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JOURNAL OF
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1915.

561ST ORDINARY GENERAL MEETING.

HELD IN THE CONFERENCE HALL, CENTRAL HALL,
WESTMINSTER, ON MONDAY, JANUARY 4TH, 1915,
AT 4.30 P.M.

PROF. H. LANGHORNE ORCHARD, M.A., TOOK THE CHAIR.

The Minutes of the preceding Meeting were read and confirmed, and the SECRETARY announced the election of C. E. Buckland, Esq., C.I.E., as an Associate of the Institute.

The CHAIRMAN said it was his very pleasing duty to ask Professor Margoliouth, who was well known to the Members of the Victoria Institute, to read a paper on a subject of no ordinary interest, "Homer, his Life and Work."

THE LIFE AND WORK OF HOMER.

By the Rev. Professor D. S. MARGOLIOUTH, D.Litt.

THE speculations called *Homeric Criticism* were started in the year 1795 by the Halle Professor, F. A. Wolf, who summarized the result of his researches as follows: *the voice of all antiquity, and generally speaking a unanimous tradition, attests the fact that the Homeric Poems were first committed to writing by Pisistratus, tyrant of Athens, who died 527 B.C., and by him arranged in the order wherein they are now read.** This supposed result can only be characterized by a phrase too harsh for this audience; for Wolf's main proposition is attested by no ancient writer whatever, and contradicted by many, who either assert or imply that Homer, like other poets, wrote his own works, and indeed in the Ionic alphabet wherein they are written and printed. The only ancient author who speaks of a period of oral transmission is the Israelite, Flavius Josephus, scarcely an authority on Hellenic literary history, and notoriously untrustworthy on all subjects; he is contradicted by his contemporaries Plutarch and Dion Chrysostom, and even by his

* Prolegomena ad Homerum, xxxiii.

countryman, the translator of Ecclesiasticus, who two centuries before had studied in Alexandria, then the focus of Homeric learning, and thinks of epic poets as writing their works.*

Of the author to whom the world owes the Iliad and the Odyssey the Hellenes apparently knew little. They state, or rather assume, that his name was *Homeros*, a Greek word signifying "hostage," which when applied to a child—as a novelist informs us—means *hostage to each parent for the loyalty of the other*. Clearly this name might be given to any child, whence no inference can be drawn from it. They also regularly associate with his name the title *Poet*, variously interpreted as "Author," "Versifier," and "Romancer." Accordingly to all, this title is pre-eminently his; according to some, it is his exclusively.

It was thought remarkable in antiquity that Homer did not, like other authors, mention his own name at the beginning and end of his works; yet it was either known or suspected in some quarters that this anonymity was only ostensible; that there was somewhere a cryptic signature. The clearest hint of this is to be found in the Latin verse translation of the Iliad, perhaps of the first century of our era. Its author has introduced his own name *ITALICUS* into his rendering of the prologue by means of an acrostich. The eight lines whereby he has rendered the seven of the original begin successively with the letters of his name *I ram, T ristia, A tque*, etc.

The employment of the cryptic signature can be traced to an early period of Greek literature. Epicharmus, about 500 B.C., is said to have armed most of his works with cryptic signatures, proving that they were his. In the fourth century we read of a poet substantiating his claim to the authorship of a pseudonymous work by pointing to a cryptic mark of the kind.

The presence of such a signature is almost always revealed by something unnatural in the text which it underlies, since the letters have to do double duty, and, like other servants, cannot serve two masters with complete fidelity. The prologue of the Iliad contains in profusion signs of an underlying cryptogram. Every word of the first line is calculated to provoke criticism, and four out of the five words of which it consists actually did provoke it. We need only quote what has been said about its first word, *μῆνιν* "Anger." This shocked antiquity as an unlucky commencement; a literary work should begin with a

* xliv. 5, *δηγούμενοι ἐπη ἐν γραφῇ*.

lucky word. In the second place it is not even appropriate; for the subject of the Iliad is not so much the *anger* of Achilles as his *glorification*. F. A. Wolf suggested re-writing the passage so as to commence with the lucky and appropriate word *κῦδος*, "Glory." In ancient times other expedients were tried to evade the difficulty.

A translator rarely introduces such an artifice as that employed by Italicus unless his text contains something analogous; but he is often compelled to substitute something simple for something complicated, when reproduction of the latter exceeds his power. The prologue of the Greek Iliad certainly displays no acrostich; but with the kindred artifice, the *Anagram*, the name of Homer is associated by his Byzantine commentator Eustathius, and such association can be traced far earlier. The author of the first monograph on Homer, Theagenes of Rhegium, in the sixth pre-Christian century appears to have applied the principle of the anagram in determining the import of certain Divine names. Even earlier the poet Hesiod appears to have applied it in determining the parentage of a Homeric hero.

The gulf between the acrostich of Italicus and the Homeric anagram is bridged over by a Sinhalese poet, Dunuvila, who has substituted the double for the single vertical column, distributing the letters of his name over four lines, thus: *DU NU VI LA*; each of these pairs of letters successively commences a line. The plan of Homer in the prologue of the Iliad is the same, except that he has substituted the anagram for the acrostich. The fourteen letters which constitute the first two vertical columns *MH OT IIO HP OI EΞ AT* give the anagram *OMHPOT IIOIHTA EΞ* of *Homer, Poet, from*. We now see why he began with the unlucky and inappropriate word *MHNIN*; its first two letters were the second and third of his name. The fifth line was ejected by some critics, and gave offence at an early period; its first word, however, contained the second and third letters of his title.

Now accident can ordinarily be distinguished from design by the fact that the former gives either too little or too much; the latter gives precisely what is required. The occurrence in this anagram of the author's name and title, and both in the same grammatical case, appears to exclude the possibility of accident; still there remains the preposition "from," which cannot well be taken with these words, yet must have some purpose if we have before us the work of design. If, however, the next pair of vertical columns constitutes a second anagram, we shall be

unable to read it without some rule; and what is equally desirable is some instruction from the author himself to look for such puzzles in his works. For we have no wish to find in them anything which he has not himself put there.

