

The Classical Review

APRIL 1900.

The beginning of a new series of Greek and Latin texts in English claims more than a passing mention; and this fresh proof of the enterprise of the Oxford University Press suggests more than one reflection of interest. In the first place it gives welcome proof of the revival of English Classical scholarship: twenty years ago, we may safely say, such an undertaking would have been destined to collapse, whereas now there is fair prospect of its being brought to a creditable, if not to a distinguished conclusion. But we must not let our patriotic satisfaction carry us so far as to rejoice with some of our contemporaries that now at last have we a national series of classical texts. For new texts, single or serial, of ancient authors the sole *raison d'être* is that they are superior to their predecessors.

Externally, the coming series will maintain the reputation of its domicile; with paper, type and margin, little fault can be found; the size and shape of its pages will commend themselves to many, and the place of its brief critical notes below the text is beyond doubt the most convenient one. Its intrinsic claims to consideration, to which we here advert without prejudice to the judgments which competent critics in this journal or elsewhere will pass upon its individual components, cannot be altogether dissociated from the mode of its origin. Oxford has long prescribed that the books in which its alumni are to be examined shall be studied in certain texts. These safety matches, if we may call them so, for kindling the illumination of learning it now decides shall be made at home. We see no reason why it should not: we do not share trade prejudice that University Presses should publish nothing but what is unremunerative: though we may add that even in this respect the University which is now labouring under the load of the New English Dictionary has done its full share.

But we cannot but feel that the existence of this 'tied' connexion justifies the question why the delegates of the Clarendon Press did not make their

roll of editors more representative of the best English scholarship than it is. It contains, it is true, a good number of names that we associate at once with the authors assigned to them: but, others ^{of the best} were not there which we should have expected to find, and of these more than one is an Oxford name. In some cases the connexion between the editor and the text is not immediately obvious while others have to be taken entirely upon trust.

As regards the last class we may observe that scholars, like everyone else, must learn their trade; but it should not be at the expense of what are to be authorised texts of corrupt and difficult authors. We wish the series every success; but we cannot repress the apprehension that what might have had even an international value, may prove to have only a domestic one.

The learned editor and the devoted publisher of the Leyden reproductions of classical manuscripts pursue steadily their course of well-doing towards ancient scholarship. Their fifth volume is the *Codex Decurtatus of Plautus*, edited by that distinguished specialist, Professor Zangemeister of Heidelberg. This as well as the other four in the series, Prof. H. Omont's fragments of the *Sarravianus-Colbertinus codex of the LXX.*, Prof. H. Hagen's *Codex Bernensis 363* (containing works of Horace, Ovid, Augustine, Bede, etc.), the Bodleian Plato, edited by Mr. Allen (in 2 vols.), we cordially recommend to the notice of librarians and scholars of means whether in England or America. The price varies from £8 to £11 5s. for the *Plautus*, which is far from excessive considering the interest and costliness of the reproductions. The announcements include the *Medicean Tacitus*, the *Ambrosian Terence*, and the *Venetian A. of the Iliad*. Subscription forms and specimen pages can be obtained from the publisher, Mr. A. W. Sijthoff, of Leyden.

From Canada we learn that the private library of Otto Ribbeck is now catalogued and lodged on the shelves of the University Library of Montreal.