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P E G A S U S

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Editorial

It is now nine years since Pegasus first appeared in the summer of 1964. Since that date our list of subscribers, both in the United Kingdom and abroad, has steadily increased and Pegasus now finds its way to Italy, Spain, Eire, Finland, Czechoslovakia, South Africa, the U.S.A., and Canada.

I should like to draw the attention of readers to the Society's forthcoming production of Seneca's Hippolytus and I trust that we shall receive the support of many of you.

My thanks to all who have contributed to Pegasus, especially to Mrs. Harris for her invaluable help in typing this edition, and to Pita Hart for her lively cover design.

P.Dominic de Prochnow.

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JAMES DUPORT'S CAMBRIDGE LECTURES ON THEOPHRASTUS

(This article is abbreviated from a lecture to the South-Western Branch of the Classical Association. Apologies are offered for a somewhat disjointed structure)

In the year 1712 a new edition of the Characters of Theophrastus appeared from the Cambridge Press, its editor being Peter Needham, a respectable scholar on whom Bentley looked with some favour. In his edition Needham included the text of a course of Lectures which had been given by James Duport, the Regius Professor of Greek from 1639 to 1654. The lectures were here printed for the first time from a manuscript of which Needham gives some account in his Preface. It belonged to John Moore, Bishop of Ely, and was catalogued in the Bishop's Library as the work of Thomas Stanley, the editor of Aeschylus. Needham had the use of this manuscript for his proposed edition and consulted Bentley about it. On internal evidence Bentley queried the ascription to Stanley and identified the lecturer as Duport. The manuscript is now in the University Library, whither it went when George II bought Bishop Moore's collection and presented it to the University.

Of Duport's life not much need be said. He was a son of Cambridge, being born in 1606 in the Lodge of Jesus College, where his father was Master. His school was Westminster, from which he entered Trinity with one of the Westminster scholarships in 1623. He graduated in 1627, and in the same year was elected a Fellow. After the regular three years he proceeded to the Master's degree and about the same time took orders. In 1635 he was Tutor of Trinity, and in 1639 was appointed Regius Professor of Greek. In conjunction with his Chair he held the ecclesiastical offices of Prebendary of Lincoln and Archdeacon of Stow from 1641. The following year saw the start of the Civil War, during which Cambridge was under the control of the Parliamentarians. Duport, though an uncompromising Royalist, was for some time left untroubled, retaining his Chair even after the Earl of Manchester's Visitation of the University in 1644. Ten years later the climate had changed, and in 1654 the Commissioners for Reforming the University compelled his resignation. But even so Trinity did not abandon him. Under its Puritan Master, Arrowsmith, it elected him one of the eight Senior Fellow and in 1655 he became Vice-Master. This virtual disregard of the Parliamentary Commission is noteworthy, and must imply a considerable respect for Duport's scholarship or his personal qualities or both. At the Restoration Duport recovered his Prebend at Lincoln, and was also appointed a Royal Chaplain. He refused to resume the Chair of Greek, and was succeeded by his pupil, Isaac Barrow. In 1664 he became Dean of Peterborough, and in 1668 was recalled to Cambridge as Master of Magdalene. In the following year he was Vice-Chancellor. He died at Peterborough in 1679 and is buried in the Cathedral.

Duport's published works are largely translation. He translated into Greek verse the Book of Job, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, the Song of Solomon, and the Psalms, and he also made a Greek translation

of the Anglican Prayer Book. In 1660 he published a compilation entitled Homeri Gnomologia, an odd book and characteristic of the cast of his mind. In it he extracts from the Iliad and Odyssey a collection of aphorisms or general truths. Each is then illustrated by parallel passages drawn from the whole range of ancient literature and from the Scriptures. His last book is personal and of greater interest. Throughout his life Duport was much addicted to verse composition in the ancient languages. He produced these pieces not only to celebrate formal academic occasions, but also to record the incidents of his daily life and to express his opinions and feelings. In 1676 he published a collection of them, a readable book which reveals much of his personality, his interests and his views on this and that.

What sort of man was Duport? Physically, we are told, he was of notably small stature, and this seems to have been something of a joke between himself and his friends. Of the quality of his mind something can be gathered from the encomium on him contained in the Inaugural Lecture of his pupil and successor in the Greek Chair, Isaac Barrow. Barrow's stately Latin periods celebrate his great learning, his industry, and the conscientious care with which he discharged his offices, but behind the formalities of the occasion one can sense a strong personal feeling of affection and gratitude. From his own writings one has the impression of a small ebullient, robin-like man, agile and quick-witted, a trifle choleric perhaps, but genial withal, one who touched life at many points and enjoyed the contacts. And this quality of enjoyment pervades his scholarship. By temperament he was a collector rather than a systematic and analytical critic, and the gusto with which he deploys his stores of learning and the verbal exuberance of his exposition is sometimes engagingly comic. He was seldom content with one word where two were available, and the habit of puns and verbal clowning, which so distressed his biographer Monk, suggests perhaps a scholarship which was in some sort a form of play. By this I do not mean that his scholarship was less than serious. He was an immensely learned man, but learning was his delight and not his task. And if it sometimes seems comic, there are certain turns of phrase in his lectures which suggest that he too shared the joke. What else can be said of Duport? He was addicted to smoking tobacco. He was an angler, a friend as well as a disciple of Isaac Walton. And he had an irrational dislike of the domestic cat. Mr. Pepys saw another side of Duport. On Feb. 8th 1663 he made an entry in his Diary: 'I walked to Whitehall.....and so to chappell, where there preached little Dr. Duport of Cambridge.....but though a great scholler, he made a most flat dead sermon, both for matter and manner of delivery, that ever I heard, and very long beyond his hour, which made it worse.'

One tries to form some picture of Duport and his class. Who formed his audience and how large was it? The average age of entry to the University at this date was about 16, though there are examples of earlier entry. Nicholas Ferrar entered Clare at 13, and Bentley was 15 when he arrived at St. John's in 1676. Was Duport's class composed of these juvenile undergraduates? The answer to this involves the curiously anomalous position of Greek in the Cambridge curriculum at this date. One sometimes needs to remind oneself that the subject which we call Classics was as yet unknown. The Latin language was there, but

less as a subject for study than as the medium in which the whole life of the place was conducted; it was used for lectures, for the disputations, for the official business of the University, and in theory at least for conversation. The assumption was that all entrants to the University already had an adequate control of the language. Latin authors were also there, embedded in the rhetoric course, either as text-books, like Quintilian or Cicero's treatises on oratory, or else as models for imitation. But the history, literature and civilization of the ancient world as a subject or self-contained discipline had no place in the statutory curriculum. The dead hand of the Middle Ages still lay heavy on the University in the seventeenth century, and the statutes which Queen Elizabeth gave it in 1570 had done little to relieve the pressure. Basically they enforced with some modifications the ancient scholastic curriculum for the degree in Arts. It was to occupy seven years, four for the Bachelor's degree and another three for the Master's. And the four-year undergraduate course for the Bachelor's degree was to comprise Rhetoric in the first year, Dialectic in the second and third, and Philosophy in the fourth. Greek had no place whatsoever in this course. Its statutory place was among the three subjects of the Bachelor's course leading after three years to the Master's degree.

But there was worse to follow. The Elizabethan statutes had required residence throughout the whole seven-year period of the Arts course, i.e. the Bachelors were to remain in Cambridge and study their three subjects including Greek. But in 1608 the Heads of Houses decided that these Bachelors could be more usefully employed in serving the parishes and schools of the country and that they were mature enough to carry on their studies for the Master's degree under their own steam. To evade the statute they now resorted to what in academic parlance was called an Interpretation of it, and with the aid of this device satisfied themselves that it should be interpreted or understood in the opposite sense to what it actually said. Bachelors henceforth were not required to reside or attend lectures in Cambridge. Some, no doubt, would do so - those, for example, who were elected to Fellowships or had other forms of occupation in the University, and some perhaps who simply wished to remain. But no doubt the majority took themselves off. Now if these two pieces of academic legislation are conjoined, the result is an elegant dilemma, disastrous, one might suppose, for Greek studies. The undergraduates were not to be taught Greek, the Bachelors were indeed to be taught Greek, but were no longer there to learn it. A plain man might deduce that Cambridge had rid itself of Greek entirely, and that the Regius Chair was a particularly enviable sinecure. But academic legislation is no sphere for a plain man, and theings were not that bad. Greek was in fact taught at Cambridge, and the solution is to be found in the division of functions between the University and the Colleges. So far we have been considering the University. But Cambridge was by now an aggregate and almost a federation of Colleges. The University and its statues controlled the granting of degrees and specified the requirements for them, but during the sixteenth century the Colleges and their tutors had increasingly usurped the real work of teaching and determined what was actually taught. And whereas in theory the University maintained the ancient scholastic curriculum of the Middle Ages and imposed it for its degrees, the Colleges were humanistic in outlook.

There is in fact plenty of evidence that Greek was actively taught at the undergraduate stage in the Colleges. Indeed some College statutes were in flat contradiction to the University statutes. Both Clare (1551) and Trinity (1560) provided Greek teaching and made it compulsory for all undergraduates who had learned the Greek grammar. Furthermore the Trinity statute discloses that Greek was not only taught internally, but that undergraduates were sent to the lectures of the Regius Professor. And there is evidence that this actually happened. Sir Symonds D'Ewes, for example, tells us in his autobiography that as an undergraduate at St. John's in 1620 he attended the lectures of Andrew Downes, Duport's predecessor. Or again at a later date Barrow, who followed Duport in the Greek Chair complains in 1662 of the mortifying attendance by undergraduates at his lectures on Sophocles. Clearly at this date undergraduates were not only permitted to attend the Professorial lectures, but Barrow felt himself entitled to their attendance.

The conclusion from all this would be that Duport's audience in the mid seventeenth century would consist of any Bachelors who in spite of the dispensing Interpretation of 1608 were remaining in residence, and of such undergraduates as chose to attend or had been instructed by their Colleges to do so. The age-range of the two groups might, therefore, be anywhere between fourteen and twenty-three. Nor is it impossible that some senior members of the University might be present.

One would wish to know how long Duport's course lasted and how much ground he covered at each lecture. The bulk of the lectures is formidable - about 300 pages of small print to be delivered in Latin. This last obstacle need not be exaggerated. Latin was still in some degree a spoken language and these people had been well trained in its use. Oral Latin was statutory at Cambridge for all purposes, including meals in Hall, and though some laxity seems to have developed during the seventeenth century, Duport's auditors would have been able to follow his fairly simple Latin at the normal speed of speech without much difficulty. The total length of the course can be established with some certainty. Lectures at Cambridge were intermitted during Lent and Duport announces this respite when Lent approaches. He does this three times during the course. The lectures, therefore, occupied two full periods measured from Lent to Lent with something preceding the first Lent and something following the last. Now it seems reasonable that Duport would have begun the course at the opening of the academic year, i.e. the Michaelmas term. And since the lectures continued after the third reference to Lent, it looks as though they occupied a final summer term. Furthermore there is one clue which provides an absolute date for the course. At one point Duport compares the small Greek coins called χαλκοῖ to English Farthings. 'Like our farthings,' he says, 'which have now been abolished.' To have any point this reference must be practically contemporary - say within a few months of the event. Now the copper farthings introduced by James I in 1613 were abolished by order of the Parliament in 1644, and their issue ceased in December of that year. Furthermore the reference to the farthings occurs in close context to Duport's second reference to Lent. He announces the cessation of lectures and promises their resumption in the summer term. In the lecture immediately following, i.e. the first lecture of the summer term comes the reference

to the farthings. We can, therefore, date this to April 1645 - four months after farthings were withdrawn - and working from this point can establish dates for the whole course. It started in the Michaelmas term 1643 and ended in the summer term 1646, occupying nine terms in all. From this one can see the scale of his commentary. The lectures covered thirteen of the Characters, which in print occupy perhaps as many pages. For these thirteen pages of Greek text he needs some 300 pages of lectures and three academic years. One might add that by statute the Greek Professor was expected to lecture on four days each week. Whether he did so is less certain.

Next texts. By this date we can be reasonably sure that each member of the class would have his own text. In 1648 the Commissioners of the Scottish Universities issued an order that for the Aristotle lecture every student was to possess the Greek text, and what was true in penurious Scotland was no doubt true in wealthier England. There are in fact a number of Undergraduates' and tutors' accounts extant, from which their book purchases can be traced. I have found only one example of the purchase of a Theophrastus, and this is in the accounts of Joseph Mede, a Fellow of Christ's in the early part of the century. He bought a copy for his pupil John Bell. Oddly enough Theophrastus figures in the list of books owned by the Fleming brothers at Sedbergh School in the later part of the century. A difficult author, one might think, for schoolboys. The edition used by Duport's class would almost certainly be Casaubon's, equipped with a commentary and Latin translation, first published at Lyons in 1592 with four reprints by this date. It would, of course, be imported, and its price perhaps 1/6 or 2/- of their money. What of note-taking? Seventeenth century undergraduates no doubt had astonishing memories. They had been exercising them from earliest schooldays, and depended less on mechanical devices than we do. But they also took notes. Educational anuals of the period insist on the importance of making notes on any books that are read, and we also know that in some at least of the Grammar Schools note-taking from sermons was compusory. Comenius when he visited England in 1641 was much impressed by the enthusiasm with which the English took down the sermon. And in undergraduate's acounts arecurrent item is a 'paper-book': its price seems to be 6d. Duport's lectures, if they were to effect anything, would require very full notes. They are in effect a complete commentary on the text, illustrated by an abundance of parallel passages which he quotes in full (sometimes with a Latin translation), but often without precise references. Unless all this was available for study after the lecture, the exercise would have lost much of its value. But if these students were able to get it all down their agility must have been astonishing.

We can now turn to the content of the lectures. Where was Duport's main emphasis, and what devices of teaching did he use? He would have no need to translate or construe his text. His pupils have their Latin translation in Casaubon, and with this Duport is generally content, though he will sometimes give his own Latin version of the work or phrase on which he is to comment. Further he is not above glossing an occasional word or so with an English equivalent. He does this principally where he needs a technical term or a colloquialism. The niggardly man, for example, (κυμινοπρίστης) appears as 'nip-cheese, pinch-penny, clutch-fist.'

There are about sixty specimens of this sort of thing in the lectures. Textual criticism is not stressed.

The text of Theophrastus is notoriously corrupt, but Duport spends relatively little time on it. His attempts at original emendation are few - not, I think, more than four or five, and these tentative. And his handling of the text is conservative. We find him at one point suggesting a modest emendation of his own against manuscript authority - only to reject it out of hand. 'I do not claim,' he says 'so much authority that I should venture to make arbitrary alterations in my author's words: yet I see that this is the traditional practice among the tribe of critics.' Emendations of previous editors - usually Casaubon - are sometimes given and explained, and may be approved or rejected without much discussion. Duport in fact was not primarily interested in producing a pure text or in the technique of textual criticism. What interested him and what he regarded as his principal function in the lectures was exegesis, the explanation of his text and the fullest possible illustration of it from literary sources.

The exegesis of Theophrastus makes two principal demands - firstly the elucidation of a contracted and elliptical style combined with much specialized word-usage and colloquial idiom, and secondly the elucidation of a wide range of antiquities, social customs, religious practises, legal and ceremonial procedure, anything in short which might occur in the life of the fourth-century Athenian. For both of these Duport was peculiarly equipped. He had immense learning over the whole range of classical literature and he had a passion for collection. Sandys in his History of Classical Scholarship divided its development from the Renaissance into three periods. First the Revival of Learning from 1300 to the mid sixteenth century, associated mainly with Italy and devoted to the imitation and reproduction of classical models in life, literature and art. Second the French period from about 1530 to the end of the seventeenth century, when exposition of the subject-matter of classical literature replaces imitation, and the scholar's task is the collection of material for that exposition. Third an Anglo-Dutch period from Bentley to the end of the eighteenth century, where the approach is critical rather than expository and the emphasis is on the recovery of pure texts. To this second phase of scholarship - the accumulative - Duport belongs, and in these lectures he applies himself to providing what is almost a dictionary of antiquities based on his author's text. His commentary far exceeds the immediate needs of exegesis. Thus when he finds a mention of the Athenian tradesman's dangerous habit of keeping his small change in his mouth instead of in the till, he falls on the reference with glee. 'A notable passage,' he exclaims' and remarkably elegant, but one which is slightly obscure and barely intelligible except to a person with much experience in Athenian antiquities.' He then sets to and expounds this nasty practice with a collection of parallel passages occupying two pages. Or take another example. In his account of the penurious man Theophrastus notes two of his characteristic oddities. He has his hair cut very short, and he dons his sandals, or maybe removes his sandals (according as one reads ὑποδουμένους or ὑπολυομένους) at midday, i.e. in either case he wears them as little as possible. Thereby he saves a bit on barbers and shoe repairs. One might suppose that a line or two to explain these economies would suffice. But not Duport. The first occupies him for a page and a quarter, and in the second he revels for nearly two pages.

Duport's treatment of antiquities is naturally enough based almost entirely on literary sources. The use of archaeological evidence was outside his scope, nor indeed was much available at his date. Further he is virtually without the sense of history as process. He seems unaware that institutions, customs, social and religious usages, even pots and pans have an origin and development and that changes occur as decade succeeds decade and century follows century. To Duport one century seems much like another, and he will illustrate a fourth century usage by parallels drawn from the whole range of classical and post- classical literature.

Duport's second main branch of exegesis, linguistic usage, is handled with the same generous irrelevance and the same lack of time-sense. Words, as words, are a passion with him. He is much interested in etymologies, which in a period before scientific philology are somewhat slap-happy: in fact they sometimes look suspiciously like puns. He spends time on the formation of words from their roots, and on rules for accentuation, and he has a keen eye for discriminating the meaning of words. For example he distinguishes κιβωτός and κίστη. Both mean a box, he explains, but κιβωτός is a box for storing clothes, κίστη a box for storing food. In the structure of sentences and in syntax he seems to me less interested.

Duport's manner is best illustrated by giving a specimen of a complete note, and I have chosen one which is an extreme example of his diffuse incontinence. This is his remarkable performance on the word θύλακος , a sack or bag. Theophrastus happens to mention this as one of the articles which his rustic might lend to a neighbour. Duport's note on the word occupies over a page, and what follows is, I think, a not unfair precis. Θύλακος , Duport explains, properly means a sack for containing grain. Hence comes its use in the Greek proverb, 'sow with the hand and not with the whole sack', i.e. exercise moderation. This proverb is specially applied to oratory, where one should not pour everything forth at random. It might also be transferred to dispensing charity: both the Apostle and the Psalmist compare charity to sowing seed. He then points out that the sacks of the ancients differ from our own. Ours are made of canvas, theirs of leather. This he supports from Hesychius. So a θύλακος is a leather receptacle for containing grain or possibly bread. When the women went out to buy barley-meal, they took with them a θύλακος ἀλφίτων , which some incorrectly translate as a bread basket. This latter object is in fact a γύργαθος (again supported from Hesychius), such as our own bakers use, woven from withies, or what Horace calls 'reticulum panis.' At this point in the exposition another reference to θύλακος in Theophrastus comes into Duport's head. The Superstitious Man, he recalls, regards it as an omen if a mouse has gnawed a sack of barley-meal. But Clement of Alexandria wittily derided this: it would be much more remarkable if the sack had devoured the mouse. This quotation reminds Duport that the word has two forms θύλαξ , gen. θύλακος, and θύλακος, gen. θυλάκου , as with φύλαξ. . Anaxarchus, the philosopher, he proceeds, called his body a θύλακος , i.e. a container made of hide. This he illustrates with a story from Diogenes Laertius. Philo, however, in telling the same story uses the word ἄσλπς in place of θύλακος . Moreover the Apostle Paul by the same metaphor uses σκεῦος of the human body. 'Let each man possess his vessel (σκεῦος) in honour. The word in this passage means not 'wife' as one learned man supposes, but the body, which is called a 'vessel' as containing flesh and blood. Finally he is reminded of another philosophic anecdote. 'What is the use of philosophy?' a man was asked: 'To see nothing terrible in departing

from the sack of flesh,' he answered.

