

hollowness his passion, which the creature had wounded" or "turned to melancholy." This is explained by the legend that Eurydice was killed by a fabulous animal, "a snake in armour" or "snake with a shield," *armatus anguis*, apparently a combination of snake and tortoise (*Liber Monstrorum* 3. 2, cited by O. Gruppe, Roscher's *Lexicon*, "Orpheus" § 95, col. 1160). From Virgil, who calls the animal first *hydrus* and here *testudo*, we see further that, according to this legend, it was the shell of it which, when Orpheus had killed it in revenge, gave him the opportunity for making the *chelys* or *shell-lyre*. This invention Timotheus also (*Persae* 234) ascribes to him and not to Hermes. It will be noticed that Virgil overleaps by a transition the actual death of Eurydice; the *Liber Monstrorum*, which says that she was decapitated by the beast and pulled down into the water, supplies and fully accounts for the omission.

FOURTH MEETING¹.

At a Meeting of the Society held in Professor Bevan's rooms in Trinity on Thursday, March 16, 1905, at 4.15 p.m., the President (Mr BURKITT) in the Chair :

I. A grant from the Society's funds of a sum not exceeding £25 was made to Dr Rouse in aid of a collection of ballads, tales, and folklore from Astypalaea.

II. Miss A. A. HENTSCH, of Girton College, was elected a member of the Society.

III. Dr POSTGATE, commenting upon a passage in the scene between Mercury and Sosia, Plautus *Amph.* 302.—316, suggested that the language used would gain in force and appropriateness by the assumption of the following allusions. V. 304 'in soporem conlocastis nudos,' 'Fists, you sent them to sleep (i.e. stunned them) without a night-dress' (i.e. with their clothes stripped off), this article of attire being apparently used by the Romans. V. 305 'ne ego hic nomen meum commutem et Quintus fiam e Sosia,' to Q. Ennius and his doctrine of metempsychosis. V. 313 'quid si ego illum tractim tangam ut dormiat?' to the use among the Romans of a well-known method of producing mesmeric sleep.

IV. Dr ROUSE read a paper on Modern Greek in its relation to ancient Greek.

The changes in the modern Greek language have not been violently brought about, but they are due to the action of principles which can be seen in ancient Greek. The foreign or borrowed element is small. Many words for common things, such as wine,

¹ Reported in the *Cambridge University Reporter*, April 6, 1905.

bread, fish, water, are different from the classical words, but they come from words which were in use in classical times. The great mass of the vocabulary is ancient. The cases of the nouns have dwindled to three; indicative and subjunctive have been confused; the infinitive and participle have almost disappeared; declensions and conjugations have been intermingled and levelled by analogy. There is more of periphrasis in the syntax. The pronunciation of vowels and consonants has generally shifted; accent has changed its quality. There are two languages in Greece: that of the people and that of the newspapers. The latter is an artificial monstrosity, a mixture of ancient words dragged out of obscurity, scraps of ancient syntax misunderstood, ancient inflexions tacked on to modern words, French phrases literally translated, and modern colloquial. For some reason the "educated" Greek thinks it patriotic to use this jargon. A great deal of the popular literature, ballads, tales, &c., is printed, but not always with proper care, and a knowledge of the spoken language is essential. Local dialects differ greatly, but all contain something and some contain much, that is supposed to be extinct. The changes in modern Greek have been brought about by the following: (1) change of accent from tone-pitch to stress, (2) consequent loss of quantity, and (3) shifting of vowel and consonant sounds. The language was practically complete in its modern form by the 11th century. Examples of the principles which now rule the syntax of modern Greek (e.g. auxiliary conjugation) can be found in the ancient language; and there are many survivals of ancient words and forms in the modern language, especially in outlying districts. The most archaic dialect is the Zakonian, spoken in the N.E. of the Peloponnese; next to this come the Acarnanian, and the dialects of Crete, Rhodes, Cos, and smaller islands out of the track of tourists or trade. Some of these dialects actually retain peculiarities of the ancient local dialects: Zakonian has \bar{a} for η , τ for Att. κ or σ , ov for v , σ for θ , intervocalic σ drops, final s becomes ρ . The modern language sometimes helps to interpret the ancient, especially the Greek Testament. It has in itself great capacities if a creative genius could only be found to use them.

EASTER TERM, 1905.

FIRST MEETING¹.

At a Meeting of the Society held in Dr Sandys' house on Thursday, May 11, 1905, at 4.45 p.m., the President (Mr BURKITT) in the Chair:

I. Mr I. ABRAHAMS, M.A., of Christ's, was elected a member of the Society.

¹ Reported in the *Cambridge University Reporter*, May 23, 1905.