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VOLUME 1

LEWIS RICHARD FARNELL



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FELLOW AND TUTOR OF EXETER COLLEGE, OXFORD

IN THREE VOLUMES
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IN MEMORIAM
FRATRIS DILECTISSIMI
ET
NUPER AMISSI

PREFACE

—♦—

THE present work, however faulty and defective it may be in method or statement, need not be prefaced by any apology for the subject with which it deals. A compendious account of Greek cults, that should analyze and estimate the record left by Greek literature and monuments of the popular and public religion, has long been a desideratum in English and even to a certain extent in German scholarship. Until quite recent years the importance of Greek religion has been contemptuously ignored by English scholars. The cause of this neglect was perhaps the confusion of Greek mythology—that apparently bizarre and hopeless thing—with Greek religion; the effect of it is still apparent in nearly every edition of a Greek play that is put forth. Fortunately, this apathy concerning one of the most interesting parts of ancient life is now passing away; and since this book, the work of many years of broken labour, was begun, a new interest, stimulating to fruitful research, in Greek ritual and myth is being displayed in many quarters, especially at Cambridge.

The comparative study of religion has received signal aid from the science of anthropology, to which

England has contributed so much; we have been supplied—not indeed with ‘a key to all the mythologies,’ but with one that unlocks many of the mysteries of myth and reveals some strange secrets of early life and thought. The influence of such a work as the late Professor Robertson Smith’s *Religion of the Semites* has been and will be very powerful in this line of research; I am glad to acknowledge my indebtedness to it, as well as to the valuable treatise recently published by Mr. Frazer, *The Golden Bough*; nor can the interest and importance of Mr. Lang’s pioneer-work in this field be ignored. My own book has, however, a different aim from any of these; I have tried to disentangle myth from religion, only dealing with the former so far as it seems to illustrate or reveal the latter, and have aimed at giving a complete account of the names and ideas that were attached, and of the ceremonies that were consecrated, by the Greek states to their chief divinities.

In these two volumes that are now appearing I have proceeded from the account of the Zeus-cult to the examination of the worships of Hera, Athena, Artemis, and Aphrodite, and of certain subordinate personages associated with them. This order seemed a reasonable one to adopt, because it is natural to study the cults of Zeus and Hera side by side, and because it is convenient to group the other goddesses with Hera in order to appreciate their traits of affinity and points of contrast.

Partly to avoid the awkward accumulation of citations at the foot of each page, partly to bring the literary

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evidence before the eyes of the student in a sifted and methodical form, I have appended to the account of each cult a table of 'Schriftquellen' or references to inscriptions and classical authors. Though these considerably swell the bulk of the work I am encouraged to think that the labour will not have been wasted. It is vain to hope that these citations include all that is relevant and that my research has been nowhere at fault, for, apart from other difficulties, nearly every month brings to light fresh inscriptions that may modify one's views on important points; the utmost I can hope is that the chief data hitherto available are collected here, and that I have been able to exclude what is irrelevant.

As regards the archaeological chapters, I have tried to enumerate all the cult-monuments, so far as anything definite is known about them; this is not so difficult a task, as these are comparatively few. In the chapters on the ideal types of each divinity my task has been mainly one of selection; I have tried to confine myself for the most part to those of which my studies in the various museums and collections of Europe have given me personal knowledge.

It has been my object to restrict myself as far as possible to the statement of the facts, and not to wander too far into the region of hypothesis and controversy. One's work thus incurs the risk of a dryness and coldness of tone; and the risk is all the greater because, while Greek mythology was passionate and picturesque, Greek religion was, on the whole, sober and sane. An emotional exposition of it may be of

great value for the purposes of literature; but for the purposes of science it is best to exhibit the facts, as far as possible, in a dry light.

In the earliest days of my studies in this field, I was bred in the strictest sect of German mythologists; but some time before I contemplated writing on the subject I had come to distrust the method and point of view that were then and are even now prevalent in German scholarship; and I regret that hostile criticism of much German work should take so prominent a place in my book. I regret this all the more because I owe a personal debt of gratitude, which I warmly acknowledge, to the German universities, that were the first to recognize the importance of this subject and that open their doors so hospitably to the foreign student.

My best thanks are due to the Directors of various museums who have readily aided me in procuring many of the plates, and still more to the many personal friends who have kindly assisted me in the revision of the proof-sheets, especially to Professor Ramsay of Aberdeen, to Mr. Macan of University College, Oxford, to Mr. Warde Fowler of Lincoln College, and to Mr. Pogson Smith of St. John's College.

I regret that these two volumes should have appeared without an index, which it was thought convenient to reserve till the end of the third volume. I hope that the rather ample table of contents may to some extent atone for this defect.

I may add one word in conclusion on the English

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spelling of Greek names. Objections can easily be raised against the over-precise as well as against the over-lax system; I have compromised between the two by adopting for the less familiar names a spelling as consonant as possible with the Greek, while for those that are of more common occurrence I have tried to keep the usual English form.

LEWIS R. FARNELL.

EXETER COLLEGE, OXFORD.
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