

**T. MACCI PLAVTI
MENAECMI**

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T. Macci Plavti Menaechmi by Titus Maccius Plautus & Clara M. Knight

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T. M. Plautus

T. MACCI PLAVTI

MENAECHMI

EDITED

WITH INTRODUCTION AND NOTES

BY

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PREFACE

THE last edition of the *Menaechmi* with English notes by Wilhelm Wagner was published nearly forty years ago¹. Since then great progress has been made in Plautine Studies not only in textual matter but also in the better understanding of the poet's language, diction, and metre.

The *Menaechmi* has a claim to be read early in the student's study of Plautus, not only on account of its literary merit and the imitations of it in modern literature, but also because the language is on the whole easier than in some other plays. With this in view I have treated the idiom, where it differs from Ciceronian Latin, more fully than would be necessary for students who have already read several plays of Plautus. Even more advanced students will generally find that a consideration of idioms historically and in connexion with different contexts is not a loss of time but, in fact, leads to their better appreciation. At this point I must acknowledge my indebtedness to Bennett's *Syntax of Early Latin*, a work indispensable to every student of Plautus, not only for its suggestiveness in the historical treatment of the language, but also for its wealth of illustration, in which it has often supplied omissions in my own notes on the poet. Philological explanations on the other hand, unlike some editors, I have introduced only where a form must otherwise be puzzling; brief notes from a science, which is little or not at all known to the student, can only prove confusing or useless. My object is to lead the reader to

¹ Mr P. Thoresby Jones' edition (Clarendon Press) was published after mine was completed at the Press.

a literary appreciation of the *Menaechmi* and to introduce him to Plautine style and idiom.

The inclusion of an account of the lyrical as well as the ordinary iambic and trochaic metres in an edition which is intended for the upper forms of Schools and undergraduates at the Universities, needs perhaps some apology. If a student is capable of dealing with Plautine prosody at all, there is no reason why his study should not include all the metres. Because he cannot yet understand every irregularity and all the points of controversy, we need not debar him from the pleasure, which the various rhythms must give him. My metrical introduction is intended for this practical purpose only. I have not given any summary of Plautine style and syntax in the Introduction, though I had once thought of doing so; but the subject is too vast to treat briefly with any success and it, therefore, seemed better to leave the points for discussion and illustration in the notes, as they occurred. Moreover, the student who wants a grammar less extensive than Bennett's work has Lindsay's handy little book on the *Syntax of Plautus*.

I am familiar with the annotated editions of the *Menaechmi* by Ussing, Brix, and Wagner; but unfortunately they are too far out of date in textual as well as other matters to be of much use now. Leo's *Plautinische Forschungen* has been valuable in some points. Of translations the Elizabethan still remains the most spirited, though it is often inaccurate; it was, of course, not meant to be a close translation. Among modern versions in English Rogers' verse translation is by far the best and closest to the spirit of the original; but it is a pity that it was not based on a later and better text.