I have not cited this note in any merely derisory spirit. For one thing it is an extreme and not a typical example of Duport at work - almost, one might say, a self-parody of his own manner. For another thing he is at least half aware that he is being naughty. Elsewhere he ends another such bout with a rueful apology. 'I'm afraid,' he says, 'that I may be babbling out before you everything that comes into my mouth.' But the fact remains that a passage like this is not an exposition or a controlled argument: it is a stream of consciousness. And one wonders what went on in the minds of Duport's pupils as they followed him through this breathless scramble. Which raises a wider issue. It has to be remembered that Duport's lectures have two aspects. One can regard them as a commentary on Theophrastus or one can regard them as an exercise in teaching. And in some cases Duport's diffuse irrelevance - however lamentable in a commentary - may be a deliberate pedagogic device. Consider for example his strings of synonyms or near-synonyms. He produces ten Greek words to express meanness in all its aspects: the Greek word ἐπιστῆναι is glossed by four Latin phrases, gradum sistere, restitare, a progrediendo desistere, cursum inhibere: σκυθρωπάζειν becomes vultu ad moestitiam composito, moeroris nebula obductum vultum habere, demissis oculis et subductis supercilliis esse. What is he up to? I suspect that all this is partly a device for increasing his pupils' vocabulary and resources of expression. It is in fact the device called 'variation' which was part of the regular teaching method in the schools. 'Variation' meant practising the pupils in saying the same thing in as many ways as possible, and the storehouse of examples in Erasmus De copia Verborum, which was a standard school text book. One more symptom of a pedagogic slant might be mentioned. Duport has a habit of prefacing some of his remarks with what is almost a call to attention. 'Notetur haec regula,' he says, and I suspect that he would then dictate.

I have suggested that Duport's lectures invite a twofold valuation. One may ask, What did he do for Theophrastus? And one may ask, What did he do for his pupils? Hardly could any notable advance in the understanding of Theophrastus be claimed for him. The text he left pretty much as he found it. As to exegesis, one has to remember that Theophrastus had already had the benefit of Casaubon's editing and that Duport was a scholar whose mind was of the same cast. In general, therefore, he follows the lines laid down by Casaubon, using his very considerable learning to amplify, or where he thought it necessary to modify Casaubon's interpretations. He is not, as Ast suggested in his 1816 edition of Theophrastus, a mere purloiner from Casaubon. That he used Casaubon's commentary is obvious, but it is also obvious that he worked through his material independently and was quite prepared to disagree with Casaubon. His permanent value, however, is in the abundance of illustrative material that he has accumulated rather than any original insights into the mind of Theophrastus.

What did Duport do for his pupils? The efficacy of a teacher lies more in the quality of his mind than in the quantity of the information which he transmits. The latter may be forgotten, the former is unconsciously assimilated as an abiding influence. Judged by our contemporary fashion Duport might be regarded as a man of limited educational objectives, and the charge would be hard to rebut. He was in fact at the opposite pole from the mere man of letters, the culture-

monger, or pedlar of ideas. Had he been asked how his lectures would help his pupils to understand the world in which they lived, he might have been dismayed at quite so inordinate an ambition. His job, he might reply, was a humbler one - to help them to understand the text of Theophrastus. Within these bounds the impact of Duport's mind must have been almost wholly beneficial. I say 'almost wholly' because I wish in a moment to suggest a qualification. But what at the end of the day would be that impact? I should be disposed to answer, a quite remarkable sense of gusto and a quite remarkable sense of thoroughness. To Duport, as to the other scholars of his period, mere knowledge was in itself an excitement. To discover and accumulate information and to deploy this learning on the elucidation of their texts was pioneering work, and the excitement of the pioneer can still after three hundred years be felt pervading his lectures. But this gusto was balanced by the solid virtues of industry and thoroughness. There is nothing facile about Duport. He could see a difficulty where there was one, and to his honest mind a difficulty could only be solved by industry and strict attention. Some part of these qualities must surely have remained with his pupils.

I must now indicate what reservation I was making when I described Duport's influence as almost wholly beneficial. One might call it verbalism. Needham in 1712 writing from the severe standard of Augustan good taste feels obliged to apologise for Duport's proclivity for word-play and for the puns which adorn or disgrace his pages. In him this kind of thing seems almost to amount to a mild form of word-obsession. We who have learned to live with at least seven types of ambiguity may have more understanding of the seventeenth century pun than Needham had, and are disposed to accord it serious - indeed solemn - criticism. However that may be I suspect that Duport's verbal euphoria may be symptomatic of something at least potentially inherent in the educational methods of the period. Here, in Duport's lectures we are seeing those methods in operation; this is how the minds of these people were formed. And here one seems to sense that the word is still an entity with an independent life of its own, a thing which may at any moment take control and determine the movement of consciousness. I avoid the word 'thought', since thought in its precise sense might well be superseded or perverted by the dominance of the word. Nearly forty years before Duport was lecturing Bacon in the Advancement of Learning (1605) had catalogued what he called the vanities or distempers of learning. The first of these, he said, was 'when men study words and not matter.' 'For words,' he proceeds, 'are but the images of matter; and except they have life of reason and invention, to fall in love with them is all one as to fall in love with a picture.' What Bacon was attacking here was the affected imitation of classical style to the neglect of what he calls 'weight of matter, worth of subject, soundness of argument, life of invention, or depth of judgment.' By Duport's time this classicising stylistic imitation had been replaced by a more serious scholarship, but it was still a scholarship operating almost entirely among words to the exclusion of what Bacon calls 'matter.' Duport's mind seems sometimes to be imprisoned in a world of literary texts, and this can beguile him on occasion into a form of annotation which is no more than tautology. Let me give an example. You will remember the formula on which Theophrastus constructed his Characters. They start with the definition of the abstract quality involved, and this is followed by a series of concrete pieces of behaviour intended to illustrate the quality. Superstition - or whatever it may be - is so and so, and the superstitious man is the kind of person who does this, that, and the other. Now some of these Characters are not without psychological subtlety, and in particular the connexion between the

abstract quality and the separate pieces of behaviour is not always obvious. One wonders why this piece of behaviour should be attached to that quality rather than to another. There are for instance three of these qualities - ἀπόνοια, βδελυρία, ἀπόνοια whose common characteristic is flagrant outrage of the accepted standards of morals or good taste in the community. How are they differentiated? Why is this or that action attached to one rather than another? What is wanted here is a close psychological analysis based on linguistic evidence to shew the development of the meaning of the Greek word. And here again Duport's inadequate sense of historical process is a weakness. To him ancient literature seems to be a static body of material, any part of which can be used to illustrate any other part. Homer, Demosthenes, the Septuagint, the Christian Fathers are all quoted indiscriminately to illustrate one another without much sense of the subtle changes in the meaning and tone of words which can develop over the ages. But to return to our three words, one wants a precise psychological differentiation and if one turns to that undervalued Victorian scholar Jebb, one finds what one wants. The ἀναίσχυντος is motivated by rational self-interest: he is not shocking for the sake of being shocking, but is prepared to outrage public opinion by small acts of meanness, if he thinks it worthwhile and he can get away with it. The βδέλυρος is the naturally gross man, whose outrageous behaviour is a kind of huge joke on society: he flourishes in Aristophanes. The third quality is ἀπόνοια , an odd word for an odd condition. It means being literally out of one's mind, and seems to express a deliberate defiance of civilized standards, a kind of moral desperation, which goes beyond isolated actions and has become a permanent element of character. Now in a case like this Duport's profusion of purely verbal learning is hardly adequate. It needs to be analysed and Duport's mind is not naturally analytical. He has assembled the linguistic and literary material which is a prerequisite for explaining the passage, but has not quite achieved the explanation. There is a lack of sharp focus, a slight impression of fumbling. The reason perhaps is verbalism, the disabling incubus of words.

Could Duport be described as a pedant? In the seventeenth century the pedant was a feature of the landscape, as one can gather from Shakespearean comedy and from the Character-writers of the period. But Duport's learning is too genuine and his mind too agile for that. Yet in one sense there is an element of pedantry in him. Not indeed by reason of the mere unimportance of the topics to which he devoted himself or their lack of content with practical life. For to determine the relative importance of things is not the scholar's job, as Browning's grammarian must have been aware, and the solution of any problem, however trivial, may be a thing of beauty and an educational exercise of high value. But if a scholar cannot be expected to know what is important, he can at least be expected to know what is relevant. And in this lies the element of pedantry in Duport's scholarship. Imagine your self present at one of his spates of verbal erudition - such for example as his exposition of θύλακος which I have quoted. Would one not be tempted to interject, 'Very interesting, Professor, but what exactly are you trying to prove?' In other words there is a lack of control and direction in the use of this scholarship: no question has been isolated for analysis, no proposition defined: one feel's one's mind floundering in a bog of gratuitous information. And this perhaps is one of the things that may happen when, as Bacon says, men study words and not matter: it may be one of the dangers of a purely literary education. And with Duport in mind can one perhaps trace the

effects of this pattern of education on some of the literature of the seventeenth century. There too is the same accumulation of curious learning, the same verbal affluence, the same lack of disciplined direction, the same tendency for words to determine the train of ideas, even the same addiction to the pun. A powerful mind will no doubt transcend the pattern and use it for its own purpose, but anyone who has occasion to examine the secondary literature of the period - say, the sermon literature - will, I think, recognize the traces of this mode of education.

In conclusion I should like to venture an unproved hypothesis. From the date of Duport's lectures to Bentley's first publication, the Epistola ad Millium of 1691, is less than fifty years. In moving from the one to the other we are moving from the accumulative to the critical phase of scholarship. Bentley disposes of the same massive learning, but it is now controlled and directed. Bentley's eye, through all the byeways down which he leads us, is focussed on his objective: he has a proposition to prove. Classical scholarship, it might seem, has grown up: it has shed its puppy-fat and developed a bony structure and sinews. And what had been happening at Cambridge in the meantime? Many things, no doubt, including Bentley himself. But among the things that have happened was the rapid emergence of the Cambridge mathematical school. In 1635 John Wallis wrote in despair of the wretched condition of Cambridge mathematics, and by 1649 he had removed to Oxford. Barrow in 1651 was still bewailing the neglect of the subject. Yet three years later in 1654 he was celebrating a new spirit of mathematical inquiry at Cambridge. In 1665 - just thirty years after Wallis's lamentations - Newton graduated from Trinity: in 1669 he was Lucasian Professor and well embarked on the pursuits which were to result in the Principia of 1687. Cambridge in fact with a splendid disregard of the statues was being converted into the mathematical University, a mutation best illustrated perhaps by the career of Isaac Barrow. Barrow learned Greek from Duport and he taught mathematics to Newton. In 1660 he was appointed to the Regius Chair of Greek, and in 1662 he resigned it to become Professor of Geometry at Gresham College. In the following year he was the first Lucasian Professor of Mathematics at Cambridge. For this metamorphosis he gave his reasons. 'To be frank,' he says, although I never actually disliked Philology, I have always felt a greater affection for Philosophy; and without despising the entertaining pursuit of word-catching, my truest affections have been given to the more weighty search of natural causes and effects.' Things, you observe, are to replace words as the objects of study, and the nexus of cause and effect is to replace an entertaining random pursuit as the method of study. It might be Bacon speaking. Into this new Cambridge scene comes Bentley, when at the age of fifteen he entered St. John's. Bentley would have spent his undergraduate years surrounded by the burgeoning mathematical enthusiasm, and his mind must surely have taken the tincture of its discipline. The gap which separates Duport from Bentley is perhaps the measure of what Cambridge Classics owes to Cambridge Mathematics.

G.V.M.HEAP.

The following short story, which previously appeared in the issue of Isis for 4th December 1957, was contributed by Mr.J.K.D.Feather, a friend of a member of staff, when he was an undergraduate. Mr. Feather spent some years in journalism, and is now a director of Messrs. Blackwell's, the publishers.

TAKE ME TO YOUR LEDA

When Sophie - Miss Sophia Smith - younger daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Smith of Surburbiton became pregnant there was consternation in the family. They were all sitting round having a bacon-and-egg supper - Mr. Smith and Mrs. Smith, Agatha their elder daughter, her husband Ted who worked on the railway, and Charlie, their five-year old son who was called after the heir to the throne.

'Pass the salt, Soph', said Mrs. Smith.

'Yes'm', said Sophie, and added quite casually, 'I'm going to have a baby'.

The scene that followed was really rather comic. You see, at first they all thought Sophie was joking. She did joke sometimes, but this time she wasn't. Sophie had always been a good girl. She went out with Alfie Carew who rode around very fast on a red motor-bike delivering telegrams, but she never evem let Alfie kiss her. Mrs. Smith knew because she was always peeping through the front-room curtains when Alfie brought her home after the pictures. 'No, Alfie, no, not tonight', she always said, implying that maybe another night....But she said the same thing all nights. Alfie hung around though. He was patient - or perhaps he was a bit daft.

Anyways, Sophie had said, 'I'm going to have a baby', and Agatha said, 'don't be silly, Soph, one doesn't joke about things like that'. But Sophie persisted. 'It's true. It's two months now'. Mrs. Smith burst into tears. Little Charlie burst into tears too like he always did. 'Ag', said Ted, 'take that kid upstairs and put him to bed'. Then Agatha got cross and there was a big scene. 'Hark at you, Edward Robinson', she shrieked, 'who do you think you are, bossing me around like that, I'd like to know'?

But Sophie was very calm; much calmer than you would expect because she was the one who always started scenes. 'It's all right', she said, 'I'll take Charlie up to bed. Come 'long, let Auntie Soph put you to bed'. Charlie wasn't really very amenable. He was carried kicking and screaming from the room, but he stopped as soon as they got upstairs. He liked to be in on a scene, but there wasn't much point when only Auntie Soph was there to see. Anyway Auntie Soph was nice.

When Sophie came downstairs again they were all just sitting round. They had finished their bacon and eggs but they weren'r doing any talking. For a start Mrs. Smith was still blubbering, and Ted and Ag were not really looking very friendly, and Ag was getting more cross because Ted was trying to make up by feeling her under the table. Mr. Smith was trying to get the last drag out of his sodden home-rolled cigarette, and then Mrs. Smith got cross. She was still blubbering and she yelled at him, 'Bert Smith, I do wish you wouldn't slobber on your cigarette like that. You make me feel sick, you do. All this time we've been married and all the time there's nothing but you slobbering on that cigarette...' She tailed off in a shriek and started blubbering again.

They were all of them very cross. Sophie stood there with a little smile. It was funny, she thought, how one minute they could be sitting round eating their bacon and eggs, and then suddenly there was a terrific scene. Mr. Smith didn't say anything but he was making that funny noise through his nose that showed he was cross and in a minute Mrs. Smith would be off again about that funny noise in his nose that he'd been making ever since they were married. Ted was still feeling Agatha and looked a bit dopey. They all seemed to have forgotten what it was had started them off.

When Mrs. Smith saw Sophie standing there with that little smile she stopped blubbering. Odd, that. You would have thought it would set her off again. But she had that pained martyr look. You could see she was going to start again any minute.

'Sit down, Sophia', she said frigidly, 'we'd better discuss this calmly'. You knew there was something up, though, when she said 'Sophia'. Sophie sat down.

'Who was it?' demanded Mrs. Smith.

'What do you mean, who was it?'

'You know very well what I mean, Sophia Smith'.

'It was that Alf', said Agatha maliciously, 'I seen you together...'

'Oh No! Not Alf. I wouldn't've let him...' Sophie giggled.

'I'll horse-whip him', put in Mr. Smith mildly.

'Stay out of this, Bert, I'll handle it. Who was it, Sophia?'
Well, if you really want to know', Sophie said slowly - this was her big line - 'if you really want to know, it was ZEUS'. Ted stopped feeling Agatha. 'Who's Zeus?' he asked.

'Zeus?' said Sophie, 'Zeus is God'.

'Zeus isn't God', said Mr. Smith definitely. 'God's God'. Mrs. Smith really thought Sophie was mad. She'd been thinking up a hysterical speech all about how the family had always been respected in the neighbourhood, and how people would stop coming to Dad's store once they knew, and how they would all be ruined, all because of Soph. But now that speech seemed somehow out of place.

'Tell us how it happened, Soph', she said gently.

'Well', Sophie began, 'I was in the park after work-alone', she added with a glance at Agatha, 'and Zeus came down in a cloud'.

'How did you know it was Zeus?' asked Ted. But Mrs. Smith put in quickly, 'go on. Tell us what happened. What did he say?'

'He said', said Sophie speaking slowly and trying to remember, 'he said: "I am Zeus, the flaming monarch of the sky" '. Mr. Smith made that noise in his nose and muttered 'flaming monarch' under his breath, but Sophie went on. 'I am the Lord of the Lightning Flash,

Master of the Gathering Storm Cloud, Zeus the Far-Seeing, the Counsellor, Lord of the Crooked Ways, Son of Cronos, Aegis-Bearing Father of the blessed ever-living Gods and of men who toil the earth and perish. I am enamoured of thee, mortal maiden'. She stopped, a little astonished at the force of her words, and Mrs. Smith prompted, 'Yes? Then what did he say'. Sophie giggled, 'He said, "Take off thy skirt, maiden." '

There was a little gasp of horror round the table but they were all avid for more. 'And then....?' said Agatha.

'Oh! Ag. You're not as innocent as all that. Is she, Ted?' She laughed and Agatha flushed and said 'well!' in shocked tones.

Sophie went on: 'Well, he did what he wanted to do, and then he turned into a swan and swam away in the lake. And that was that'.

'The girl's mad', said Mr. Smith.
'She's a liar', said Agatha.

But of course it never occurred to any of them that the story might be true.

J.K.D.FEATHER.

"Mr. Howard Woodcock, Managing Director of Woodcock Worldway Holidays, Mrs. Eileen Taylor, Manager of the Broomhill Office, Miss Jean Verity, Manager of Arundel Gate Office, Mr. J. Rice an Executive Director and Mr. R.A.Hibblethwaite, left yesterday to visit Athens for three days to view hotel development in the surrounding are and also to consult the oracle at Delphi."

(item in South Yorkshire Post, reprinted in the "This England" column of the New Statesman)

VERGILIOMASTIGES

To the memory
of Baruch Kurzweil

PROLOGUE

Cicero and Virgil became classics in their lifetime, and in the generations that followed they attained among the students of literature the rank of the supreme writers of Latin prose and verse. Both were among the most widely-read authors in the Mediaeval West. In the early Renaissance, Cicero obtained his second apotheosis at the hands of Petrarch, while the pagan Virgil became Dante's guide through his very Christian underworld. Ciceronian Latin became the order of the day, and it was only after the first onslaughts of Erasmus that the spell of Ciceronianism in the writing of Latin began to break. Cicero's philosophical writings continued to be read avidly by the educated public and pondered seriously by students of ancient thought, until the emergence of new methods of Classical philology in the nineteenth century taught those students that their real value was merely derivative, as a reflection (and often downright reproduction) of the views of Cicero's Greek masters and the schools of philosophy he attended.[1] His stature as a political leader and orator suffered a devastating blow at the hands of Mommsen[2], and the more detailed and exact study of the political life of the late Republic in the last fifty years has only confirmed the ineffectuality of his policies and his political ideals[3]. After all these attacks, he has still retained his standing as a great orator and a master of Latin prose style. But these are both qualities which can endear him only to the professional student of antiquity who has spent many years training his ear to listen to the nuances of antike Kunstprosa. The ordinary educated man nowadays cares little about prose style and even less about rhetoric; nor does the average Classics undergraduate of today have enough time or training for the appreciation of such niceties. But poetry still has its votaries both among Classical students and the educated public. In the realm of Latin poetry, Virgil continues to reign supreme in many circles, and it is still not unusual to find the student who would prefer him not only to all other Roman poets, but even to Homer and Aeschylus. When we turn to our contemporary manuals of the history of Roman literature, we are occasionally told that 'the rediscovery of Homer temporarily eclipsed Virgil's fame, especially in Germany'[4]. But this is usually soon passed over, and the reader has the impression that this 'temporary eclipse' - especially in Germany! - was merely a passing aberration, and that, in the natural course of events, Virgil has always been assigned the supremacy he deserves by all men of good sense and taste.

