and shop, and could by no possibility be anything more. There was nothing in all this to gratify the love of Letters, the love of Nature, the love of Beauty. No experience could be less Hellenic, or less Humane. The classics, I then felt, and I feel still, were hackneyed to death, and nothing short of a miracle could impart to them the least touch of freshness. A classic text to me both was and is, a thing of verbs and adjectives; of the grammar and the lexicon; and the study of it had no more to do with Poetry than it had to do with Chemistry. Indeed the one solid result which I brought off from four years' work was not literary but scientific;—a certain grip of the Latin language and an elementary knowledge of Greek. It is a curious reflection that the only Greek book which has ever been of any real value to me, is the Greek Bible.

I therefore *chucked* the classics with a βάλλ' ἐς κόρακας, with mingled feelings of mortification and relief. For myself the grapes were sour, and I gladly turned to other and, on the whole, more congenial subjects. Yet there has always remained with me, lurking in the background of my mind, an unsatisfied desire to return once more to the classical literature, and if possible to find there some part at least of the treasures which it is supposed to afford the student. And the occasion of our discussions has arisen out of my very unsuccessful efforts to achieve this result, efforts which, as you know, have only revived and strengthened the painful conviction that *Classical Books should be left to Classical Men.*

I remain, my Dear——,

Your assured friend,

G. H. S.

October, 1900.

(*To be continued.*)

ΣΜΙΝΘΕΥΣ, PESTILENCE AND MICE.

A propos of Mr. Godley's note on Σμινθεύς in the May *C.R.*, it is a curious coincidence that in the May number of the *Expository Times* there is a paper by a medical missionary, the Rev. J. C. Gibson, M.A., M.D., of Swatow, designed to prove that the fifth and sixth chapters of the first book of Samuel describe an outbreak of bubonic plague, and that the 'mice that mar the land' are rats, mentioned because of their carrying disease. Dr. Gibson observes that Hitzig recalled in this connexion the association of Apollo with plague, under the epithet Smintheus. He tells us that bubonic plague is commonly called 'rat plague' in China to-day. The independent confirmation of an interesting theory thus supplied seems worthy to be brought to the notice of readers of the *C.R.* who may not have seen it.

JAMES HOPE MOULTON.

IN a paper upon some Homeric questions in the May number, Mr. Godley discussed the connection between mice and pestilence, and would explain it as the result of the knowledge acquired from Egypt of the fact that mice and rats carry disease. Is it not simpler to explain this connection as the result of an oriental metaphor? With the same suddenness and thoroughness that mice destroy crops, does pestilence destroy men. It is noticeable that in almost every instance where the connection has been found the mouse mentioned has been the shrew-mouse. We know how great are the ravages of mice in corn-land from the elaborate spells found in Teutonic mythology to get rid of them. A possible explanation of the differing accounts of the destruction of Sennacherib is that the Assyrian folk-tales or chronicles described the destruction of the army by 'pestilence,' using what to them may have been the common metaphor of 'mice.' In after ages when the metaphorical signification of mice had been lost, the story of them gnawing the bowstrings was invented, to explain how mice could work the destruction of an army. It is significant that the Philistines, when they sent back the ark, were advised by their priests and diviners to 'make images of your emerods and images of your mice that mar the land,' (Sam. i. v. 9), though no mention of the ravages of mice is made. The words 'that mar the land' seem almost to be inserted in an explanatory way to show why they were included in the offering.

The story of the gnawing of the bowstrings in the Troad and the similar story in Chinese legends, both referred to by Mr. Lang, may have originated in the same way, or merely be other forms of the same story.

The connection between mice and disease being established by this metaphor, it is a short step to the idea that mice have some control over disease; and therefore the author of the Homeric poems regards it as quite natural to address Apollo in his capacity of the mouse-god, when he has afflicted the Greeks with a pestilence.

A. T. C. CREE.

Magdalen College, Oxford.

[Mr. Cree's explanation of the puzzling passage in the First Book of Samuel (not the least of whose difficulties is the discrepancy between the Hebrew and LXX. texts) would appear to be the same as that of Prof. Wellhausen, and, after him, of Prof. Driver in his '*Notes on the Hebrew Text of the Books of Samuel*' (on I. Sam. vi. 21), viz. that the mouse is a symbol (Bild) of pestilence. There is a somewhat similar legend in the Arabic chronicle of Ṭabarî of the destruction of the Abyssinian army when marching against Mecca. 'So God sent birds like swallows in swarms from the sea; each carried three stones, one in its beak and two in its claws, of the size of a chick pea or lentil. Those who were struck died: but not all were struck.' Other accounts, however, represent the army as attacked by small pox. See Nöldeke's *Geschichte der Perser u. Araber zur Zeit der Sasaniden*, pp. 213 *sqq.*—ED. *C.R.*]

ARCHAEOLOGY.

BERNOULLI'S *GREEK ICONOGRAPHY.*

Griechische Ikonographie, mit Ausschluss Alexanders und der Diadochen. Von J. J. Bernoulli. Erster Theil: Die Bildnisse berühmter Griechen von der Vorzeit bis an das Ende des V. Jahr. v. Chr. München. 1901. 16 M.

GREEK and Roman portrait sculpture has been for many years sadly neglected in comparison with other branches of Archaeology. Since Visconti's *Iconographie Grecque* was published in 1808, there has appeared no important work dealing with the portraits of celebrated Greeks, until a few years ago Dr. Arndt began the issue of his splendid series of plates called *Griechische und Römische Porträts*. Even Arndt only adds a few lines of text to each plate; portraiture as a branch of ancient art has only been treated of in a few short papers by Michaelis, Winter, Six and others. Hence every one interested in ancient art must have been delighted to hear that Prof. Bernoulli of Basel, whose *Römische Ikonographie* is so valuable a work, was preparing a kindred book on Greek portraits.

Prof. Bernoulli's book is of great value, a solid and laborious piece of work. If I point out some respects in which it does not fulfil all one's hopes, I must not be supposed to underrate its undeniable merits.

There are two lines of study in relation to Greek portraits which claim attention; first, the history of portraiture as a branch of art, second, the recovery of the features of great men. The second of these lines of study is that to which the book before us will most contribute, and it is the most obviously attractive; and yet some previous attention to the first is a necessary preliminary; for until the date and artistic character of a statue is determined, it is of unknown value, and we cannot decide how far to trust it, or what allowance to make for the personal bias of the sculptor.

It is thus greatly to be regretted that Dr. Bernoulli does not preface his work by a summary history of portrait-sculpture among the Greeks; had he done so, he would have handled Greek portraits with more decision and more insight. Taking these up as he does one by one, with no formulated principles to refer to, he sometimes falls into inconsistencies. His plan is to discuss the certainly or probably identified portraits of eminent Greeks in the order of their historic succession. But it is certain that the date of their life is by no means always the date of the portrait which we possess, and thus from the first we are apt to lose touch with chronologic succession. The first portrait discussed is that of Homer. But of course the portrait of Homer is a mere fanciful invention, dating from Hellenistic days. The earliest contemporary portrait which we can with confidence attribute is that of Pericles, which comes about the middle of Prof. Bernoulli's book. Thus it is clear that the arrangement of the work, though no doubt