

**A HISTORY OF CLASSICAL GREEK
LITERATURE, IN TWO VOLUMES,
VOL. II, PART II. THE PROSE
WRITERS, FROM ISOCRATES TO
ARISTOTLE**

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A History of Classical Greek Literature, in Two Volumes, Vol. II, Part II. The Prose Writers,
from Isocrates to Aristotle by J. P. Mahaffy

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J. P. MAHAFFY

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CLASSICAL GREEK LITERATURE

VOL. II.--PART II.

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A HISTORY
OF
CLASSICAL GREEK LITERATURE

BY THE
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IN TWO VOLUMES

VOL. II. PART II.
THE PROSE WRITERS
FROM ISOCRATES TO ARISTOTLE

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ἐπει δὲ τοῦ βίου μεταβολὴν ἔμα ταῖς τύχαις καὶ ταῖς εὐδαίμοις λαμβάνοντος, ἐξωθοῦσα τὸ περιττὸν ἢ χρεια, κρωβύλους τε χρυσαῦτε ἀφίρει, καὶ ξυστίδας μαλακὰς ἀπημφιάζει, καὶ πον καὶ κόμπη σοβαρωτέρων ἀπικεῖρε, καὶ ὑπέλυσε καθορῶν, οὐ φαύλους ἐθιζομένων ἀντικαλλωπίζεσθαι πρὸς τὴν πολυτέλειαν εὐτελείᾳ, καὶ τὸ ἀφελὲς καὶ λιτὸν ἐν κόσμῳ τίθεσθαι μᾶλλον, ἢ το σοβαρὸν καὶ περίεργον· οὕτω τοῦ λόγου συμμεταβάλλοντος ἔμα καὶ συναποδυομένου, κατέβη μὲν ἀπὸ τῶν μέτρων, ὅσπερ ὀχημάτων, ἢ ἱστορίας, καὶ τῶν περὶ μάλιστα τοῦ μυθώδους ἀπεκρίθη τὸ ἀληθές· φιλοσοφία δὲ τὸ σαφὲς καὶ διδασκαλικὸν ἀσπασαμένη μᾶλλον ἢ τὸ ἐκπληττον, διὰ λόγων ἐποιεῖτο τὴν ζήτησιν.—*PLUTARCH, De Pyth. Oraculis, 24.*



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HISTORY OF GREEK PROSE LITERATURE.

PART II.

CHAPTER I.

ISOCRATES.

§ 441. WE turn to another leading representative of Attic prose during the earlier half of the fourth century B.C.—a representative who, with Lysias and Isæus, with Plato and with Xenophon, makes up that wonderful constellation of writers of whom Demosthenes may be considered the greatest star. Our authorities are agreed that Isocrates was born at Athens in 436, the son of Theodorus, a flute manufacturer, and of Hecuto. The names of three obscure brothers and a sister are mentioned. He may have been a few years younger than Lysias, eight or nine years older than Plato. His father, being wealthy, was able to give him so good an education that he himself boasts¹ he was better known and stood higher among his school-fellows than ever afterwards—a very credible statement, seeing that his great talent for form must have made him a brilliant and promising pupil. Among his masters are mentioned Prodicus, of whom critics have found traces in his orations, and Socrates, whom he once mentions² in connection with Alcibiades, without sympathy, so that the stories about his public mourning of the philosopher's death seem false; indeed, no natures could be more contrasted than those of the two men,

¹ *Antid.* § 161.

² *Busiris*, § 5.