One reason why Cicero has been more often criticised and 'debunked' by modern scholars than Virgil is, perhaps, not far to seek, and may not be entirely a question of literary merit. In order to criticize a writer in some detail, one has first to become perfectly familiar with the whole range of his writings and with much of the modern research done on them. In quantity, such a task would be much more formidable in the case of Cicero than that of Virgil. Yet in many ways, a

/thorough

thorough acquaintance with Cicero is much more indispensable to students in many departments of antiquity than is the case with Virgil. The historian of the late Roman Republic may (as did Mommsen) find Cicero thoroughly repulsive as a man, a politician, and even as a writer. But Cicero's speeches and letters, as well as large sections of his philosophical and rhetorical writings, are among the largest collections of contemporary evidence bequeathed to us by any period of Classical antiquity. However one-sided the evidence itself, and however unattractive the person of the chief witness may be to the historian, he must familiarize himself with every niche and corner of his writings. The same applies, to take one other example, to the student of Hellenistic philosophy. He may find Cicero superficial, lacking in genuine philosophical insight, even prone to misunderstanding his sources at times. But his writings constitute a most indispensable body of evidence as to the opinions and disputes of the Athenian schools of philosophy from the age of Aristotle's pupils to his own day. Circumstances have thus conspired to produce that odd creature, the Ciceronian scholar malgré lui, who has to be an expert on the writings of a man with whom he is incapable of establishing genuine sympathy. Add to this that Cicero's own personality is conspicuous in his writings in a much more obvious and ubiquitous way than Virgil's is in his poetry. The result, in such cases, is a pent-up feeling of resentment at having to spend so much of one's time in the company of such an uncongenial spirit, and the angry effusions of Mommsen may well serve as one illustration of the consequences of this phenomenon.

It is much more difficult to visualize a Virgilian scholar malgré lui. True, a good acquaintance with the work of Virgil is essential to every student of ancient letters, and even his value as a historical source is not entirely negligible.[5] But a lifetime spent in the study of Virgil is generally required only of students of Latin poetry, and more especially of Latin epic; and even there, one can always have other favourites and spend much more of one's time in their company. Thus, the modern Virgilian scholar is more often than not a man who has become one out of choice, and his choice has more often than not been conditioned to a large extent by his love and admiration for Virgil's poetry. Those who do not find themselves in sympathy with Virgil and his Muse can steer clear of them - not entirely, perhaps, but enough to cancel out any feeling of resentment for having to spend so much of their time in his company.

Yet adverse criticisms of Virgil have been advanced, and, despite the superficial impression one gets from our literary handbooks, they have not been restricted to the generation which rediscovered Homer, nor have their exponents always been entirely devoid of Classical learning or literary discernment. The following is a mere selection of a few of these criticisms, given in the authors' own words,[6] with comments on the authors themselves and the context of the extracts presented here. I have selected my critics with considerable care, avoiding as far as possible any of the main protagonists in the drama,[7] christened by Miss E.M.Butler 'The Tyranny of Greece over Germany', since we are told that this 'tyrrany' has been the cause of the relative lack of interest in Virgil (and by implication, one assumes, a corresponding lack of true appreciation for his poetry) in nineteenth-century Germany.[8] Neither Winckelmann nor Lessing, nor Herder, Goethe, Schiller or Nietzsche have been included here for any adverse criticism of Virgil they may have expressed. If an exception has been made in the case of Niebuhr, this is because (as we shall see) he was not as

/convinced

convinced as many of his contemporaries of the superiority of Greek over Roman civilization. Nor was any of the critics represented here chiefly a Greek scholar. Professors of Greek often exhibit the tendency to belittle the 'secondary and derivative' achievements of Latin writers.[9] Thether they are right or wrong may or may not be a matter of taste; but their vested interest would surely make the reader suspect them of being hostile witnesses.

An English editor of Greek and Latin texts who lived and died before the rediscovery of Homer; a German historian of Rome, who loved Latin literature and admired Roman civilization; a German philosopher with an enviable and encyclopaedic knowledge of Western literature among the other manifestations of the human spirit; and one of the most distinguished English literary critics and literary historians, whose knowledge, in the original languages, of the whole range of European literature, was no less enviable - these are my chief witnesses. To illustrate the reactions to the criticisms offered by some of them, I shall also call upon one favourable witness, a Virgilian scholar who lived and wrote in the nineteenth century, when one still had to come to grips more often with hostile judgements of Virgil and - if one loved Virgil - try to reply.

Each of my witnesses would certainly have considered some of the others as rather strange bedfellows. They approach their victim from different angles, censuring him in different terms and fashions, as one would only expect from such a varied company. Yet much of their criticism stems from the same feelings and ideas, they supplement each other in more ways than is immediately obvious, and the reader can construct for himself from their various, and often all too concise, arguments a more consistent general picture of 'the case against Virgil'. One can add that none of their attacks is as wholesale and as concentrated as Mommsen's famous onslaught on Cicero. All of them direct their censure almost entirely against the Aeneid, for reasons we shall soon discover. This is only fit and proper, since Virgil's unique reputation rests to a very large extent on this poem, which has been called by one of our leading contemporary experts and admirers of his work 'the greatest poem by the greatest poet'.[10]

κάλει μοι ῥῦν τοὺς μάρτυρας.

I. A Classical Philologist of the Old School : Jeremiah Markland, 1693-1776.[11]

Markland was a typical eighteenth-century scholar. He devoted his long career as Fellow of St. John's College, Cambridge and the last twenty years of his life as a retired 'gentleman-scholar' in the country to the editing and emending of various Greek and Latin texts. On the few occasions when he ventured outside the field of textual criticism, it was mainly to discuss such problems as that of the authenticity of some of Cicero's speeches and letters. In his own country, he was considered something of a pedant by (the now almost forgotten) Bishop Hurd of Worcester.[12] He fared much better on the continent, and when F.A.Wolf tried, in essays published in his Literarische Analekten (1817-1820),

/to acquaint

to acquaint his countrymen with the achievements of Classical philology in Britain, he chose as its representatives Bentley, Taylor, Markland, Tyrwhitt and Henry Homer.[13] Markland's edition of Statius' Silvae, first printed in 1728, was reprinted in Germany in 1828. As a textual critic, he was nothing if not bold and imaginative - a far cry from the sterile dryasdust he was taken to be by much less original minds of the stamp of Bishop Hurd and that arch-pedant Samuel Parr.[14] In the nineteenth century, when the discovery of 'Lachmann's method' and the increasing availability of manuscripts produced a tendency towards conservative criticism, his methods were dismissed even by the great Wilamowitz himself as gewaltsame Konjekturalkritik. They have recently been reassessed and vindicated in a fascinating article by Mr. J.A.Willis,[15] which re-emphasizes again the independence and originality of his mind.

Markland's originality of judgement was not always restricted to questions of text and authenticity. He expressed some views on the language of the Greek New Testament which angered some of his contemporary theologians. He was also - to use the words of F.A.Wolf[16] 'the first among the moderns who refused to close his eyes to the indications, which can be supported by historical proof, of the incompleteness of this poem (the Aeneid), and discovered in it many shortcomings in thought as well as expression which had not been noticed before'. Wolf goes on to quote and paraphrase some of the relevant passages from Markland's publications. We could do worse than quote some of them in full: the forcefulness of their Latin style alone will make them good reading for those who still care for such things.

A. From the Preface to his edition of Statius' Silvae:[17]

De Vergilii Aeneide, quibusdam in locis, (praecipue p. 302, col. 1) liberius quam mos est, opinatus[18] sum. Hujus opinionis audaciam expavet eruditus quidam amicus meus, cujus causa, & ut quod censeo sine ambagibus proferam, addo, Plurima esse in isto poemate quae, si ego (pessumus omnium poeta) versus scriberem, nollem in meis conspici. et licet numero infinita ultra humanae imitationis metas in illo emineant, nonnulla tamen sunt contradictoria, multa languida, exilia, nugatoria, spiritu & majestate Carminis Heroici defecta: quae si Perfecti Operis signa sunt, sit per me quantumlibet perfecta Vergilii Aeneis. Et de Georgicis quidem quantum vult concedo; de Aeneide vero, renuo negitoque. Non solus ita censeo: immo hoc sensisse videutr ipse Vergillius, optimus certe sui judex; aut quare flammis aboleri jussit hoc opus? Sed & solus, ita censebo, donec Sensus Communis & Rerum Notiones animo haerebunt. Impudentiam vel dementiam meam miraris? quod dixi, praestare paratus sum, & in hanc rem, non mediocrem Silvam jam in mundum habeo,[19] cujus specimen in notis passim videbis. O Vergili, quale te numen habere dicerem, si sic omnia scripsisses quemadmodum multa in Secundo, Quarto & Sexto Libris! Et tu quidem sic omnia scripsisses, si tibi permisissent Tempus & male feriati Homines: sed nunc pars minima es ipse Tui. Vale, Lector, &, si minus recte de his rebus sentiam, docere me vel redarguere, si tanti sit, ne dedigneris.

B. From his notes to the same edition: on Silvae V, 3,127;[20]

Virgilii locus sic habet:

> Nam tibi finitimi, longe lateque per urbes,
> Prodigiis acti caelestibus, ossa piabunt.

Qui locus, nisi omnia me fallunt, insigni absurditate foetus est. si enim FINITIMI, quomodo LONGE LATEque per urbes? idem est ac si dixisset FINITIMI LONGINQUI piabunt tua ossa: quod sane mirum dicerem, nisi quod nihil mirum habendum est in poemate tam imperfecto.

C. From his edition of the Supplices of Euripides : [21]

Horatius enim, Vergilius, Ciceronis nonnulla, Caesar, Livii, quaedam, Juvenalis, &c. in scholis praelegebantur pueris, et in singulis fere monasterlis lectitabantur. inde tot spurii et inepti versus in Horatii et Juvenalis hexametris, tot explicationes et immutationes Elegantiarum Linguae Latinae in Contextu Caesaris, Ciceronis, et Livii, ut si isti Auctores reviviscerent, in multis sua scripta non agnoscerent. nam hemistichia, et debilia fulcra ista et supplementa sensus in Vergilii Aeneide, a seipso pleraque profecta sunt; quippe qui, dum scriberet, ne quid impetum moraretur, quaedam imperfecta reliquit; alia levissimis versibus veluti fulsit: quos per jocum pro tigillis vel tibicinis interponi a se dicebat, ad sustinendum opus, donec solidae columnae advenirent: ut de eo refert Donatus in Vita ejus. Heu quod columnae istae, morte Vergilii interveniente, numquam ADVENERUNT!

II. A Roman Historian :

Berthold Georg Niebuhr, 1776-1831. [22]

Niebuhr belongs to the first great generation of Classical scholars in nineteenth-century Germany who transformed the study of Classical antiquity into the systematic body of disciplines so familiar to us today. In the course of a short and extremely busy life, mostly in the time he could spare from his work as a Prussian civil servant and sometime ambassador to Rome, he founded Rheinisches Museum, the first of the great Classical periodicals still published today; gave courses of lectures on ancient history at the Universities of Berlin and Bonn; published his History of Rome and a considerable number of essays and articles; edited, and helped others edit, several Greek and Latin texts; discovered the Vatican palimpsest of fragments of Cicero's Pro Rabirio; and organized the publication of the Corpus Scriptorum Historiae Byzantinae ('the Bonn Corpus'). He was the first to base the study of ancient history on a methodical investigation of the sources and their credibility - a method brought to perfection in the study of mediaeval and modern history by Ranke and his school in the following generation. If much of his History is based on conjecture and divination, and much else in it has been rendered obsolete by a century and a half of more intense historical, archaeological and epigraphical studies, his position as one of the founders of the modern discipline of history is still as secure as ever. Even Mommsen, who did not have much patience for his methods of historical reconstruction, once said that 'all historians, so far as they are worthy of the name, are his pupils'. [23]

Before proceeding to the passages from his writings, one should note that Niebuhr was no starry-eyed admirer of the Greeks and their civilization. He dedicated most of his hectic life and his many publications to the study of the history of Rome and Byzantium, and he did it in full

/consciousness

consciousness of his choice. Without ignoring the superiority of Greece in the arts and sciences, he realized that the Roman world was the most universal and all-encompassing of ancient civilizations - that, indeed, it was for many centuries identical with the whole of the Classical world, and, being something of a statesman and a patriot, he considered it superior to the Greek world.[24] Thus he had no professional axe to grind in giving preference to Homer over Virgil as the greater epic poet. It is true that he belonged to the generation which rediscovered Homer. Lessing's Laokoon was published ten years before his birth, and he was nineteen, and already a competent scholar at that tender age, when Wolf published his Prolegomena. But the extracts themselves will show that his admiration for Homer was not the main reason for his censures of the Aeneid. With an unmistakable sensitivity, he compares Virgil not only to Homer, but to the lyric poet Catullus. This last point is worth bearing in mind when we deal with the extracts from our next witness.

A. From The History of Rome.[25]

These wars are described by Virgil, who softens whatever is harsh in them, and alters and accelerates the succession of events, in the latter half of the Aeneid. Its contents were certainly national; yet it is scarcely credible that even a Roman, if impartial, should have received any genuine enjoyment from his story. To us it is unfortunately but too apparent how little the poet has succeeded in raising these shadowy names, for which he was forced to invent characters, into living beings, like the heroes of Homer. Perhaps it is a problem that defies solution, to form an epic poem out of an argument which has not lived for centuries in popular songs and tales as the common property of a nation, so that the cycle of stories which comprises it, and all the persons who act a part in it, are familiar to every one. Assuredly the problem was beyond the ability of Virgil, whose genius wanted fertility for creating, great as was his talent for embellishing. That he himself was conscious of this, and was content to be great in a way adapted to his endowments, is proved by his practice of imitating and borrowing, and by the touches he introduces of his exquisite and extensive erudition, so much admired by the Romans, and now so little appreciated. He who puts his materials together elaborately and by piecemeal, is aware of the chinks and crevices, which varnishing and polishing conceal only from the unpractised eye, and from which the work of the master, when it issues at once from the mould, is free. Accordingly Virgil, we may be sure, felt a misgiving, that all foreign ornaments with which he was decking his work, though they might enrich the poem, were not his own wealth, and that this would at last be perceived by posterity. When we find that, notwithstanding his fretting consciousness, he strove, in the way that lay open to him, to give a poem, which he did not write of his own free choice, the highest degree of beauty it could receive from his hands; that he did not, like Lucan, vainly and blindly affect an inspiration which nature had denied him; that he did not allow himself to be infatuated, when he was idolized by all around him, and when Propertius sang:

> Yield, Roman poets, bards of Greece, give way,
> The Iliad soon shall have a greater lay;

that, when the approach of death was releasing him from the fetters of civil observances, he wished to destroy what in those solemn moments he could not but view with melancholy, as the groundwork of a false reputation; we feel that this renders him worthy of our esteem, and ought to make us indulgent to all the weak points of his poem. The

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merit of a first attempt does not always furnish a measure of a writer's talents: but Virgil's first youthful poem shows that he cultivated his powers with incredible industry, and that no faculty expired in him through neglect. But it is wherever he speaks from the heart that we perceive how amiable and generous he was: not only in the Georgics, and in all his pictures of pure still life; in the epigram on Syron's villa: the same is no less visible in his way of introducing those great spirits that shine in Roman history.

B. From Lectures on the History of Rome.[26]

Virgil was born on the 15th October, 682, and died on the 22nd September, 733. I have often expressed my opinion respecting Virgil, and have declared that I am as opposed to the adoration with which the later Romans venerated him, as any fair judge could demand. He did not possess the fertility of genius nor the inventive powers which are required for his task. His Eclogues are anything but a successful imitation of the idylls of Theocritus; they could not, in fact, be otherwise than unsuccessful: their object is to create something which could not prosper in a Roman soil. The shepherds of Theocritus are characters of ancient Sicilian poetry; I do not believe that they were taken from Greek poems. Daphnis, for example, is a Sicilian not a Greek hero. The idylls of Theocritus grew out of popular songs, and hence his poems have a genuineness, truth, and nationality. Now Virgil, in transplanting that kind of poetry to the plains of Lombardy, peoples the country with Greek shepherds, with their Greek names and Greek peculiarities - in short, with beings that never could exist there. His didactic poem on Agriculture is more successful; it maintains a happy medium, and we cannot speak of it otherwise than in terms of praise. His Aeneid, on the other hand, is a complete failure; it is an unhappy idea from beginning to end; but this must not prevent us from acknowledging that it contains many exquisite passages. Virgil displays in it a learning of which an historian can scarcely avail himself enough; and the historian who studies the Aeneid thoroughly, will ever find new things to admire. But no epic poem can be successful, if it is anything else than a living and simple narrative of a portion of some series of events which, as a whole, is known and interesting to the mass of a nation. I cannot understand how it is that, in manuals of Aesthetics, the views propounded on epic poetry, and the subjects fit for it, are still full of lamentable absurdities. It is really a ludicrous opinion, which a living historian has set forth somewhere, that an epic poem must be a failure if the subject is not old enough - as if it were necessary for it to lay by for some centuries to go through a kind of fermentation! The question is similar to that as to what subjects are fit for historical painting. Everything is fit for it, which is known and capable of suggesting to the beholder the whole, of which it is only a part. This is the reason why Sacred History is so peculiarly fit for historical painting. Everyone who sees, for example, a madonna or an apostle, immediately recollects all the particular circumstances connected with those personages; and this effect upon the beholder is still stronger, if he has lived some time surrounded by works of art. When Pietro of Albano or Domenichino paint mythological subjects, we scholars indeed know very well what the artist meant to express, and are vexed at his little inaccuracies; but the majority of the people do not understand the meaning of the painting;

/they cannot

they cannot connect a definite idea with it, and the subject contains nothing that is suggestive to them. Mythological subjects, therefore, are at present a hazardous choice for an artist; and however excellently they may be treated, they cannot compete with those taken from Sacred History. Mythological subjects were as much the common property of the ancients, as the Sacred History is the common property of the Christian nations. A subject from modern history, if generally known, much talked of, and suitable in respect to the external forms connected with it, would be just as fit for artistic representation as any other. But our costumes are unfavourable to art. The ancients, however, very seldom represented historical subjects in works of art, although their costumes were not against it. The case of epic poetry is of the same kind. If a narrative which everybody knows, sings, or relates is not treated as history in its details, and if we feel ourselves justified in choosing for our purpose some portion of the whole, then any of its parts is a fit subject for epic poetry. Cyclic poetry relates whole histories continuously, and is of the same extent as history; but epic poetry takes up only one portion of a whole, which the poet relates just as if he had seen it. There cannot be a more unfortunate epic than Lucan's Pharsalia: it proceeds in the manner of annals, and the author wants to set forth prominently only certain events. There are passages in it like the recitative of an opera, and written in a language which is neither prose nor poetry. Virgil had not considered all the difficulties of his task, when he undertook it. He took a Latin History, and mixed it up with Greek traditions. If he had made use of the Roman national traditions, he would have produced a poem which would have had at least an Italian nationality about it. The ancient Italian traditions, it is true, had already fallen into oblivion, and Homer was at that time better known than Naevius; but still the only way to produce a living epic would have been to base it upon the national Italian traditions. Virgil is a remarkable instance of a man mistaking his vocation: his real calling was lyric poetry; his small lyric poems, for instance that on the villa of Syro, and the one commencing 'Si mihi susceptum fuerit decurrere munus', shew that he would have been a poet like Catullus, if he had not been led away by his desire to write a great Graeco-Latin poem. It is sad to think that his mistake, that is, the work which is his most complete failure, has been so much admired by posterity; and it is remarkable that Catullus' superiority to Virgil was not acknowledged till the end of the eighteenth century. The cause of Virgil being so much liked in the middle ages was that people did not or could not compare him with Homer, and that they fixed their attention upon the many particular beauties of the Aeneid. Jeremy [sic] Markland was the first who ventured openly to speak against Virgil; but he was decried for it, as if he had committed an act of high treason. It was surely no affectation in Virgil when he desired to have his Aeneid burnt; he had made that poem the task of his life, and in his last moments he had the feeling that he had failed in it. I rejoice that his wish was not carried into effect; but we must learn to keep our judgement free and independent in all things, and yet to honour and love that which is really great and noble in man. We must not assign to Virgil a higher place than he deserves, but what the ancients say of his personal character is certainly good and true. It may be that the tomb of Virgil on Mount Posiliponear Naples, which was regarded through the middle ages as genuine, is not the ancient original one, though I do not see why it should not have been preserved. It is adorned with a laurel tree, which has no doubt been often renewed. I have visited the spot with the feelings of a pilgrim;

/and the branch

and the branch I plucked from the laurel tree is as dear to me as a sacred relic, although it never occurs to me to place Virgil among the Roman poets of the first order.

