

## Glory

Of course there is glory. There is no need, after Viktor Pöschl, Michael Putnam and others, to go again over the imagery. But we may pick out four moments. The identification of Turnus with Dido at the beginning of the book (5 cf. 4,1) is a dramatic masterstroke. Reminiscences of book 4 recur throughout: 37:4, 595; 54:4,1 etc.; 55:4,415; 56:4,314; 99:4,215; 400:4,449; 604 ff: 4,665 ff; 703:4,445; 868:4,280; 871:4,673 and point the effect. Aeneas's anguish at the broken truce is another moment quo ruitis? quaeve ista repens discordia surgit? (313). The echo of Horace Epod. 7,1 quo quo scelesti ruitis only makes it more poignant. Again, the prayers of Juno and promises of Jupiter are magnificently memorable:

sit Latium, sint Albani per saecula reges,  
sit Romana potens Itala virtute propago:  
occidit, occideritque sinas cum nomine Troia. (826-8)

And the ending is superb: Turnus's defiance non me tua fervida terrent/dicta, ferox; di me terrent et Iuppiter hostis (894-5); the brilliant dream-sequence; the skilful way in which the poet draws together the dramatic necessity for Turnus's death and the concept of a hero who pities by attributing the final killing to the spirit of Pallas. And who else would end an epic of national glory on the piteous passing of an enemy?

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## BOOK REVIEWS

LATIN READINGS: VOLUME 1, PROSE, VERSE and DRAMA (DCL 1201), 38/- (or 30/- to J.A.C.T. members), and VOX ROMANA - six passages from Virgil (DCL 503), 15/-. One copy of the text is supplied with each disc by the producers, Discourses Ltd., 10a High Street, Tunbridge Wells, Kent.

LATIN POETRY in VERSE TRANSLATION from the BEGINNINGS to the RENAISSANCE, ed. by L.R. Lind. Oxford University Press (Paperbacks series), 1967. 16/-.

VERGIL: EPIC and ANTHROPOLOGY, by W.F. Jackson Knight (John D. Christie - editor). George Allen and Unwin Ltd., 1967. 55/-.

THE STORY OF AENEAS, by Kenneth McLeish. HERITAGE of LITERATURE series. Messrs. Longmans, Green & Co. Ltd., 1968.

To the ancients the sound of what they wrote mattered greatly, a fact which we tend too often to overlook; our pupils usually make contact with Latin and Greek as written languages only. This situation the J.A.C.T. along with their publishers, Discourses Ltd., have set out to correct, and their recorded series of readings (by an excellent team of readers) is consequently to be welcomed very much. The attempt

has been made to recreate "something of the literary character of verse and prose of different periods and styles." Volume 1 contains passages from Cicero, Caesar, Livy, Tacitus, Plautus, Terence, Lucretius, Catullus, Virgil, Horace the Archipoet and L.P. Wilkinson (a Cambridge oration upon the presentation of Henry Moore, the sculptor, for an honorary degree). The Virgil passages on the second disc are all well chosen - Eclogue iv, 4-21; Georgics ii, 136-157; Georgics iv, 485-503; Aeneid v, 843-884; Aeneid vi, 450-471; Aeneid xii, 926-952. The pronunciation advocated by W.S. Allen in his "Vox Latina" (C.U.P., 1965) has been followed. How authentic this is we shall probably never know, but there are certainly some delightful sound patterns in these recordings. Otto Skutsch's rendering of part of the Archipoeta's Confessio is particularly memorable for its sepulchral resonance. It would have to be a very stolid class that would not happily respond to this kind of thing!

Professor Lind's anthology goes from Ennius to Richard Crashaw and a seventeenth century anonymous hymn, "O Deus, ego amo te" translated by Gerard Hopkins, by way of Ovid, Janus Vitalis Panormitanus and Politician. There is a useful introduction, and the book is rounded off with notes and a bibliography of the principal relevant works in English. Lind has made no fetish of modern translations, including versi by Lovelace, Jonson or Marvell etc. wherever they seemed not too quaint for modern taste. The present reviewer found especially impressive the verse translations of Propertius by Frances Fletcher (of whom we should like to know more). There is unfortunately, no room for a representative quotation. The book is aimed chiefly at the student of modern languages or the general amateur, but there is much in it to claim the classicist's attention.

J.D. Christie of Glasgow University has brought out for Allen & Unwin a revised edition of W.F. Jackson Knight's studies, "Vergil's Troy" (on the second book of the Aeneid), "Cumaean Gates" and "The Holy City of the East". The product of an ingenious mind, they contain much that is speculative, much that is controversial and much that is interestingly suggestive. The publishers and Mr Christie deserve our thanks for thus making available these three fascinating essays.

Kenneth McLeish's "The Story of Aeneas" in "The Heritage of Literature" series of Longmans, Green and Co. is a workmanlike prose abridgment of the Latin poem. The author will be happy if pupils will read it as a novel. His wish should in all probability be granted.

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Charles Rowan Beye: THE ILIAD, THE ODYSSEY AND THE EPIC TRADITION,  
Macmillan, London, 1968. Pp. viii-263. 25/-

It is regrettably but inescapably true that only a small proportion of the English-speaking world has any knowledge of Greek, but encouraging that so many of the remainder are willing to attempt the difficulties of appreciating the alien world of the Homeric epic. For these Greekless readers, Professor Beye's work, which first appeared in 1966 in the United States, provides a useful and helpful introduction. He explains to his readers the peculiar nature of oral poetic composition, outlines the background of Mycenaean culture, and elucidates some of

striking forms of Homeric narration before proceeding to an extended criticism of the Iliad and the Odyssey; he continues with a brief and sketchy chapter on the Aeneid and closes with a guide to an English bibliography of Homeric scholarship.

