

A Commentary

on

LIVY

BOOKS 1-5

R. M. OGILVIE

The Commentary is intended to aid the reading of Livy by analysing the literary and moral principles on which he retold the traditional account of the early history of Rome down to 390 B.C. It aims, by the examination of Livy's sources and by the light of recent archaeological discoveries and of modern advances in the study of Roman religion, law, and antiquities, to uncover the historical foundations from which the traditional account evolved. At the same time it illustrates Livy's linguistic and stylistic usage and discusses the difficulties of his text. It is both a running commentary on the text of Livy and a source-book for the story of early Rome.

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BY

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PREFACE

THIS commentary owes its beginning to the inspiration of Murray Last, Esq., who incited me to ask some of the questions which it sets out to answer, and it owes its completion to the kindness of Col. D. H. Cameron of Lochiel who gave me, first at Glen Dessary and then at Errachd, a home among the

mountain backs, misty or bared,
ridged multitudinous to the northern bourn,

where it was possible to read and write at leisure.

The study of Livy has always travelled at a high level: Symmachus and RATHERIUS, Petrarch and Macchiavelli, Milton and Macaulay are but a few of the illustrious who have pondered on his History, and been moved by it. And if he has been less fortunate in his editors, the editions of Gronovius and Madvig must rank among the finest monuments of classical scholarship. It is thus daunting to undertake a new Commentary, even on the first five books. So much has already been done: so much still remains to do. There are so many controversial matters of history, law, and religion; there is so much that is inscrutable about his narrative technique. The great increase in understanding particularly of early Roman archaeology combined with the research that has been carried out over the last hundred years into numerous details of style and language suggested, however, that the time was opportune to try to collect the fruits of these different investigations together. The aim of any Commentary ought to be to make it *easier* for a reader to appreciate the ancient text. Livy, after all, was writing nearly two thousand years ago about times and events which were four hundred years and more distant from his own day, so that many things which were obvious to his contemporaries are obscure to us and many things were obscure even to him. It is this gulf which a Commentary should assist a reader to bridge. Inevitably no two readers will ask the same questions, and in consequence I have had to be content with discussing those points which interested me as a reader. I have not, therefore, written it specifically for the needs of the schoolboy or the undergraduate or the scholar but rather for the use of anyone who wants to read Livy. It is not a systematic history of early Rome: still less is it a substitute for Livy himself.

It would be impossible in a work of this kind to acknowledge every debt to written sources or personal suggestions. There should

PREFACE

be no copyright in learning, and so far from claiming any originality for any of the opinions expressed I am conscious of my overwhelming debt to the work of others. Instead, however, of compiling a general bibliography (which would largely reproduce the excellent bibliography given by Professor Walbank in his *Commentary on Polybius*) or giving repeated references throughout the Commentary, I have appended a selective bibliography to each main section or episode. The abbreviations used throughout conform in the main to those used by *L'Année philologique* and should be self-explanatory. A short list of works commonly referred to is given below. The stream of new publications shows no sign of abating and I have been unable to profit from certain important works such as R. Werner's *Der Beginn der röm. Republik* or A. Momigliano's paper on early Rome in *J.R.S.* 53 (1963), which reached me after the autumn of 1963.

R. M. OGILVIE, *Errachd*

23 April 1964