OBITUARY

HENRY MONTAGU BUTLER.

In the Master of Trinity Cambridge has lost a scholar of a type once more common than it is at present. Dr. Henry Montagu Butler was a product of the palmy days of the Classical Tripos, and maintained throughout his long life the best traditions of that excellent course. To have a wide and thorough knowledge of the Greek and Latin authors of the 'best' periods of Greece and Rome—to understand their language, accept its rules or customs as the climax of excellence, and by close study of them to obtain some skill in imitating the diction of the great masterpieces—that was the ideal. It was an ideal congenial to the Master's own mind; and circumstance most happily placed him at the head of a great school which had for long preserved traditions of good classical teaching. Here he followed the practice, more common in the nineteenth century than to-day, of taking most of the work of his own sixth form. 'Dr. Butler,' one who knew him well writes in the *Journal of Education*, 'was emphatically a great teacher, one of the old order, now disappearing, of headmasters who looked on teaching, rather than the framing of syllabuses and time-tables and new curricula, as their prime business and duty.' He was not what is called an 'educationist,' but he was a much better teacher than many educationists. Naturally, his prime achievement as a form-master was instruction in 'pure scholarship.' Himself an artist in expression (whether in English, Greek, or Latin), all his life long aiming at perfection of language, an enthusiastic student of the most polished period of English oratory, he did his best to encourage something like his own artistry in his pupils. He was an unfailing judge of elegance and grace in composition, but it must always be founded on sound knowledge of grammar and idiom. He himself was devoted to the practice of verse composition in Latin and Greek. Whether in the intervals of his day's work at Harrow, or on a railway journey, or during a walk, he would have some passage in the original was easy or difficult, the version was always a model of correctness and grace. Most of his compositions were collected and published in 1914 in *Some Leisure Hours of a Long Life*—a volume which contains some extraordinarily clever *tours de force*: for instance, the twenty-two alternative translations of Herrick's *What Needs Complaints?* or the twenty-one versions of *Crossing the Bar*—where each somehow seems to have caught, not only the style, but the mood which one associates with the metre in which it is composed.

Dr. Butler published nothing else relating to the Greek and Latin classics. But if style and finish be worthy objects of education, then he was undoubtedly a great educator. To speak of his striking and attractive personality, and of his varied activities, would be beyond the province of this Review.

WILLIAM WALTER MERRY.

On March 5 of this year died Dr. William Walter Merry, Rector of Lincoln College, and for nearly thirty years Public Orator in the University of Oxford: a scholar whose name will always be honourably associated with the classical learning of his University. Few in our days have done so much to facilitate and in the best sense to popularise the study of Greek and Latin. He was an editor of unwearying activity. The large edition of the first half of the *Odyssey*, begun by James Riddell of Balliol, and continued by his friend Dr. Merry, is likely to remain for a long time the standard English commentary: the Rector was responsible for three quarters of this volume, and entirely for the shorter or school editions of the whole twenty-four books. Like all his work, these are models of lucid and careful exposition. His editions of Aristophanes (*Acharnians, Clouds, Frogs, Knights, Birds, Wasps, Peace*) have been familiar to many generations of students. Their learning is not, nor is it intended to be, that of an Ellis or a Munro. But they are quite erudite enough, full of sound scholarship, and spiced with congenial humour—'learning put

what most readers of Aristophanes want. Dr. Merry also published *Selected Fragments of Roman Poetry* in 1891.

He was a good editor; but he was an ideal Public Orator. No one could be better equipped for the position. He was an effective public speaker; he had a fine presence, a lively humour, and a rich vocabulary of Latin. At Oxford, the Creweian Oration—dealing with the events of the academic year—is delivered at alternate Encaenia by the Public Orator and the Professor of Poetry. The Rector's Creweian Orations were always popular. They managed to combine the dignity proper to an academic exercise, with direct and unfailingly successful appeals to the gallery. Dr. Merry could turn the diction of Cicero to the topics of the day in such a way as to make it somehow quite intelligible to undergraduates who had little Latin, and ladies who had none. These orations have been collected and published. They are always entertaining, and very useful contributions to the history of the University. Learning and the amenities of scholarship suffer by the Rector's death.

MRS. SELLAR.

THE death of Mrs. Sellar, in a great and beautiful old age, took place on February 9 last, at the house which had been her home for more than half a century, and had during all that time been a meeting-place for the many classical scholars who had the privilege of her friendship. It should not pass unnoticed in a journal dedicated to the support and study of the classics. No scholar herself—her own incursions into the classical languages were chiefly in the direction of making Latin puns—she had lived among scholars from her youth, and gave more than she received in that intercourse. For the survivors of many generations of Sellar's pupils, first at St. Andrews and then at Edinburgh, her memory is an undimmed brightness. Nor is it less precious among the dwindling remnants of the Oxford friends of long ago. The brilliant group of her husband's contemporaries has ceased to exist; but from them onward, a perpetual succession of younger scholars found a welcome in her home and a place in her heart. Her death removes almost the last link between the present generation and that mid-Victorian age in which, with all its defects or limitations, humane letters were a potent influence, and simplicity and purity of living were combined with high ideals. The scholars of that age took their rank less from profound investigation or original research than from elevation of character and distinction of personality. She stands beside them, as she lived among them, in virtue of qualities of her own no less remarkable than, in their conjunction, they are rare: ceaseless kindness and pungent wit, tender sympathy and unconquerable gaiety. She seemed, almost until the end, endowed with immortal youth.

Ὀκτὼ ἐπ' ὀγδώκοντα βιώσασ' ἐξετέλεσσεν
ὄλβια σὺν μούσαις καὶ χαρίτεσσιν ἔτη·
τούς ποτ' ἔθελξε νέους ἔτι γηράσκοντας ἔτερπε,
νῦν δ' ἤβην αὐτὴ σώζει ὑποχθόνιος.

J. W. MACKAIL.

QUERIES

DODWELL, in his *Tour through Greece*, i. 36, mentions a tradition that Colchians settled in Corcyra in 1349 B.C. He quotes no authority. Is there any?

Were the Colchians and Minoans kin? According to Herodotus the former were of Egyptian extraction, and it is said there was in the Egyptians, as in the Minoans, an Armenoid strain. The Colchians also were no doubt Armenoid.

The most likely settlers from the East in Corcyra in late Minoan days would be Minoans. Could they have been converted into Colchians through the influence of the Argonaut saga?

Mure's view that the Phaeacians were a real people is correct. He believed they were a colony of *Φοίνικες*, and *Φοίνικες* are to modern archaeologists the Minoans. Phaeacia is not in fairyland, nor is it the lost Atlantis. It is Corcyra, and Scheria is a Minoan settlement there. The proof will be published in detail.

A. SHEWAN.

St. Andrews, March 13, 1918.