

Handwritten signature

THE

G E O G R A P H Y

OF

STRABO.

LITERALLY TRANSLATED, WITH NOTES.

THE FIRST SIX BOOKS

BY H. C. HAMILTON, ESQ.

THE REMAINDER

BY W. FALCONER, M.A.,

LATE FELLOW OF EXETER COLLEGE, OXFORD.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. I.



HENRY G. BOHN, YORK STREET, COVENT GARDEN.

MDCCCLIV.

JOHN CHILDS AND SON, BUNGAY.

911
S88

NOTICE.

THE present translation of Strabo, the great Geographer of Antiquity, is the first which has been laid before the English public. It is curious that a classic of so much renown and intrinsic value should have remained a comparatively sealed book to this country for so many centuries; yet such is the fact. It is true that the imperfect state of the Greek text, and the difficulty of geographical identification, have always been appalling obstacles; yet, after the acute and valuable labours of Gosselin, Du Theil, Groskurd, and especially of Gustav Cramer of Berlin, (whose text is followed in the present volume,) we might fairly have expected that some English scholar would have ventured to enter the field. But the task, like many in a similar position, has been reserved for the publisher of the Classical Library, and he trusts it will be found conscientiously fulfilled.

The translation was, in the first instance, intrusted to Mr. H. C. Hamilton, whose knowledge of the subject, and familiarity with the various languages concerned, peculiarly fitted him for the undertaking. His official

1937

duties, however, added to his anxious examination of every thing which tended to illustrate his author, prevented his proceeding with much speed; and it was only after the lapse of three years that he had reached the end of the sixth book. In the mean time it transpired that Mr. W. Falconer, son of the editor of the Oxford edition of the Greek text, had, after several years of care and attention, produced a very excellent translation, meaning to publish it. Under the circumstances it was deemed advisable to amalgamate the rival undertakings, and it is a source of gratification to the publisher that the respective translators were each so well satisfied with the labours of the other, that they assented readily to his proposal of associating their names.

This is all it seems necessary to state here. In the third volume will be given some account of the life and labours of Strabo, and of the manuscripts and principal editions; also a complete index of the places mentioned in the text, accompanied, where possible, by the modern names.

H. G. B.

STRABO'S GEOGRAPHY.

BOOK I.

INTRODUCTION.

SUMMARY.

That geographical investigation is not inconsistent with philosophy.—That Homer gives proof of it throughout his poems.—That they who first wrote on the science have omitted much, or given disjointed, defective, false, or inconsistent accounts.—Proofs and demonstrations of the correctness of this statement, with general heads containing a summary description of the disposition of the whole habitable earth.—Credit to be attached to the probabilities and evident proofs that in many regions the land and sea have been shifted, and exchanged places with each other.

CHAPTER I.

1.¹ IF the scientific investigation of any subject be the proper avocation of the philosopher, Geography, the science of which we propose to treat, is certainly entitled to a high place; and this is evident from many considerations. They who first ventured to handle the matter were distinguished men. Homer, Anaximander the Milesian, and Hecataeus, (his fellow-citizen according to Eratosthenes,) Democritus, Eudoxus, Dicæarchus, Ephorus, with many others, and after these Eratosthenes, Polybius, and Posidonius, all of them philosophers.

Nor is the great learning, through which alone this subject can be approached, possessed by any but a person acquainted with both human and divine things,² and these attainments constitute what is called philosophy. In addition to its vast importance in regard to social life, and the art of government, Geography unfolds to us the celestial phenomena, acquaints us

¹ The chapters and sectional divisions of Kramer's edition of the Greek text have been generally followed in this translation.

² τὰ θεία καὶ ἀνθρώπεια, "the productions of nature and art."

with the occupants of the land and ocean, and the vegetation, fruits, and peculiarities of the various quarters of the earth, a knowledge of which marks him who cultivates it as a man earnest in the great problem of life and happiness.

2. Admitting this, let us examine more in detail the points we have advanced.

And first, [we maintain,] that both we and our predecessors, amongst whom is Hipparchus, do justly regard Homer as the founder of geographical science, for he not only excelled all, ancient as well as modern, in the sublimity of his poetry, but also in his experience of social life. Thus it was that he not only exerted himself to become familiar with as many historic facts as possible, and transmit them to posterity, but also with the various regions of the inhabited land and sea, some intimately, others in a more general manner. For otherwise he would not have reached the utmost limits of the earth, traversing it in his imagination.

