

J. E. B. MAYOR.

JANUARY 28TH, 1825—DECEMBER 1ST, 1910.

JOHN EYTON BICKERSTETH MAYOR was the son of the Rev. Robert Mayor and Charlotte Bickersteth, sister of Lord Langdale and of Edward Bickersteth of Watton. A few days after his death four brief and characteristic contributions from his pen appeared in the *Classical Review*, which will always be associated with the fact that it was edited by his younger brother, Joseph Bickersteth Mayor, for the first seven years of its existence.

John Mayor was born on January 28th, 1825, at Baddegama, in Ceylon, where his father was a missionary of the Church Missionary Society. At the age of six he revelled in Rollin and the English Homer and Virgil (both in prose) and in the English Nepos and Caesar. Early in his eighth year he was sent, with his two elder brothers, to the Grammar School of Newcastle-under-Lyme, where he was a day-boy under the headmastership of Mr. Anderson. His elder brother, Robert, afterwards Fellow of St. John's and Mathematical Master at Rugby, was greatly taken with John's vehement spirit, shown even there by his readiness to fight boys ever so much bigger than himself, and also with his ready memory and precocious love of learning. Before completing his eighth year, he was sent to Christ's Hospital, and it is surmised that his stoical endurance, his asceticism, and his antiquarian and historical interests were fostered by the strange survival of sixteenth-century life, into which he had been thrust in the very heart of London. In his eleventh year, after an attack of scarlet fever, he was withdrawn from school, and spent two or three years at home, learning Greek, as well as Latin, from his mother. When he was about thirteen he went to Shrewsbury, the school which won his loyal devotion for the rest of his long life.

At St. John's, Cambridge, his private tutor was William Henry Bateson, subsequently Public Orator, and ultimately Master of the College; and in the Classical Tripos of 1848 his name appeared in the third place in the First

Class, immediately below C. B. Scott and Westcott.

From 1849 to 1853 he was a Master at Marlborough, where (apart from his principal work with the lower sixth) it was his duty to teach one of the lowest forms three hours a week. It was at Marlborough that he prepared his erudite edition of *Thirteen Satires of Juvenal*, 1853. In 1886, in the 'advertisement' of the fourth edition of Vol. I., he thus records the genesis of the work:

'When, in 1850 or 1851, my friend the publisher said to me, "You ought to bring out a book," it was no special acquaintance with Juvenal that suggested the choice, but dissatisfaction with Ruperti's edition, then holding the field. "I have a good many notes on Juvenal, and Ruperti's book is not worthy of his author."

After his return to St. John's as a College Lecturer, he contributed to the *Journal of Classical and Sacred Philology* two comprehensive articles on Latin lexicography, which appeared in November, 1855, and in March, 1857, and were marked by the same love of learning and familiarity with its history, which continued to be his leading characteristic for more than half a century of his subsequent life. He also produced, in 1861, the first of the six editions of Cicero's *Second Philippic*, founded on that of Halm. Meanwhile he had thrown himself with ardour into various forms of literary and antiquarian research. He printed the four earliest codes of the College Statutes, completed and published Baker's History of the College, and edited Roger Ascham's *Scholmaster*, and the biographies of Nicholas Ferrar, Matthew Robinson, and Ambrose Bonwicke. For the 'Rolls Series' he edited in 1863-69 the *Speculum Historiale*, bearing the name of Richard of Cirencester, pointing out the sources of all the borrowed erudition of the forger of that chronicle. In 1868 he produced his excellent *First Greek Reader*, with a racy preface on classical education.

During the three years for which the Professorship of Latin was held by Munro (1869-72), Mayor was accident-

ally engaged in bringing out a second edition of his *Juvenal*. In 1872 he was elected Professor. The favourite subjects of his lectures were Martial, and the letters of Seneca and Pliny, with Minucius Felix and Tertullian. In 1875 he published a bibliography of Latin literature founded on that of Hübner; in 1878 a joint edition of the third and fourth books of Bede's *Ecclesiastical History*; in 1880 an edition of the third book of Pliny's Letters; and in 1889 a critical review of the *Latin Heptateuch* of Cyprian, the sixth-century poet of Toulon. The introduction to this last work closes with a few interesting reminiscences of his old head-master, Dr. Kennedy. Three years before, he had dedicated to Dr. Kennedy the first volume of the fourth edition of his *Juvenal*. In the 'advertisement,' under the heading of a series of mottoes from the *Satires*, we have the editor's discursive views on many of the subjects of the day. The last words are:

'Henceforth I hope to devote myself to clearing off my many literary arrears, reserving for my old age a commentary on Seneca, for which I have made large collections.'

The *Commentary on Seneca* never appeared, and of the editions of several books of the *Odyssey* and of the tenth book of Quintilian only a small portion was published.

The finest specimens of his English

style are to be found, not in his introductions or in his lectures, but in the sermons preached in the chapel of his College and elsewhere. Some of these were inspired by the Old Catholics, the Spanish Reformed Church, and the Church of Scotland, and by the simple life exemplified by a moderate variety of vegetarianism.

In his old age he quickly mastered Esperanto. He was familiar with French, and especially familiar with German and with Dutch. He represented his University at the tercentenary of Leyden, where he met Madvig and Cobet. He paid only one visit to Rome, where, apart from memorials of ancient ages, he was mainly interested in the modern schools.

He was one of the original Fellows of the British Academy, and he received honorary degrees from Oxford, Aberdeen, and Glasgow. On his eightieth birthday, a Latin address of congratulation, written by Dr. Reid, was presented to him at a meeting presided over by Sir Richard Jebb. In the preceding year his portrait, etched by Herkomer, had appeared as the frontispiece of *Minerva*. One of that artist's masterpieces is the portrait painted in 1890, and now preserved in the hall of St. John's.

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ORIGINAL CONTRIBUTIONS

NOTE ON HOMERIC HYMN TO DEMETER, 239 ff.

I WAS glad to find a suggestion of Dr. Fraser, supporting a view at which I had independently arrived that behind the Demophoön story lies a rite of infant initiation, not one of child sacrifice.¹ Prof. Murray has shown that the hymn has been expurgated and that the expurgators had probably in mind the

atrocities of infant sacrifice.² The Greeks were always making analogous mistakes; Pausanias, we remember, explains as a survival of human sacrifice the scourging of the Spartan lads.

To the Demeter story must be added the Thetis legends, of which again two versions have come down to us; in one

¹ *On Some Ceremonies of the Central Australian Tribes*. Australasian Association for the Advancement of Science (Melbourne, 1901), p. 319.

² See *Rise of the Greek Epic*, Appendix G, p. 276 f. Prof. Murray no longer believes that the whole myth is based on a ritual of child sacrifice.¹