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political, may set an example to the Churches for more united action in matters spiritual, and that New South Wales, becoming more and more interpenetrated by a true missionary spirit, may stir up the other colonies to help in the realization of those hopes which Henry Venn expressed in 1786, and to which we have already referred, that the Australian Settlement might prove to be the means of "opening connexions with the heathen, as a foundation for the gospel of our God and Saviour to be preached unto them."

B. A. Heywood.

Art. V.—ARISTOPHANES.

IF a student seeks to epitomize in a single author the greatest difference between the ancient and the modern world, let him turn and re-turn the pages of Aristophanes, more especially the grander, more vigorous and earlier of the eleven extant plays. Probably nothing more trenchant and unscrupulous in manner and in method, and yet few things with a sounder moral purpose, according to the standard of those days, ever issued from human pen. The standard, indeed, was lamentably low—had been higher, and was falling fast. There is some reason to think that Aristophanes was painfully conscious of this—that he felt his own moral convictions pulling him one way, and the popular taste another, and at last found himself unsupported by any adequate reserve of decency and sobriety in the public, and so gave way, at least at intervals, overcome by the strain. He struck hard at the rascal institutions, as he deemed them, into which public sympathy was drifting: the demagogues plunging their country ever deeper in ruin; the sophists, with their new-fangled pretensions of culture, effacing the distinctions of right and wrong; the war-party, with their vain bluster and selfish ends of personal aggrandisement; the Dikasteries, where justice was mobbed out of court by their train of peculating perjurers. The Sovereign people loved a laugh at their own follies, but loved those follies better still. Festive license and factious uproar went hand in hand. The whole male adult population, save those from home on distant expeditions, and absent on indispensable public duty or private business, were at such oft-recurring seasons packed bodily in the theatre. It was no picked audience of casual playgoers, each anxious to see and hear to the full limit of his money at the doors. It was the vast promiscuous public, who at other times filled the Agora, lounged in the baths, lined the wharves of Piræus with traffic,

voted war or peace in the Ekklesia, prepared resolutions in the Senate, acquitted or condemned in the Law Courts. All these and more were there, in one ferment of national enthusiasm, patriotic ardour (or what passed for it), religious fervour, (where the most popular cult was the most scandalous), and holiday frolic, all combined.

Thus the liberties taken with his public by Aristophanes were such as we have no record of elsewhere. He probably never drew more boisterous applause than when assailing the cherished idols of the populace. The exhibition of the Sovereign people itself held up to its own ridicule, "Demus" made the butt of his own stage, in the character of grand old fool, cajoled, wheedled, fleeced, and plundered by his own time-serving varlets, till his fullest confidence is gained by the one who outbids the rest in profligate offers, and outbawls the rest in virulent "Billingsgate"—this is a picture which we don't meet twice in human history. The perfect *carte blanche* of abandonment, the utter irresponsibility with which the power of merciless exposure was for years exercised, the moral tar-and-feathers to which popular celebrities were exposed, are only rivalled by the rich piquancy of sauce in which the whole is served up. How widely different is the attitude in which the modern stage-manager, ever since the traditions of our stage became settled, ventures to stand, or rather cringe, to his public! Sheridan, in a well-known prologue, says,

> I know 'tis hard to deal
> With this dread Court, from which there's no appeal.

Johnson, in a couplet among the best known of all he ever penned, adds,

> The drama's laws the drama's patrons give;
> For they who live to please, must please to live.

But all the distinctions implied between "patron" and patronized, "Court" and pleader were effaced on the Greek stage—even the last distinction between actors and audience faded out. When the "chorus" wheeled round and faced the grand arc of human faces, and unloosed their torrent of uproarious quizzery on the ear, if the lucky key was hit and the popular mood of mind caught in its swing by the poet, a single enthusiasm prevailed and pervaded both performers and public. The minds of all alike, before and behind the curtain (as we should say) danced to the same time and tune. The poet could not hit too hard. If only there was a plausible case which might be put, or questionable issue possible to be raised, the most trusted and meritorious public servant was no more safe from the coarsest personalities and most vehement invective, than a scullion in the royal kitchen of our ancestors would

have been safe from the gibes of the court-fool. But even this does not exhaust the chartered license of the sock. The audience themselves, in that spirit of festive *abandon*, are belaboured with the same cudgel as the social or political scapegoat of the moment; even as in the Horatian entertainment the parasite in his cups cracks jokes at the expense of host as well as guests. Thus the poet rates them in the "Knights", (514 foll.), explaining why he had hesitated to put his play on the stage at once:

'Twas no want of wit that kept him undecided, but the thought
That a comedy's the stiffest work by author ever wrought.—
Comedy, of thy many suitors few indeed thy favours gain!—
Like a man he therefore bids us to your face the facts explain.
Well he knows your captious tempers, annuals that bloom and fade;
How you treated those before him, veteran favourites how betrayed!
Seeing, too, what Magnes suffered, when his hair was turning grey;
None like him from choral rivals so many trophies bore away.
Every note in all his gamut—minstrel touches, birds that flew,
Tried he, Lydians, stage Ascidians,[1] daubed his face a froggy hue—
All he tried, but all too little public favour to secure;
His in lusty youth undreamt of, doomed when agèd to endure;
Cast off, superannuated, when his jokes had lost their sting—
Who shall say, with such examples, comedy's an easy thing?

Can we imagine a modern audience sitting patiently through such a lecture as this on their special prerogative of cashiering their favourites? Garrick's "public," or Kemble's, would have made short work of chandeliers, seats, and scenery, had such liberties been attempted with them.