The instruction and the rule which we seek are to be found in the place where they should be sought, viz., in the line which precedes the epilogue of four lines which closes the *Odyssey*. The anagrammatic value of that line is an iambic verse with part of another giving the sense*: *Thou, who at some time seekest the prayers of Homer and of the Iliad, find them somehow*. The language of this instruction is that plain Greek which would have been understood at any time from Homer's day to our own.

The instruction gives us most of the guidance which we require. What should surprise us is not the absence of the Poet's name at the beginning and end of his works, but the absence of *prayers*; and indeed such a work ought to commence with a prayer to Apollo, as we know on the authority of one of the *Homeric Hymns*, which declares that it should end with mention of this deity also. We cannot doubt that so pious a poet would have regarded this as a matter of the utmost importance. We are then told to look for the prayers and find them. Probably they are in the form of anagrams, like the instruction itself; and probably they will be in iambic metre, like that instruction.

What the reader now has is the content of the puzzles—prayers; the nature of the puzzle, anagrams; and the rule for arranging the letters, viz., iambic metre. The seat of the puzzles is doubtless the prologues and epilogues, which are clearly marked off. It is left to him to discover the anagram-unit, *i.e.*, the number of vertical columns to be taken together, and then to arrange the letters within those groups so as to furnish iambic verses correct in grammar, metre and sense. If this can be done, then the cryptic instruction and the cryptic prayers will confirm each other; corresponding as key and lock.

The first of these puzzles is formed by the four lines which immediately follow the instruction and constitute the epilogue of the *Odyssey*. The anagram unit is four vertical columns, or sixteen letters; the result is as follows:—

* ΜΗΠΩΣΤΟΙΚΡΟΝΙΔΗΣΚΕΧΟΛΩΣΕΤΑΙΕΥΡΥΟΠΑΖΕΥΣ = ΕΥΧΑΣ
ΟΜΗΡΟΥ ΚΙΛΙΑΔΟΣ ΖΗΤΩ ΠΟΤΕ ΕΥΡΙΣΚΕ ΠΩΣ.

*Having come at last to the end, offer a fervent prayer. Goddesses, who made the lay wherein I have presented Odysseus, how he wrought and endured acts of enmity unmatched in magnitude: may as great acts of kindness be wrought about it, if it seem good to the gods and to you, ye goddesses.**

The next which comes for solution is the prologue of the Odyssey, which is a very miracle of the Poet's ingenuity; his ten hexameters here are to be divided by vertical lines between every pair of columns; there result twenty anagrams, of which sixteen are of twenty letters, giving a preface of thirteen iambic lines, thus:—

Thou (in a sense), Apollo, art the author; O king, be very gracious; "expelling" the load of cares which has entered, come enter us, and bear aloft one well accustomed to such a journey. Thou didst bid me lay down Carnage and Strife there whence they once arose; to turn the War-god towards his northern home; to propitiate on the earth's account her child Erinyes with sacrifices, prayers and pyres; and after this in payment of thy due reward, O son of Laertes, to compose as many lays as Homer, recommended by the choice, brave son of Aeneas, was chosen by Ilion to compose for her. But for this, Apollo, the scion of Aeneas would by offers of reward have turned my mind to some fresh Trojan theme.†

* πολλὰς ἀφίκων τέρματα δὴ θεῶ ἀράς· θεαί,
αἱ κάμον ἀοιδῆν, ἧτ' ἔθηκ' Ὀδυσῆϊ ἐνί,
ὄππῃ τε ἔρδε δὴ εἴμιμνέ θ' ὄσ' ἄμαχα,
τόσ' ἀμφὶ εἶο ἔρδοιτο κήδει' ἔργ', εἴαν
θεοῖσι χυμῖν ἧύ, ὦ θεαί, δοκῆ.

Authority for ἀφίκων is given by Veitch, *Greek Verbs*, 1871, p. 296; in the work of which this paper is an abstract it is proposed to justify every phrase, form, and thought which these and the other verses produced here contain.

† σὺ πῆ, πατήρ, Ἀπολλων· ὦ ἄνα,
πόλλ' ἴλαθ'· "ἴλλων" δύντ' "ἀγρόνδ'" ἀχῶν γόμον,
ἴθ' ἄμμε δὺς ἄειρ', ἀγων ἀήθε' οὐ
ὀδοῖο. καθθέντ' ἐννεπες Σφαγῆν ὄθεν
ποτ' ὄρτ' Ἔριν τ'· Ἄρεα τόπου εἶο, Βορέω,
τρέψαντ' ἐπ' οἴμφ'· σὺν θυσίης, εὐχῆς, πυραῖς,
Γῆς παῖδ' Ἔρινὺν ἔνεκα θεραπεύσαντ'· ἄφαρ
τίνοντι σόν, Λαερτιάδῳ γ', ἀθλίου
τέλος, ποεῖν τόσ' ὄσσο' ἔλετο τὰ ἄ κλέα

We come next to the colophon of the Iliad, which is to be found in the last four lines. The cryptogram, as it tells us itself, extends to the first three only, the last line being a *chronogram*. Its import is the following:—

*Be thou two prayers, O turningpoint, and thou one thing,
O end. One prayer is: May all this which Homer sings,
the war that befell Ilios, now be published; and a
second: May thy epic, Ilios, please.*

The “one thing” which follows is the chronogram made up of the initials of the words in the last line;* this may be read in the year 871 or in the year 874.†

We now return to the puzzle whence we started, the prologue of the Iliad. We have already seen that the anagram-unit is fourteen letters, or two vertical columns. Its import is the following:—

*O gracious deity, who from the Poet Homer's boundaries didst
expel the contrary fiends: enter the way thou camest
then, and enter all over us, and delight us, playing notes
worthy of thyself. Breathe sweetly, charm of this story,
through the ears of the son of Aeneas; leave Eastern
things afar, O Ilios, and come near to Hellas, if her
Cypris and her Athene still survive; that the happy
lyre may crown thee with fair fame.‡*

Ομηρον Ιλιον ποεῖν, ὃν ἐπήνεε
κριτὸς θεὸς τόκος Αἰνέου. πρὶν μὲν ἂν
τιμαῖσι θυμὸν ἦγ' ἐπ' ἄλλο ῥῆμ' ἐμόν,

* Ἀπολλων, ἔρνος Αἰνέου Τρωίων. See Appendix.

