

This is a far-reaching question, since it is connected, in all classical research, with serious reservations as to the casual nature of our sources.

In his introduction to the Pro Murena speech, the writer describes, among other things, election machinations and the measures adopted to rid the system of its abuses in the Rome of Cicero's day and earlier. The introduction to the Pro Flacco speech, on the other hand, illustrates, for instance, the legislative measures taken to combat the extortion to which the inhabitants of the provinces were subjected in the century up to Cicero's time. In the introduction to the Pro Sulla speech, Macdonald looks for - and finds - reasons behind Cicero's defence of Sulla (who probably took part in Catiline's ventures), without endeavouring, however, to provide any completely final answer.

The speeches are all linked in one way or another with the Catiline episode and the fine introductions bestow upon the work a coherent and readable unity.

Raimo Tuomi

*P. Vergili Maronis Aeneidos liber sextus.* With a commentary by R.G. Austin. Clarendon Press: Oxford University Press 1977. X, 303 p. £ 5.00.

To R.G. Austin's commentaries on Books I, II and IV of Virgil's Aeneid has been added a new volume, his posthumous commentary on Book VI (the author completed his work a few days before his death in 1974). The present volume contains the text (Mynors' Oxford Classical Text with some modifications), a detailed running commentary, an appendix on the Avernus topography by Colin Hardie and three indices (*Nominum, Verborum, Rerum*). Metric, linguistic, stylistic comments and those relating to content are profound and appropriate. The rhythmic qualities of the metrum are carefully assessed (e.g. the relation of accent and ictus). Virgil's position in the development of the language of the Latin epic is taken into account throughout. In his stylistic notes the author prefers describing the case in question to rhetoric formulations (enallage etc.). He pays special attention to the topographical aspects (e.g. the Cave of the Sibyl in the light of the most recent excavations). The author also cites parallel places from Roman literature (the context provided where necessary): from Ennius (see esp. pp. 93-94), Ovid and the poets of the Silver Age. But the treatment of Homer is, in my opinion, inadequate; the author ignores G.N. Knauer's important book (*Die Aeneis und Homer*, 1964) and on the whole pays no attention to the structural influence of Homer (*Odyssee XI*). Servius and Ti. Donatus are adequately represented. Austin repeatedly refers to certain important works (Norden on Aeneid VI, Frazer on Apollod. Bibl., Ogilvie on Livy I-V, Nisbet-Hubbard on Horace I), but ignores others (Knauer, see above; Büchner, whose RE article should be regarded as a living study, not as an encyclopaedic contribution; Quinn, *Virgil's Aeneid*, 1968). Of the central Virgilian scholars Otis and Klingner are only consulted in passing.

*In summa:* In spite of some defects, particularly with regard to

the structure of the book and the unity of the work, Austin's post-humous commentary is an important contribution to the field of Virgilian scholarship and the most beautiful legacy he has bequeathed to us.

*Teivas Oksala*

*Erik Wistrand: Miscellanea Propertiana.* Studia Graeca et Latina Gothoburgensia XXXVIII. Acta Universitatis Gothoburgensis 1977. 84 p. Sw.Cr. 50.-.

This book deals with some of the many controversial passages still found in Propertius' text and, somewhat unexpectedly, with one Livian passage (6,25,7-10). The introductory essay "Poetic Patriotism under Augustus" (pp. 8-30), which discusses the affinity between Prop. 3,4 and Hor.carm. 3,14, was the one which appealed to me most. Wistrand's arguments (pp. 9-14) in favour of his conjecture *Quiris*, instead of *viri*, in Prop. 3,4,3 and his interpretation (pp. 23-26) of *virginum...iuvenumque* and of *pueri et puellae* in Hor.carm. 3,14,9-10 impressed me as both well-considered and sound. The other essays do not perhaps quite reach this high standard. In addition to the *Index Locorum* and the *Index Rerum* and *Verborum* (pp. 81-84), the reader would have appreciated a separate Bibliography.

*Saara Lilja*

*Giordana Pisi: Fedro, traduttore di Esopo.* Università degli Studi di Parma, Pubblicazioni della Facoltà di Magistero 4. La Nuova Italia Editrice, Firenze 1977. 93 p. Lit. 3000.

The detailed lexical analysis of eight fables of Phaedrus, compared with the corresponding fables in Aesop, is in many ways a highly commendable work. The author's skill in interpretation is impressive, and so is her economy in saying much in a concise manner, at the same time giving all the necessary arguments in footnotes. Unfortunately some of her perceptive observations remain hanging in the air, since we do not know for certain how much the Greek text translated by Phaedrus differed from the version known to us, one which derives from a considerably later time. Be this as it may, Pisi's comparative study contributes to a better understanding of Phaedrus' creative approach to the traditional fables. It is a pity that Chapter V entitled "Aspetti formali" (pp. 75f.) was not given as much attention and care as the lexical analysis.

*Saara Lilja*

*Manilius: Astronomica.* With an English translation by G.P. Goold. The Loeb Classical Library No. 469. Harvard University Press, Cambridge Mass. - William Heinemann Ltd, London 1977. CXXII, 388 p. £ 3.90.