canachi's 'Capitol' by the Director of the British School at Rome, and a review of recent American Doctoral Dissertations in Classics (a list of 46 is given) by Mr. W. A. Heidel. Summaries of periodicals (General Archaeological and Numismatic) conclude the number.

CORRESPONDENCE

MR. LANG'S *HOMER AND HIS AGE.*

I MUST apologise to Mr. Lang and to the readers of the *Classical Review* for having delayed so long to answer his friendly criticism (*C.R.* xxi. pp. 49–51) of my review of his book (*ib.* pp. 19–23). I will take his points in the order in which he gives them.

The first is scarcely a serious one, and I would not allude to it if it had not worried Mr. Lang so much that he has even carried it to the unsympathetic columns of the *Illustrated London News*! I really do not see why Mr. Lang should have minded my making that remark about the Laird of Runraurie. I am lost in admiration at Mr. Lang's wide range of illustration, but the obvious relish with which he gives us details of the life and manners of Glenbucket and Glenbuckie and Arnprior of Leny and Cluny and Lochiel and Claverhouse and Dugald Dalgetty and the Sconce of Drums Nab and the Laird of Drumthwacket and Jamie Telfer of the Fair Dodhead, makes it fair to chaff him a little. It is quite a large gallery, you see, and we can add to it Sutherlandshire cairns, and Celtic hillocks near Kildonan, and Runrig fields, and Burns and his Sculduddery Lays, and Scott and Mrs. Brown and the Border Minstrelsy. The allusions to things Scottish are nearer twenty than two, and even those that are strictly Highland are more than Mr. Lang makes out. Why he should disown them I cannot conceive.

It is difficult to be more serious about the next point. Mr. Lang objects to my calling him an athetizer. If he regards it as a term of abuse, I gladly withdraw it. But what is to be my amended description of his views? he did not athetize the line about iron, he tells us, but 'offered alternative solutions, twice.' What are these alternative solutions? *That either the line is a late addition, or his theory is untenable.* It is difficult to see how this improves matters! Does Mr. Lang, in point of fact, believe that the odds are even on his theory? I thought it was the one and only solution, complete and four-square, rising superior to any 'baffling residuum'! Is it my fault that I assumed that Mr. Lang believed in it?

I still maintain that the phrase in the *Odyssey* that 'iron does of itself attract a man' is the rock on which Mr. Lang's theory breaks, and that the evolutionary view is the only one on which it can be satisfactorily accounted for.

The next point we come to is the Shield of Achilles. I quite agree with Mr. Lang that in the great days of Knossos and Phæstos shields were probably not metal-plated. I have gone into the matter in my *Discoveries in Crete* (pp. 206–7), and it is sufficient to say here that it is not necessary to suppose that the work of art which inspired the first poet was a shield at all. It may have been a chest of cypress wood, such as that which was decorated with the porcelain plaques at Knossos. Such a description could be taken over as soon as ever shields were strengthened with bronze plates. The five folds of *Iliad*, xviii. 481, show us that the decoration was originally conceived as engraved on metal bands running round a foundation of hide. On the other hand, the making of the shield as we have it (468-80) points to a still later stage, contemporary with the tin greaves; it undoubtedly implies that the whole shield was of metal.

In regard to Shakespeare and North, I

never suggested that the analogy was an exact one. *Julius Cæsar*, however, and *Coriolanus* are more to the point than *Troilus and Cressida*. In the former case Shakespeare clearly meant to give a picture of an historical situation, so far as he understood it. In the latter he felt himself almost as free as in his fairy tales; one might as well discuss whether the poets who gave us the *Odyssey* were anachronistic in their picture of the Cyclops. So far as analogy is of use at all, Shakespeare's Roman plays and the Book of Common Prayer are quite to the point. It was Mr. Lang, however, and not I, who appealed to analogy first. The real answer to this appeal is twofold. In the first place our data for testing Homeric anachronisms are still very slight; many of them may still escape our observation, for the simple reason that we do not know all that was worn, still less all that was thought, in the various centuries in question. That is partly why I mentioned the Book of Common Prayer. Does Mr. Lang believe that, apart from our knowledge of the history of the period, we could make out a convincing case that our Prayer Book, as we have it, shows in its phrasing stages of growth and conflicts between schools of thought? Would not Mr. Lang be using just the same language there as he does here, unless he happened to know the facts? Does the schoolboy, or the poet, or anyone else except those critics whom Mr. Lang distrusts, find a want of unity in the Psalms of David?

The other half of our answer is that the analogy from second-rate epics can never be valuable unless it be frankly recognised how second-rate they are. Mr. Lang's method is to point to the epics of other countries in whose composition evolution seems to have played a part, and to point out triumphantly that they are inferior to Homer. 'That is all that evolution can do!' is in effect what he says. The fact, however, that Homer is unique is really not our fault. It would be just as sensible to say that great dramas could not have been written in Latin, because Rome in fact produced none. The inability of early Germany, or early France, or early India to produce a great epic is not to be put down to their sinful tendency to work by way of evolution. Unity can no more bring forward an analogy than evolution can. There is nothing in the world like the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*. The *Aeneid* and *Paradise Lost* are just as far removed from them on the one side as the *Nibelungenlied* and the *Chanson de Roland* are on the other. It is here that Shakespeare's Roman plays come in to help us; they are at least an example of first-class work produced by evolution. If Mr. Lang wishes to be saved from his friends, and to realise by the way the value of a poet's opinion on such a matter, let him study the severe and delightful words Sir Alfred Austin addresses to critics who suggest that Shakespeare used North in the particular way that he actually did. I do not apologise for quoting them at length. Indeed, in Mr. T. W. Allen's words, 'The sixth form masters of our larger public schools would do well to commit them to memory, and instead of teaching bad prose, dictate them in lengths to their charges' (*C.R.* xxi. p. 16).

'Though Shakespeare,' said our Poet Laureate,[1] 'may have taken his plots and the names of his personages from wherever he happened to find them, he could by no possibility have borrowed prose passages from anyone and made poetry of them by turning them into verse. Poetry is not made in that fashion. The white heat, the fine frenzy of the brain in the moment of such composition, precludes so cold a procedure. To suppose that the poet deliberately takes his material, his subject-matter from others, and then transforms it into poetry by the aid of what Prospero calls his "so potent art" is to commit the mistake so often made by critics with an insufficient amount of imagination.'

RONALD M. BURROWS.

University College, Cardiff.

[1] *Times*, Sept. 23, 1904, quoted by R. H. Carr, *Plutarch's Lives of Coriolanus*, etc. Clar. Press, Introduction, p. xviii.