* Ως Οἶγ Ἀμφι Ἐπον Ταφον Ἐκτορος Ἰπποδαμοιο οἷ Ως Οἶ Γ, etc.

† The anagram-unit is 15 letters or five vertical columns, thus:—

δύω μὲν εὐχά, νύσσα, γίνε', ἐν δέ τι,
πέρας. μία μὲν “Ὀμηρος ὁ τόδ' αἰοιδῆ
πάν, Ἰλιόν τ' ἐκ νῦν φέροιτ' Ἄρεος ὁ βᾶς.”
καὶ δευτέρα “τᾶπη ἄδοι τὰ σ' Ἰλιε.”

‡ ποιητᾶ Ὀμήρου ἐξέλλων ὄρων,
ὃ ὄλε δαίμων, Δηίας ἐναντίας,
τῆ δύσε' ἢ τότ', ἦδ' ἐφύπερθεν ἀμμέων
πᾶς δῦθι, τέρπε δ' ἀξίας οὐ λαχὰς
ψάλλων. διὰ ἡδύ, ἱστορίας χάρι
ᾧτ' Αἰνεάδαο τῆσδ' ἔα τῦνη ἐκάς
έώι, ἄγχι δ' ἔρχε' Ἑλλάδι, ἔο
εἰ Κύπρις, Ἰλιε, ἔο τ' Ἀθήνη σόα,
ἴν' ὀλβία χέλυς σ' εὐ στέψη κλέος.

In spite then of Dion Chrysostom's assertion, Homer, like other authors, has mentioned his own name both at the beginning and at the end of each poem, and those who, following his instruction, seek the *prayers of Homer and the Iliad* are able to find them. The cryptograms perform some four functions. In the first place they are prayers offered, as they should be, in secret to the Reader of secrets. Secondly, they vindicate the Poet's claim to authorship against the possibility of dispute. Thirdly, they furnish evidence of his extraordinary command of the language which he writes; for even the easiest of these puzzles could scarcely have been constructed by anyone else. Fourthly, they enable the Poet to drop his mask and tell us something about himself.

First we must endeavour to interpret his date, 871 or 874. The only document which helps us in this matter is the Parian Chronicle of the year 264 B.C., which has not indeed an era, but uses as the beginning of history a year which synchronizes with 1582 B.C. If this be the era of the chronogram, the resulting date is 711 or 708 B.C., of which the latter is the first year of Olympiad xviii. Now this very Olympiad xviii was given as the date of Homer by Euphorion of Chalcis, who was born 280 B.C. Probably then Euphorion noticed the chronogram, and interpreted it by the same era. He made Homer contemporary of the Lydian king Gyges, whose reign, according to him, began then. The synchronism of Gyges seems to be in accordance with the Chronicle, though it places Homer far earlier.

There are, however, certain internal considerations which bring us near the date 708. The chain of Greek poets other than Homer can be traced to about Olympiad xxvii; and all these, as the Hellenic critics observed, are imitators or reproducers of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*. It must be remembered that those who make this assertion had access to a far larger mass of Greek poetry than we, and that their opinion is thoroughly borne out by what we have. Now, a commentary must be later than its text, yet not necessarily much later. The generation which intervenes between Olympiad xviii and Olympiad xxvii is quite sufficient for our purpose. And indeed we should expect that imitation would commence very soon when once the great classics had spread far and wide.

On the other hand it can be shown that the Ionic colonies were earlier than the composition of the *Iliad*, and these are first mentioned in Oriental documents about the year 725 B.C. In the last chapter of *Isaiah* *Yavan* figures as a nation with which communication has only just been established. The date

of the Poem is then somewhere between the establishment of these colonies and the commencement of the historical series of Greek poets. The date given by the chronogram comes in this period, which is not very lengthy.

The Troad, to which the Iliad belongs, enters history as a settlement of Aeolian Greeks. The date of that settlement is not certainly known, but evidently the Troad had not been Hellenized previously. In the Iliad, however, the prehistoric heroes of Ilios are given Hellenic names, a proceeding for which as we have seen, the cryptic preface apologises, somewhat as Plato in the Critias explains away an analogous Hellenization of barbarians. Whether these heroes were historical or fictitious, they were certainly not Hellenized before this Aeolian immigration. The name *Ilios* or *Ilion* is very clearly Semitic, meaning city of *Il*, the Hebrew *El* in *Bethel*.

The cryptograms tell us that the community resident in this place on the recommendation of *the Son of Aeneas*, who is mentioned in this context three times, selected the Poet Homer to compose its lays in 24 cantos. The text of the Iliad lets us know that *a son of Aeneas* was the author's patron; it prophesies that the descendants of Aeneas shall rule over the Trojans. We may conclude that this person, whose name was probably *Aeneades*, was tyrant, or at any rate chief magistrate, in this place.

The work, when issued, succeeded perhaps beyond the Poet's hopes; we learn that fresh offers were made him for another Poem on a kindred theme; analogy would suggest that Aeneades would have liked his own exploits to be thus celebrated. Apollo commanded the Poet to abandon the subject of war and to compose the Odyssey in the same number of lays as the Iliad.

The reason why Ilios, though the home of the Iliad, ceased to be connected with it and generally with poetry, is to be found in the Cimmerian invasion, dated by Herodotus in the reign of the Lydian Ardys, wherein according to Strabo all this region was overrun. This event accounts for the breach in the continuity of Ilios and the tradition therewith connected.

