

# The Classical Review

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## EDITORIAL NOTES AND NEWS

THE Association for the Reform of Latin Teaching held its annual Summer School in August (2 to 15) at Downe House, near Newbury. Dr. Rouse gave a very interesting course of demonstration lessons with boys from Newbury Grammar School who knew no Latin or French. Latin reading and conversation classes were diligently attended; there was even a small informal Greek reading circle. Mr. R. G. Collingwood gave an interesting lecture on Roman inscriptions in Britain, showing beautifully drawn copies. Professor Ure and the Headmaster of Newbury Grammar School lectured on the place of Greek in modern schools, the former urging the importance of even one year's Greek for students going to the newer universities. In the open-air theatre some scenes were given from Latin and Greek plays, as well as the topical Latin plays which are an annual feature of the School. A full report of the School will be printed in *Latin Teaching* for November. The President of the Association for 1923-24 is Mr. L. R. Strangeways, Headmaster of Bury Grammar School (Lancs.); the Hon. Secretary is Miss M. F. Moor, 45, High Street, Old Headington, Oxford, from whom further information may be obtained. The A.R.L.T. will be holding a meeting in London on January 9, 1924, and will discuss 'Problems in Latin Teaching: some Modern Solutions.'

A correspondent writes :

A performance of the *Birds* of Aristophanes in Greek was given at King's College, London, at the end of last June. Dr. Clara Knight, Reader in Classics at the College, was the prime mover and chief author (under Aristophanes) of the performance, and Professor Ernest Gardner, with Mrs. and Miss Gardner, were generous and indefatigable collaborators in the arrangement of all the scenery, setting, and costumes of the play. No one who saw the

play can fail to remember—and to remember as triumphs of art and archaeology—the costumes which they designed (and not only designed, but also executed) for hoopoe, flamingo, and every manner of bird, each according to its kind. And the scene before which the birds flapped their wings and said their parts and sang their songs, with its picture of the heavenly city in the clouds, is no less of a happy memory.

The burden of the play fell largely upon Mr. M. L. W. Laistner, who played the part of Peisthetairos as one to the manner born, with the gravity of profound conviction and the energy of a quick enthusiasm. He dominated the stage and controlled the action. His colleague, Mr. Pocock (of University College), in the part of Euelpides, caught the same vein and showed the same verve, *et respondere paratus*. Mr. Jacob, unforgettable in the part of the hoopoe, was a bird of shy dignity, with a modest droop of the eyes, pontifically serious when the action was *au grand sérieux*, but twinkling into humour when the chance came his way. The adventurers who came to offer their aid in the building of Nephelococcygia were all convincing adventurers. Mr. Randolph Hughes, with an Athenian versatility, played the part both of oracle-monger and of sycophant, with so clear a distinction between his two parts, alike in action and in voice, that only those who knew in advance that the same man was playing both could possibly have distinguished the sycophant from the oracle-monger. And as for the Chorus—well, one can only say, as one reflects on their twitterings (*τὸ τὸ τὸ τὸ τὸ*) and their excitements and the wheeling of their evolutions, 'ἕμετερος ὁ πυραμοῦς—*you* take the cake.' Mr. Raeburn was an admirable leader. Parry's music set a key to which everything attuned itself naturally; and if the ear had its delight in clear enunciation and good music, the eye had also its delight in the costumes and the movements of the birds.

Many rehearsals had gone to the success of the play; and the conductor, Mr. Arthur Cowen, had laboured with a loyalty that commanded success upon the music. But there is a something in the performance of a Greek play which generally blesses performers and audience alike. Is it that both feel themselves initiated in a mystery which is hidden from the understanding mass? Or is it that the players can fling themselves into Greek parts, just because they are in Greek, with a high magnificence which would desert them if they were speaking in the common English tongue? *Vix solvenda quaestio*; but at any rate one may say of all the performers, in the final words of the play itself, *τῆνελλα καλλίνικοι*.