

later married to Juba, the enlightened king of Mauretania. But on the strength of an erroneous presentation of the facts, the author argues that while Actium ended the civil strife—into which Octavian was plunged when still in his 'teens—'such a boy', as Cicero wrote to Atticus—it did not change the personal character of Octavian, and proceeds to depreciate his new régime by which 'on the urgency of Maecenas and Agrippa he was apparently attempting to restore much of the Italy which Horace loved. As a highly politic move the murderer of little children was restoring religion and morality to his bewildered people'.

Again in the last chapter but two, the author takes Od. 4, 5, published some seventeen or eighteen years after Actium, for exposition of his view, and instances the passage in two of the ten stanzas 'in which the peasants are inclined to deify Augustus'. He detects irony when Horace puts the 'drinking' first before the libations (in another chapter he suggests that Horace was 'possibly ironical in what he said in the sixth Epode about the Romans drinking till they were sick in honour of one more "glorious victory".') This seems fanciful and far-fetched, but his main point is that 'in the last stanza "deus" is dropped for "dux" and Horace comes back to earth again with the usual formal compliments about the heroes'. But the implication that Horace 'drops' the 'deus' is clearly wrong. To Horace Augustus is 'dux bone', the form of address alike in the first line of the second and the first line of the last stanza. It is not Horace who deifies the Emperor but the peasants who might well, as is said in the next line, include him among the domestic spirits who guarded their hearths and homes.

But if the author had made a better cause for his thesis, it seems a strange elucidation of the charm of Horace who, as Sainte-Beuve says, has been for 2000 years a sort of secular breviary of good taste, poetry and wisdom, to represent him as capable of deliberate insincerity, and merely to gratify his secret self-satisfaction, writing such poetry as he wrote here with his tongue in his cheek. Surely the reply to that is to apply to Horace Browning's terse

Did Shakespeare? If so, the less Shakespeare he.

J. J. R. BRIDGE

ENGLISH BOOK ILLUSTRATION, 1800-1900. By Philip James. (King Penguin; Penguin Books; 2s. 6d.)

Nineteenth century art, and in particular the art of the printed book, would seem a poor theme for a popular book; for the populace have now been taught to despise that century particularly in its typographical arts. But here is a revelation, not so surprising to anyone over thirty-five. The children of the first decade of the present century will be suddenly reminded on opening this book of Kate Greenaway and Edward Lear, Blake and Beardsley too, not to mention Cruikshank's Dickens and Tenniel's *Alice*. All these and many others

were familiar currency before the first war. They have been revived here and there since then. But to see them all marshalled with earlier work such as the exquisite engravings of Bewick makes one realise what considerable talent and brilliant success are to be found in this one line of craftsmanship. It was, as the author points out, an age of transition and revolution in the means of reproducing the work of the artist on paper; and often these new methods were used for commercial purposes and the market was flooded with vivid and sickly pictures to attract and augment the vulgar taste. But in spite of this men were working at the art with nobler aims; even the Pre-Raphaelites were able to achieve perhaps their greatest success in this medium (look at the Cranes, Burne Joneses, Hugheses in this book), and the century culminated with the work of William Morris. It might be said that these men did well for books what they did weakly and degenerately for direct painting. Anyway the selector and author of this history shows nothing which is not pleasing to the eye. He shows few illustrations which make with the letterpress a composite whole, but, since the manuscripts of the age before printing, that art has been almost lost. The author gives the history not only of the artists but also of the processes of reproduction as they developed throughout the century. And the book itself is well worthy of its subject, being the joint work not only of the author and publisher, but also of three printers and several artists. It is a book of charm and a happy tribute, long overdue, to the accomplishments of the last century.

CONRAD PEPLER, O.P.

MAINLY ON THE AIR. By Max Beerbohm. (Heinemann; 8s. 6d.)

It was not without misgivings that I opened the latest collection of Max's essays and addresses, particularly the addresses. For although in the writing of prose and the execution of caricature he had never offended, and even his rare but tender use of a post-Edwardian means of communication had charmed my ear, his modest suggestion that some of these efforts might be read aloud by anyone who could afford a first-class subscription to Boots' library made me fear the worst. But now that I have made the venture, I remain as idolatrous as ever. Max still implements his ancient determination. Whether it is a record of what he has told us in his own utterly inimitable accents at the microphone or the printed expression of his thoughts—simple, fastidious, loyal—the words leap to the ear as of old. The best appreciation of his own prose is that which he wrote of Whistler's.

The period, too, is Whistler's. Speak about walking in the Row to a member of the rising generation, it has recently been suggested by an essayist who comes as nearly as possible to Max's calibre, and you will probably be asked, 'What Row?' When Max wrote his essay on the things that really mattered in 1880—a date at which his own generation was scarcely conscious of those great events—he com-