

**AN INTRODUCTION TO  
GREEK  
VERSE COMPOSITION,  
WITH EXERCISES**

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An Introduction to Greek Verse Composition, with Exercises by Arthur Sidgwick & F. D. Morice

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GREEK VERSE COMPOSITION  
*With Exercises*

BY

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## PREFACE.

THE object of this book is to take the learner through all the stages of Greek verse composition, from the first rudiments till he has reached a fair proficiency in turning into Greek Iambics an average piece of English dramatic poetry. The authors have been guided all through by a considerable experience obtained in teaching Greek verse composition to the two upper forms of a great public school. In consequence of that experience, they have paid particular attention to the following points;—

1. To make the rules and principles of the Tragic Iambic metre full, accurate, and clear.

For example, they have explained at length a point very important, but often neglected, namely, the metrical treatment of monosyllables. When this is grasped, the learner will find it much more easy than is otherwise the case to master the two most troublesome points in the Greek Iambic line, viz., the Caesura and the rule of the final Cretic. They also hope that the section on combina-

tions of syllables will save the student much time by clearly showing him what kinds of words are available for this metre, and in what parts of the line they are naturally placed. Further, it requires considerable care to state the proper uses of resolved feet, and insist on the due limitations of such uses, so as to leave no room for misconception. The authors hope not to be found wanting in this respect:

2. To supply an adequate treatment of the laws of quantity.

Under this head (besides such general rules of prosody as those relating to the quantities of final syllables, lengthening of vowels by position, etc.), the real facts about elision and crasis, which are often left to the learner's imperfect knowledge and undeveloped instinct, are here carefully collected and expounded.

3. To give full hints on poetic forms and usages.

Among the causes that tend to make Greek Iambic writing far easier than the beginner is apt to believe, is the fact that Greek has such an immense store of resources in the variety of its admissible poetic forms. A good many of these, when a little advance has been made, will be readily recognised when seen: but it will be much longer before the student is able to think of them when he is doing verses. The authors have accordingly made as complete a collection of them as they could, arranged

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in the natural order according to the parts of speech. It is further hoped that the hints on poetic usages and diction, and especially the full list of particles, with examples from Sophocles, will do something to give the learner such help as no dictionary conveniently affords, and as could otherwise be only collected by prolonged study of the Greek poets.

4. To give a sufficient number of exercises on the early stages, and a large number on the more advanced stages, of composition.

On this head the authors will only remark, first, that it is a great mistake to keep boys doing single lines when once they have mastered the metre, as they learn infinitely more from trying to deal with continuous pieces of poetry; and, secondly, that every piece in the book the authors have themselves turned into Greek verse, and so are aware of all the difficulties and problems which it presents, and are able to give appropriate help in the notes.

5. To give a full vocabulary of words suitable to dramatic poetry, which will be useful not merely for these exercises but for any other.

They hope by this means to render unnecessary, at any rate for a considerable part of the time devoted to learning Greek, the use of English-Greek dictionaries. These books usually confuse the learner by giving some