

treats the genre, contrasts Bacchylides and Pindar, and touches on special matters of Bacchylides' style. He further furnishes a series of notes (from one sentence to two pages in length) analyzing and elucidating each poem in turn. This service has the virtues of seldom saying too little, rarely saying too much, and never patronizing. Sir Maurice Bowra has appended a brief preface which discusses the pitfalls for the translator of Greek verse.

What Parry accomplishes for Bacchylides and Fagles, Anderson does for Persius and Merwin. For not for nothing has Persius borne the reputation of the most obscure of Roman poets; his work cries for an elucidator. An introduction of over forty pages relates Persius—Rome's Angry Young Stoic—to his philosophic, social, and literary milieu, skilfully analyzing his life, his work, and his predilections. After a careful perusal of this essay and with constant use of the notes on individual passages, the reader finds the veil falling away from in front of the poet and sees him for what he is—vehemently direct, mordantly compelling. But Merwin's verse translation helps to induce this effect too, for his ingenious bridging of abrupt transitions in thought and his clever interpretation and phrasing of obscurities lend the satires a comprehensible continuity they have never enjoyed in English form. Avoiding Persius' compression of language, Merwin (with intelligibility his aim) considerably expands on the Roman poet's terse, but pregnant and precise, phraseology. The result is a witty and often breezy English style which causes some wide departures from Persius' words, but thereby faithfully reproduces his essential qualities, ridicule and contempt, exhortatory vigor and warm admiration. One can hope that when time overtakes this version, there will be another Merwin around to present Persius as well to his generation.

Of quite different stamp is Rosenblum's volume on Luxorius. Here, accompanied by an exhaustive introduction and commentary, multiple appendices, an *index nominum et verborum*—in short all the scholarly trappings—appears the Latin text of a very late and very minor epigrammatist. The pieces are rendered into a fairly literal, and therefore frequently wooden, prose translation. The world of scholarship will find Rosenblum's work a boon, but for the general reader Luxorius' verses, limited in subject matter and strained in treatment, will have chiefly the effect of raising his estimation of Martial.

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New Fausts

GOETHE, *Faust*, translated by WALTER KAUFMANN. Doubleday. GOETHE, *Faust*, translated by LOUIS MACNEICE. Oxford.

Although the recent publication of two translations of *Faust*, one by the poet Louis MacNeice and the other by Professor Walter Kaufmann, is certainly no more than coincidence, their appearance is timely. For Goethe's

masterpiece is urgent reading today. It is not only a unique literary achievement; it is rich in insights into the human condition. Faust's need to find a meaning in life has, if possible, only become more acute and stands out as the central crisis of Western civilization. In alarm, Albert Schweitzer confesses that reason compels him to be pessimistic about the future of mankind, that only his will and hope remain optimistic. But Goethe, who was keenly aware of human shortcomings, had a wholeness of vision that transcends such ambivalence and enabled him to transform a legendary figure into an enduring symbol of man's redemption. Even the despair, the seemingly negative force which in the beginning drives Faust to the verge of suicide, has positive value; it motivates his restless striving, impelling him onward to higher spheres, and is essential to his salvation. Thus, in the fullest sense, *Faust* is an affirmation of life.

As to format, the translations have their respective merits. The MacNeice volume is a worthwhile addition to the growing collection of reprints in paperback editions. It makes available in inexpensive form the version that the poet first prepared for broadcast. The higher price of the Kaufmann *Faust* is offset by the inclusion of the original German on facing pages, which will be welcomed by those who prefer translations in bilingual editions.

Neither version is complete. MacNeice deletes some 4,000 lines from the original 12,000. He has, moreover, rearranged the order of a few speeches. Kaufmann has abridged the text even more. Although he presents Part I in its entirety, Part II is represented by only the first scene and the last act. He does, however, provide a synopsis of the omitted portions. Unfortunately, neither volume includes notes on the text. Kaufmann's introduction compensates for this somewhat, but his reference only to commentaries in German will not be very helpful to readers who must rely on a translation.

The stated intention of both translators has been to re-create the form and meaning of the original, and they have succeeded to a high degree. MacNeice, who takes more liberties than Kaufmann, displays great virtuosity in his command of the poetic line and in his ability to capture Goethe's rhythms. This is conspicuous in the justly famous lyric monologue of Gretchen at the spinning wheel. His translation of the first stanza differs from that of Kaufmann in only one respect, but an essential one. MacNeice, by adding "shall" to the third line, matches the meter of the original with its spinning wheel rhythm and brings out effectively the contrast between Gretchen's anguished state of mind and the monotony of her occupation. This is not so evident in Kaufmann's version, but the latter has a far more serious blemish in the syntax of the first line of the next stanza: "Where him I not have." Such word order has little place in English and certainly does not belong on the lips of this unsophisticated girl, distraught though she may be. In the fifth stanza, MacNeice's mastery of metrical stress is again apparent. The insistent repetition of the pronoun "he" at telling intervals

betrays the growing intensity of Gretchen's feelings and brings into sharp focus the imagined presence of her lover. As the poem moves to its climax, the lines and stanzas surge and overflow, and even as slight a pause as that caused by Kaufmann's positioning of "so" at the end of the line preceding the final stanza is disturbing. While both translators have captured the intensity of the scene, MacNeice has given us an English version remarkably close to the original.

Although Kaufmann's translation with its scrupulous adherence to Goethe's rhyme scheme at times seems rather strained, it often reproduces to advantage effects that MacNeice sacrifices. For example, when Gretchen declares her willingness to let Faust come to her room at night but fears her mother might discover them, her speech concludes with the words: *Ich wär gleich auf der Stelle tot* (I would die on the spot). The first line of Faust's reply with its rhyme word *Not* (danger), although an attempt to disarm her fears, echoes her concern and casts a shadow over his suggestion that she administer a sleeping potion to her mother. Kaufmann matches the *tot-Not* rhyme with "dead-dread" and preserves the foreboding of disaster. Moreover, the same translator has a knack for finding precisely the right words to bring out the meaning of certain passages. Thus the idea of growth, so important to an understanding of *Faust* and of Goethe's thought, is clear in the rendering of *wer fertig ist* (the one who is finished, l. 182) as "Those who have ceased to grow."

Since *Faust* is a work of such scope and diversity, some shortcomings are to be expected in a poetic translation. In spite of these, the versions of Kaufmann and MacNeice can be highly recommended for their accuracy and quality. Both are successful for the most part in avoiding the excessive Latinization and stilted language that mar some earlier attempts to turn Goethe's masterpiece into English. To a very considerable extent, the two translators have preserved the letter and spirit of *Faust*, and MacNeice, moreover, offers a richly poetic version. In both instances, however, the abridgment remains a grave weakness. Faust's redemption is the culmination of his activities as a whole, and to omit any meaningful phase of his experience is to subtract from the comprehensiveness of Goethe's poetic vision.

Only one misprint was noted in the MacNeice volume. There are many printing errors in the German text of the Kaufmann edition.

D. E. ALLISON

An Older Italy

Alfieri Memoirs, ed. E. R. VINCENT; *Italian Regional Tales of the Nineteenth Century*, selected and introduced by ARCHIBALD COLQUHOUN and NEVILLE ROGERS. Oxford.

The Oxford University Press has undertaken to supply a want which,