

THE PLUTUS

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The Plutus by Aristophanes

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ARISTOPHANES

THE PLUTUS

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THE
PLUTUS
OF
ARISTOPHANES

EDITED

WITH INTRODUCTION AND NOTES

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CONTENTS.

| | PAGE |
|---|------|
| PREFACE | I |
| INTRODUCTION | 3 |
| THREE PERIODS OF ATTIC COMEDY | 19 |
| GREEK THEATRES | 20 |
| THE PLUTUS | 23 |
| NOTES | 61 |
| INDEX TO NOTES | 109 |

PREFACE.

THE present is an expurgated edition of the "Plutus" of Aristophanes, based on the text of Bergk, and designed to meet the wants of public schools, and of private students preparing for University and other examinations. The different readings in disputed lines, together with their various interpretations, are fully discussed in the Notes.

M. T. Q.

LONDON,
March, 1896.

INTRODUCTION.

It is strange that we should be so singularly ill-informed about the personal history of the greatest comic poet of Greece. Two Greek biographies—one by Thomas Magister, the other anonymous—a notice by Suidas, a short contemporary sketch in Plato's *Symposium*, and such scraps of information as we can gather from his own plays, supply the materials for the *Life* of Aristophanes, and still leave us in doubt as to the time and place of his birth and death. Athens was probably his birthplace, although his father Philippos had property in Ægina. His Attic citizenship is shown indirectly, for when at a later time Kleon, then the foremost man at Athens, was smarting under the comic lash, he prosecuted the poet on a *γραφὴ ξενίας* as being a foreigner exercising civic rights, but even Kleon could not procure a conviction. Again, his first play, the *Δαιταλῆς* (*Banqueters*), came out in 427 B.C., when he must have been a young man. Thus his birth would probably fall between 450 and 444 B.C. Plato pictures him as an easy-going, pleasure-loving, gay young aristocrat, mixing in the most fashionable society of his time, and always expected to turn everything into ridicule. Happily, we know a good deal about his writings. In the fourth year of the Peloponnesian War his *Δαιταλῆς* received the second prize. It was aimed at recent innovations, especially the teachings of the Sophists, and praised the simplicity of the old conservative education. Next year (426 B.C.) appeared his *Babylonians*, in which he satirised Kleon so mercilessly in presence of envoys with tribute from the subject cities, that the indignant demagogue prosecuted him on the *γραφὴ ξενίας* mentioned above. Of these two