

## B. B. ROGERS.

A SPECIAL tribute is due to the memory of Benjamin Bickley Rogers, M.A., Fellow of Wadham College, Oxford, and Barrister-at-law, who throughout a long and busy professional life never abandoned his early-chosen literary work. So far back as 1852 he published his translation of the *Clouds* of Aristophanes, and finally completed his great edition of all the surviving comedies with the second edition of the same play in 1915.

It would hardly be possible to praise too highly his achievement as a translator. At first it was the custom for reviewers of his books as they appeared, play after play, to say that he was a good second to Frere. In reality his versions are incomparably superior in every point. They possess an extraordinary spirit and vigour, and possibly in this minor but, of course, essential respect Frere may be his equal. But in poetical power, in metrical resource, in delicacy of touch and melodious phrasing, in depth of appreciation, closeness of rendering, terse command of language, and every attribute of high scholarship, Mr. Rogers strands pre-eminent: Frere is not in the field. For English readers, whether acquainted or unacquainted with Greek, Mr. Rogers has produced the one and only version of Aristophanes.

To his competence as a commentator and critic his notes bear amplest witness. He was conservative in the best sense in his treatment of the text, making few alterations of his own, ever intolerant of nonsense, and criticising with unfailing perspicacity, lucidity, and humour the suggestions and opinions of others. He could not pen a dull

line. It has even been said that his critical appendices were the most attractive and interesting part of his books.

He wrote admirable Introductions to the several plays, and all with a charm of manner and style peculiarly his own. He highly appreciated the great English critics to whose penetration and judgment the received text owes so great a debt—Bentley, Porson, Elmsley, Dawes, Tyrwhitt, Dobree, etc.—nor did he fail to make use of more recent criticism whenever it appeared. With the wilder flights, however, of the modern destructive Higher Criticism, as it calls itself, he had little sympathy. 'It has,' he says in his appendix to the *Peace*, 'dealt gently with the old Attic Comedy. No one has yet discovered that a play of Aristophanes is a thing of shreds and patches put together by the order of Peisistratus; or that it was composed by Lord Bacon, or in the days of the Maccabees. Doubtless these things will come in good time; else how will the professorial mind amuse itself in all the centuries to be?'

I cannot do better than close with a single typical specimen of Mr. Rogers' work:

*Wasps*, 1051-9:

But O for the future, my masters, pray;  
Show more regard for a genuine bard  
Who is ever inventing amusements new  
And fresh discoveries, all for you.  
Make much of his play, and store it away,  
And into your wardrobes throw it  
With the citrons sweet: and if this you do,  
Your clothes will be fragrant, the whole year  
through,  
With the volatile wit of the Poet.

T. L. AGAR.

## NOTES AND NEWS

*Discovery*, a new monthly periodical at sixpence, dealing with interesting points of progress in all subjects, ought to command the sympathies and the subscriptions of all our readers. It is supported by leading men in all

branches of learning, and the board of management will include representatives of a number of specialist associations. But the periodical is intended for educated men, not for specialists in particular.