

CORRESPONDENCE

PROSODIA LATINA.

To the Editor of THE CLASSICAL REVIEW.

SIR,

Perhaps the best acknowledgement of the kindness of my friend Professor Sonnenschein's review¹ is to respond to his suggestion that I should explain myself further on a point of detail, not indeed cardinal in itself but involving what is cardinal. I had said in § 47 of my book that *-mat* [as in *amat*] is a syllable only before a following consonant or at the end of a sentence or verse. These words were not intended for a positive and formal statement of the rules which govern the distribution and, by consequence, the scansion of the final sounds of words whereof *amat* is taken as a specimen, but as a general caution to the student respecting the practice of Latin speech as a whole, both in prose and in verse. In the first of the three cases ('before a following consonant') prose and verse were regarded, in the second, speaking generally, prose only, and in the third of course verse alone. I thank Professor Sonnenschein for pointing out the insufficiency of the statement, which, when occasion offers, I will endeavour to mend. On the actual question which he raises I can admit no doubt. Quoting *Aen.* iv. 238 *Dixerat. Ille patres*, etc., and *Aen.* xi. 709 *Dixit: at ille furens*, etc., he asks how are we to scan these lines, for the pause at the end of the first sentence makes it impossible to pronounce *Dixera-Tille* or *Dixi-tat*. He thus denies liaison of a consonant at the end of a sentence, assuming that a sentence in verse must end with the last sound of its final word, and that it is after the completed word that the sentence pause will come. There is, however, another liaison which clamours for attention—the liaison of vowels or 'elision,' of which I treat in the next following page. The Roman poets might easily have avoided elision at the end of a sentence, had they chosen; but they did not choose. For examples take *Georg.* i. 100 f. *Vmida solstitia atque hiemes orate serenas | Agricolae: hiberno laetissima pulvere farra*, *ib.* ii. 17 ff. *Pullulut ab radice aliis densissima silua | Vt cerasis ulmisque; etiam Parnasia laurus | Parua sub ingenti matris se subicit umbra*. Here the sentence pause cannot

come after the last sound of the final word (*agricolae, ulmisque*); for this would give not elision but hiatus. Either, then, there was no pause between the sentences, and the value of the sentence pause as an argument for pronunciation and scansion disappears; or the sentence pause was in the unelided portion of the word, being, for example, either (a) *agrico-* or (b) *agricol-*. If Professor Sonnenschein elects for (a), why should *dixera-* shock him when *agrico-* does not? If for (b), he must explain why the *l* was so upset by the elision that, deserting its partner and forgetting the established principles of Latin word-division (*agri-co-lae*), it backed into the preceding syllable, and in the second example how *qu(e)* can be pronounced with its sentence without producing a final combination of sounds which even if pronounceable, is completely alien to the Latin tongue. Failing such explanations, the unbiased reader will conclude that in the liaison of vowels the punctuation of a verse is immaterial to its scansion, and will ask to be told why it should be material in the liaison of consonants. In this connexion he will bethink himself that ancient verse forms were indifferent not only to stops but, what to us is much more disconcerting, changes of speakers, and that he has only to turn a page or two of Plautus to discover that division of a line between two interlocutors is (as at *Amph.* 307) no obstacle to liaison between their speeches, and that Vergil does not shrink from elision at the end of sentence, verse and speech in one, *Aen.* iv. 629 '*pugnent ipsique nepotesque.*' | *Haec ait*.

With other important questions raised by Professor Sonnenschein, especially in their bearing on the proper teaching of the Latin classics in our schools and universities, I hope to have another opportunity of dealing. But I feel that I ought at once to protest against the suggestion that I regard the metre of Myers' *St. Paul* as 'ignoble.' The metre so stigmatised in '§ 323 p. 114,' is the measure commonly called the English sapphic, ridiculed by Canning in the *Anti Jacobin*, from which I then quote a stanza. And may I ask readers of my book to correct two oversights affecting numbers that may cause trouble? In § 319 (end) 'Fourth' should be 'Fifth' and in § 348 'three feet' should be 'two feet.'

J. P. POSTGATE.

¹ See *C.R.*, Vol. XXXVII. (1922), p. 125.

BOOKS RECEIVED

All publications which have a bearing on Classical Studies will be entered in this list if they are sent for review. The price should in all cases be stated.

* * * Excerpts or Extracts from Periodicals and Collections will not be included unless they are also published separately.

Billson (C. J.) The Aeneid of Virgil, translated by C. J. B. New and revised edition. Pp. viii + 365. Oxford: Blackwell, 1923. Cloth, 7s. 6d. net.

Buckler (W. H.) and *Calder* (W. M.) Anatolian

Studies presented to Sir W. M. Ramsay. Edited by W. H. B. and W. M. C. Pp. xxxviii + 479. 14 plates. Manchester: University Press, 1923. Cloth, 36s. net.

Carnoy (A.) Manuel de Linguistique Grecque.