III. A Philosopher :

Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, 1770-1831. [27]

Hegel was one of the greatest figures in the greatest age of German philosophy. He made one of the last major attempts to encompass the whole of human knowledge and all the manifestations of the human spirit within one consistent system of philosophy, and his though has exercised an immense influence on the philosophy, political theory, social studies, theology and all the humane disciplines of the following generations in Germany and abroad. His influence extended even to the various fields of Classical studies, where he influenced, among others, Droysen's early work on Hellenistic history, Schwegler's work on Roman history and Greek philosophy, Zeller's monumental Philosphie der Griechen and Gottfried Bernhardy's pioneering work on the literary history of Greece and Rome.

In the nineteenth and early twentieth century, 'Hegelianism', in a rather debased and distorted form, became, through the work of people like William Wallace, Edward Caird, F.H.Bradley, Bernard Bosanquet and J. McTaggart, one of the dominant systems of philosophy taught in British universities. The present analytic trend in British and American philosophy started, to a large extent, as a revolt against this obscure form of 'Absolute Idealism' by Bertrand Russell, G.E.Moore and their generation.[28] Although the number of new books on Hegel and new translations of his works published in Great Britain and the United States has been steadily increasing in the last few years, there is still no sign of a genuine revival of interest in his thought among professional philosophers in the English-speaking countries. In philosophical circles, Hegel is still in disgrace, and his system is usually rejected at second-hand,[29] often on the authority of earlier rejections at second-hand. Of his Aesthetics we are told in one of the latest introductions to the subject in English[30] that 'Hegel....was such a systematiser. Starting from the position that the whole business of art is 'the sensuous representation of the absolute itself', i.e. of the one reality, he proceeds to make the various forms of art, symbolical, classical and romantic, and the various arts, architecture, sculpture, painting, music and poetry, exactly reflect the various stages in that progressive intellectual understanding of the absolute, which he traces in his Logic. This approach to theoretical aesthetics, which is known [to whom, and cui bono? - J.G.] as 'essentialism', is', we are immediately assured, 'clearly disastrous'. So clearly disastrous, that no further reasons need to be given, except that the reader is referred to an article about 'essentialism' in general in an issue of Mind.[31] But such a view of Hegel's Aesthetics, even if it were philosophically conclusive (and one could hardly call a short enumeration of headings, a labelling which does little to explain the complexity of the work, and a brief dismissal anything like conclusive), would still do great injustice to an aspect of Hegel's Aesthetics which it ignores completely. For the work shows the immense range of Hegel's detaailed and first-hand knowledge of the various forms of art and their history, and is full of minute observations and analyses drawn out of this gigantic store of

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knowledge. Hegel once remarked during one of the courses of lectures which form the basis of the posthumous Aesthetics:[32] 'I know virtually all of [the great masterpieces of the ancient and modern world] : one can, and ought to know them all', and this was no idle boast. Not being anything like the dogmatic a-priori thinker he is now commonly held to be, he considered it his duty to acquaint himself with the empirical data of any subject he was about to treat philosophically - without, however, deluding himself that out of these data the philosophical conclusions would naturally emerge without any effort on the part of the philosopher himself. In the context of aesthetics, the range of his knowledge of European literature was enviable, not only in a philosopher, and in discussing general problems, he never leaves out of sight the individual works which give rise to such problems. Of the following extracts, the first is more abstract and general, a discussion of the problem of what is nowadays called secondary or literary epic. But the second extract, in which the general principles are applied to the case of Virgil, shows that the author was never abstract in the sense of being out of touch with empirical reality as some of his predecessors and followers in the philosophical profession have been. If general concepts are to be valid, they should demonstrate their validity in their application to individual cases.

To put the discussion in its proper context, one should add that for Hegel, literature is no abstract activity indulged by a lofty individual in complete isolation from his social, political and historical[33] background - as if such an isolation were possible. For him, 'epic expresses the naive consciousness of a nation in poetic form for the first time'. Thus, 'genuine epic comes at such an age of transition when a nation has already awakened from its dim, earlier stage, and its spirit has already gathered enough momentum to create its own world and make itself feel at home in it, yet on the other hand everything which is later to become strict religious dogma or civil and moral law is still entirely alive, still inseparable from the individual and his own private conviction, and the separation between man's will and his sentiments has not yet taken place'. On the other hand,[34] 'drama is the product of a national spirit which has already cultivated itself to the full. For in its very nature it assumes as already given both the original poetic stage of the epic and the self-conscious subjectivity of the effusions of lyric poetry, inasmuch as it encompasses both, while not satisfied with either of them as a self-sufficient sphere of activity'. It can therefore only exist in a later and more sophisticated age, 'when a free self-consciousness of the aims, complexities and destinies of human life has already been fully awakened and has reached such a stage of completeness as can only be encountered in the middle and later epochs of the national existence.' Virgil, one should add, lived precisely in such an age of growing maturity and sophistication, and - what would be of some importance for Hegel's scheme of the development of poetry - several of his predecessors and contemporaries had already created some highly complex and sophisticated lyric poetry. Now to the two longer extracts.

A. Aesthetics Part III, Section III, Chapter 3, CIC, YY.[35]

Despite such a separation [Hegel has just mentioned the usual distance in time between most epic poets and the events they depict, using Homer's example], a close cohesion between the poet and his material is nevertheless essential. The poet must still exist entirely within the framework of those circumstances and modes of belief; he must

/add only

add only his poetic sensibility and his descriptive powers to his object, which continues to maintain its own substantial reality. When, on the contrary, there is a lack of communion between the real beliefs, ways of life and customary modes of thought which permeate the poet's present environment and the events which he is to depict in his epic poetry, the inevitable consequence will be an inner contradiction and absence of harmony within his poem For both of these aspects - that of the subject-matter, the epic world ** which is now different and independent of it - are of a spiritual nature, and each has at its core a distinct principle which lends it its peculiar characteristics. Thus, when the poet's own spirit is essentially different from that which activates the national realities and events depicted by him, the result is a rift which strikes us as both inadequate and disturbing. For we observe here, on one side, scenes from a world long past, and, on the other, forms, sensibilities and modes of thought belonging to a present age entirely distinct from it, transforming the contours of ancient beliefs, by means of its more sophisticated reflection, into something cold, into a mere superstition and a meaningless embellishment for a poetic apparatus devoid of any genuine breath of life of its own.

B. Aesthetics Part II, Section III, Chapter 3, C2B, YY. [36]

In relation to the world of the gods, we meet especially in epic poetry with one phenomenon to which I have already drawn attention in an earlier section [the extract just translated] : that is, the contrast between original epics and those created artificially in a later age. This contrast will emerge in a most striking fashion from a comparison between Homer and Virgil. The level of sophistication from which the Homeric poems sprang is perfectly in tune with their subject-matter. In Virgil, on the other hand, one realizes in every single verse that the mental world of the poet himself is entirely different from the world which he depicts, and that especially his gods lack the fresh breath of genuine life. Instead of possessing their own life and generating belief through their own concrete presence, they prove to be the purest poetic fabrications and mere external tools, which cannot be taken seriously either by the poet or by his audience - yet one is presented with the illusion that they are taken very much in earnest. The light of everyday life permeates the whole of the Virgilian epic, and the old traditions, saga and the fairyland of poetry are paraded before us with prosaic clarity within the limited boundaries of : common-sense. The Aeneid is similar to Livy's History of Rome, in which kings and consuls of old deliver their speeches in the same manner as did the orator of Livy's own age in the Roman Forum or in one of the schools of rhetoric, and any episode which has been faithfully transmitted from ancient times, like Menenius Agrippa's parable of the stomach (Liv. II, 32), stands out against the background as an authentic piece of archaic eloquence. But in Homer, the gods hover in a magival atmosphere somewhere between art and reality; they are never brought so close to our perception as to make their appearance entirely intelligible to us in the light of everyday life, yet even less so are they allowed to remain so vague and indefinite as to lose all living reality for our imagination. Their activities can be explained by the same inherent principles

/as those of

** to be portrayed, and the poet's own mental and imaginative world..

as those of human actions, while what secures our belief in them is the substantial quality of their nature. This latter aspect of the gods is treated by the poet as well with utmost seriousness, whereas he treats their appearance and external behaviour with irony. Even the ancients, it appears, believed in such external appearances merely as the product of art which receives its concreteness and meaningfulness at the hands of the poet. This sober, human and fresh concreteness, which makes even the gods appear human and natural, is one of the major achievements of the Homeric poems, whereas Virgil's gods make their entries and exits as cold, artificial portents, or like a mechanical apparatus, in the midst of the real course of events. Despite his seriousness - indeed, precisely on account of this serious posture on his part - Virgil has not avoided the shafts of travesty, and Blumauer's [37] picture of Mercury as a courier in boots and spurs wielding a whip in his hands is not without its justification. The Homeric gods require no one else to ridicule them: Homer's own description makes them sufficiently funny. For does he not make the gods themselves laugh at the limping Hephaestus and the crafty net in which Mars and Venus are caught, does not Venus herself have her face slapped, and does not Mars shriek and upset himself? Through such natural and sober joy the poet has liberated us all the more from the external form he has depicted; but he has thus suppressed and cancelled merely their human appearance, while the substantial force which animates their very essence and our belief in them remain firm. To quote two concrete examples. The episode of Dido has such a modern flavour about it that it was imitated - indeed, translated word for word in places - by Tasso, and even today arouses the French to a state of rapture. And yet how more humanly naive, unaffected and true is everything in the story of Circe and Calypso. Of a similar nature is Homer's description of Odysseus' descent into the underworld. This dark, nocturnal abode of the shadows appears in cloudy mist, a mixture of fantasy and reality which grips us with its wonderful magic. Homer does not allow his hero to descend into a ready-made underworld: Odysseus has to dig a hole in the ground, dpill into it the blood of a ram he has slaughtered, and then call upon the dead who are about to gather around him to drink of this life-giving blood, so as to enable them to speak and report to him, while he chases away with his sword the others, who have gathered around him in their desire for life. Everything is alive here, and is brought about by the hero himself, who does not comport himself with the meekness of an Aeneas or a Dante. In Virgil, on the other hand, Aeneas descends into the underworld in a methodical fashion, and the steps, Cerberus, Tantalus and all the rest assume the shape of a minutely prearranged operation, as though taken out of one of those rigid compendia of mythology.

IV. A Virgilian to the Defence :

William Young Sellar, 1825-1890. [38]

Sellar's <u>The Roman Poets of the Augustan Age : Virgil</u> was first published in 1876, when, we are told, [39] 'the tyranny of Greece over Germany' had not yet come to an end, and a votary of the Virgilian Muse still had to indulge in apologetics. Forty-six years earlier,

/Gottfried Bernhardy

Gottfried Bernhardy was, perhaps, the first to notice a change in modern attitudes towards Virgil, and to document it in a section of his Outlines of the History of Roman Literature[40] which is quoted by Sellar. In the long extract which follows, Sellar has attempted to come to grips with such adverse criticism. As a confirmed Virgilian, he cannot but see in this trend an aberration. But the passage immediately following on our extract shows how Sellar has also digested and absorbed much of this criticism. In it, he admits that 'it can hardly be doubted that [Virgil's] claim to preeminence in Latin Literature must, if put forward at all, be maintained on somewhat different grounds from those on which his position formerly rested. He never again can enter into rivalry with Homer as the inspired poet of heroic action.... The life of the heroic age will continue to be known to all future times as it was originally fashioned by the creative mind of Homer, not as it was modified by the after-thought of Virgil'. He then continues by claiming that Virgil's chief merit consists in being 'more than any other Latin writer, a representative poet, - representative both of the general national idea and of the sentiments and culture of his own age'. But the Aeneid, as Niebuhr and Hegel would remind us, was conceived and written as an epic poem, and it is chiefly on its merits as an epic poem that it should be assessed. The mere fact of being 'representative' is hardly a guarantee of genius or greatness. The novels of C.P.Snow, to take a very crude and very extreme example, may be more representative than most contemporary works of fiction of the atmosphere of Britain in the 1940's and 1950's, - 'representative, both of the general national idea and of the sentiment and culture of his own age'. Yet this does not make them good novels or great works of literary art. Elgar may well be the composer most 'representative', as far as music can be, of the landscape , traditions and sentiments of his country: yet this does not qualify him to take his seat among the greatest musicians of the world, nor does it even render him the greatest composer in British history. The Messiah would still be considered by most music-lovers as a greater piece of music than anything Elgar ever wrote. When the historian G.M.Young attempted to answer the question as to who was the greatest Victorian, the person best suited to represent and exemplify the Victorian age, he settled, not for Karl Marx, George Eliot, Tennyson, Matthew Arnold, Darwin, Carlyle or Ruskin, but for the more obscure and more representative figure of Walter Bagehot.[41] Here, now, is the relevant extract.[42]

> As the comparison of his own epic poem with the greatest of the Greek epics is the probable explanation of Virgil's own dissatisfaction with the Aeneid, so it is the cause of the adverse criticism to which the poem has been exposed in recent times. Of these adverse criticisms, that expressed by Niebuhr, both in his History of Rome and Historical Lectures, was among the earliest. In the former he expresses his belief that Virgil, at the approach of death, wished 'to destroy what in those solemn moments he could not but view with sadness, as the groundwork of a false reputation'. In the latter he says, 'The whole of the Aeneid, from the beginning to the end, is a misconceived idea'. 'Virgil is one of the most remarkable instances of the way in which a man can miss his true calling. His was lyric poetry. It is a pity that posterity so much overrated the very work which was but a failure'.

Although the service rendered to the study of antiquity by the historical insight of Niebuhr is probably as great as that rendered by the genius of any scholar of this century, yet the opinions expressed by him on literature are often more arbitrary than authoritative. Still his verdict on the merits of the Aeneid was in accordance with the most advanced criticism of the time when it was written, both in Germany and in England. The writer by whom the critical taste of England was most stimulated and enlarged about the same time was Coleridge; and in his 'Table Talk' such disparaging dicta as this occur more than once; 'If you take from Virgil his diction and metre, what do you leave him?' The whole tone of the criticism which arose out of the admiration of German thought and poetry was thoroughly opposed to the spirit in which Latin literature had been admired. Mr. Carlyle also expressed in one of his earliest works - the Life of Schiller - an estimate of the value of Virgil, which was not uncommon among younger scholars at the Universities some thirty years ago. 'Virgil and Horace', he writes, 'he (Schiller) learned to construe accurately, but is said to have taken no deep interest in their poetry. The tenderness and meek beauty of the first, the humour and sagacity and capricious pathos of the last, the matchless elegance of both would of course escape his inexperienced perception; while the matter of their writings must have appeared frigid and shallow to a mind so susceptible.' Even the warmest admirers of Virgil about that time, such as Keble, are content to claim for him high excellence as a poet of outward nature. The late Professor Conington, while showing the finest appreciation of 'the marvellous grace and delicacy, the evidences of a culture most elaborate and most refined' in the poet to the interpretation of whose works he devoted the best years of his life, has questioned 'the appropriateness of the special praise given to Virgil's agricultural poetry, and conceded though with more hesitation to his pastoral compositions'. He speaks also of it as an admitted fact that 'in undertaking the Aeneid at the command of a superior, Virgil was venturing beyond the province of his genius'. And he describes this disparaging estimate as the opinion 'which is now generally entertained on Virgil's claim as an epic poet'. Mr. Keightley is also quoted by him as speaking of Virgil as 'perhaps the least original poet of antiquity'. It is certainly not in the spirit of an ardent admirer that the author of Virgil's life in the 'Dictionary of Classical Biography and Mythology' approaches the criticism of his poetry. But it is by German critics and scholars that Virgil's claim to a high rank among the poets of the world is at the present day most seriously impugned. Thus to take two or three conspicuous instances of their disparaging criticism: Mommsen in his <u>History of Rome</u> speaks contemptuously of the 'successes of the Aeneid, the Henriade, and the Messiad'; Bernhardy in his <u>Grundriss der Romischen Literatur</u> (1871) brings together a formidable list of German critics and commentators unfavourable to the merits of the Aeneid, in which the illustrious name of Hegel appears; Gossrau in his edition of the Aeneid quotes from Richter (as a specimen of the unfavourable opinions produced by many critics) the expression of a wish that, with the exception of the descriptions and episodes, the rest of the poem had been burned; and W.S. Teuffel, among other criticisms

which 'damn with faint praise', has the following: 'Aber er ist zu weich und zu wenig genial als dass er auf dem seiner Natur zugesandte Gebiete hätte beharren und darauf Ruhm ernten können.'

The chief, as well as the most obvious, cause of the revolt against Virgil's poetical pre-eminence, which, though yielding apparently to a revived sentiment of admiration, has not yet spent its force, is the great advance made in Greek scholarship in England and Germany during the present century. Familiarity with Latin literature is probably not less common than it was a century ago, but it is much less common relatively to familiarity with the older literature. The attraction of the latter has been greater from its novelty, its originality, its higher intrinsic excellence, its profounder relation to the heart and mind of man. The art of Homer and that of Theocritus are felt to be an immediate reproduction from human life and outward nature; the art of Virgil seems, at first sight, to be only a reproduction from this older and truer copy. The Roman and Italian character of his workmanship, the new result produced by the recasting of old materials, the individual and inalienable quality of his own genius, were for a time obscured, as the evidences of the large debt which he owed to his Greek masters became more and more apparent.

Again, the greater nearness of the Augustan Age, not in time only but in spirit and manners, to our own age, which in the last century told in Virgil's favour in the comparison with Homer, tells the other way now. The critics of the last century were interested in other ages, in so far as they appeared to be like their own. The rude vigour and stirring incident of the Homeric Age or the Middle Ages had no attraction for men living under the <u>régime</u> of Louis XIV and XV or Queen Anne and the Georges. What an illustrious living Frenchman says of the great representative of French ideas in the last century may be said generally of its criticism. 'Voltaire', says M. Renan, 'understood neither the Bible, nor Homer, nor Greek art, nor the ancient religions, nor Christianity, nor the Middle Ages'. And yet he was prepared to pronounce his judgement on them by the light of that admirable common sense which he applied to the questions of his own day. One of the great gains of the nineteenth century over former centuries consists in its more vital knowledge of the past. The imaginative interest now felt in times of nascent and immature civilization tells in favour of Homer and against Virgil. The scientific study of human development also tends more and more to awaken interest in a remote antiquity. Even the ages antecedent to all civilization have a stronger attraction for the adventurous spirit of modern enquiry than the familiar aspect of those epochs in which human culture and intelligence have reached their highest level. This new direction given to imaginative and speculative curiosity, while greatly enhancing the interest felt, not in the Iliad and Odyssey only, but in primitive epics of various races, has proportionately lowered that felt in the literary epics belonging to the times of advanced civilization. Recognizing the radical difference between the two kinds of representation, some recent criticism refuses to the latter altogether the title of epic poetry, and relegates it to some province of imitative or composite art. There is a similar tendency in the present day to be interested in the varieties of popular speech, - in language before it has become artistic. Both tendencies are good in so far as they serve to draw attention to neglected fields of knowledge. They are false and mischievous in so far as they lead to the disparagement of the great works of cultivated eras, or to any forgetfulness of the superior grace, richness, and power which are imparted to ordinary speech by the labours of intellect and imagination

employed in creating a national literature.

Other causes connected with a great expansion of human interests acting on the imagination, and with the revolt against the prevailing poetical style, which arose about the beginning of the present century, have tended to lower the authority of writers who formed the standard of taste in previous ages. The desire of the new era was to escape from the exhausted atmosphere of literary tradition, and to return again to the simplicity of Nature and human feeling. The genius of Roman literature is more in harmony with eras of established order, of adherence to custom, of distinct but limited insight into the outward world and into human life, than to eras of expansive energy, of speculative change, of vague striving to attain some new ideal of duty or happiness. The genius of Greece exercised a powerful influence on several of the great English and German poets who lived in the new era. But neither Goethe nor Schiller, Byron nor Scott, Shelley nor Keats were at all indebted in thought, sentiment or expression to the poets of the Augustan Age. Among the great poets of this new era the only one known to have greatly admired Virgil and who in his poems founded on classical subjects was influenced by him, is the one who most decidedly proclaimed his revolt against the artificial diction and representation of the school of classical imitators, - the poet Wordsworth.

