

**P. VERGILI MARONIS.
AENEIDOS.
LIBER QUINTUS**

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P. Vergili Maronis. Aeneidos. Liber quintus by P. Vrgili Maronis & R. D. Williams

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P. VIRGILI MARONIS & R. D. WILLIAMS

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AENEIDOS

LIBER QVINTVS

EDITED WITH A COMMENTARY

BY

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OXFORD

AT THE CLARENDON PRESS

PREFACE

THE fifth book of the *Aeneid* is outshone in brilliance by the books before and after it, but it is indispensable to both. In the structure of the poem it makes possible the progression from the tragic events of Book IV to the mystery and majesty of Book VI; it interposes a different kind of scenery between the conquest of two mountain summits. Here we see the skill with which Virgil handles his transitions of tone and intensity, for in the course of Book V the tension is gradually released and gradually built up again. We see too the skill with which the intensity is changed without any change in the major themes of the poem as it moves; the scenery is different but entirely harmonious. A careful reading of Books IV, V, and VI will do much to illuminate how a great epic poet builds up his structure in such a way that his poem will not fall apart, a fate which often overtakes the lesser epics.

In preparing this edition of *Aeneid* V I have endeavoured to meet the needs of students in the upper forms of schools and in universities, and at the same time to make some contribution to more advanced Virgilian scholarship. I have paid particular attention throughout the commentary to stylistic and metrical features, both in order to explain Virgilian usage, and to try to show how rhythmic effects (whether of metre or sound) are employed to support and emphasize the meaning and tone of a passage; in brief, to comment on what Dryden tried to imitate in his translation, the way in which Virgil chooses and places his words 'for the sweetness of the sound'. I am indeed aware that there must be a subjective element in aesthetic appreciation of this kind, and that it is easy to go too far, but I have thought it better to venture suggestions rather than to keep silent, and each reader may judge for himself how far he is prepared to go. I have commented often on sense pauses, because it is here that Virgil differs most from his predecessors, and on the division of words within the line, which I have discussed mainly by use of the terms *ictus* and *accent* (though other terms which may be preferred, such as *diacresis* and *caesura*,

would give much the same result). The student of Milton will easily appreciate the importance of these two elements of verse movement.

The debt which I owe to the great Virgilian commentators and critics of the past cannot be acknowledged at each point, because it is their formative influence, not their specific comments at one place or another, which has left the main impact. Those who have helped me most are included in the list on pp. 29-31. But Servius is in a category of his own, and I have cited him very frequently in the commentary in order to give a picture both of his merits and of his limitations.

The text of this edition is reproduced from Hirtzel's Oxford Classical Text, by kind permission of the Delegates of the Clarendon Press. I have indicated in the notes that I would prefer a different reading or punctuation from the Oxford Text in the following places: 112, 238, 279, 317, 326, 349, 486, 512, 768, 776.

My grateful thanks are due to Mr. F. Robertson for the profit which this book has derived from many long discussions on every aspect of it; to Professor J. M. R. Cornack and Mr. A. E. Wardman for ready help of all kinds; to Mr. H. H. Huxley and Mr. A. G. Lee for valuable criticisms and suggestions on many points; and to Professor R. G. Austin for the constant assistance which I have had from his edition of Book IV, and for personal help in many places in Book V. For the errors and omissions which remain I am myself responsible.

I wish to acknowledge my thanks to the authors and publishers for permission to make citations from the translations of the *Aeneid* by Mr. W. F. Jackson Knight (Penguin Books, 1956) and Mr. C. Day Lewis (Hogarth Press, 1952).

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INTRODUCTION

I. *The Purpose of Book V*

THE major part of Book V is concerned with the anniversary games held in honour of Anchises. The description which Virgil gives recalls again and again Homer's account in *Iliad* XXIII of the funeral games for Patroclus, and it is plain that among the main reasons which led Virgil to include an account of athletic contests in the *Aeneid* was his desire to recall this element of Homer's poetry to his Roman readers, and to transfer into a Roman context and the idiom of a later day the heritage which as an epic poet he had received from Homer. The poems of Homer had cast their spell upon him; the magic of their artistry and the love of life in so many of its varied aspects which they breathe had captured the poet in him, just as the grandeur of his vision of Rome had captured the patriot in him. The roots of the *Aeneid* took their nourishment not only—as is so very evident—from Roman ways and Roman ideals, from the national model of Ennius' epic and the great new prospects of Roman destiny, but equally (and in some ways perhaps primarily) from Virgil's love of Homer's poems. This truism is not best stated in phrases like 'imitation of Homer', as if Homer was Virgil's model and therefore to Homer he had to go. Rather we should think of how Homer had fired Virgil's poetic imagination, shaped and sharpened his appreciation of countless aspects of human activity seen through a poet's eyes, impelled him to wish to re-create—in his own language and from a very different standpoint—the situations and events in which the Homeric heroes had played their parts. We should not expect Virgil to have recaptured the *elan* of Homer's games (indeed no Roman was likely to see athletics as the Greeks saw them); but what