

## OBITUARY NOTICES

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### PROFESSOR L. H. MILLS

It is a remarkable coincidence that the only two English-speaking scholars who have published original translations into English of the Avestan Gāthās have died within the space of less than ten months of each other. Professor James Hope Moulton, of the University of Manchester, whose tragic death, as the result of the torpedoing of the *City of Paris*, occurred, at the comparatively early age of 54, on April 7, 1917, published, as an appendix to his important work *Early Zoroastrianism* (1913), a fresh translation of those ancient hymns which, though avowedly based on the German version of Bartholomae, still, as he justly claimed himself, is no mere slavish re-translation,<sup>1</sup> but one relying on a keen and intelligent study of the original texts word by word. It is certainly the best and most reliable, as well as the most intelligible, version that we possess. On January 29, 1918, died, after long infirmity and at the ripe old age of 81, Professor Lawrence Heyworth Mills, of Oxford University, whose English version of the Gāthās is contained in his translation of the Avestan *Yasna* (vol. xxxi of SBE.), published in 1887.

From his manner and speech I had always concluded that L. H. Mills was a North of Ireland man, but I learn that he was born in New York in 1837, and received his education at the New York University and at the Fairfax Theological Seminary, Virginia. He held the New York degree of D.D., and in later years was made honorary M.A. of Oxford. I presume that he entered the ecclesiastical ministry in America. It was at the invitation of the late Max Müller that he undertook the formidable task of translating the *Yasna* and

<sup>1</sup> Like Bleeck's translation of Spiegel's version.

*Visparad* for the SBE., and so completing the version of the Avesta, the two preceding parts (vols. iv, xxiii, of the series) having been the work of the celebrated French scholar James Darmesteter (1880, 1883), who, it was generally supposed, shirked undertaking so difficult a piece of work, though he afterwards produced his French translation in 1892. Indeed, in his preface to the latter, Darmesteter plainly says: "Je ne pus me résoudre à accepter, ne me trouvant pas suffisamment armé pour cette tâche. Je considérais une traduction de ces deux livres comme impossible à cette date, étant donnée la pénurie des secours dont on disposait alors." In accordance with what was the least amiable trait of his character, Darmesteter apparently passes by in silence the work of his English predecessor.

Mills' translation (pt. iii, *The Yasna, Visparad, Âfrînagân, Gâhs, and Miscellaneous Fragments*) appeared as vol. xxxi of SBE. in 1887.<sup>1</sup> In a quasi-autobiographical article in the ZDMG., vol. lxv, pp. 331 et seq., 1911, Mills gives us his own account of the undertaking and of his views on Avestic exegetics in general. It is far too long to quote, but I select a few sentences.

"It was undertaken at the united request of a leading German, the Editor, and a leading Frenchman, one of the translators. The invitation, an urgent one, to continue the two previous volumes upon the Avesta then already published, was extended upon the basis of my work upon the Gâthas, which had been tentatively put into print two years previously, by 1881, or earlier. . . . Since 1881 I had paused before entering upon the commentary, enjoying the very high privilege of closely attending the lectures of the late Professor R. von Roth at Tübingen."

Although thus a pupil of this leader of the "Vedic" school of Avestan scholarship, Mills developed in quite an opposite direction into one of the leading lights of the "traditional" school.

<sup>1</sup> Reviewed in JRAS., n.s., Vol. XIX, p. 700.

His connexion with the SBE. led to Mills settling down definitely at Oxford. Ten years later, in 1897, a special chair of "Zend Philology" was created for him in the University by the generosity of Indian and English admirers. He was thus the first and only holder of a professorship of Irānian language and literature in a British University. He continued his astonishingly abundant literary output until 1917.

Mills may, in one sense, be strictly described as *homo unius libri*. In spite of his endless publications, both books and articles, we may say that all he wrote centred around the *Yasna*, containing the Gāthās, to the elucidation of which he devoted practically his whole life. Under date 1894 appeared in Erlangen his bulky volume, *A Study of the Five (Zoroastrian) Gāthās, with Zarathushtrian texts and translations* (xxx + 622 pp.), which has been justly styled "a monumental work". It contains not only the Avestan (Zend) text, with English and Latin renderings, but also the Pahlavi, Sanskrit (Neryosangh's), and Persian versions, also translated into English, with elaborate notes and commentary. This was followed up in 1900 by *The Gāthās of Zarathushtra (Zoroaster) in metre and rhythm* (Leipzig, Brockhaus), and in 1902 by *A Dictionary of the Gāthic Language of the Zend Avesta*, "being vol. iii of *A Study of the Five Gāthās, etc.*," but containing only the letters *u* to *y* (*a* to *ē*). It was never completed.

Meantime, in 1893, the Oxford Clarendon Press had issued, under Mills' editorship, the superb collotype facsimile of the MS. of the *Yasna* known as "J. 2", the oldest existing Avestic MS. (A.D. 1323), which had been presented to the Bodleian Library by the Parsi High Priest, Jamaspji Minocheherji, perhaps the most splendid facsimile of an ancient MS. ever published.

