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This Book Review is brought to you for free and open access by CrossWorks. It has been accepted for inclusion in New England Classical Journal by an authorized editor of CrossWorks.
This fourth volume, the second to appear in the series, covers the years 1790-1880 and explores Romantic and Victorian receptions of the classics. Noting the changing fortunes of particular ancient authors and the influence of developments in archaeology, aesthetics, and education, it traces the interplay between classical and late eighteenth- and nineteenth-century perceptions of gender, class, religion, and the politics of republic and empire in chapters engaging with many of the major writers of this period. When completed, this 5-volume history will be one of the largest, and potentially most significant, projects in the field of classical reception ever undertaken.

Vance and Wallace have brought together an international team of expert contributors who offer a comprehensive investigation of the numerous and diverse ways in which literary texts of the classical world have been addressed and refashioned by English writers. This volume covers the full range of English literature.

Chapter 1 discusses the classical writers who really mattered in the English literature of the period: Homer, closely followed by Shakespeare suggesting a parity of esteem, Aeschylus, Euripides, and Sophocles, then Hesiod, Pindar, Sappho, Theocritus, and Aristophanes. Lucretius and Vergil also appear in this group, with Vergil being there only as the nature-poet of the *Georgics*. Visibly absent are the Vergil of the *Aeneid*, Ovid, Horace, Catullus, Propertius, Juvenal, Persius, Plautus, and Terence. Of the classical philosophers, Plato enjoys the highest renown, followed by Aristotle. Of the historians, Herodotus ranks high as a storyteller and Thucydides tends to contribute more to the political than the literary imagination of the period. Horace’s *Odes* have had more influence in the period than his *Satires*, though Byron has drawn on the wit and energy of classical satire including Juvenal. Ovid has enjoyed more literary prominence than the satirists.

Chapter 2 reveals that translation as a mode of classical reception from 1780 to 1880 underwent a simultaneous flourishing and diminishment. Translators elevated the prestige of Greek literature, notably Sappho and the Attic dramatists, above Roman to a wider public. For practicality, self-improvement, and scholarship, Homer and Lucretius have offered touchstones for understanding how cultural and scholar-
ly developments combined to affect the nature of classical translation.

Chapter 3 looks at the revival of the decaying rural endowed schools of England which became the public schools of the Victorian era, when Greek verse began to be composed as well as read in them. Soon Greek and Latin texts were annotated, and classical textbooks written, in Latin. In the late eighteenth century cultural changes centered on the emergence of Romantic Hellenism as a powerful cultural and social formation. By the early nineteenth century, the Roman and Latinate Augustan culture of the eighteenth century had been nearly replaced by an enthusiasm for Greek art, architecture, and literature. Greek was taught as well as Latin, with the two languages and their literatures comprising almost the whole curriculum of the schools. Eton College, founded in 1440, was the most prestigious and influential of the public schools where the classics were taught. Perhaps the most striking feature of the education of English authors is the centrality of established and elite education: public schools and mostly Oxford where classics was central to the Oxford curriculum in a way that it was not at Cambridge.

Chapters 4 through 11 cover a wide range of topics on how the classics were received in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries in England and elsewhere in Europe. Among these are political writing and class; barbarism and civilization; American literature and classical consciousness; myth and religion; art, aesthetics, and archaeological poetics; classical reception and gender; the novel; and Shakespearean Sophocles: (re)-discovering and performing Greek tragedy in the nineteenth century.

Chapters 12 through 26 focus on the English writers themselves and their reception of classical literature. Significant coverage is given to William Wordsworth; Coleridge’s reception and transmission of classical learning; Walter Savage Landor and the classics; the unexpected Latinist: Byron and the Roman muse; the younger Romantics: Leigh Hunt, Keats, and Shelley; Elizabeth Barrett Browning; Matthew Arnold; Arthur Hugh Clough; Robert Browning’s Greek Decade; Tennyson; William Morris; George Eliot; Thomas Hardy; Swinburne; Walter Pater and John Addington Symonds.

This work, like the other volumes in the series, ends with an annotated bibliography intended as an overall guide rather than a bibliography to individual chapters, so it contains some items not included in chapter references and omits others that are. It is therefore selective, as most of the writers of the period have attracted very extensive critical and scholarly commentary.
Anyone working or interested in the numerous and diverse ways in which literary texts of the classical world have been addressed and refashioned by English writers will want to own this very important book which both synthesizes existing scholarship and presents cutting-edge new research.

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