At no time does the city appear to have been of any considerable importance, since its existence in early ages seems to be known only from the Homeric Poems. Nor are we to suppose that when Homer was employed to compose its lays he was expected to utilize historical materials; it is most improbable that any such existed. What he had to do was to compose a fiction which would be agreeable to both the Hellenic ruler and the non-Hellenic population. And in the main the Iliad is a political pamphlet with this tendency. It is shown that this

Hellenic ruler is the true heir to the throne, for by the plan of Zeus the older dynasty of the same family had been extinguished. The ancestor of Aeneades who came next in succession was by no means responsible for this; on the contrary, he had done his utmost to save the house of Priam. By Divine intervention he had been rescued from the field wherein his desperate valour was likely to prove fatal to him, and so been able to found a line which duly inherited Priam's throne. On the other hand Aeneades was also a Hellene, whence the prehistoric conquest of Ilios by the Hellenes gave him another claim to the sovereignty.

To fictions of this sort analogies can easily be found. It seems to furnish wonderful consolation to a conquered people to be told that their conqueror is one of themselves and indeed the legitimate heir to their throne. Hence Alexander the Great in the Egyptian form of his biography is made out an Egyptian. In the Aeneid when Aeneas comes to Italy it turns out that his ancestor was an Italian. In the official chronicle of the Ottomans, it is shown that although their founder was at first in the service of the Seljuks of Asia Minor, whose throne his descendants inherited, he had nothing to do with the overthrow of that dynasty; on the contrary, he was its bravest champion. Only Allah had decreed the fall of the Seljuks and the rise of the Ottomans, who were to last for ever.

With the Hellenes, we are told, the next best thing to winning a battle was winning a horse-race. Aeneas *ex hypothesi* cannot win the battle between the invaders and the Trojans; an opportunity has then to be found wherein he can win a horse-race. In the chariot-race of the Hellenes, as in the modern horse-race, it is the owner who gets the glory. Funeral games are provided wherein the horses of Aeneas win, whence their owner is consoled for his unavoidable defeat in the field. But a fresh Divine intervention is required to enable these horses to take part in the race.

For the rest the Poet employs the framework of the familiar love-story, which begins with the parting of lovers, and ends with their re-union. Everything that intervenes has something to do with the result. The parting brings about the re-union by an unforeseen chain of causation.

The chief features of Homeric composition were skilfully made out by Aristotle. He observed that in these Poems nothing could be omitted or displaced without the whole suffering. In a way then, it may be said that the process of composition commences from the end. The last line is thought out before the

first is composed. The cryptograms are in miniature what the Poems are on a great scale. Since in them the rows of vertical groups constitute a set of verses no less continuous than the wholly different set constituted by the horizontal groups, very clearly the composition did not proceed straightforward; everything is dovetailed with the greatest ingenuity into an excogitated scheme, and it is impossible to say which line was composed first or last. He who reads either the Iliad or the Odyssey with Aristotle's guidance will find that the same skill exhibits itself only on a vastly greater scale. The genius of Homer is evidently that sort which can take infinite pains.

In the second place Aristotle observed that the names of the characters were chosen after their functions had been assigned them and were indicative of those functions. It is decided that for the purpose of the story, Ilios is to have *one* defender, whose death involves the fall of the city; to him then the name *Hector* "holder" is given. Often, if not invariably, the interpretation of the name is given somewhere by the Poet himself; but the names are not casual, though at times without such guidance we might not easily tell their appropriateness.

If we endeavour to estimate the services rendered by Homer to his countrymen, we shall naturally group them under some four heads.

As we have seen, the later verse literature is wholly dependent upon him; but what surprises us in the cryptograms is that he by no means claims to commence Hellenic poetry. On the contrary he uses language which reminds us of far later periods in the history of the Hellenes; who both before and after the Roman conquest refused to acknowledge that there was any literature but theirs; who supposed themselves to be intellectually as superior to other races as mankind generally are to the brutes. In this spirit Homer tells Ilios that if she wishes to be crowned with poetic fame she must abandon the East and come near to Hellas, to which country the goddesses of beauty and wisdom belong. It would appear then that Homer does not represent the infancy but the adolescence of Hellenic poetry; and indeed we cannot imagine the first book in a language armed with elaborate cryptograms and a chronogram. Only literature like the human being "when it becometh a man putteth away childish things." When the production of a truly classical work has raised the standard perceptibly, the immature works which have preceded it are liable to fall into oblivion, especially where writing material is cumbrous, and, as is the case with the wax tablet,

can be repeatedly used for different matter. In such a case the new has a tendency not only to supersede, but to destroy the old.

The second great service rendered by Homer was that he provided his countrymen with the beginnings of history. There is no reason for supposing that of the whole mass of heroes found in the two poems any had ever been heard of before he composed. Indeed it is clear that the Athenians, who claimed to be indigenous, learned the names of their ancient heroes from the *Iliad*, having themselves no traditions about the series of their rulers; and if this was so in Athens, doubtless the same was the case in less literary areas of Hellas. It would, however, seem to be generally true that just as men acquire wealth and station before they want pedigrees, so a community must have accomplished something great before it feels the need of history. There are cases wherein we find the same man pedigreeless before he has acquired fortune and with a lengthy pedigree at a later period; thus the father of that Othman who founded the Ottoman empire appears as a modest leader of a Turkish tribe in the chronicle of the Seljukes of Asia Minor, but in that of the Ottoman Sultans he has a pedigree of fifty generations. These ancestors must indeed have existed, but as they achieved nothing of consequence their names were not remembered, and had afterwards to be conjecturally restored. Similarly continuous Hellenic history commences with the Persian Wars; something had been accomplished which was worthy of commemoration, and history arose. The fictions of Homer then provided a past to which the present could be linked; when princes required ancestors, these could be found in the Homeric poems. The names of these ancestors ordinarily show that they were created for the romance wherein they play a part; but just as the real man (to use the phrase of Horace) becomes by death a fable, so the hero of fiction has a tendency to become historical. A recent writer called Spain the land of Don Quixote and Ignatius Loyola, as though both were equally historical or equally fictitious. The house at Chertsey which Bill Sikes attempted to rob was recently pulled down.

