

of its language, the clearness and healthiness of its moral bearing. It is moreover, as I believe, impossible to fully know the development of the 'mind and art' of Aeschylus without this, his earliest extant production. (See Introd. 'Date of the Play.')

No separate study of the play has, so far as I know, appeared in England during the last half-century, and, except for the wild work of Burges, I have seen the commentary of no English editor whatever but Paley. Even in Germany separate editions have been rare. In the matter of exegesis my obligations are principally to Paley, Weil and Oberdick. I hope, however, to have contributed much. Where I have totally differed from other editors I have not felt it becoming to indulge in expletives, remembering that my own first impressions have afterwards appeared to me equally deserving of an *inepte* or a *perperam*.

Of Hermann's work I cannot bring myself to entertain such a high opinion as his reputation would seem to warrant. To avoid a charge of presumption I will quote Madvig (Adv. Crit. cap. II. *ad fin.*) for an estimate of Hermann, to which I have of my own judgment come, but which perhaps only a Madvig may confidently enunciate, 'non maximum numerum bonarum emendationum obruit innumerabili inanium et levium opinionum festinanter iactarum multitudine, rursus non raro, ubi libido aut obtrectatio abriperat, strenuus pravorum defensor.'

For the text of the Medicean I have followed Vitelli's recension (1885). Merkel's has also been in my hands. These, together with the *apparatus criticus* supplied by Wecklein's indispensable collection, practically place the antipodean student on an equality of equipment with the European. I feel strongly how grateful one should be for so helpful a compilation. Before obtaining Wecklein I had in a laborious and unsatisfactory manner collected an *apparatus criticus* from any available sources, but his work has enabled me in many cases to correct the attribution of conjectures, as well as to add many valuable modern suggestions to my lists.

In selecting previous conjectures for mention I have been guided generally by the measure of their apparent plausibility, but sometimes by a wish to shew the necessity of some point of the commentary or translation.