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978-1-107-65622-2 - The Temples and Ritual of Asklepios: At Epidauros and Athens: Second Edition

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THE
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OF ASKLEPIOS

AT EPIDAUROS AND ATHENS

TWO LECTURES DELIVERED AT THE ROYAL INSTITUTION OF GREAT BRITAIN

BY

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WITH THIRTY FOUR ILLUSTRATIONS

SECOND EDITION

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PREFACE

Some apology is perhaps needed from one who can neither claim to be a classical scholar nor a professional archæologist in venturing upon the subject of these lectures.

Repeated visits to Greece and the Greek colonies during the past twenty years have enabled the author to observe, in their various stages, certain of the researches to be here briefly recounted. To him their interest appeared so considerable that it seemed probable the enquiry might be attractive to members of the medical profession generally, and perhaps also to other readers, from the side of the cult, if not from that of the classical archæologist.

The same motive explains the effort made to present a picture, in part hypothetical, of the ancient fabrics, and of the work carried on in them. More latitude in speculation in such a direction is perhaps allowable to one who traces the development of a cult, than to the scientific archæologist.

No originality is claimed in regard to the facts. Some of the sketches and restorations are original, and so are various theories or suggested explanations, such as that regarding the purpose of the Tholos and the Circular Pit at the Asklepion; the suggestion that the Square Building was a Prytaneion, where sacrificial banquets were held and

the perpetual fire maintained; the theory that certain of the buildings were hostels; the conjecture regarding the selection of sites for Greek Theatres, &c. Whether these are well-founded or otherwise only time and further research can decide.

The author desires to record his thanks to the learned Oxford friend who edited and translated the inscription on page 42, and who kindly pointed out various errors in the first issue, also to Mr. Sampson, the librarian of University College, Liverpool, for his highly valued advice and for his kindness in reading the proofs of the present edition.