The author has set himself the task of treating the two Homeric epics as poems. and this task is not lightened by the existence of two main strands of Homeric scholarship, with which he deals in succession. In following one, we are concerned, as was Milman Parry, with the process of composition - the definition of the poet's own setting; in tracing the second, we consider the Iliad and the Odyssey in their effect on the contemporary reader. No happy resolution of the resulting dichotomy has yet been achieved, and it is much to Beye's credit that, in a work intended for the beginner, he does not attempt to gloss over the hiatus; a discerning student will surely ask himself whether the background to the poems has any appreciable effect upon Beye's criticisms of them.

In this book, the central doctrine of formulaic technique is laid out better than one would have thought possible without resort to the use of Greek. Nevertheless, the author does not seem to be very comfortable when describing the phenomena of the Greek language and several peripheral defects must alarm the linguist and prove misleading to a student learning Greek. His grasp of the difference between the syllabary of Linear B and the classical alphabet is marred by an inexact assessment of the merits of these two forms of writing. He gives a dangerous impression that Mycenaean is the ancestor-dialect of the classical Greek dialects. He states, as if it were typical, that a noun in Greek could appear in fourteen different forms: in the mixed dialect of the Homeric epic, the declension of naus does show such variation, but it is exceptional. These imprecisions sap confidence but do not materially lessen the usefulness of his exposition to the English reader.

When however he does cite allegedly Greek forms, the authority of the printed page may overwhelm the student with little Greek: "thetes", for example, is not an accurate representation of  $\theta\eta\tau\epsilon\varsigma$ ; and the wayward use of the mark of length is sufficiently apparent in the three forms, of frequent occurrence, "Athene", "Aretē" (the wife of Alkinoos), and "aretē" ('excellence').

It is however the exegesis of the Iliad and the Odyssey, which Beye rightly acknowledges to be the works of different poets, which both shows the author at his best and will be found most relevant by the student of comparative literature for whom he principally writes. Whatever his intention, the modern reader must approach these epics with a mind already prejudiced, consciously and unconsciously, by his knowledge of later literature, and it is particularly clear that this must be so for the reader of translations. His interest can best be nursed to full and independent life by drawing his attention to these facets of the Homeric epic which minimise the strangeness of the literary form. Beye therefore treats the Iliad rather as if it were a novel about the psychology of young men at war, albeit the warfare is rather strange to us, and he brings out the individuality of the principal personages, especially that of Diomedes, as the real determinants of the course of the epic. The very different ethos of the Odyssey is expounded as 'man's archetypal confrontation of woman's', and once more the criticism will have a direct appeal to those more familiar with contemporary literature.

These are Beye's principal themes, although he does not confine himself to these: he does make clear the great difference in narrative technique and the handling of time-sequence in the Odyssey as opposed to the Iliad, and shows an awareness of the probable presence of folk-tale elements in the Odyssey. He appears to under-estimate the importance of these folk-tale elements, partly because an over-emphasis would detract from the supremacy of the individual intelligence of the poet, active at all stages of the narrative; partly also, I suspect because the modern student is less likely to find the folkloristic approach sympathetic.

One may well question the advisability of suggesting that this exegesis is a true consideration of the epics as poems: it is clear that the nature of the verse cannot be fully rendered in English, and that Beye, who is content to use rather prosaic translations of the passages he quotes, has in effect treated them as works of prose literature. The inevitable inherent incompleteness of any consideration of poetry in translation requires strong emphasis. It is also particularly important that references accompanying translated passages, where the original is not given, should be accurate: I note the following errors: p. 46 for Il. 14. 361ff" read "Il.15.361ff"; p. 76, for "Il.2.48ff." read "Il. 2.488ff".

When Beye turns his attention to the Aeneid, it would appear that he has despaired of his students' willingness to read the text for themselves, in Latin or English. It is an unworthy sequel to his work on Homer - an imprecise encapsulation of knowledge for the lazy, on which it would be unfair to comment further than to remark that it will have no interest for readers of these Proceedings.

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#### OBITUARY

With the death of Mr. W.J. Moloney in February of this year the Virgil Society has lost a valued friend and supporter. He belonged to a generation which regarded a grounding in the Classics as a liberal education for life - not, as in our age of specialization, a training for a job. His career was in journalism; it began at the bottom of the ladder, and culminated in his appointment as Joint General Manager of Reuters, a post which he held during the darkest years of the Second World War. Throughout this career, and throughout his retirement, Latin poetry was never his business, but always his pleasure; in recent years he wrote a number of poems in elegiacs, and some in accentual verse, which were published in The Times at Christmas. On the occasion of his removing from a house called "Green Park" to one called "The" his friends received a change-of-address postcard as follows:

Dilecto viridi prato campoque relicto  
exiguae nidum nunc habitamus avis!

Along with his deep love of humanity there went a very lively Irish wit; this combination of humanitas and urbanitas divided his loyalties (about equally) between the Virgilians and the Horatians; but he gave vigorous support to all organizations supporting the Classics, and will be greatly missed by them all.

J.G.L.