and he had a profound knowledge of, and feel for, classical Latinity. This book, ably and unobtrusively edited by Christie, exhibits fully Fordyce's powers and virtues as expositor. The notes vary in extent from a line or two to substantial discussions of particular points. The touch is always sure. It is a great pity that the number of those able to savour the bouquet of this kind of learning has so greatly lessened and will continue to do so. The commentary is full of good things. *quae quibus anteferam?*

As models of lucid and instructive annotation one could cite: 7.1 (*Aeneia nutrix*), on the use of the possessive adjective in place of the genitive as a Latin idiom; 7.11 (*inaccessos* – 'unapproachable'), on negated participial adjectives; 7.28 on *lentus*; 7.129, on incomplete lines; 7.491 on repetitions and jingles; 7.563, on the literary narrative device *est locus . . . hic*; 8.358, on the idiomatic use of the pluperfect defining a past state as prior to a past event which is not expressed; 8.382, on the ending of the line (*sanctum mihi numen*) – and many more passages. There is a highly useful appendix on alliteration. On *quandoquidem* (7.547) a reference to Palaemon's use of this word (*Ecl.* 3.55) with some comment on it would have been welcome.

This work will do much to stimulate interest amongst those who still care for Latin studies in books of the *Aeneid* which have tended to be less popular. We are very grateful for the *pietas* of Mr Christie and Professor Walsh which has given us this splendid volume.

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Obituary: Brooks Otis

It is sad to report the death in July, 1977, of Professor Brooks Otis, one of the greatest Virgilian scholars of our time, author of *Virgil, A Study in Civilised Poetry*, a book whose influence on Virgilian scholarship in recent times has been profound, and of many other studies on Virgil, Ovid, and patristic Latin writers. His death occurred only a few months after his retirement from the Paddison Chair of Latin at the University of N. Carolina, an event marked by a colloquium at Chapel Hill at which the Virgilian Society was represented by Professor R.D. Williams, who gave the post-prandial lecture on Virgil.