But Mills' books represent but a portion of his literary output. He contributed articles in an endless stream to

all the leading Orientalist or philological reviews, notably the *JRAS.*, the *ZDMG.*, the *JAOS.*, the *AQR.*, and the *Muséon* of Louvain, besides half a dozen other periodicals. Most of these articles are critical editions of the Pahlavi texts of the various chapters of the *Yasna*, with translations and commentaries, or collations of all the available texts with their Sanskrit or other equivalents. A large number of others are occupied with such questions as interested Mills as a theologian, notably the relations between the Avesta and the Old Testament, and also with Philo. I had compiled a list occupying several closely written pages, and which, I believe, is far from complete, of these articles; but I find it is too long for publication, and I content myself with a list, at the end, of his articles in this Journal.<sup>1</sup>

It must be honestly said that Mills' erudition, vast indeed in his own sphere, was of what may be called the "cumbrous" type. His translations are so intricate and obscure that it has been said, not unjustly, that you often require the original Avesta text to understand his English. And so immense is the quantity of information congested in his comments, that one may honestly declare that "you cannot see the wood for the trees". Hence his numberless

<sup>1</sup> It may, however, prove useful to Avesta students to have the following list of *Yasna* papers other than those quoted from this Journal:—

*ZDMG.*: Pahlavi texts, *Yasna* X–XIII, 56 (1902), p. 117; *Yasna* XIV–XVI, 57 (1903), p. 13; *Yasna* XIX, 12–58, *ib.* p. 577; *Yasna* I, *ib.* p. 766; *Yasna* XX–XXII, 58 (1904), p. 426; *Srōš Yašt*, *Yasna* LV, LVI, 60 (1906), p. 73; *Yasna* LVIII–LXII, *ib.* p. 84; *Yasna* LXV, 61 (1907), p. 370; *Yasna* LXVI, LXVIII, 62 (1908), p. 555; *Yasna* LXX, 64 (1910), p. 119; *Yasna* LXXI, *ib.* p. 430; *Yasna* XLIV, 1–10, 65 (1911), p. 65; *Yasna* XXX, 68 (1914), p. 149.

*Muséon*: Pahlavi texts, *Yasna* I, n.s., vii (1906), p. 161; *Yasna* XIII, n.s., v (1904), p. 76; *Yasna* XXIX, in its Sanskrit equivalent, n.s., xiii (1912), p. 1; *Yasna* XXXI, in its Sanskrit equivalent, n.s., xv (1914), p. 1.

*JAOS.*: Pahlavi texts, *Yasna* IX, 49–103, xxiv, p. 61.

Eleventh Orientalist Congress, Paris, 1897: *The Sanskrit Equivalents of Yasna XLIV*, t. i, p. 317.

Thirteenth Orientalist Congress, Hamburg, 1902: Pahlavi texts, *Yasna* XIX, (résumé).

contributions to Avestan science must rather serve as mines of information for future scholars to dig in, than as constructive works in the domain of Avestan study. Many of his views, whether philological or exegetical, were peculiar and are not likely to find many adherents. But his erudition and his industry can only be described as prodigious.

Personally I found him a kind and agreeable character, decidedly sore sometimes on the treatment he had received from German Orientalists, who, he believed, plundered whilst criticising him, and endowed with a sense of humour, that not unfrequently appears also in his writings.

L. C. CASARTELLI.

ARTICLES BY L. H. MILLS IN JRAS.

1899. The Initiative of the Avesta. p. 271.  
 1900. The First Preparers of the Haoma. p. 511.  
 1901. Philo's *dyrdmuis* and the Amesha Spenta. p. 553.  
 1902. Zoroaster and Heraclitus. p. 897.  
 1903. The Vision of Haoma to Zarathushtra. p. 313.  
 The Pahlavi Texts of Yasna X. p. 495.  
 Elohē Hašamaīm is Devā. p. 833.  
 1904. The Pahlavi Texts of Yasna XI, XIII. p. 75.  
 " " " XIX. p. 295.  
 " " " I. p. 687.  
 1905. " " " Haptanghaiti. p. 58.  
 " " " Srōsh Yasht. p. 451.  
 " " " Yasna XIV-XVI, XX, XXI. p. 657.  
 1906. " " " LVII-LXI. p. 53.  
 " " " LXV. p. 825.  
 1907. " " " XXII. p. 85.  
 " " " LXVI, LXVIII. p. 583.  
 1908. " " " LXX. p. 39.  
 " " " LXXI. p. 765.  
 1909. " " " LXXI (continued). p. 77.  
 1910. *Ahuna Vairya*, from Yasna XXVII. p. 13.  
 " " with Pahlavi and Sanskrit translations. pp. 57  
 and 641.  
 1912. Yasna XXX, as the Document of Dualism. p. 81.  
 1915. " XXXII, 1-8, in its Indian equivalent. p. 205.  
 1916. " " 9-15 " " p. 103.  
 1917. " XLIII, 1-6, in its Indian forms. p. 541.  
 " " 7-16 " " p. 753.  
 1919. " XLVII of Gatha(-a) Spentamainyu. p. 1.