The third service rendered by Homer was according to Herodotus that he assigned the gods their pedigrees and their functions. This cannot of course be accepted without modification; thus we learn from the cryptograms that the functions of three deities are assumed, those of Apollo, Aphrodite and Athene. Nevertheless the later theology is so clearly based on what can be found in the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, that Herodotus is

evidently right in assigning Homer a considerable share in the process whereby the Greek deities were made into a family, the members of which to a considerable extent had their own particular duties. And it must be observed that Greek theology seems to be almost entirely native; attempts which have been made to deduce the system from any other have been failures. Only one name appears to be shared by the Indian and the Hellenic pantheons, that of *Zeus*; but in the Indian system he is merely a poetical personification of the sky, the fertilizer of the earth; in Hellas he indeed retains that function and is not quite distinguishable from the rain, but the working of sound laws has connected his name with the verb *to live*, whence he becomes identified with the principle of life, and indeed life in its highest form, viz., royalty. The transition from the rain-god to the father of gods and men, and indeed the Almighty, who alone produces every result, is therefore one that has taken place within Hellas, and is a consequence of the process whereby the Greek language was developed. This solitary case then, wherein the Indian and the Greek pantheons have a common name, is an exception which proves the rule.

There is, of course, no reason why in a polytheistic system the deities should either be affiliated or have special functions; for normally it would appear that a deity belongs to a community, and does everything for that community. This would naturally be the case where a deity was merely an expression of the community, as is Athene of Athens; *Athene* is to Athens what *Britannia* is to Britain. *Athene* is very clearly a city name like numerous others of similar formation, but becomes personified in the goddess of the place. She is perhaps the clearest case of this phenomenon, but there are others wherein it is only faintly concealed. Such a being is naturally concerned with everything that affects the well-being of the community whose name she bears. And there is no more reason to affiliate her than there would be to name both the parents of the *Virgin daughter of Sion*.

The idea then of making a family of the gods implies original thought, and this may conceivably be Homer's. Where he devotes some space to making out their genealogy, it is highly improbable from the original character of his mind that he is embodying traditional material; and at times the allegorical nature of these genealogies lies on the surface. When the War-god is given for sons Flight and Fright, it is evident that this is a poetical way of saying that war causes panic; Flight and Fright do not thereby become material, it is rather the War-god

who stands in danger of becoming ideal. When we are told that Prayers are the daughters of Zeus, the former do not thereby become persons, it is rather the personality of Zeus which becomes precarious. When therefore Theagenes of Rhegium introduced the allegorical interpretation of Homeric mythology he was fully within his rights.

The clues which determined the functions were ordinarily if not always etymological. The works of the Greeks which deal with etymology are therefore of value, not for the discovery of the real origin of the names, but because they show us what ideas those names suggested to a Hellenic. Plato is doubtless right, *e.g.*, when he interprets the name *Athene* as "the Divine reason," in the sense that he has hit on the etymology to which the goddess owes her function. The Greek commentators on Homer usually point out that where she suggests a course to a hero, she merely stands for that hero's intelligence; she is no more a person than Strife the sister of War, or his sons Fright and Flight. If the question be asked "How comes such an abstraction to have temples and sacrifices, priests and worshippers?" we are confronted with a psychological puzzle which we are unable to solve. We know that the Athenians offered yearly sacrifice to *persuasion*, a goddess who scarcely deserves a capital letter. They cannot well have imagined that so ideal a process as persuasion can have been propitiated by sacrifice; still less have enjoyed either the taste or the odour of the offerings.

So far then as the Greek deities were survivals of older cults, their assumption of functions had a tendency to spiritualize them, as we have seen to happen in the case of Zeus; it does not, however, seem possible in any case to identify one of them certainly with a member of an older pantheon belonging to the same territory, though a plausible case may be made out for one or two names. The extent to which in the worshipper's mind the fetish or tribal deity was sublimated would depend on the mental capacity of the individual. The quality of the poet's work which may be called depth of focus, *i.e.*, the power of appealing to young, middle-aged and old, to the weak-minded and the strong-minded, and of charming all alike, is to be found in his theology no less than in his narratives.

In the fourth place Homer is credited by the Hellenic critics with founding their philosophy, not only in the sense that his works provided texts and illustrations for all their preachers from Plato to Epictetus, but also that he initiated speculation on the origins of things. As the lord of the world he regards

the principle of *Life*; to this principle he assigns parents, *Cronos and Rhea*; the latter name is (as indeed Plato observed) simply the Greek word for *currents*, whereas the former is only a dialectic variant of one which signifies *fountain-head*. There is no reason for supposing that either of these deities had been known before. The allegory is, therefore, as little disguised as in the names of the *Pilgrim's Progress*; the ultimate analysis of the phenomenon of life into a fountain-head and currents implies at least some speculation on this subject. And the names of the parent deities would no more *accidentally* mean these things than the letters of the cryptograms could accidentally furnish two sets of verses. It can be shown that the chief ideas of the Aristotelian philosophy were learned from the Homeric poems by their ablest interpreter. For, indeed, the comments of Aristotle which have been preserved indicate a greater grasp of the structure and purpose of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* than is exhibited by any other student of them.

There appears to have been no time at which free criticism of these poems was forbidden, and though Homer is pre-eminently *the Poet*, he is often treated as the first among equals; yet, he was never actually dethroned, and the place which his works occupy among the Hellenes scarcely differs from that which the *Koran* claims among Moslems. That fame was then won because it was deserved. He was not superseded because he was neither surpassed nor even equalled. And this was because his productions were not naïve, but in the highest degree mature: not improvised, but the fruit of toilsome reflexion and elaboration. In this case as in others the time spent on the production has paid its interest in the preservation of the fruit.