The very perfection of Virgil's art, combined with the calmness and moderation of his spirit, was not in harmony with the genius of such a time. He seemed to have nothing new to teach the eager generation which regarded the world and speculated on its own destiny with feelings altogether unlike to those of the generations that went before it. The truth of his sentiment, its adaptation to the spiritual movement of his own age, in which it gained ascendancy like a new revelation, had caused it to pass into the modes of thought and feeling habitual to the world. This too may be said of the ethical feeling and commonsense of Cicero's philosophical treatises. Moral speculation has been so long and so deeply permeated by the thought expressed in these treatises that it now appears trite and commonplace. So too the moderation and unfailing propriety of Virgil's language had no attraction of freshness or novelty to stimulate the imagination. The direct force of language in Homer or Lucretius never can become trite or commonplace. It affects the mind now as powerfully and immediately as in the day of its creation. There is also a kind of rhetorical style which produces its effect either of pleasure or distaste immediately. It does not conceal its character, but tries to force the reader's admiration by startling imagery, or strained emphasis, or tricks of allusive periphrasis. Whether this style is admired or detested, it does not lose its character with the advance of years. Juvenal and Persius probably affect their readers in much the same way as they did three centuries or seventeen centuries ago. But this is not the style of Virgil and of Horace. They produce their effect neither through the direct force which causes a thought to penetrate or an image to rise up immediately before the mind, nor by strained efforts at rhetorical effect. As their language became assimilated with the thought and feeling of successive generations, it may have lost something of the colouring and sentiment of association, of the delicate shades of meaning, of the vital force which it originally possessed. It has entered into the culture of the world chiefly through impressions produced in early youth, when the mind, though susceptible

to graceful variations of words and harmonious effects of rhythm, is too immature to realise fullness of meaning half-concealed by well-tempered beauty and musical charm of language. The style of Virgil is the fruit of long reflection, and it requires long reflection and familiarity to draw out all its meaning. The word 'meditari', applied by him to his earlier art, expresses the process through which his mind passed in acquiring mastery over words. In apprehending the charm of his style it is not of the spontaneous fertility of Nature that we think, but of the harvest yielded to assiduous labour by a soil at once naturally rich and obedient to cultivation - 'iustissima tellus'. These characteristics of his art were not unlikely to be overlooked in an age which demanded from the literature of imagination a rapid succession of varied and powerful impressions.

We have already noted that in the section immediately following, Sellar concedes to Homer the primacy in the writing of heroic poetry proper. The present extract treats the whole problem of the nineteenth-century reaction against Virgil (which, from the indications given by Sellar himself, was clearly not limited to Germany) as though it were a purely literary affair, a matter of passing fashion in European taste. Even if treated from such an angle, the problem is far more complex than that of a mere reaction of a turbulent age which demands from its literature what in the modern idiom we would call sensation. Goethe, at least in his middle and late period, was no sensationalist. As he grew older, he became more and more a careful and learned artist as Virgil had been, and he never shied away from adaptations of Classical themes. The reaction against the eighteenth century was a reaction, not against careful, conscious and learned art, but against Classicism. Like many of the writers of the eighteenth century and before, Virgil and Horace were Classicists, in the sense of attempting to recreate for their own age some of the forms of literature which had sprung up and flourished in a totally different age and atmosphere. The whole problem of Classicism seems to receive no attention in Sellar's discussion, which appears to concentrate on matters of literary taste. His sneer at Niebuhr's qualifications as a literary critic, with its implied nous avons changé tout cela, would not sound infamilar to readers of much of the literary criticism of our own age. But one also notes that Sellar picks out only the 'titbits' of literary taste from Niebuhr's passages, comparing them to the short epigrams of Coleridge's Table Talk, as though Niebuhr had made no aaempt to give reasons for his judgement of Virgil. Nor does Sellar appear to have read or pondered very seriously the arguments of 'the illustrious Hegel', perhaps because it is more difficult to extract such 'titbits' from them. His answer to the nineteenth century is an 'attack from the outside', ignoring arguments and describing criticisms as a mere consequence of the spirit and taste of the age. The result - which Sellar, I imagine, would have wished to avoid had he discerned it - is complete relativism. For how could one tell that Sellar's own view of the Aeneid, which by his own method, could only be construed as the result of the literary taste of his own age, is in any way more reliable than that based on the taste of an earlier generation? Progress would not save us here, for it would also imply that the early nineteenth century was right as against all the generations which preceded it (and no one would deny that in many fields of arts and science the early nineteenth century constituted a gigantic advance on much that preceded it). It would also leave the literary critic entirely at the mercy of passing fashions, and who is to tell which fashion is passing and which is there to last? And, if our criterion is to be the number of generations in which 'men of good taste' admired Virgil as one of 'the greatest', why should we, once we have introduced book-keeping into our argument, stop at 'men of good taste'?

The majority of mankind - a much more formidable statistical entity - has rarely cared much for works of great literature. It is, of course, a commonplace that literary judgements cannot be as accurate and 'objective' as scientific, or even historical ones, and that cultivated taste and sensitivity have their place in them - as a prerequisite. But to reduce it all to a matter of taste is to deprive aesthetics and literary history of any serious claim to our attention as anything more intelligent than after-dinner conversation.

V. A Literary Critic and Historian :

George Saintsbury, 1845-1933.

Saintsbury is often considered nowadays to be a rather superficial critic, and it is true that his work, at its worst, can show a considerable lack of depth. This is especially true of his History of Criticism, 1900-1904, which was produced by the 'scissors and paste' method, patching together purple-passages and summaries of some of the more important works of European literary criticism. He is never exceedingly profound. But having said this, one should remember some of those sterling qualities which made him such a leading figure among British students of literature for well over a generation. He was a man of taste and judgement and a wide, accurate knowledge, who loved literature and spent a very long life enjoying the study of its history and contributing to the diffusion of literary knowledge and judgement. Having received his Classical education in Oxford, he taught French, Italian and English in various schools and spent some years in journalism before he became Professor of Rhetoric in Edinburgh, a post he held for the last twenty years of his active teaching life (1895-1915). The range of his knowledge of Classical and modern literature in the original languages - he was fluent in most of the major languages of Western Europe - has hardly ever been equalled by a literary critic or historian in this country. Even after his retirement, he read avidly and published occasional pieces of criticism, some of which were collected by him in his two Scrap Books. The present extract is a complete short essay from the second of these volumes, published ten years before his death, when Saintsbury was already seventy-eight. The humorous tone of the essay should not deceive the reader. The points madehere with such a light and amusing touch are meant to be taken seriously. One should remember Chesterton's famous remark that 'serious' is not the opposite of 'funny': it is the opposite of 'not serious'.

Haeresis Virgiliana. [43]

It would be an obvious error to make this Second Scrap Book anything like an apologia for the First; but in one or two instances one Scrap may be allowed to patch another. I see that some excellent persons have been made unhappy by my personal "panel of greatness" (Scrap Book I. pp. 214-15). "Where is Virgil?" they say. "Where are Chaucer, Rabelais, Cervantes, Moliere, Dickens" etc.? Now that anybody can accuse me of belittling Rabelais in especial is rather comic, considering that for forty years at least I have been, again and again, such a standard-bearer of Gargantua and Pantagruel that I wonder Master Alcofribas (who knew most things past, present and to come) did not put me in the wars of the first

or the Bottle-voyage of the second. But the funniest thing is that, on the opposite page and elsewhere, I had excluded him and all his companions by the titles of their masterpieces as not entering the particular competition. The twelve I mentioned are expressly described as the "serious" writers, who have appealed to me as such, and as such consummately.

But there is, I admit, one excluded name which is that of an author serious or nothing; and that is Virgil's. All my life I have been a heretic as to Virgil, and have shocked many good men by being so. In order not to shock them more, I have, I think, never yet given reasons in anything like detail of the unfaith that is in me. A page or two here devoted to these reasons may not, therefore, be quite improper.

That Virgil is a very pretty, indeed a most elegant writer, I have not the slightest intention of denying. That he gives us in verse, with Cicero in prose, the most perfect expression in literature of the sophisticated Latin temperament, I not only admit, but will maintain totis viribus. That his power over phrase and metre is that of a most accomplished craftsman, I am ready to testify. His narrative power is remarkable, and would, I think, have made him a really good novelist. The Eclogues, which are probably the best thing he ever did, are also charming things; and the Georgics are about as good as didactic poetry, not sublimated after the fahsion of Lucretius, can be. As to the Aeneid, since it is the piece which, as being most ambitious shows his failures most, one had better examine it somewhat more narrowly.

Little need be said about its complete and allowed second-handness. Shakespeare is often second-hand in this or that respect, but he seems sometimes, if not always, to be so, mainly in order that he may transcend his original. With Virgil it is just the other way. The inferiority of the Dido part to the Medea part of Apollonius Rhodius is hardly less glaring than its imitative character; and in none of the innumerable Homeric pastiches does Virgil succeed in being more than second in both senses. The regatta and indeed the games generally are really good, but scarcely of first-hand rank. The "Destruction of Troy" would be good, if it were not for the fatal and ubiquitous presence of the hero in it. I am not sure that the games do not escape because he has very little personally to do with them.

For a more disgusting hero than Aeneas there is not in the range of epic. And in some astonishing manner he combines uninterestingness with disgust. He is such a poor creature that you would almost be ashamed to kick him, as he deserves, because he would begin complaining to his mother, and you wouldn't like to annoy her. I should like to hear her private opinion [1] [all references in this extract to Saintsbury's own footnotes, appended at the end] of her offspring, also the remarks both of Vulcan [2] and of Mars [3] on the subject.

That, however, Aeneas is not a very heroic hero is practically admitted by those who insist so strongly on hie "piety"; and that Virgil belongs rather to the polishers and decorators than to the real "makers" I can hardly believe to be seriously denied by anybody save fanatics or hopeless traditionalists. But this polishing and decorating seem to appear to some so exquisite that they make him a "maker". It may be mea maxima culpa; but I cannot see it. There is a sort of synthetic character about his jewels. Even the famous and constantly cited Tendebantque manus ripae ulterioris amore,

owes most of its beauty to its artful construction, and has not the sudden earth-born blaze of

κεῖσο μέγας μεγαλωστὶ λελασμένος ἱπποσυνάων

or of

ἐγὼ δὲ μόνα κατεύδω [4]

or of

The rest is silence,

or even of

Gregor's Kahlkopf
und die Brüste der Mathildis,

and

Et la Seine fuyait, avec un triste bruit,
Sous ce grand chevalier du gouffre et de la nuit. [5]

Even where magnificence is not required, and even if we confine comparison to his own country, time, and language, how far does he fall short of Lucretius and Catullus, nay, of Horace himself at his very best [6] - I do not say of Ovid. Take the two coaxing scenes in the De Rerum Natura and the Aeneid, and you would really imagine that they have been written purposely to illustrate La Rochefoucauld on Marriage - but in reference to the quality of the poetry, not of the situation. Where has Virgil anything to match the Ave Frater in passionate tenderness, and

Et, quod vides perisse, perditum ducas

in passion unfortunate?

No, Virgil is essentially not a "greatest". He is even less of such a thing than his companions Pope and Racine, because he has hardly anything but form; while Pope has a diable au corps in satire unsurpassable in its kind, and I am told, by persons better qualified to judge than I am, that Racine has exceptional theatrical quality. Now I have myself been blamed for putting too much value on form apart from matter. But then it must be live form; and what is more, form which has not merely craft, but art and "art magic" in it. The poet makes, but he does not manufacture.

The fact is that the rhetoricians of the later Empire did better than they knew for themselves, and worse than they knew for their idol, when they went to Virgil as above all a master of rhetoric rather than poetic. He is a master of rhetoric in the wide but proper sense - of tropes and figures, of ordonnance and ornament, of convention and rule. And another fact, more curious still, is that when the Middle Ages, in that Heaven - guided blindness of theirs which somehow surpassed the clearest ordinary sight, made him a magician, they made him just what he ought to have been to be an altissimo poeta. This last they were told he was; the other therefore he must be. But to me, he is neither.

Saintsbury's footnotes:

1. There is a touch of disgust when she stops him from his second-greatest infamy, the intention of killing Helen. And, by the way, her speech here is followed by, and almost seems to include, one of the finest passages in Virgil :

> Apparent dirae facies, inimicaque Troiae
> numina magna deum.

2. Vulcan, of course, had to make the armour, and was well paid for it. But the language of forges is often free; and I imagine that Brontes' and Steropes' comments were less amiable than, say, Joe Gargery's might have been.

3. It has been much the fashion to regard Mars as a sort of Rawdon Crawley; but, though I like the Colonel, I think this is unfair to the god. It is true that Rebecca's husband would not, when wounded, have howled like Aphrodite's lover, though he might have said, "D - n"; but this is merely due to the difference of nationality and manners.

4. Whether it should be κατ - or καθ - here is, I believe, disputed.

5. The "modern" examples from Heine's great Canossa piece and Hugo's Quatre Vents de l'Esprit are, of course, of a more "composite" order than the Greek and Shakespearian which I have chosen, and than divers from Dante, between which I hesitated to choose. But I think they both have the "blaze" - the "transport" - which I desiderate in Virgil. He has no doubt (as I acknowledge that Tennyson is against me, I need not apologize to anyone else) a wonderful "measure", but even in that, how Homer "puts him down"! And where does he show such command of it as does Hugo when he makes the French iamb solemn and mysterious in the picture of the dark river flowing beneath the statue; or Heine when he lifts the German trochee to scornful triumph, or indignation, if you prefer it, as the Pope's white skull and the countess's white breasts gleam from the lighted window on the Emperor crouching in the night below? As for such intensity of simplicity as Sappho's and Shakespeare's, or (I might have added another four-word jewel) Dante's in "dove il sol tace", where is it in him?

6. Some people call Horace "unpoetical". Well, he certainly does not affect me as, let alone the First Three, many different poets do. But if Pastor cum traheret, with its wonderful scenic character, and the best parts of Tyrrhena regum and Qualem ministrum, and the passages that are recalled by the words Atqui sciebat and Surge quae dixit are not poetry, I think a very small book-case, or even shelf, will hold what is, and a very large courtyard will be required safely to burn the rest.

One should note that Saintsbury makes no claim to be representing any group of people or any general standards other than his own feelings and reactions to Virgil and various other poets. But his criticisms are 'from the inside', and based on a good knowledge of Virgil and of the other poets he compares with him. His feelings as to the strength and weaknesses of lines and expressions taken (out of context, but on the assumption that his reader will remember the context) out of the various works of poetry may well be a matter of personal tastes and preferences. But is his analysis of the pale and unsubstantial character of Aeneas only a personal idiosyncracy?

E P I L O G U E

It is now time to put together some of the points made by our various authors and see if they can lead us to any conclusions. It is, of course, impossible to do justice to every single argument and observation they have offered. This would also be unnecessary, since I have allowed them to have their say in their own words. The following remarks are only meant as comments and conclusions which can be drawn from some of the more salient points in these extracts, not as a detailed commentary on any of them.

The one point shared by all our critics is the chief object of their censure. It is the Aeneid, the poem claimed by most of the author's admirers to be his supreme achievement; and it is the Aeneid taken as a piece of epic, or heroic, poetry - which is, after all, what it sets out to be.

It is an unfinished work. Many of its verses are incomplete , and not a few of the completed ones are imperfect. This is pointed out by Markland, with the support of the text itself and the evidence of the ancient Vitae. It is clearly one of the reasons, and quite probably (pace Niebuhr) the chief reason, why Virgil decided on his deathbed against the publication of this incomplete work. He was always a careful craftsman, and the prospect of his most ambitious project reaching posterity in the form of an oeuvre inachevée must have alarmed him. But did he have any reasons other than technical ones for wishing his work to be suppressed? Was he, as Niebuhr claimed, aware of any other, more serious imperfections? We have only the evidence of the passage in the Vita quoted by Markland that Virgil was aware of the technically incomplete state of this poem, and the rest must remain guesswork. One can, however, proceed to examine those other imperfections, whether Virgil was aware of them or not.

The hero - and the Aeneid, like the Odyssey, is clearly a one-hero epic - the hero, we are told by Saintsbury, is far from being heroic: in fact, he has hardly a personality at all. What he has is a character in the Theophrastian sense: he is the embodiment of the Roman virtue of pietas. But epic heroes, we remember, are living men and women. They may have a dominant characteristic, repeatedly coupled with their names by an epic formula. But they have other traits, they have a life of their own, and, if they are to be convincingly human, they have their failings and make mistakes. When

they make mistakes, they do not usually 'become good boys and girls' and repent as soon as they are shown the error of their ways: they often repent only at the last minute, or when it is too late, or never. This is hardly the case with pius Aeneas, who is almost always good and faithful and colourless like a boy-scout, or a Charles Augustus Fortescue, or a Penelope. But in Homer, Penelope is a very minor character. As such, she can be used as a symbol. Aeneas is the chief hero of Virgil's poem.

The reasons for this are hinted at by Niebuhr and are further elaborated by Hegel. In choosing Aeneas as his hero and his age as his subject, Virgil was opting for a milieu which was too distant and unrealizable for himself and too unfamiliar to his audience. For a historian like Niebuhr, his chief failing here consists in attempting a historical narrative based on unfamiliar legends and traditions. A philosopher like Hegel can place this very fact in a deeper context. By attempting to write in the style of a poetic genre which had long ceased to be a living tradition, Virgil has introduced an essential contradiction into his work. Aeneas and his contemporaries are transformed into the atmosphere of Rome of Virgil's own age, where Roman virtues exist in plenty, but they are not the virtues of the Homeric hero. The difficulty is not merely, as Niebuhr thought, that they were not Romans of Virgil's own age, and that little was known about them by his time. Oedipus and Antigone, Hippolytus and Medea, were hardly the contemporaries of Sophocles and Euripides; but what is possible in a more sophisticated literary form like drama is doomed to failure in an attempt to re-create an epic poem at an age when the prerequisites for the composition of such poetry have been superseded by a more complex and self-aware society and its more sophisticated forms of literary expression. More than a century before the discovery of the oral tradition in epic (at least in the more exact and empirical form given it by the work of Milman Parry and his followers, although not in the more sepculative form of the 'ballad theory' of Herder and his followers), it was clear to Hegel that epic poetry is the product of a naive and unsophisticated age, and that an attempt to create it in the artificial conditions of a complex literary age - the 'secondary' or 'literary epic' so often discussed and defended in recent years - is a contradiction in terms. Such criticism would apply, of course, not only to the Aeneid - and Hegel proceeds (in the section immediately following our second extract from his Aesthetics) to apply it to Klopstock's Messias and Voltaire's Henriade (few people will nowadays shed tears over an attack on these two works), and even to Paradise Lost itself. We all - at least, most of us - have a soft spot for Milton, and it cannot be denied that Paradiss Lost has many powerful and touching passages and is one of the masterpieces of English poetical and descriptive style. Nor would anyone deny such qualities to much of the Aeneid: none of our critics has done so. Hegel, however, is judging these works on the merit of what they claim to be - that is, epic, or heroic poetry.[44] If his main assumption, that genuine epic poetry can only grow naturally from the primitive background of the earliest stage in the development of the national culture, is correct, his censure of all these 'literary epics' may not be wholly unjustified. This may be a matter of taste or prejudice, but it may not necessarily be only that. One of Hegel's main assumptions is that some stages in the development of the spirit of an individual, a nation, a civilization or

mankind in general, have been irreversibly superseded in the process of development and there is no authentic return to them. Sympathy and recapture there can be. Just as an adult can remember his childhood or youth and identify with it on the purely imaginative level, so we can obtain an intellectual or imaginative understanding and rapport with an earlier stage of the development of our civilisation and the artistic manifestations of such an age. But just as it is impossible for the sophisticated adult, however romantic or nostalgic he may be, to become again the child he was - and it is of the very nature of nostalgia that it realizes, with all the painfulness involved in such a realization, that what we are yearning for is now irreparably part of a past which will never return - so it is impossible for a civilization, however romantic it may feel about some stage in its past, to create that stage and bring it back to life again. In literature, the attempt to do this - to re-create the literary expression of an irretrievable past - is as clearly doomed to failure. A genuine romantic poet like Wordsworth is fully aware of the nostalgic nature of such yearnings and of the irreversibility of the order of things; he makes it clear in a poetic manifesto like Intimations of Immortality, and it is such a feeling that lends its peculiar evocative power to a poem like The Prelude. Others, in a less romantic age, take their themes from the literature of a bygone age - the Athenian tragedians took most of theirs from the various epic cycles - but they adapt them to the literary expression of their own age. Virgil was blissfully unaware of the intellectual and imaginative distance between his age and that of the sort of epic he tried to bring back to earth. He did nothing to adapt his epic materials to the spirit of a later age, nor was he aware of the contradicition inherent in the effort to recapitulate completely what is beyond retrieval. Can one - to take another crude example - create genuine folk-tales and folk-music in an age when there is no 'folk' to produce such things? Or - since Hegel has put so much emphasis on the matter of belief - can a modern agnostic compose a proper, authentic psalm?

