

CORRESPONDENCE

(i)

Dear Sir,

May I take up certain points of general relevance in E. Courtney's review of 'Towards a Text of "Anthologia Latina"' (*CR* 31 (1981), 39–42)?

'In recent years Shackleton Bailey has produced articles on the text of one author after another, and in the cases of some at least I can demonstrate that he has not adequately investigated the literature of the subject' ('recent years' presumably means 1944–1981). That would not surprise me. Nobody who has published on the texts of thirty-odd Latin authors, major and minor (and I must warn that there are more to come), is likely to claim a totally clear conscience in this respect. One does the best one can. 'Then don't publish', I may be told. But my critic also remarks of the emendations and interpretations in the volume under review: 'There is no need to say that a high proportion of them is convincing and many are brilliant.' If there is no need to say that, I must needs infer that a high proportion of the many hundreds I have published elsewhere are likewise convincing. With that assurance I await any future bibliographical onslaught without too much dismay. True, he distinguishes between 'papers incidental to our central research' and 'a more ambitious work like this', but it is not clear to me why a monograph containing 69 pages of notes is significantly more ambitious than an article containing 49 (cf. *HSCP* 83 (1979), 237–85). Anyway, I hope that future Madvigs, if any arise, will not be deterred from letting their light shine before men by the risk of making occasional misattributions such as are not seldom met with in that giant's immortal (though not always convincing) 'Adversaria'. And after all, the resurrection of a valid conjecture or interpretation, even in ignorance of its true origin, performs a service. Someone is sure to correct the inadvertence; the benefit to the text remains.

C. refers to me as 'a scholar who is ever ready to impress his superiority on us by criticism of the sloth and negligence of others' and goes on: '*Schadenfreude* is inevitable when in poem 93 he expresses himself in these terms with reference to a reading which Riese in his addenda (2. 373), overlooked by Shackleton Bailey, actually advocated'. He might have mentioned that the offending terms (misquoted: I wrote 'ignorance', not 'negligence') are a saying of Housman's, quoted as such. But while allowing *Schadenfreude* to run its inevitable course, may I observe that there are oversights and oversights? The vulgate in this passage is a conjecture which in successive editions ousted the manuscript reading because the editors did not remember or bother to look up one of the best known stories in the Old Testament, the Judgement of Solomon. Finally, in an addendum to his next volume (ed. 2), Riese awoke. I am sorry to have overlooked it. But *that* is not the sort of negligence for which, in Housman's words, the author pays.

I must not trespass further on your space by entering into matters of detail. C. has corrected some mistakes and seen some things which I had missed. All credit to him for several most ingenious elucidations of these often obscure pieces. Sometimes I think he is off target.

Let me conclude by referring to editions of three of the lengthier poems (accompanied by translations) in the latest volume (84 (1980)) of *HSCP*. From these readers may better be able to judge whether or not 'there is little point in a new edition which simply reproduces Riese's materials with an improved text' (I refer to Riese's first volume; the second volume is another matter).

Peterhouse, Cambridge

Yours faithfully,
D. R. SHACKLETON BAILEY

(ii)

Sir,

A reviewer praises one of my books on pages 279 and 281 of your 1980 issue, but devotes the intervening page to the discussion of six specific errors he discovers. On these, he is in fact half right, half wrong. No doubt there really are lots of mistakes in the book; but if it attained over-all, or even on a single page, a level of accuracy of only 50 per cent, that reviewer might have felt obliged to withhold any praise at all.

In America, the deerhunters go out every autumn, the veterans wearing bright red jackets and hats. Even so, not a year goes by without one being wounded by the excitable novices who mistake him for a deer. There seems no way to control a hazard harmful to the whole sport – unless a veteran, purely for the public good, should some day decide to *shoot back*.

Yale University

Yours truly,
RAMSAY MACMULLEN