APPENDIX.

Prologue and Preface of the Odyssey.

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 |
| AN | ΔΡ | ΑΜ | ΟΙ | ΕΝ | ΝΕ | ΠΕ | ΜΟ | ΥΣ | ΑΠ | ΟΛ | ΥΤ | ΡΟ | ΠΟ | ΝΟ | ΣΜ | ΑΛ | ΑΠ | ΟΛ | ΛΑ |
| ΠΑ | ΑΓ | ΧΘ | ΗΕ | ΠΕ | ΙΤ | ΡΟ | ΙΗ | ΣΙ | ΕΡ | ΟΝ | ΠΤ | ΟΛ | ΙΕ | ΘΡ | ΟΝ | ΕΠ | ΕΡ | | ΣΕ |
| ΠΟ | ΛΑ | ΩΝ | ΔΑ | ΝΘ | ΡΩ | ΠΩ | ΝΙ | ΔΕ | ΝΑ | ΣΤ | ΕΑ | ΚΑ | ΙΝ | ΟΟ | ΝΕ | Γ | | | ΝΩ |
| ΠΟ | ΛΑ | ΑΔ | ΟΓ | ΕΝ | ΠΟ | ΝΤ | ΩΙ | ΠΑ | ΘΕ | ΝΑ | ΑΓ | ΕΑ | ΟΝ | ΚΑ | ΤΑ | ΘΥ | Μ | | ΟΝ |
| ΑΡ | ΝΥ | ΜΕ | ΝΟ | ΣΗ | ΝΤ | ΕΨ | ΥΧ | ΗΝ | ΚΑ | ΙΝ | ΟΣ | ΤΟ | ΝΕ | ΤΑ | ΙΡ | | | | ΩΝ |
| ΑΛ | ΛΟ | ΥΔ | ΩΣ | ΕΤ | ΑΡ | ΟΥ | ΣΕ | ΡΡ | ΥΣ | ΑΤ | ΟΙ | ΕΜ | ΕΝ | ΟΣ | Π | | | | ΕΡ |
| ΑΥ | ΤΩ | ΝΓ | ΑΡ | ΣΦ | ΕΤ | ΕΡ | ΗΙ | ΣΙ | ΝΑ | ΤΑ | ΣΘ | ΑΛ | ΙΗ | ΙΣ | ΙΝ | ΟΛ | ΟΝ | | ΤΟ |
| ΝΗ | ΠΙ | ΟΙ | ΟΙ | ΚΑ | ΤΑ | ΒΟ | ΥΣ | ΥΠ | ΕΡ | ΙΟ | ΝΟ | ΣΗ | ΕΛ | ΙΟ | | | | | ΙΟ |
| ΗΣ | ΘΙ | ΟΝ | ΑΥ | ΤΑ | ΡΟ | ΤΟ | ΙΣ | ΙΝ | ΑΦ | ΕΙ | ΔΕ | ΤΟ | ΝΟ | ΣΤ | ΙΜ | ΟΝ | ΗΜ | | ΑΡ |
| ΤΩ | ΝΑ | ΜΟ | ΘΕ | ΝΓ | ΕΘ | ΕΑ | ΘΥ | ΓΑ | ΤΕ | ΡΔ | ΙΟ | ΣΕ | ΠΙ | ΕΚ | ΑΙ | ΗΜ | | | ΙΝ |

Vertical groups written horizontally and rearranged.

| | | |
|-----|-------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1 | ΑΝΠΙΔΠΟΠΙΟΑΡΑΛΛΑΥΝΗΗΣΤΩ | ΣΥ ΠΗ ΠΑΤΗΡ ΑΠΟΛΛΟΝ Ω ΑΝΑ |
| 2 | ΔΡΑΓΑΛΛΑΛΝΥΛΟΤΩΠΙΘΙΝΑ | ΠΟΛΛ ΙΛΑΘ ΙΛΛΟΝ ΔΥΝΤ ΑΓΡ |
| 3 | ΑΜΧΘΩΝΑΔΜΕΥΔΑΝΓΟΙΟΝΜΟ | ΟΝΔ ΑΧΩΝ ΓΟΜΟΝ ΙΘ ΑΜΜΕ ΔΥ |
| 4 | ΟΙΗΕΔΑΟΓΝΟΩΣΑΡΟΙΑΥΘΕ | Σ ΑΕΙΡ ΑΓΩΝ ΑΗΘΕ ΟΥ ΟΔΟΙΟ |
| 5 | ΕΝΠΕΝΘΕΝΣΗΕΤΣΦΚΑΤΑΝΤ | ΚΑΤΘΕΝΤ ΕΝΝΕΠΙΕΣ ΣΦΑΓΗΝ |
| 6 | ΝΕΙΤΡΩΠΟΝΤΑΡΕΤΤΑΡΟΕΘ | ΟΘΕΝ ΠΟΤ ΩΡΤ ΕΡΙΝ Τ ΑΡΕΑ Τ |
| 7 | ΠΕΡΟΠΩΝΤΕΨΟΥΕΡΒΟΤΟΕΑ | ΟΠΟΥ ΕΟ ΒΟΡΕΩ ΤΡΕΨΑΝΤ ΕΠ |
| 8 | ΜΟΙΗΝΙΩΙΥΧΣΕΗΙΥΣΙΣΘΥ | ΟΙΜΩΙ ΣΥΝ ΘΥΣΙΗΙΣ ΕΥΧΗΙ |
| 9 | ΥΣΣΙΔΕΠΑΗΝΡΡΣΙΥΠΙΝΓΑ | Σ ΠΥΡΑΙΣ ΓΗΣ ΠΑΙΔ ΕΡΙΝΥΝ |
| 10. | ΑΠΕΡΝΑΘΕΚΑΥΣΝΑΕΡΑΦΤΕ | ΕΝΕΚΑ ΘΕΡΑΠΕΥΣΑΝΤ ΑΦΑΡ |
| 11 | ΟΛΟΝΣΤΝΑΙΝΑΤΤΑΙΟΕΙΡΔ | ΤΙΝΟΝΤΙ ΣΟΝ ΛΑΕΡΤΙΑΔΑΟ |
| 12 | ΥΠΤΕΑΛΑΓΟΣΟΙΣΘΝΟΛΕΙΟ | Γ ΑΘΛΙΟΥ ΤΕΛΟΣ ΠΟΕΙΝ ΤΟΣ |
| 13 | ΡΟΟΔΚΑΕΑΤΟΕΜΑΛΣΗΤΟΣΕ | ΟΣΣ ΕΛΕΤΟ ΤΑ Α ΚΛΕΑ ΟΜΗΡΟ |
| 14 | ΠΟΙΕΙΝΟΝΝΕΕΝΙΗΕΛΑΝΟΠ | Ν ΙΑΙΟΝ ΠΟΕΙΝ ΟΝ ΕΠΗΝΕΕ |
| 15 | ΝΟΘΡΟΟΚΑΤΑΟΣΙΣΙΟΣΤΕΚ | ΚΡΙΤΟΣ ΘΟΟΣ ΤΟΚΟΣ ΑΙΝΕΑ |
| 16 | ΣΜΟΝΝΕΤΑΙΡΠΙΝΙΜΑΙ | Ο ΠΡΙΝ ΜΕΝ ΑΝ ΤΙΜΑΙΣΙ |
| 17 | ΑΔΕΠΓΘΥΟΛΟΝΗΜ | ΘΥΜΟΝ ΗΓ ΕΠ ΑΛΛΟ |
| 18 | ΑΠΕΡΜΟΝΗΜ | ΡΗΜ ΕΜΟΝ ΑΠ |
| 19 | ΟΛ | ΟΛ |
| 20 | ΛΑΣΕΝΩΝΩΝΕΡΤΟΙΟΑΡΙΝ | ΑΟΝ ΕΡΝΟΣ ΑΙΝΕΑΟ ΤΡΩΙΩΝ |