The student of literary history may, perhaps, go beyond these earlier criticisms and make use of the new insights into the nature of the various literary genres in antiquity won by the work of Friedrich Leo and some of his pupils and contemporaries.

When Virgil set out to compose his epic poem he was faced with a baffling mixture of disparate elements in the Graeco-Roman tradition to which he was heir. Apart from Livius' Odissia (which, being a translation in usum scholarum, should not disturb us here), there were two Latin epics already in existence. Neither of them was an epic in the Homeric sense, or in the general Greek sense of this word as established by Aristotle and his Alexandrian followers. They did not describe one central episode like the Iliad or the Destruction of Troy, nor did they possess a strong central hero like the Odyssey. They were both works of Roman history in epic form. Naevius' Bellum Poenicum has, at least, a definite period to cover - but a whole war is still far too large for an epic poem in the Homeric tradition. He may well have started his epic with those fragments which have reached us concerning Aeneas - although this is far from certain. His Muses, although they are already nine in number, are still the old Roman Camenae, and his metre is still the old Saturnian. Ennius changed the metre into hexameters modelled on the heroic verse of Greek epic; his Muses are

Greek, 'treading mighty Olympus with their feet'; and in his dream he meets Homer, who appoints him as his Italian successor and counterpart. But he is his Italian successor, and his theme is as far from Homer as one can imagine: his Annals are a history of Rome from its beginnings to the poet's own age. His official heroes are - to use the exquisite expression of Jackson Knight - the 'ordinary men' who did 'extraordinary deeds' and 'made a city a world'. His real hero is Rome.

In Virgil's age, a strong tendency was manifest among Roman writers to return to the 'Classics' of Greek literature, the antiqui, as against the Alexandrians. It was not universally followed, and it did not start only in the Augustan age. Roman Atticism at the age of Cicero was already a movement in that direction, and even Cicero was as much opposed to 'Asianism' as were the Atticists themselves. His models were not the contemporary or Hellenistic schools of rhetoric, but Demosthenes, Aeschines and their contemporaries. His philosophical writings deal with issues still debated in his own contemporary schools of philosophy; but their structure, as he tells us himself, is that of the dialogues of Aristotle and Heraclides Ponticus, and many of their themes, motifs and stage-settings are borrowed directly from those of Plato. In Virgil's own age, Horace is already far more influenced by the metres and forms of Archilochus, Sappho and Alcaeus than was Catullus. Ovid regarded the Metamorphoses as his crowning achievement; and, however revolutionary this work may have been in its whole approach to the stories of early epic and myth (a point we shall touch on presently), the point that it is written in the metre of epic poetry, in the form of a perpetuum carmen, however Alexandrian its structure and sources may have been. Virgil was moving even further in the direction of this sort of 'Classicism'. Despite the portions incorporated into his Aeneid from later sources like Apollonius, he clearly conceived his task as that of being the Roman Homer, just as Cicero had been the Roman Demosthenes; and, just as Cicero had excelled his originals (as Cicero himself is never tired of reminding us,) it was Virgil's mission to out-Homer Homer and to create in Latin 'something greater than the Iliad', as Propertius, who knew him, sang while Virgil was working on the new poem. We have only Niebuhr's word for it that 'he did not allow himself to be infatuated when he was idolised by all around him, and when Propertius sang' those verses. The Aeneid is an imitation of Homer: this is one of the few points of agreement among all students of Virgil.

But the theme had to be Roman. The poem had to celebrate the new grandeur of Rome, not merely because it was commissioned by Augustus as part of his 'Cultural Revolution', but also because the Roman tradition of a national epic (which was not, as so often maintained nowadays, the invention of Virgil himself: Ennius and Naevius had already established the tradition, and Virgil merely tried to transform it into a national epic) was too strong to resist. Thus, Virgil tried to bind together res olim dissociabiles, a Homeric epic and a Roman historical poem. Ennius may have known better when he adopted the external forms of Greek epic poetry but left the themes of his work firmly within the distinct and different world of Rome. Virgil's attempt bordered on the heroic. He was quite sincere in his belief in the possibility of such an achievement, just as he was quite sincere in his belief that the Golden Age could return and was, in fact, returning. If the Golden Age itself, why not the poetic form of expression peculiar to it?

But Diomede, renowned for his battle-cry, and M. Claudius Marcellus, aedile 23 (even if his name can be made to fit into a hexametric line), are strange bed-fellows, and their conjunction can sound as jarring and incongruous as 'Jerusalem on England's green and pleasant land' (which is, at least, not an attempt at realism), or the 'Heav'nly Muse, that on the secret top of Oreb or of Sinai, didst inspire That Shepherd, who first taught the Chosen Seed In the beginning how the Heav'ns and Earth Rose out of Chaos' etc. (which is).

Virgil's successors may well have sensed the failure of such a literary concordia ordinum. Those of them who preferred the Greek models proceeded to write on purely Greek subjects, and their Thebaids and Achilleids and Argonautics earned them the ridicule of men like Juvenal. Lucan preferred to remain within the older Roman tradition. He wrote on a theme familiar to himself and his readers from their own recent history, and called his poem by a Roman historical title, De Bello Ciuili. Even that 'ape of Virgil' Silius Italicus did not attempt to ape him also in the choice of his theme. He wrote on a Roman subject. The Dido episode (if its length justifies calling it even by this name) is a mere prologue or αἰτία, and by the time we have reached line 38 of the first book, Hannibal is already marching on the stage. The most important attempt at an epic work after the Aeneid is Ovid's Metamorphoses. This, we are told by Mr. Kenney, 45
'is a contradiction in terms, a modern epic'. And, we are also told, 'he had the genius to adapt his apparently unsuitable material to the needs of an Augustan poem'. This adaptation - perhaps the greatest achievement of this poem - lies in the very fact that it is not an ambitious attempt to create a serious Homeric epic 'on Rome's green and pleasant land'. It treats its mythological themes in the only way possible in a highly sophisticated literary tradition: the stories are told for amusement, with a humour and irony which does not detract from their seriousness - or perhaps even adds to it. Ovid succeeded, as far as this was possible for a doctus poeta in a learned society, in re-creating something of the atmosphere of the mythological fairy-tale, precisely because he treated it as fairy-tale. He made no attempt to Romanize them, or to Homerize his more 46
Roman poetry. Did he - to use Mr. Kenney's words again - 'perceive.... that there could be no question of rivalling Virgil on his own grounds' - or was it rather that he perceived that Virgil's experiment had ended in a failure? Ovid does not tell us. But when he made his own contribution to Roman historical poetry, Ovid did not attempt to cast his Fasti in the mould of Homeric epic, or to narrate the events in the form of epic legend. He did not even use epic metres or a perpetuum carmen.

Our discussion could have ended here; but there is one issue which ought to be raised in the context of Virgil's popularity, especially in the second half of the twentieth century. The Classical student in this barbarous age is often faced with questions put to him by his more contemporary contemporaries as to the value of his subject for - horrible phrase, this! - 'the present day and age'. The question, of course, is absurd. What is of value to one age is more often than not of value to that particular age only, and the Classics have already proved themselves, with changes in aspect and emphasis, to have exercised a beneficial influence on many ages which have done more for Western civilization than ours is ever likely to do. But the question is being constantly raised, and attempts are continually made by those, within the Classical camp to answer it. If Virgil has now come into his own

again after the 'eclipse he suffered in nineteenth-century Germany', he has done so with a vengeance. Virgil, we are now told by the various Vergil Societies, is the symbol of Western civilization and of the continuity in its values and traditions. He is the answer to the question of the relevance of the Classics to the present age: he is, indeed the very essence of this relevance.

Far be it from me to deplore the existence of the Vergil Societies. I am a member of one of them myself. Long may they flourish and help to advance our knowledge and understanding of a great Roman poet. Nor would I dispute Virgil's relevance to us, or to any future age still interested in the pursuit of good letters. As long, that is, as this relevance (if it is right at all to worry about it too much) is not attributed exclusively to Virgil, as though he were the greatest and the most significant manifestation of all that is good and noble in the ancient world, making his predecessors and followers look like mere pygmies, or, in the best case, like a praeparatio Evangelica for the great message of the Aeneid followed by a long series of apostles and epigons. A Virgil Society has its place - but so should a Homer Society, an Aeschylus Society, an Aristotle Society, a Tacitus Society - nay even a Cicero Society, and countless others. It is a question of emphasis and of significance. Is an epic poet altogether the best conceivable symbol of a civilization which has long ago cast its heroic past behind it? Is the particular world of values and attitudes comprised in Virgil's oeuvre the most adequate representation of the total achievement of the ancient world? Let us consider what some of these values are.

Virgil stands, first and foremost, for pietas, for the Pax Augusta (which, as he did not quite forget, had to be won at the price of a series of bloody civil wars), for the solid and stable political and religious organization of the ruling city and its empire. He may or may not be unaware of the fact - he certainly does not go out of his way to stress it - that haec otia, so generously granted by the new god on earth to the poor shepherd of Mantua, had been won at the cost of what the man he (probably) so cruelly lampooned as the pompous and half-witted windbag of an orator, Drances, and his contemporaries called by the name of libertas (cuius non audeo dicere nomen). We know now that this libertas was incomplete and largely elusive and illusory. It meant the rule of a nobility and its factions; it made little difference to the man in the street and in the municipium, and by its very structure it perpetuated the oppression of the provinces. But it was a more open system, and making one's career in it depended on obtaining the favour of a variety of individuals or groups from all walks of society. It did guarantee its members some form of free speech. The state and its citizens were not continually at the mercy of every whim of an absolute ruler and his appointed successor. It may well be true - it almost certainly is - that omnem potentiam ad unum conferri pacis interfuit. But Virgil accepted this pax without showing many signs of realizing that it had its darker side; that it had only come into being by dealing the death-blow to one of the most remarkable experiments in free government. His own libertas was the new reign of peace established by Augustus. This was the Golden Age returning, and Virgil accepted it lock, stock and barrel, along with the artificial revival of an obsolete religion and mythology, to which he contributed more than most other employees of the Department for the Organization of Opinion. The apotheosis

of the insignificant Marcellus is his own answer to the much more successful failure of the Somnium Scipionis; and Cicero's, at least, is the nobler failure of the two, for he did not deify his hero Scipio by appointment to Her Imperial Majesty but did so from his deepest political convictions. If his libertas was tantamount in the realities of his age to the rule of cliques and factions, pietas is not much more than blind obedience : to one's parents, to the gods, to the powers that be - to anything but one's own reason and conscience - not to mention that wonderful phrase which Virgil, for the life of him, could not have coined (not merely because it does not scan), conscientia generis humani. Iustitia itself, and mens sibi conscia recti, are empty phrases in the context of a world based on pietas - and does not the virgo (Iustitia) herself return to earth to inaugurate that very new age of pax and pietas? Horace was also prepared - wise man that he was - to accept the otium offered him and sing the praise of its author. But he did it cum dignitate, never losing sight of the motus ex Metello consule civicum, and even mentioning in passing that aetas parentum peior auis tulit nos nequiores, mox daturos progeniem uitiosiorem.

Nor does Virgil's scheme of things leave much room for the intellectual and artistic achievements of the ancient world. The Roman's task is conceived in those immortal lines of Anchises with unmistakable clarity. This, like much else I have said here, is ancient history; but one sometimes wonders if those who would wish us to turn Virgil into the representative symbol of our civilization are often conscious that he takes all this in supreme earnest; that he is quite serious in his contempt for the Greek arts of peace as against the Roman's superior art of imposing this peace by his more Spartan virtues; that, in his profound belief in the supremacy of the state - any form of state, provided it grants the populace peace and otium - he is not talking tongue in cheek (as Horace might do) when he belittles his own studia ignobilis oti. His 'Drances' (who, I should add, would still not be my own first choice as the supreme representative of Classical civilization and its achievements - even if such a choice had any sense at all) had at least some room in his scheme of the best of all possible worlds for studia humanitatis - even for philosophy, which he makes a prerequisite of the education of the orator. His Golden Age was in the past, an age of limited aristocratic liberty and of literary refinement; and his ideal constitution, however utopian it may have been in the practical realities of his own day, was an attempt to balance the various elements of the body politic against each other, preventing any single one of them from attaining absolute supremacy. His world is still too narrow to accomodate much of the achievement of the preceding ages, but he is, at least, aware of those achievements, and pays his respects to them. The choice, as between these two representatives of Roman civilization (and, once more: this is far from being the only choice, or a very real one), is essentially between a world often in a state of turmoil, but conceived in liberty (of sorts) and dedicated to the cultivation, among other things, of humane pursuits; and a world in which peace has been bought at the price of servility (another possible rendering of pietas), where humanitas has been put firmly in its place - at the service of the arts of war and of a totalitarian government. The noblest minds in Rome in the following generations considered themselves faced with such a choice, and opted for the first of these worlds, however unrealistic such an option was. Is the second of these possible worlds the sort of thing one should wish modern man to consider as the supreme achievement of Greece and Rome?

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I dedicate this essay to the memory of Baruch Kurzweil, teacher and friend, whose death in Tel Aviv was announced last August, a few days after the essay was completed.

At the time of his death, Kurzweil was Professor of Hebrew and General Literature at Bar-Ilan University, Tel Aviv. He dedicated his life's work to the reinterpretation of Modern Hebrew Literature, and his many books and articles have revolutionized the study and criticism of much of Hebrew and Jewish literature of the last two centuries and raised the whole field from the superficial and provincial level of most of his predecessors to standards comparable to those attained in the study of any of the world's great literatures. He brought with him into the study of his chosen field an uncommonly wide knowledge of Hebrew and European literature, from the earliest beginnings to the present day; an extraordinary sensitivity to the sound, style and inner rhythm of works of literary art; an uncanny grasp of the 'immanent logic' of a literary masterpiece and the world of images, insights, concepts and experiences which lies beneath its surface; and a profound understanding of, and concern for, the human values embodied in the greatest literary masterpieces of the world, and especially of his own people.

He was a committed Jew and a dedicated humanist, a man of immense intellectual honesty and sincerity and great moral courage, as well as a profound sense of humility before the great achievements of the human spirit, some of which, in his own department of literature, it fell to his part to interpret. But this humility was not always extended to some of his less fortunate or less ingenious contemporaries, and he often delighted in playing the enfant terrible in his devastating criticisms of what he considered to be sham, sub-standard, or mealy-mouthed in their work. Many of his most brilliant and most profound studies are devoted to the 'debunking' of established orthodoxies and reputations in the fields of his own speciality, and I had him often in mind when I was compiling the present essay. Although not a Classical scholar by training, he was as much at home in ancient as in modern literature, had a good knowledge of Latin (though only some Greek), and frequently delighted in quoting Latin poetry by heart. It was my intention to send him a copy of this essay as soon as it appeared, and his comments would have carried more weight with me than those of most others. I dared to entertain the hope that this essay might give him pleasure. Perhaps, in its small way, it may not be entirely unworthy of the memory of a man who never hesitated in questioning accepted dogma and never feared to give expression to his doubts. May his soul be bound up in the bond of eternal life.

J. GLUCKER.

A P P E N D I X

The 'Youthful Indiscretion' of a Great Historian.

The following extract from Gibbon's autobiography [47] has little to do with the present essay. It is not a criticism of Virgil - except on one or two small points - nor is it an attempt to rehabilitate him in an age which has not yet been exposed to the later attacks on his reputation. But its theme has a marked local interest, anticipating as it does a topic often studied and discussed in this University. The temptation to include it in an anthology of Vergiliana and to confirm my favourite Biblical writer in his opinion that there is no new thing under the sun has proved too strong to resist. Let mighty Gibbon have the final word!

"My next publication was an accidental sally of love and resentment; of my reverence for modest genius, and of my aversion for insolent pedantry. The sixth book of the Aeneid is the most pleasing and perfect composition of Latin poetry. The descent of Aeneas and the Sibyl to the infernal regions, to the world of spirits, expands an awful and boundless prospect, from the nocturnal gloom of the Cumaean grot,

Ibant obscuri sola sub nocte per umbram,

to the meridian brightness of the Elysian fields;

Largior hic campos aether et lumine vestit
Purpureo.....

from the dreams of simple nature, to the dreams, alas! of Egyptian theology, and the philosophy of the Greeks. But the final dismission of the hero through the ivory gate, whence

Falsa ad coelum mittunt insomnia manes,

seems to dissolve the whole enchantment, and leaves the reader in a state of cold and anxious scepticism. This most lame and impotent conclusion has been variously imputed to the taste or irreligion of Virgil; but, according to the more elaborate interpretation of Bishop Warburton, the descent to hell is not a false, but a mimic scene; which represents the initiation of Aeneas, in the character of a lawgiver, to the Eleusinian mysteries. This hypothesis, a singular chapter in the Divine Legation of Moses, had been admitted by many as true; it was praised by all as ingenious; nor had it been exposed, in a space of thirty years, to a fair and critical discussion. The learning and the abilities of the author had raised him to a just eminence; but he reigned the dictator and tyrant of the world of literature. The real merit of Warburton was degraded by the pride and presumption with which he pronounced his infallible decrees; in his polemic writings he lashed his antagonists without mercy or moderation; and his servile flatterers, (see the base and malignant essay on the Delicacy of Friendship) exalting the master critic far above Aristotle and Longinus, assaulted every modest dissenter who refused to consult the oracle, and to adore the idol. In a land of liberty, such despotism must provoke a general opposition, and the zeal of opposition is seldom candid or impartial. A late professor of Oxford, (Dr. Lowth) in a pointed and polished

epistle, (Aug. 31, 1765) defended himself and attacked the Bishop; and, whatsoever might be the merits of an insignificant controversy, his victory was clearly established by the silent confusion of Warburton and his slaves. I too, without any private offence, was ambitious of breaking a lance against the giant's shield; and in the beginning of the year 1770, my Critical Observations on the Sixth Book of the Aeneid were sent, without my name, to the press. In this short Essay, my first English publication, I aimed my strokes against the person and the hypothesis of Bishop Warburton. I proved, at least to my own satisfaction, that the ancient lawgivers did not invent the mysteries, and that Aeneas was never invested with the office of law-giver; that there is not any argument, any circumstance, which can melt a fable into allegory, or remove the scene from the Lake Avernus to the Temple of Ceres; that such a wild supposition is equally injurious to the poet and the man: that if Virgil was not initiated he could not, if he were, he would not, reveal the secrets of the initiation: that the anathema of Horace (vetabo qui Cereris sacrum vulgarit &c.) at once attests his own ignorance and the innocence of his friend . As the Bishop of Gloucester and his party maintained a discreet silence, my critical disquisition was soon lost among the pamphlets of the day; but the public coldness was overbalanced to my feelings by the weighty approbation of the last and best editor of Virgil, Professor Heyne of Gottingen, who acquiesces in my confutation, and styles the unknown author, doctus....et elegantissimus Britannus. But I cannot resist the temptation of transcribing the favourable judgement of Mr. Hayley, himself a poet and a scholar: "An intricate hypothesis, twisted into a long and laboured chain of quotation and argument, the Dissertation on the Sixth Book of Virgil, remained some time unrefuted. ------ At length, a superior, but anonymous, critic arose, who, in one of the most judicious and spirited essays that our nation has produced, on a point of classical literature, completely overturned this ill-founded edifice, and exposed the arrogance and futility of its assuming architect". He even condescends to justify an acrimony of style, which had been gently blamed by the more unbiassed German; "Paullo acrius quam velis....perstrinxit" [1] [Gibbon's footnotes are given below]. But I cannot forgive myself the contemptuous treatment of a man who, with all his faults, was entitled to my esteem; [2] and I can less forgive, in a personal attack, the cowardly concealment of my name and character."

Gibbon's footnotes:

1. The editor of the Warburtonian tracts, Dr. Parr (p.192), considers the allegorical interpretation "as completely refuted in a most clear, elegant and decisive work of criticism; which could not, indeed, derive authority from the greatest name; but to which the greatest name might with propriety have been affixed."

