HARVARD STUDIES IN CLASSICAL PHILOLOGY: VOL. XIII, 1902

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649458981

Harvard Studies in Classical Philology: Vol. XIII, 1902 by Various

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PREFATORY NOTE

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CLEMENT LAWRENCE SMITH,
CLIFFORD HERSCHEL MOORE,
CHARLES BURTON GULICK.

EDITORIZ

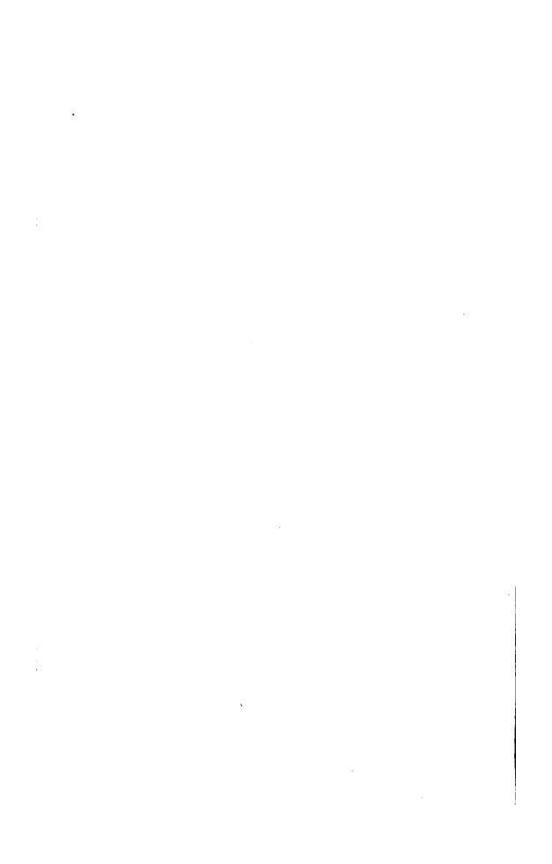
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Died

At Cambridge, on October 11th, 1901,

JAMES BRADSTREET GREENOUGH,
in the sixty-ninth year of his age.

The Fourteenth Volume of the Studies will be dedicated to the memory of Professor Greenough and will contain a sketch of his life and services.



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THE POLITICS OF THE PATRICIAN CLAUDII

By George Converse Fisks

In this paper I shall endeavor to determine what general policy was advocated by the members of the Claudian gens who were active in Roman politics from the beginning of the republic down to the time of the Gracchi. Upon this subject four distinct views are held. In the first place, ancient historians, of whom Livy, Dionysius of Halicarnassus, Diodorus Siculus, and Appian are the principal representatives, look upon the family as ultra-patricians. Thus Livy, in describing Appius Claudius, consular tribune of 403, dictator 362, consul 349, says: Claudiae genti iam inde ab initio nihil antiquius in re publica patrum maiestate fuisse, semper plebis commodis adversatos esse.'

Of modern historians Herzog^{*} approaches most closely this traditional theory. He looks upon the Claudii as ultra-patricians, but believes that they wished to encourage the growth of a state within the state, to build up by the side of the patrician order a parallel plebeian order, well organized under strictly plebeian officials, but having no share in the larger activities of the state. In order to secure such dependence the tribunate was first of all to be abolished, and the union of the more progressive of the nobility with the tribunician families was opposed. In short, the Claudii were reactionaries, who wished to 'shepherd' the plebs in the omniscient fashion of the regal period.

The third view is that of Mommsen. Relying partly upon certain general Claudian characteristics, such as interest in literature and military incapacity, but principally upon a critical examination of the policy of the leading members of the house, Mommsen endeavored to show that the family were in reality champions of the plebeians. He even

^{1 495-133} B.C.

¹ Liv. 6, 40, 3. Cf. also Liv. 9, 33 ff.

³ Römische Staatsversassung, Vol. I, pp. 179 ff. and pp. 265 ff.

^{*} Römische Forschungen, p. 287 ff.: Die Patricischen Claudier. Berlin, 1864.