The text employed is the vulgate, as printed by Allen, and a century ago by Ernesti, without alteration of any kind.

DISCUSSION.

The CHAIRMAN, in announcing that the Meeting was open for discussion, said that there were several points which, he would suggest, called for debate. For instance, as to whether Josephus deserved quite so severe a comment as that applied to him on the first page of the paper. Then the date of Homer and the Author's theory of Greek mythology seemed open to discussion. It was most interesting to note how early the literary artifices of acrostics, riddles, and anagrams, came into use. The learned Professor had reminded them that, if an author in those times had put his name openly to his work some envious rival might have cut that portion out, and then have claimed the verses. There was, therefore, no doubt, some practical value in the use of the anagram. He thought

that all would agree with the statement in the second line of the second paragraph on page 39, and they would also feel that to decipher and interpret these anagrams, as Professor Margoliouth had done, was a similar "miracle of ingenuity." We, therefore, in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, were not altogether behind those wonderful men who had flourished in such remote times, for to decipher such a puzzle was almost, if not quite, as wonderful as to invent it.

Mr. PRICKARD had admired immensely the extraordinary ingenuity and diligence of his friend, Professor Margoliouth. It was wonderful that an ancient poet should have managed to wrap up his meaning in this cryptic framework, but it really seemed to be even more wonderful that now at length, in the twentieth century, his interpreter should have come. He had no right himself to speak on Homeric study, but one point seemed to him to require explanation, and that was how the very acute minds that had dealt with Homer in past centuries had failed to give any indication of these cryptic revelations. Plutarch, who so intensely enjoyed anything ingenious, failed to indicate that anything of this kind might lie behind the Homeric poems. For the rest he would rather hear the effect on the present audience of the very remarkable paper to which they had listened. It would be a great relief to have done away with a period of assumed "oral tradition," and to have a definite literary date connected with the poems.

Mr. E. J. BROOKS said that the Greek poet Theognis, who wrote elegiacs about 546 B.C., stated in his poetry that he had "put his seal upon it in such a way that no one else shall plagiarize it." Yet after a careful search, he (the speaker) could not find any editor or critic who had any definite idea as to what the seal was. Perhaps Professor Margoliouth knew the cryptogram of Theognis or would yet be able to discover it.

Mr. E. W. MAUNDER said he thought the Victoria Institute was exceptionally favoured that afternoon by the paper which Professor Margoliouth had set before it; the paper itself was so very remarkable in its novelty, originality and importance, and this was the very first time that Professor Margoliouth had communicated it to the world. He did not feel at all competent to criticize the point round which the whole paper turned—the question of the

anagrams—but in his own line, astronomy, he had once had something to do with an anagram, and he thought that the anecdote might illustrate the use and value of the anagram in earlier times and also the danger attaching to it.

It would be remembered that when the telescope was first invented Galileo, when he made some of his earliest discoveries, was very anxious to establish his claim to the priority and yet to carry on his observations and work them out yet further before he published his discoveries to the world. The course he adopted was to write in short epigrammatic form a statement of the discovery, and then turn it into an anagram, and it was the anagram which he published. Later on, when his observations were complete, he could publish the solution of the anagram together with the fuller details. Other astronomers followed the same custom; amongst them, Christian Huygens, who used this method to announce his discovery of a satellite of Saturn in the year 1655. Among other astronomers to whom he sent this cryptogram was Dr. Wallis, a friend of Sir Christopher Wren. Dr. Wallis replied by sending a long anagram to Huygens, and when Huygens published the interpretation of his anagram, Dr. Wallis, in answer to his challenge, gave the solution of his. Both anagrams signified the same thing. Had Wallis made an independent discovery? Wallis never claimed it for himself. Was he then attempting to work off a fraud on Huygens, and if so, how did he accomplish it? He (the speaker) had gone into the subject and came to the conclusion that Wallis had simply added a number of letters to the anagram of Huygens in the expectation that, when Huygens explained the meaning of his anagram, he would be able to frame a sentence to the same general effect from the greater number of letters at his disposal. He did this, not in order to establish a spurious claim to a discovery that he had not really made, but in order to prove to Huygens that the method of anagrams was not a safe one, but was open to a falsification which it would be difficult to expose. Letters have since been published which show that this inference as to the methods and motive of Wallis was correct in every particular.