2. The Divine Legation of Moses is a monument, already crumbling in the dust, of the vigour and weakness of the human mind. If Warburton's new argument proved anything, it would be a demonstration against the legislator, who left his people without the knowledge of a future state. But some episodes of the work, on the Greek philosophy, the hieroglyphics of Egypt, etc., are entitled to the praise of learning, imagination, and discernment.

N O T E S

1. In recent years, the tendency to take Cicero's philosophical works seriously has enjoyed something of a revival - see Wilhelm Süss, Cicero, eine Einfuhrung in seine philosophischen Schriften, Mainz 1966; A.E.Douglas, Cicero the Philosopher, in Studies in Latin Literature, Cicero, Birmingham and London 1965, pp. 135-170; Cicero, Greece and Rome, New Surveys in the Classics No. 2, Oxford 1968, pp. 27-34. Neither of these authors denies the derivative nature of Cicero's philosophy, and their strongest argument is based on the assumption that not everything in his writings is mere copy and summary. So far, such attempts have not convinced the professional philosophers, and they do not seem very likely to convince the historians of philosophy that Cicero should be reinstated in the prominent position he once held.

2. See especially his wholesale attack on Cicero the man, the politician, the philosopher, the orator, and even the stylist in the final section of his History of Rome (English transl. by W.P.Dickson, Everyman edition vol. IV, pp. 574-7).

3. For a detailed and balanced statement of the present position of historical scholarship see Matthias Gelzer, Cicero, Wiesbaden 1967 (English translation forthcoming, Oxford 1972). Gelzer is, perhaps, an example of what I call here the Ciceronian scholar malgré lui. Like Mommsen, his sympathies as a political historian lie with Caesar, and he finds much in Cicero, especially as a statesman, to repel him. But in the course of a long and distinguished career as a student of the late Republic, he has been constantly in touch with Cicero's work and has come to appreciate some of the positive traits of his character and to admire his genius as a writer and orator.

4. Ludwig Bieler, History of Roman Literature, Engl. transl. by John Wilson and the author, London 1966, p.135, Bieler continues: '...but brought forth no great poetry of Homeric inspiration. The reason may be found partly in the literary situation of the age'. Certainly. But why should a rediscovery of an ancient poet necessarily be expected to produce a literature inspired by him?

5. See extract from Niebuhr's Lectures on the History of Rome (below section II and note 26).

6. But the extracts originally written in German are presented here in translation.

7. E.M.Butler, The Tyranny of Greece over Germany, Cambridge 1935; repr. Boston 1958.

8. C.G.Hardie in the Oxford Classical Dictionary,[2] 1970, pp.1127-28.

9. Many years ago, I was told the story of the late Professor M.Schwabe of Jeruasalem, a pupil of Wilamowitz, who, on a tour of Greece, reprimanded a colleague whom he found reading the Latin inscriptions on the Greek soil of Eleusis. He immediately added that 'the Romans had only one genuine poet, and even he found it necessary, on occasion, to translate from the Greek'.

10. C.G.Hardie in his Jackson Knight Memorial Lecture at the University of Exeter in 1970, on The Georgics, a Poem of Transition - now available in print, Abingdon 1971. Mr. Hardie treats much of Virgil's earlier poetry as an apprenticeship and a preparation for this final achievement.

11. Biographical essay: John Nichols, Literary Anecdotes of the Eighteenth Century, London 1812, vol. IV, 272-362 and 657-661; containing extensive quotations from the correspondence between Markland and his publisher William Bowyer, and a portrait of Markland facing the title-page; Sandys, Hist. of Class. Schol. II, 413-4. F.A.Wolf's essay (see below no. 13) is based on Nichols and on various passages in the publications of Markland himself.

12. See his remark quoted in Barker's Parriana pp. 271-4: Nichols op.cit. pp. 289-90. On Hurd and Warburton see Mark Pattison's Essays, Vol. II, Oxford 1889, pp. 119-176.

13. The essay on Markland: Lit.Anal. II, 370-387, repr, in Kleine Schriften II, 1869, 1069-1112.

14. That a man like Parr could be considered by many as the greatest scholar in England in an age which saw the publication of the works of Tyrwhitt, Porson, Musgrave, Dawes and Twining is a riddle, to which Parr himself has provided the key. " 'It is all very well to say that so-and-so is a great scholar', said Samuel Parr to Samuel Butler of Shrewsbury, 'but can he write an inscription?' " S. Butler, Life and Letters I, 255, quoted by Sandys, Hist.Class.Schol. 2, 422). It has long been one of the besetting sins of Classical scholarship in this country to consider the main purpose of learning the ancient languages to be 'education of a gentleman', and its crowning achievement to consist in the ability to write elegant Greek and, especially, Latin. This attitude still has its votaries today, and Parr has summed it up as neatly as befits a great writer of epigrams. Such an attitude has often resulted in a neglect and contempt for the other sort of Classical learning, the one which tries to study and reinterpret the ancient world not merely as a means to improving the elegancies of the student's style. Its representatives have often put obstacles in the way of those who preferred to indulge in that other brand of scholarship, especially when, in the nineteenth century, it was considered to be foreign and German. A German professor once remarked to Henry Sidgwick that the English language possessed no word corresponding to the German Gelehrte. Sidgwick answered without batting an eyelid: 'But we do have such a word, sir: prig'. As late as the 1950's, a professor of English in one of our provincial universities remarked with astonishment, on hearing that a colleague had published a book: 'But I thought a gentleman did not write books!'. A shrewd and entirely just estimate of Parr : De Quincey's Samuel Parr in vol.V of Masson's edition of De Quincey's Collected Writings, Edinburgh 1890, pp. 9-145. Wolf, of course, did not include Parr among the representatives of British Classical philology whom he wished his countrymen to emulate. He did include his friend and follower Henry Homer - but then, Homer did publish editions of Classical texts.

15. The Silvae of Statius and their Editors, Phoenix XX, 4, 1966, pp.305-324.

16. Anal. Lit. p.387, repr. in Kl.Schr.II, pp.1107-8. My translation.

17. P.Papinii Statii Silvarum libri quinque...recensuit Jer.Marklandus.. Londini MDCCXXVIII, pp. XXI.-XXII. For a defence of Virgil's half lines see John Sparrow, Half-lines and Repetitions in Virgil, Oxford 1931. Mr. Sparrow maintains that at least some of the unfinished lines were meant by Virgil to remain unfinished, for stylistic effect.

18. Wolf, loc.cit., says:'...so waren die lateinishchen Philologen gleich unzufrieden mit demjenigen, welches er nicht bloss uber einzelne in der Aeneis, sondern uber das ganze Werk aussprach'. Niebuhr,Lectures (below no. 26), p.663, seems to echo this statement; 'Jeremy [sic] Markland was the first who ventured to speak openly against Virgil; but he was decried for it, as if he had committed an act of high treason.' The only evidence for a scandalized reaction to Markland's censures of the Aeneid that I can find is this reference to an 'eruditus quidam amicus meus' and the apologetic tone of the rest of this preface, which gives the impression that he is anticipating another attack. Wolf and Niebuhr may well have come across more criticism of Markland's views in publications more easily accessible to them in their age and places of residence than they are to the present writer in his - but if so, they give no reference to them.

19. Wolf, loc.cit., says of this collection: 'Von dem aber ist wenig oder nichts in Umlauf gekommen.' I have tried in vain to trace such a collection among Markland's books, with marginal notes in his hand, now in the British Museum. But I believe that some of his books are now the property of his two Cambridge colleges, Peterhouse and St. John's. It may not be an unrewarding task for a Classical student in one of these colleges to try to unearth this collection, if it is still in existence.

20. Ibid. p.302

21. Euripidis...Supplices Mulieres.... Londini MDCCLXIII, p.261.

22. Sandys, Hist. Class. Schol. III, 77-82; G.P.Gooch, History and Historians in the Nineteenth Century, 2nd ed., London 1952, pp. 14-23. The Life and Letters of Niebuhr, English transl. 1852, is mercifully available in the Exeter City Library.

23. Quoted by Gooch, op.cit. p.23.

24. See his Lectures (below no. 26), p.1, and his History(below no. 25), pp. XVI-XXXII. The latter is a penetrating analysis of the place of Rome in history.

25. First German edition 1811-1832. The present extract is taken from the English translation by J.C.Hare and C.Thirlwall, Cambridge MDCCCXXXI ('second edition,revised with the additions in the third edition of the original'), vol. I, pp. 193-5.

26. The first edition of these Lectures was published in English translation in 1844, from lecture notes taken during his courses in 1828-9 by his pupil Leonhard Schmitz, who had settled in England by the date of publication. The first German edition was published two years later by Meyer Isler, who drew on his own notes taken in courses during 1826-7. In his second and third English editions (the latter reprinted many times), Schmitz incorporated into his own version any additional materials he found in Isler's German version, I have used the more popular and accessible one-volume Fifth Edition (London 1898). The present extract: pp. 661-3. Here, in the more proper context of a discussion of Augustan Literature, and in the more informal atmosphere of the lecture room, Niebuhr gives fuller expression to his views about Virgil. He says in this extract that he had 'often expressed his opinion concerning Virgil'. His writings, apart from the two works excerpted in this essay, are - like numerous other important works of Classical scholarship - not available to the present writer in his present place of residence. Since this is not a systematic attempt to present a full collection of all the various criticisms of Virgil ever made, I have considered the second of our extracts long and detailed enough to represent most of Niebuhr's criticisms of this poet.

27. The literature on Hegel is vast and ever-growing, yet I know of no work in English which does anything like full justice to the philosophical complexity and the wealth of detailed observation of his Aesthetics. The most accessible biography in English : Franz Wiedmann, Hegel, English transl. New York 1968. General introductions to his philosophy: W.T.Stace, The Philosophy of Hegel, London 1924; Walter Kaufmann, Hegel, New York 1965; G.R.G.Mure, The Philosophy of Hegel, London 1965 (with a short summary of his aesthetic theory, pp. 185-194). A translation of the Aesthetics, 'The Philosophy of Fine Art', by F.R.B.Osmaston, was published in four volumes in London in 1920. It is one of the most unreliable English translations of any of Hegel's works, and, in any case, it has not been available to me in Exeter. In translating the extracts from Hegel myself, I have found it advisable to pay more attention to the purpose of the present essay and make his comments as intelligible in English as one can. If this involves some inconsistency in the translation of some of the central concepts of his system (e.g. Dasein; Wirklichkeit; Empfindung), my excuse is that I have not attempted here to present the reader with a systematic exposition of Hegel's thought - not even his views of aesthetics in general. Hegel would have considered it incorrect to have extracts from his lectures taken out of context - although this has been done innumerable times and with much more harmful consequences than one can expect from the present passages. For him, the only proper context of a philosophical idea or argument is nothing less than the totality of philosophical thought which he attempted to present in his system. The reader should be warned that, however knowledgeable and acute Hegel may be in his criticisms of works of literature, he never considers such criticisms as 'practical criticism', detached from any general principles. A proper piece of literary criticism for him is merely the general principles demonstrated as covering the individual cases. This will be clear from the relation between the two extracts presented here.

28. See G.J.Warnock, English Philosophy since 1900, 2nd. ed., Oxford 1969, pp. 1-8.

29. Warnock, pp. 7-8, admits as much, but tries to defend this by claiming that 'metaphysical systems do not yield, as a rule, to frontal attacks. Their odd property of being demonstrable only, so to speak, from within, confers on them also a high resistance to attack from the outside....Such systems are more vulnerable to ennui than to disproof.' But this implies that the contemporary philosopher does not, as a rule, bother to study Hegel's philosophy, because he has put himslf, so to speak, outside it from the outset. I am reminded of an Oxford friend who had already firmly convinced himself of the correctness of the present approach to philosophy when he was faced with Aristotle. After a first reading of the De Anima, by no means the easiest of that author's writings, he could cheerfully inform me that he had found it easy to detect where Aristotle had gone wrong.

30. W. Charlton, Aesthetics, London 1970, pp. 82-3.

31. Ibid. p.128, no. 52. Sir David Ross was once asked, in a course he was giving on political philosophy, what he thought of the view of Marx on one of the problems discussed. 'Marx....', he answered, 'hm....that is, Karl Marx....Isn't he the chap who has recently been refuted quite adequately by Mr. Joseph?'

32. Frankfurt ed. (below no. 35), p.568.

33. Frankfurt ed. pp. 407-8.

34. Ibid p. 514.

35. I have used vol. 2 of the latest edition, Europäische Verlagsanstalt, Frankfurt am Main 1955. This is based on Hotho's 1842 text, reprinted in Glockner's Jubiläumsausgabe, and is the one usually quoted. Lasson's edition, which attempts to return to extant lecture notes, has not to the best of my knowledge ever reached the section from which the extracts in this essay are taken. First extract: Frankfurt ed. p.409.

36. Frankfurt ed. pp.434-5.

37. Aloys Blumauer, S.J., published in 1784-88 a travesty of the Aeneid (original title: Abenteuer des frommen Helden Aeneas), often reprinted. It is among the best parodies of a Classical work in German.

38. Sandys, Hist.Class.Schol. III, 435, with references.

39. C.G.Hardie (no. 8 above) seems to consider 1903, the year of publication of Heinze's Vergils epische Technik and Norden's edition of Aeneid VI, as the date of termination of this 'tyranny'.

40. G. Bernhardy, Grundriss der römischen Literatur, 5th ed., Braunschweig 1872, note 375 on pp. 502-3. Still the best summary of this subject. The first edition has not been accessible to me, and I cannot tell how much new material has been added in this edition. Karl Büchner, RE VIII A,2, pp. 1483-6,does little more than repeat, with some added detail, some of the information supplied by Benhardy. R.D.Williams, Changing Attitudes to Virgil, Studies in Latin Literature, Virgil, Birmingham and London 1969, pp.114-137 (esp. 128-137), treats the reaction against Virgil in the nineteenth century almost entirely from the point of view of the English Romantics.

41. G.M.Young, Victorian Essays, ed. W.D.Handcock, London 1962, pp. 123-128 ('The Greatest Victorian'). It goes without saying that I do consider Virgil, not only as a careful and learned artist but as a genuine poet, and that I deny such qualities to Lord Snow. But, as the Talmudic proverb has it, 'Jephthah to his generation as Samuel to his', and it may be true that a drab and prosaic age like ours gets the novelists it deserves and is adequately represented by them. We do have some genuine novelists, but none of them has depicted so accurately the atmosphere of England before, during and after the last war like Lord Snow, with the possible exception of Evelyn Waugh, whose range is more limited in many ways. This is precisely the point. What may well be, to the historian and sociologist, the best representation of an age, is often by no means the best literary creation of that age, or even a literary creation at all. That Virgil is a poet there is no doubt, but he should not be made to owe whatever greatness he may possess to the wrong reasons.

42. W.Y.Sellar, The Roman Poets of the Augustan Age, Virgil, 2nd. ed., Oxford 1883, pp. 71-77. I have omitted his footnotes: all but one are short references to passages quoted, and the one exception is not essential to the argument.

43. George Saintsbury, A Second Scrap Book, London 1923, pp. 250-259. Another attempt by a famous British literary critic to unmask some of Virgil's shortcomings: Andrew Lang, On Virgil, Letters on Literature, London and New York, 1892, pp. 58-67. It is much less incisive than Saintsbury, and goes into much less detail. On Saintsbury, see DNB 1931-40, Oxford 1949, pp. 774-7, with biographical references.

44. One should add that in his analysis he concentrates more on Klopstock than on Milton or Voltaire. The latter, of course, would have been a case of flogging a dead horse. As to Milton, I suspect that Hegel may not have trusted his feeling for English poetic style. In any case, Klopstock was still exercising too much influence in Germany (he died in 1803), and Hegel delighted in the demolition of his chef d'oeuvre here, just as he could not resist the temptation to demolish his prose manifesto, Die deutsche Gelehrtenrepublik, in the famous section on Das geistige Tierreich in his Phenomenologie des Geistes.

45. E.J.Kenney in the Oxford Classical Dictionary^{2}, 1970, p.764.

46. The words omitted are: 'what later epic poets, except Lucan, would or could not perceive'. It is true that Lucan did realize, and the others did not, that an authentic Latin epic could be better achieved if written on a Roman theme. But they do seem to have realized that when one chooses a Greek epic theme, one should do better to remain within the boundaries of Greek legend. Ovid's achievement in the Metamorphoses is of a different order. It is epic only in metre and continuity, not in the sense of any of the unities demanded by Aristotle.

47. Memoirs of my Life and Writings, in The Life and Letters of Edward Gibbon, the "Chandos Classics", London and New York 1889, pp. 84-5.

English Lyric and Greek Epigram

A slumber did my spirit seal;
I had no human fears:
She seem'd a thing that could not feel
The touch of earthly years.

No motion has she now, no force;
She neither hears nor sees;
Roll'd round in earth's diurnal course
With rocks, and stones, and trees.

W. WORDSWORTH.

φεῦ, λήθη τις ἐμὴν ψυχὴν κατέδησεν ὑπνώδης·
οὐ τὰ κατ' ἄνθρωπον κῆρ ἐμὸν εἶχε δέη,
ἀλλ' ἐδόκει μοι δωρὶς ἄγειν φύ σιν αιεν ἄθικτον
πάντα βιαζομένων τἄλλ' ἐπι γαῖαν ἐτῶν.
ἦν τυφλός· οὐδὲν ὁρᾷ δ' αὐτὴ νῦν, οὐδὲν ἀκούει,
οὐδὲν ἔχει κινεῖν, οὐδὲν ἔνεστι κράτος.
δένδρεσι σὺν πέτραις τε λίθοις τε κθλίνδεται ἀεί,
εἰς τὸν γῆς δῖνον δῦσα καθημέριον.

Note : This supposes the Greeks to have the same notion of the revolving earth as Wordsworth.

English Lyric and Greek Epigram

REQUIESCAT

Strew on her roses, roses,
And never a spray of yew.
In quiet she reposes;
Ah! would that I did too.

Her mirth the world required;
She bathed it in smiles of glee.
But her heart was tired, tired,
And now they let her be.

Her life was turning, turning,
In mazes of heat and sound;
But for peace her soul was yearning,
And now peace laps her round.

Her cabin'd, ample spirit,
It flutter'd and fail'd for breath;
Tonight it doth inherit
The vasty hall of death.

M. ARNOLD.

δὸς ῥόδα τῇδ' ἄπεχ' ἔρνος ἄπαν σκιερᾶς κυπαρίσσου·
σῖγ' εὕδει βρέφος ὥς· εἶθ' ἐμ' ὅδ'εἶχεν ὕπνος.
χάρμα, γέλων, θαλίας αἰτοῦσιν ἁπᾶσι χεούσης
· νῦν – ἔκαμεν γάρ – ἔχειν ἤρεμ' ἐῶσι φρένα.
ἔστρεφε θέρμα ῥέατρα χοροῦ τ' ἠχῶν λαβύρινθος
σῶμα γαληνὰ ποθοῦν οἷα τανῦν ἐνέδυ.
εἰρχθέντ' ὡς ὄρνιν θυμὸν μέγαν ἄσθμ' ἀνέπαλλε,
νυκτὶ δὲ τῇδ' Αἴδου δώματ' ἄπειρ' ἔλαχεν.

The Romans associated cypress, rather than yew, with death. Bud did the Greeks?

F.W.CLAYTON

CASSIODORUS

A SIXTH CENTURY CHRISTIAN HUMANIST

With the separation of the Roman empire into East and West, and with the inroads made by tribes from northern and central Europe into the countries bordering the Mediterranean, it was inevitable that the links between the Latin West and Hellenic culture should become weakened in the fifth and sixth centuries A.D. The irrupting barbarians were not, however, purely destructive, or even intent upon methodical conquest: rather were they in varying degrees eager to appropriate for themselves some of the advantages which geographical conditions and the continuing presence of a mature civilisation could still offer along the Mediterranean littoral and in the Italian peninsula.