3. First, he stated that the earth was entirely encompassed by the ocean, as in truth it is; afterwards he described the countries, specifying some by name, others more generally by various indications, explicitly defining Libya,¹ Ethiopia, the Sidonians, and the Erembi (by which latter are probably intended the Troglodyte Arabians); and alluding to those farther east and west as the lands washed by the ocean, for in ocean he believed both the sun and constellations to rise and set.

“ Now from the gently-swelling flood profound
The sun arising, with his earliest rays,
In his ascent to heaven smote on the fields.”²

“ And now the radiant sun in ocean sank,
Dragging night after him o'er all the earth.”³

The stars also he describes as bathed in the ocean.⁴

¹ Africa.

² Then indeed the sun freshly struck the fields [with its rays], ascending heaven from the calmly-flowing, deep-moving ocean. Iliad vii. 421; Odyssey xix. 433. These references relate to the Greek text; any one wishing to verify the poetic translation will find the place in Cowper, by adding a few lines to the number adapted to the Greek. The prose version is taken from Bohn's edition.

³ And the bright light of the sun fell into the ocean, drawing dark night over the fruitful earth. Iliad viii. 485.

⁴ “ Bright and steady as the star
Autumnal, which in ocean newly bathed,
Assumes fresh beauty.” Iliad v. 6.

4. He portrays the happiness of the people of the West, and the salubrity of their climate, having no doubt heard of the abundance of Iberia,¹ which had attracted the arms of Hercules,² afterwards of the Phœnicians, who acquired there an extended rule, and finally of the Romans. There the airs of Zephyr breathe, there the poet-feigned the fields of Elysium, when he tells us Menelaus was sent thither by the gods:—

“Thee the gods
Have destined to the blest Elysian isles,
Earth’s utmost boundaries. Rhadamanthus there
For ever reigns, and there the human kind
Enjoy the easiest life ; no snow is there,
No biting winter, and no drenching shower,
But Zephyr always gently from the sea
Breathes on them, to refresh the happy race.”³

5. The Isles of the Blest⁴ are on the extreme west of Maurusia,⁵ near where its shore runs parallel to the opposite coast of Spain ; and it is clear he considered these regions also Blest, from their contiguity to the Islands.

6. He tells us also, that the Ethiopians are far removed, and bounded by the ocean : far removed,—

“The Ethiopians, utmost of mankind,
These eastward situate, those toward the west.”⁶

¹ Gosselin remarks that in his opinion Strabo frequently attributes to Homer much information of which the great poet was entirely ignorant : the present is an instance, for Spain was to Homer a perfect *terra incognita*.

² The Phœnician Hercules, anterior to the Grecian hero by two or three centuries. The date of his expedition, supposing it to have actually occurred, was about sixteen or seventeen hundred years before the Christian era.

³ But the immortals will send you to the Elysian plain, and the boundaries of the Earth, where is auburn-haired Rhadamanthus ; there of a truth is the most easy life for men. There is nor snow, nor long winter, nor even a shower, but every day the ocean sends forth the gently blowing breezes of the west wind to refresh men.” *Odyssey* iv. 563.

⁴ The Isles of the Blest are the same as the Fortunate Isles of other geographers. It is clear from Strabo’s description that he alludes to the Canary Islands ; but as it is certain that Homer had never heard of these, it is probable that the passages adduced by Strabo have reference to the Elysian Fields of Baïa in Campania.

⁵ The Maurusia of the Greeks (the Mauritania of the Latins) is now known as Algiers and Fez in Africa.

⁶ The Ethiopians, who are divided into two divisions, the most distant of men. *Odyssey* i. 23.

END OF SAMPLE TEXT



The Complete Text can be found on our CD:
Primary Literary Sources For Ancient Literature
which can be purchased on our Website :
www.Brainfly.net

or

by sending **\$64.95** in check or money order to :
Brainfly Inc.
5100 Garfield Ave. #46
Sacramento CA 95841-3839

TEACHER'S DISCOUNT:

If you are a **TEACHER** you can take advantage of our teacher's discount. Click on **Teachers Discount** on our website (www.Brainfly.net) or **Send us \$55.95** and we will send you a full copy of *Primary Literary Sources For Ancient Literature* **AND** our *5000 Classics CD (a collection of over 5000 classic works of literature in electronic format (.txt))* plus our *Wholesale price list*.

If you have any suggestions such as books you would like to see added to the collection or if you would like our wholesale prices list please send us an email to:

webcomments@brainfly.net