This anecdote might be sufficient to remind us that there was a time when anagrams were undoubtedly used for a purpose strictly analogous to that which Professor Margoliouth has ascribed to Homer; it also pointed out that the device was not without its

dangers. There was also a very suggestive feature about Wallis's solution of his anagram ; these astronomical discoveries were always published in Latin in those days, and the Latin of Wallis's anagram was very "doggy" indeed ; so much so, that, in his opinion, it proved that it was not an original utterance, but that Wallis had been obliged to force the words to fit an interpretation for which they had not been originally intended. That seemed to him to illustrate some of the points which Professor Margoliouth had brought out with respect to these Homeric anagrams. In the case of an anagram it was impossible so to arrange it that the language was as good in the secondary document as in the primary one, because language could not be made to serve two masters equally well at the same time. He (the speaker) was not a Greek scholar, and therefore he could offer no criticism of his own on Professor Margoliouth's working out of the anagrams, but it seemed to him that this would be a trustworthy criterion to apply to them. If the language in the iambic metre was better Greek than it was in the poem of Homer he thought it would afford strong support to the idea that they had there an actual anagram. Apart from that he should like to say how much he had been delighted with the paper and the references to Homer, because Professor Margoliouth had brought before them so clearly the wonderful position which Homer occupied in Greek thought and Greek literature—that he was truly the founder of both. Not, indeed, that Homer had originated Greek literature, but he was of such overpowering genius that he had effaced, so far as we were concerned, those who had gone before him.

Mr. M. L. ROUSE endorsed all the praise that had been bestowed on Professor Margoliouth's discovery ; the patient ingenuity shown in this unravelling of Homer's enigma closely vied with that of the poet in weaving it. That part of the solution which fixed the date of Homer's chief work as 708 B.C. had especially delighted him ; but he could not agree that Homer, whose allusions to armour and adornments and to the topography of Troy had been so well confirmed by Schliemann and others, had invented his heroes and their pedigrees. He thought the Lecturer would admit that ancient peoples preserved their genealogies better than we do to-day, and he considered that three at least of the principal Greek divinities were really the children of Lamech (Gen. iv, 19-22) who had undergone

deification. Nor did he believe that the Greek cities on the coasts of Asia Minor could properly be called colonies; he rather inferred from the tenth chapter of Genesis that they were the original settlements of the race.

The Rev. J. J. B. COLES pointed out how great had been the failure of ancient philosophies. Men had fallen into idolatry, the worship of the heavenly bodies, of human ancestors, of the powers of nature, and of abstract qualities. The Lecturer that afternoon had shown them that to Homer the Greeks were indebted for the foundations of their history, philosophy, science and religion. But in the religion of the Greeks there was a deification of the human passions.

The LECTURER, in reply, said that he would take into careful consideration the various criticisms and suggestions that had been brought forward. As regards Josephus, he had taken a great deal of trouble in inquiring into his credibility, but he feared that the result was not very satisfactory. In reply to Mr. Prickard's observation that Plutarch and other commentators did not seem to know of the cryptograms, it occurred to him that such knowledge might be handed down only by tradition, and therefore only be known to a few persons at any time. These particular cryptograms might not have been widely known because they did not answer the question in which the Greeks were most interested; that is to say, they did not reveal which was the birthplace of Homer. He was acquainted with cases in literature where an interpretation, which was not indicated on the surface, had come to light by accident. Thus there was a particular treatise among the Jews, often referred to, in which a certain phrase had been objected to by the censors of Venice and elsewhere, so that in some editions different words and capitals were used in its place. One in particular consisted of letters normally rendered "worshippers of stars and constellations." This would seem absurd, because so few of those nations with whom the Jews had to do at this period followed that particular kind of worship. But he was once told that, as a matter of fact, what those initials really meant was "worshippers of Christ and Mary." Yet he had asked several people who had studied that treatise from childhood, but had never heard of that interpretation. It was only here and there that there was someone to whom the correct interpreta-

tion of those initials was known. They might be sure that there must have been many instances of the same kind of thing in connection with ancient literature.

The Meeting adjourned at 6.10 p.m.

SUBSEQUENT COMMUNICATION.

Prof. EDWARD HULL :—Though not by any means a specialist on the above subject, I read “my Homer” with the greatest interest at school—and have never forgotten its charming story of the Siege of Troy, written as it is in the most musical of languages, and I have read the remarkable essay of Dr. Margoliouth with no less interest. The reflection occurs to me that, while the Author clearly shows how mythical are the heroes of that drama—and that their names were derived from the events and characters attributed to them—I cannot suppose that he intends to consign the whole story to the origin which he assigns to Apollo, Aphrodite and all the divinities except Zeus—namely, poetic fiction. What then comes of the discovery of Schliemann and of the ruined cities he describes? May we not suggest that there was a city at the site identified, recognisable by its geographical position as the site of Troy, and that the poet, having full knowledge of the topography of the region, made use of it as the central position for the events recorded—though it may have only been a ruin? I do not read in the Author’s paper anything that militates against this view.

There is another point in connection with the settlement of the Æolian Greeks (p. 42), the date of which is not certainly known. It must have been very ancient, and the Author states that the name *Ilios* or *Ilion* is very clearly Semitic; in fact of Hebrew origin. But there is another name no less clearly Semitic, namely *Danai*, which may, perhaps, connect the early Greek settlers with that remarkable tribe of the Israelites—the tribe of Dan. This tribe settled on the coast of Palestine, and, like the Phœnicians, became a maritime people, coasting along the Mediterranean—and doubtless visiting the Grecian harbours and islands.
