

**HARVARD
LECTURES ON
GREEK SUBJECTS**

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Harvard lectures on Greek subjects by S. H. Butcher

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PREFACE

THESE Lectures—Public Lectures delivered at Harvard University in April 1904—owe their origin to a generous gift made to the University by Mr. Gardiner Martin Lane, of the Class of 1881; and will remain associated in my memory with the recollection of infinite kindness received during my visit to Cambridge and Boston.

The Lectures, here and there slightly expanded, are, in other respects, published almost in the form in which they were delivered. The hearers to whom they were originally addressed comprised not only classical scholars, but also

the general public; and they are now offered to a similarly mixed body of readers.

The book may be regarded as forming a kind of companion volume to *Some Aspects of the Greek Genius* (third edition, Macmillan and Co. 1904). Under various lights I have attempted to bring out something of the originality of Greece. The contrast is at the outset drawn between Greece and two older civilisations:—that of Israel, dominated by a great religious idea, and that of Phoenicia, given over to the pursuit of material well-being (I. and II.). In the subsequent lectures two features of the Greek intellect come into special prominence. First, a Love of Knowledge, which not only seeks out the facts of nature and of man's life, but persistently asks their meaning; and this belief in the interpretative power of mind, working on and transmuting all raw material of knowledge, is shown to

extend beyond the domain of philosophy or of science, and to give significance to Greek theories of history and Greek views on education (III.). Secondly, a Critical Faculty standing in singularly close relation to the Creative Faculty. Art and inspiration, logic and intuition, elsewhere so often disjoined, enter into perfect union in the constructive efforts of the Greek imagination. It is but one eminent example of that balance of contrasted qualities, that reconciliation of opposites, which meets us at every turn in the distinguished personalities of the Hellenic race, and which is too often thought of, in a merely negative way, as the avoidance of excess, rather than as the highest outcome of an intense and many-sided vitality (IV.). But the critical instinct, one of the primary endowments of the Greeks, operates also apart from the constructive power, and (chiefly from the time of Aristotle onwards)

tries to penetrate the secret of the literary art. Here we have no longer the same sureness of insight;—indeed the lack of it is frequently startling. Nevertheless there remains a sufficient body of interesting—and even illuminating—Criticism, to enable us to see, through Greek eyes, some of those literary principles of enduring value which Greece has bequeathed (V. and VI.).

S. H. BUTCHER.

October 1904.