Theodoric, king of the Ostrogoths, took possession of Ravenna and became virtual monarch of Italy in A.D. 493. During his long reign he sought to bring about a synthesis of barbarian vigour and the cultural tradition of the Roman world. The chief architect of the literary renaissance of which Theodoric dreamed was Boethius, who, encouraged by his father-in-law Symmachus, drew up an immensely ambitious programme for translating and commenting upon many Greek learned works; he conceived the idea, for example, of translating into Latin and commenting upon Plato and the logical, ethical and physical works of Aristotle and of then showing that their philosophies were fundamentally congruent.[1] But his work was brought to an abrupt end when at the age of only forty-four he fell into disfavour with Theodoric and was executed in 524 for alleged treason. By then an associate of Boethius had become Theodoric's chancellor. His name was Cassiodorus Senator.[2]

Cassiodorus was born of a distinguished family at Scyllacium in Bruttium, probably during the decade 480-490.[3] He presumably received the rhetorical education which was still normal for the

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1. Boethius, De interpretatione editio secunda, 2, 2, 3, ed. C. Meiser, Leipzig, 1880, p. 79, 9. The compatibility of Platonic and Aristotelean philosophy was a familiar theme in Neo-Platonist thought.

2. In its fullest form, Flavius Magnus Aurelius Cassiodorus Senator. For the authenticity of the form Cassiodorus (as distinct from Cassiodorius), see T. Stettner, "Cassiodors Name", in Philologus 81 (1926), pp. 233-236. Cf. also D.M.Cappuyns, "Cassiodore" in DHGE,* XI, Paris, 1949, col. 1350. *(Dictionnaire d'histoire et de géographie ecclésiastiques).

3. The exact date is unknown. Mommsen (MGH. Auctores antiquissimi, XIII, p.x) proposes the year 490, but this would mean that Cassiodorus would have become consilarius at the implausibly early age of 13 and quaestor at 17. A date nearer 480 would therefore seem more likely. See also T.Hodgkin, Italy and her Invaders, Oxford, 1896, III, pp. 284-285; and Cappuyns, art. cit., col. 1349f.

sons of aristocratic families. For this purpose he probably went to Rome,[4] which was still a major centre for rhetorical studies. It may also have been there that Cassiodorus later pursued his study of dialectic with Dionysius Exiguus,[5] who was strongly imbued with Alexandrian theological literature and may have helped to develop Cassiodorus' regard for Hellenic learning.

Cassiodorus' father rose to be praetorian prefect (503-507) under Theodoric, and Cassiodorus himself made an early start in public life.[6] He became consilarius in 503, and, after delivering a very favourably received eulogy of Theodoric, was quickly promoted to quaestor in 506, an office which he probably held until 511. In 514 he was consul ordinarius, and subsequently was perhaps appointed corrector of Lucania and Bruttium.[7] In 523 he was made Theodoric's magister officiorum and he remained in that post until 527.

Theodoric died in 526, and in the following year Justinian became emperor. Amalasuntha, Theodoric's daughter, became regent queen in Italy, for her son Athalaric, the Gothic heir, was only eight years old. Amid many other cares, Amalasuntha tried to continue her father's plans for the revival of classical culture.[8]

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4. See, e.g. P. Riché, Education et culture dans l'occident barbare, Paris, 1962, pp. 65 ff.

5. Cassiodori Senatoris Institutiones, edited from the manuscripts by R.A.B.Mynors, Oxford, 1937. Reprinted from the corrected sheets of the First Impression, 1963, page 62, line 17. (Future references to the Institutiones are to the page and line numbers of Mynors' edition.) Cf. Riché, op. cit., p. 124.

6. For the principal events of Cassiodorus' life, see, e.g. Cappuyns, art. cit., cols. 1349 ff.

7. This received view of Cassiodorus' appointment as corrector is not substantiated by definite evidence. See Cappuyns, art. cit., col. 1352.

8. Her own cultural attainments were considerable. Cf. e.g. Variae 11, 1,6 (ed. Mommsen, p. 328, 18).

In this objective she received some help from Cassiodorus, whom she appointed praefectus praetorii in 533.[9] But she was mainly pre-occupied with her attempts to establish an entente with Justinian, and she could look for little support for her cultural aspirations from her fellow Goths, who were becoming apprehensive about the prospect of a Byzantine reconquest of Italy. Their apprehension was justified. Justinian's forces under Belisarius captured Africa from the Vandals in 533. After failing to re-establish hegemony in Italy by constitutional and diplomatic means, the emperor declared war on the Italian Goths in 535, a partial pretext being the murder of Amalasuntha, nominally under Byzantine protection, by the kinsmen of three Gothic nobles whom she had executed. Belisarius successively took possession of Sicily (535), Naples (536) and Rome (536). In Rome he had to withstand a year long siege by Vitiges, by then king of the Ostrogoths, but after this and other delays he proceeded cautiously to extend Byzantine control in northern Italy, and in 540 he entered Ravenna. By then the official career of Cassiodorus was over.

Cassiodorus' administrative and rhetorical talents had enabled him to present the edicts and rescripts of the Ostrogothic rulers in the elaborate Latin which was still the prerogative of the senatorial aristocracy.[10] It is a tribute to the sheer tenacity of rhetoric in the late Roman world that towards or on his retirement (he was replaced by Fidelis in 537) Cassiodorus thought it worthwhile to publish a twelve volume collection of his past papers - the Variae[11] - in order to afford examples of literary styles suited to different occasions. He evidently did not regard his compositions primarily as historical documents: they are not dated, and they present perplexing material for the modern historian. To the Variae he appended (probably in 538) a short treatise De anima,[12] largely based on Augustine. In 533 he completed a History of the Goths,[13] presenting the Ostrogothic ancestry and régime in the most favourable light.

Shortly before his retirement, Cassiodorus collaborated with the pope Agapetus (535-536) in seeking to found at Rome a higher theological school comparable with that of third century Alexandria, and, as he was later to learn, with that which existed in his own day at Nisibis in Syria.[14] But the enterprise foundered in the turmoil of

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9. For example, he regularised the payment of state employed teachers of grammar, rhetoric and law (Variae, 9, 21).

10. See, for example, P.Brown, The World of Late Antiquity, London, 1971, pp. 130-131.

11. Ed. Th. Mommsen, MGH, Auct. Ant., XII, Berlin, 1894.

12. See the edition of J. Halporn in Traditio, 16, New York, 1960, pp. 39-109.

13. Now lost, although the summary made by Jordanes is extant.

14. Inst., 3,7. See also H.I.Marrou, "Autour de la bibliothèque du pape Agapit", MEFR 48 (1931), pp. 124-169.

the Byzantine incursions into Italy. Agapetus died while heading a legation in Constantinople, and conditions in Italy offered little encouragement for an audacious cultural experiment. But there is little doubt that the frustration of this plan had something to do with the eventual foundation of Vivarium.

At about the time of his retirement, Cassiodorus underwent a conversio. In this sense conversio does not mean an initial conversion from paganism to Christianity but the adoption by a layman of a disciplined and quasi-clerical mode of life.[15] Cassiodorus began work[16] (probably at Ravenna) on a detailed commentary on the Psalms,[17] much of the material for which was taken from Augustine.

Nothing certain is known of Cassiodorus' movements in the 540s. He may have retired to his family estate in Bruttium and there cultivated the life of a devout layman. More probably, however, he followed Vitiges,[18] who in 540 was taken prisoner in Ravenna, transferred to Constantinople and there warmly received by Justinian. Wherever he was, Cassiodorus must have been acutely aware of the precarious outlook for the preservation of literary works of all kinds in an Italy ravaged by strife, and of the consequent need to ensure that some attempt be made to preserve and copy those manuscripts which survived.[19] It may have been at Constantinople that he formed the idea that when peace should return to Italy a monastery set amid his pleasant lands and in a favourable climate[20] could satisfy all his aspirations: the religious life could be followed, scripture and theology studied, and manuscripts cared for andcopied.

During his stay in Constantinople, Cassiodorus may have had the opportunity to learn - perhaps from Junilius[21] - about the theological school at Nisibis, which had been founded in 457. Such a discussion could well have fortified Cassiodorus in his intention to found his own school.

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15. See A.Loyen, Sidoine Apollinaire, Tome 2, Lettres (Paris, 1970) xxxiv-xxxv, and Ep. 4, 15, 2: "non solum religione celata, sed et conversione manifesta". Conversio was a decision to be announced in public.

16. De orthographia, praef. (Keil, Grammatici Latini, 7,14 ?

17. Ed. M. Adriaen, in Corpus Christianorum, 97-98, Turnhout, 1958.

18. On this question, see P.Courcelle, Late Latin Writers and their Greek sources (Eng. trans. by Harry E. Wedeck, Cambridge, Mass., 1969), p.335 and n. 24; A. Momigliano, "Cassiodorus and Italian Culture of his Time" in Proceedings of the British Academy 41 (1956), p.219; and Cappuyns, art. cit., cols. 1356 - 1357.

19. On the general state of culture in Italy during this period, see P.Riche, op. cit., pp. 92-219.

20. For a lyrical description of Cassiodorus' estate, see Variae, 12,15.

21. Either in person of from the Preface to Junilius' De Partibus Divinae Legis (PL, 68, 15): Scola in Nisibi urbe...ubi divina lex per magistros publicos....ordine et regulariter traditur. Junilius' work dates from c.542.

We know that Cassiodorus was in Constantinople in the year 550.[22] Of course, even if he had lived there since 540 he may have been able to make occasional visits to southern Italy and perhaps even to take some preliminary steps towards the foundation of his monastery of Vivarium. But it was probably not until after the final defeat of the Ostrogoth Totila in 552 and the promulgation in 554 of the Pragmatic Sanction, which fixed the organisation of the conquered territory and authorised the return of the Italian dignitaries to their native land,[23] that Cassiodorus was able to return permanently to his old home.[24] It therefore seems reasonable to surmise that the monastery of Vivarium did not come into full operation earlier than the year 555.[25]

Cassiodorus probably remained at Vivarium for the rest of his life. The date of his death is not known, but he himself lets us know that he was still active in his ninety-third year, for it was then that he compiled the De orthographia.[26] It is to Cassiodorus' lasting credit that he realised the perils of a self-absorbed monasticism, and that he saw too that the scriptures and the writings of the Fathers would lose in intelligibility if they were allowed to drift away from their conceptual and linguistic moorings. A similar apprehension had visited Augustine.[27] Indeed, the De doctrina Christiana is in a sense the charter for Cassiodorus' own two-volume manual for his monks, the Institutiones.

The date of the composition of the Institutiones is unknown. But presumably Cassiodorus would have completed what we may regard as the standard and authentic edition[28] as soon as possible after the opening of the monastery, and this standard edition may thus be dated provisionally to the second half of the decade 550-560.[29] It may be, however, that Cassiodorus began work on a master draft of his manual very much earlier, perhaps even as early as 540 or when he first conceived the idea of founding the monastery.

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22. Vigilius, Ep. 14, ad Rusticum et Sebastianum (PL 69, 49A).

23. Pragmatica Sanctio, 27 (in Corpus Iuris Civilis, III, Berlin, 1895, p.802).

24. Cappuyns, art. cit., cols. 1357-1358.

25. For the location and layout of the monastery, see P.Courcelle, "Le site du monastère de Cassiodore", MEFR 55 (1938), pp. 259-307; and id., "Nouvelles recherches sur le monastère de Cassiodore", in Actes du V^e Congres international d'archéologie chrétienne, Vatican City and Paris, 1957, pp. 511-528. The monastery may have followed the Regula Magistri, the authorship of which Cappuyns (art. cit., cols. 1360-1361) assigns to Cassiodorus.

26. GL 7, p. 144, 14.

27. Eg. De doctrina Christiana 2, 40 (cf. Inst., 70, 22ff.) and De ordine, 2, 16, 44. See also R.A.Markus, "Augustine: Christianity and Philosophy" in The Cambridge History of Later Greek and Early Medieval Philosophy, Cambridge, 1967, pp. 346-347 and passim.

28. See the Introduction to Mynors' edition.

29. Cf. Cappuyns, art. cit., col. 1372.

Cassiodorus wishes to insist on the value for scriptural understanding of preserving a continuity between the study of the liberal arts, which form the subject of Book II, and that of the scriptures:

> In secundo vero libro de artibus ac disciplinis liberalium litterarum pauca libanda sunt; ubi tamen minore periculo delinquitur, si quid salva fidei stabilitate peccetur. (Inst., 6, 14: cf. 68,1ff.)

The prime importance which Cassiodorus attaches to the study of scripture and of the Fathers does not obscure for him the difficulties which would arise from the neglect of secular learning, even if such learning could take only the most summary form (Inst., 69,9 ff). He is, however, careful to temper his enthusiasm for such studies and to rest his words on the authority of the Fathers themselves:

> est enim rerum istarum procul dubio, sicut et Patribus nostris visum est, utilis et non refugienda cognitio (68,13); and
>
> et ideo, sicut beatus Augustinus ait et alii doctissimi Patres, scripturae saeculares non debent respui (159, 10). [30]

These studies are not to be followed for their own sake, but are to subserve the elucidation of the scriptures:

> Verumtamen nec illud Patres sanctissimi decreverunt, ut saecularium litterarum studia respuantur, quia non exinde minimum ad sacras Scripturas intellegendas sensus noster instruitur... quanti enim philosophi haec solummodo lectitantes ad fontem sapientiae non venerunt, et vero lumine privati ignorantiae caecitate demersi sunt! (70, 8ff.)

Similarly, study of the (mathematical) disciplines purifies the mind for contemplation:

> has [disciplinas] dum frequenti meditatione revolvimus, sensum nostrum acuunt limunque ignorantiae detergunt, et ad illam inspectivam contemplationem, si tamen sanitas mentis arrideat, Domino largiente perducunt (131, 17)

The fundamental point is that liberal studies may properly be followed because they are in principle contained in the scriptures themselves:

> quicquid autem in Scriptures divinis de talibus rebus inventum fuerit, praecedenti notitia melius probatur intellegi. constat enim quasi in origine spiritalis sapientiae rerum istarum indicia fuisse seminata, quae postea doctores saecularium litterarum ad suas regulas prudentissime transtulerunt; quod apto loco in expositione Psalterii fortasse probavimus (6.16)

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30. Cassiodorus had earlier allowed himself a less qualified enthusiasm for these studies: gloriosa est denique scientia litterarum, quia quod primum est, in homine mores purgat; quod secundum, verborum gratiam subministrat: ita utroque beneficio mirabilis ornat et tacitos et loquentes. (Variae, 3, 33,3 (Mommsen, p. 96, 28)).

In Book I of the Institutiones (which was probably not written until after Book II), Cassiodorus provides a bibliographical guide to the study of the Bible. As well as naming Latin authorities - Jerome, Ambrose, Hilary, Augustine, Propser - Cassiodorus refers to a variety of Greek exegetical works of which he possesses Latin translations.[31] Among them are Adrian's Introduction to the Study of Scripture[32] and commentaries by Basil of Caesarea on Genesis[33] Didymus on Proverbs,[34] John Chrysostom[35] and Clement on various Epistles. Some of these works had already been translated by Jerome and Rufinus. In other instances Cassiodorus commissioned his colleagues and friends Epiphanius, Bellator and Mutianus to produce Latin versions. He is prepared to make selective use of the writings of the suspect Tyconius the Donatist, and displays a similar liberality towards Origen, whom some authorities thought should be avoided altogether.[36] Translations of some of Origen's exegetical works by Jerome and Rufinus were already available;[37] others were translated in the monastery itself.[38]

Cassiodorus also possesses Rufinus' translation of Eusebius' Church History, and brings the work up to date by asking Epiphanius to translate the Greek historians Socrates, Sozomen and Theodoret and then by combining excerpta to form the Historia Ecclesiastica Tripartita,[39] a work which was to have a widespread currency in the Middle Ages.

Book I continues with brief but engaging character sketches of some of the Latin fathers, Hilary, Cyprian, Ambrose, Jerome and Augustine; and with a longer and appreciative section about Cassiodorus' former fellow-student Dionysius Exiguus, whom he reveres for his equal proficiency in Greek and Latin as well as for his personal saintliness.[40]

Employment in the gardens (and suitable reading: Gargilius, Martialis, Columella, Emilianus) is prescribed for the less academically inclined monks,[41] and there is a charming piece[42] on the lowly but useful art of the medical practitioner recalling Vergil's lines in the twelfth Aeneid:

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31. Inst., 34, 10.

32. ibid., 11, 9.

33. ibid., 22, 12.

34. ibid., 29, 11.

35. ibid., 29, 16.

36. ibid., 15, 3.

37. ibid., 14, 1 (Sermons on the Octateuch); 24, 3 (on the Song of Songs); 31, 3 (on Romans).

38. e.g. on Esdras (Inst., 27, 12)

39. Inst., 56, 2

40. ibid., 63, 7.

41. Chap. 28.

42. Inst., 78, 9ff.

There is no doubt that Cassiodorus does subordinate the study of secular culture to his stated aims. But his compendium on the seven liberal arts was to have a future which he could scarcely have foreseen.[47] It was extensively plagiarised by Isidore of Seville in the first three books of the Etymologies, and both Alcuin and Rhabanus Maurus are indebted to the Institutiones for their treatments of the seven liberal arts. Copies of Cassiodorus' work are listed in ninth century library catalogues of Reichenau and Fulda, and various parts of the work were in the same century used as sources by Aurelian of Moutier-St-Jean, Regino of Prüm, and Erchanbert of Freising.[48]

Perhaps the Dark Ages were not so sable as they have often been represented. But at all events the lamps of learning in Europe for centures burnt low and fitfully; and in that darkling world there gleam more brightly the aspirations and achievement of Cassiodorus.

John Mair

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47. See, e.g., L.W.Jones, "The Influence of Cassiodorus on Mediaeval Culture" in Speculum 20 (1945), pp. 433-442; and id., "Further Notes on Cassiodorus' Influence on Mediaeval Culture", in Speculum 22 (1947), pp. 254-256.

48. Speculum, 20, p. 438.

ille (Iapyx), ut depositi proferret fata parentis,
scire potestates herbarum usumque medendi
maluit, et mutas agitare inglorius artis.

(XII, vv. 395-397)

Book II of the Institutiones is a short compendium of the seven liberal arts, and consists mainly of excerpts from authorities - Greek as well as Latin - on the individual subjects. It opens with a preface with a number of reminiscences of Augustine. The chapter on grammar contains a series of definitions taken from Latin writers, principally Donatus, and the chapter on rhetoric which follows is similarly a compilation from Latin writers - notably Cicero, Quintilian, and Fortunatianus. When he comes to dialectic, however, Cassiodorus adopts the Greek custom of prefacing his discussion of logic itself by providing a list of the divisions of the subject matter of philosophy. The body of Cassiodorus' chapter consists of passages from the translations of Aristotle's logical works made by (Pseudo) Apuleius, the Christian rationalist Marius Victorinus, and Boethius.

For arithmetic, Cassiodorus turns to the Introduction to Arithmetic of Nicomachus of Gerasa, a work of importance for later Greek and early mediaeval philosophy. Cassiodorus could refer to translations of the Arithmetic made by Apuleius and Boethius.[43]

In his chapter on music, Cassiodorus draws on the Greek writer Gaudentius, whose works were translated into Latin by the Mutianus who was responsible for translating the Homilies of John Chrysostom on Hebrews. Cassiodorus also quotes from Clement of Alexandria, and, probably above all, from the Greek writer Alypius.[44] In the short chapter on geometry Cassiodorus departs from his usual practice of excerpting earlier writers, and refers his readers instead to the works of Euclid and Archimedes, both of whom Boethius had translated, and to those of Apollonius. For astronomy, Cassiodorus is almost entirely beholden to Ptolemy, translated by Boethius.

Besides the seven liberal arts themselves, Cassiodorus mentions (in Book I) the study of history, geography and the natural sciences. Some of the authorities he recommends for the former - Josephus on history ("paene secundus Livius") and Dionysius Periegetes and Ptolemy on geography - are Greek; and medicine, the only one of the natural sciences treated, is a subject of thoroughly Greek origin.

Although the monastery of Vivarium did not long outlive its founder, its achievements were to have a lasting effect in the Middle Ages.[45] If Cassiodorus cherished the hope of establishing a permanent study centre at Vivarium, it was not realised. But he did succeed in collecting and - with the help of his friends - in preserving many invaluable works of Greek and Latin exegesis, some of which were possibly later transmitted to the Lateran Li rary.[46]

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43. Inst., 140, 18.

44. Courcelle, op. cit., pp. 349-350.

45. Cf. Cappuyns, DHGE, XI, cols. 1358-1359.

46. P. Courcelle, Late Latin Writers, Chapter 8.