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The Iliad: A Commentary. General Editor G.S. Kirk. Volume iii: books 9-12 ed. by Bryan Hainsworth. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 1993, 380 p. Hardback (ISBN 0-521-23711-4) GBP 55.00, paperback (ISBN 0-521-28173-3) GBP 18.95. Volume iv: books 13-16 ed. by Richard Janko. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 1992, 459 p. Hardback (ISBN 0-521-23712-2) GBP 50.00, paperback (ISBN 0-521-28174-1) GBP 17.95. Volume vi: books 21-24 ed. by Nicholas Richardson. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 1993, 387 p. Hardback (ISBN 0-521-30960-3) GBP 55.00, paperback (ISBN 0-521-31209-4) GBP 18.95.

With the publication of these three volumes, the major commentary on Homer's Iliad in six volumes issued under the general editorship of Professor G.S. Kirk is now completed. The collaboration of five eminent classical scholars (Mark W. Edwards as the editor of vol. v) has in a relatively short time (the first volume was published in 1985) resulted in a scholarly tool which nobody interested in the Homeric poems can overlook. Not least because of the individual mark of each of the editors, this commentary will be useful for undergraduates as well as for professionals of several different disciplines connected with the world of the epics.

The Homeric scholarship of the last three decades has been variegated and fertile. The impact of the oral poetry theory launched by Milman Parry has given new life to many aspects of Homeric research, as have new findings in the fields of e.g. archaeology, dialectology, anthropology, mythology, Near Eastern studies, and narratology. The new volumes of the commentary are especially useful as an up-to-date and concise means of getting acquainted with these and other new approaches to Homeric scholarship. This is done in the commentary proper and in the bibliographical notes, but especially in the introductory chapters, which in every volume are marked by the personal interests (and views) of the different authors. In the volumes discussed, one should note especially the chapters on formulas by Hainsworth, on the origins and evolution of epic diction and on the text and transmission of the Iliad by Janko, and on Homer and his ancient critics by Richardson.

Maarit Kaimio