To

A. A. HAMILTON

In recognition of the debt which I and many others owe to his inspired teaching
THE
CLASSICAL HERITAGE
AND ITS BENEFICIARIES

BY
R. R. BOLGAR

Fellow of King’s College, Cambridge

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS
CONTENTS

Preface to 1973 impression ............................. page vii

Introduction ........................................... 1

Chapter I  The Background ...........................................
   I. The Character of the Classical Heritage .............. 13
   II. The Educational Inheritance ......................... 26
   III. The Patristic Tradition .............................. 45

II  The Greek East .........................................
   I. The attack on Hellenism .............................. 59
   II. Ecclesiastical Hellenism ............................. 66
   III. The eleventh-century Renaissance ................ 72
   IV. The counter-attack by the Church ................. 78
   V. The Latin invasion and the fourteenth-century
      Renaissance .......................................... 82

III  The Carolingian Age ....................................
   I. Classical Studies in Ireland and Britain, 450–650 .... 91
   II. The Anglo-Saxon Schools, 650–800 ................. 95
   III. The Educational Reforms of Charlemagne .......... 106
   IV. The Educational Cross-Currents of the Ninth
       Century ............................................. 117

IV  The Pre-scholastic Age ..................................
   I. The Revival of Roman Law ............................ 130
   II. The Study of Aristotelian Logic .................... 140
   III. The Study of Medicine and Natural Philosophy ... 149
   IV. The Study of Literature ............................ 162
   V. The General Character of the Twelfth-Century
      Revival of Learning .................................. 183

v
## CONTENTS

Chapter V  The Scholastic Age  
1. The Reorganisation of Literary Studies  207  
2. The Reorganisation of Philosophy  224  
3. The Organisation of General Knowledge  230  
4. The Reorganisation in Medicine and Law  235  
5. The Causes of the Scholastic Movement  236  

VI  Collapse and New Beginnings  239  

VII  The High Renaissance  265  
1. The Popularisation of a new method of study  265  
2. The Additions to the Classical Heritage  275  
3. Humanism and the Specialities  282  
4. Humanism outside of the Specialities  295  

VIII  The End of the Renaissance and the Appearance of New Patterns in Classical Education and Scholarship  302  
1. The Northern Renaissance  302  
2. Imitation in the Vernaculars  317  
3. "Pietas Litterata"  329  
4. The New Scholarship  369  

IX  Education and the Classical Heritage  380  

Notes  394  

Appendix I  Greek MSS. in Italy during the Fifteenth Century  455  
II  The Translations of Greek and Roman Classics before 1600  506  

Index  543
PREFACE
TO 1975 IMPRESSION

The twenty years which have passed since this book was written have
done much to make the history of the classical tradition a more inviting
field of research. The basic information, on which the historian of
classical survivals so largely depends, has continued to accumulate. The
Institut de Recherche et d’Histoire des Textes, B. Bischoff, P. O.
Kristeller, Giuseppe Billanovich and his collaborators in the Italia
medievale e umanistica, L. D. Reynolds writing on Seneca’s letters and
G. Zuntz on Euripides have established the provenance and fortunes of
a great many manuscripts. L. D. Reynolds and N. G. Wilson have
given us in Scribas and Scholars an excellent short guide to the trans-
mition of ancient literature before the invention of printing. Many
early catalogues and book-lists, many medieval and renaissance texts
have appeared in convenient modern editions, among which special
mention should perhaps be made of that noble work in progress, the
new Erasmus; and a growing body of monographs, whose findings
still await tabulation, have added to our knowledge of what was
translated from Greek into Latin, from Latin into the vernaculars. The
student who takes up the subject to-day has more adequate tools at his
disposal than his predecessors had a generation ago.

Advances have also been made in certain specialised areas. In the
medieval period, C. Mohrmann has made a start with a much-needed
analysis of Christian Latin usage. B. Bischoff, L. Bieler, P. Riché have
gone some way to rescue the history of Irish scholarship from the
realm of legend. P. Dronke, following lines indicated by E. R. Curtius,
has characterised precisely and imaginatively the debt which medieval
poets owed to their classical models in Latin and in the vernaculars,
while the Cambridge History of Later Greek and Early Medieval
Philosophy (ed. A. H. Armstrong) has provided a vigorously analytical
account of the influence of Platonism up to the age of Abelard.

Some light has also been shed on the problem of the origins of the
Renaissance. Research, published for the most part in the Italia
medievale e umanistica, has presented us with a mass of evidence about
the libraries and schools of northern Italy, which, taken in conjunction
with the findings of R. J. Dean and B. Smalley (on the English friars)
and of F. Simone (on the beginnings of the French Renaissance),
strongly suggests that the humanist interest in antiquity had its begin-
nings at least as early as the last quarter of the thirteenth century. More-
over, a series of recent studies on figures from classical history and
legend in later literature—Alexander (G. Cary), Dido (E. Leube),
Orpheus (J. B. Friedman), Philemon and Baucis (M. Beller), Fro-
metheus (R. Trousson), Ulysses (W. B. Stanford)—have indicated
that this interest may have had even earlier roots, and that the popular
literature of the Scholastic Age may have provided a bridge between
the classical enthusiasm of the twelfth century and that of the fourteenth.

Where the Renaissance proper is concerned, attention seems to have
been focussed mostly on two or three areas. The studies mentioned
above, whose scope extends well beyond the Middle Ages, together
with some monographs of a more general sort—K. Heitmann (on
Fortune), P. O. Kristeller (on Ficino’s Platonism), E. F. Rice (on
Wisdom), J. L. Saunders (on Stoicism), C. Trinkaus (on Nature and
Man), F. A. Yates (on mnemotechnics) have made useful additions to
our understanding of the Renaissance mind. N. Gilbert (on Method),
N. Mann (on the influence of Petrarch), W. J. Ong (on Ramus), M. M.
Phillips (on Erasmus’s Adagia), D. J. Starnes and E. W. Talbert (on
the use of dictionaries) have explored the ways in which classical
learning was organised and absorbed into the European tradition. The
main effort of recent research has however been directed at elucidating
problems of language and literary technique. W. S. Howell, I. Silver,
L. A. Sonnino, C. Vasoli, B. W. Vickers have published valuable
general surveys of logic and rhetoric during the period, and there have
been interesting studies of a more specialised sort: F. Gray (on
Montaigne), A. H. Sackton (on Jonson), B. W. Vickers (on Bacon).
On the literary side, there has been B. Weinberg’s monumental survey
of Italian critical theory, R. Colie (on paradox), R. M. Darley (on
the role of the poet), W. L. Grant (on the pastoral), J. M. Lechner (on
common-places), C. Maddison (on the ode) and A. M. Patterson (on
progymnasmata). And finally it should be mentioned that in both the
medieval and the renaissance field students can draw with greater
confidence than before on the work by historians of science and tech-
nology, which is too extensive to be listed here.

For all this, the account given in the pages which follow remains, it
is hoped, largely correct, sufficiently so at any rate to provide a frame-
work which the student can on certain specific points complete by
referring to the recent research cited above.

Cambridge 1973

R. R. B.