Of all the greater poets Aristophanes flourished in the period fullest of events most exactly coincident with the city's fortunes. He remembered the rise of Pericles to ascendency, and the outbreak of the war into which his leadership plunged her. He witnessed her overthrow, and shared and survived her political ruin. His plays are a laughing commentary on the severe and stern narrative of Thucydides. He himself helped to make history by his attacks on Cleon.

As the play which includes the most of true poetry with the least of scurrility, has fewest faults of construction and personalities, and is richest in a continuous flow of action, we place the "Birds" unquestionably first. Its motive has not been generally fathomed, and the obscurity hence arising has extended itself to the judgment of certain recent critics.[2] Unless we see the moral clearly, we cannot judge the fable. The idea of grouping the western colonial Greeks under the ægis of

[1] The word means precisely small gall-insects that puncture figs. Magnes, determined to be novel or nothing, brought out among other plays one that contained numerous allusions to this fact of natural history, probably as a vehicle for grossness.

[2] See *Quarterly Review*, No. 316, p. 351.

Athenæ Polias, and thus extending the empire of Athens to the western Mediterranean basin, was the grand possibility which lay on the horizon of the popular mind, then full of the Sicilian expedition. That expedition had newly sailed, was still in the flush of its early hope, was pursuing its diplomatic course among the supposed friendly Sicilian cities, as advised by Alkibiades, and the comparative failure of those negotiations could not be known at Athens till the play was nearly or quite finished. In the presumption of their success, the poet probably sketched his "Castle in the Air." About the time that its merits came before the dramatic censors, probably came home from Sicily the news that nothing was yet done, and that more cavalry and money were wanted. The depression of popular enthusiasm at these tidings was probably what thrust the "Birds" down to the second place of merit. The poet had played for a high stake on a chance die. Had it turned in his favour, his success would have been triumphant. But it depended on the fervid sympathy of the public, and this latter on the absence of any chill to the public hopes. He had thrown his whole heart into his work, but kept still a second string to his bow. It was, after all, but an allegory wrapped in a comic adventure and decorated with all the accessories of a brilliant *fantasia*. If the allegory failed, through any miscarriage of its prototype, the expedition itself, there remained the vehicle thereof and its poetical interest. It was then but a story of "A Cuckoo and a Cloud," with unlimited scope for the tinsel glories of the stage. But that the poet shared to the full the patriotic hopes, and cast into an enchanting form the grand results to which they pointed, there seems no reasonable doubt. The crowning point, however, of the dramatic action, is the starving the gods into surrender. The failure to perceive the allegorical meaning of this has been the reason for missing the entire political bearing of the drama. There seems no doubt that by the "gods" we are to understand the power of Carthage in the far west, with the prospect of ascendency over the various barbarian tribes more or less under her commercial tutelage. This would open up fresh markets to Athenian enterprise, and might place in Athenian hands the key to the commerce and carrying trade which at present Carthage held. This would balance the crippling losses caused to Athenian merchandise in the Levantine and Egyptian direction by the Peloponnesian war, and, to borrow a phrase of modern commerce, would "send up Athenian stock" in all the markets of the world. The flit-about habits of the birds represent the lack of union among the western colonies. The master-eye of a political architect is supposed to detect the grand future which lay before them when combined under the

hegemony of Athens—reproducing in the west the confederacy of Delos and its consequences among the Ægean Islands and coast-towns on the eastern side. The following is the key-note struck in "Birds," (162 foll.). While the shallower adventurer of the two, Euelpides, sees only in the happy random life of bird-land a perpetual honeymoon, his more far-sighted comrade, Peisthetærus, makes a meditative pause and draws a long whistle.

PEISTH.—Whe-w-w-w! A mighty future for the race of birds
I see. Power waits for you. Take my advice!
EPOPS.—Take *what* advice?
PEISTH.—This which I'll give. Stop first.
Those habits flit-about and gape-about. . . . .
EPOPS.—What should we do then?
PEISTH.—Join, and found one city.

The "bird's eye view" of the situation, to which Epops is at once invited by his suggestive friend, includes the heaven and the gods as the foremost object. A power which lay beyond the proposed western confederacy, just as the heaven and the gods in popular conception lay beyond the bird's region of mid-air, is obviously intended. What, then, lay in that direction from the standpoint of Athens? Nothing else than Carthage and the barbarous tribes of the west. For this new Hesperian hope, the first landing-stage was Sicily. Had Athens succeeded there, the "westward march of Empire" might have been hers. In it she would have found the key to the golden west, including the sands of Tagus, the tin of the remote Kassiterides, the purple bales and ingots of Carthage herself—even as the Romans found later. At that sanguine crisis all seemed possible—humanly speaking *was* possible. The conception was grand and the venture heroic. We judge by the event when we pronounce it Quixotic. We ought to consider how near it actually came to success. A little less of blind confidence in the old-womanish strategy of Nikias, a little longer dilatoriness in the mission of Gylippus from Sparta, and the investment of Syracuse in the summer of 414 B.C., would probably have been complete. On that, as far as we can see, the turn of the scale depended. The Athenians would then at any rate have been like the angler who has struck his fish, and only needs dexterity in the use of the landing-net.

We learn from the play (505-6) that the Cuckoo was the signal for the Phœnician harvest, earlier by some months than the Greek.

Cuckoo, at thy voice's signal, the Phœnicians, one and all,
Fall to on their wheat and barley in the plains that hear thy call.

A possible inuendo of the "Phœnician harvest," to be

reaped from Carthaginian traffic on the western main, is conveyed in the fact, that the Cuckoo, in itself an insignificant bird, becomes the *eponymus* of the new city of bird-land, "Cloud-cuckoo-ton." The embassy sent from the starved-out gods is further suggestive. It consists of three members, Poseidon, Herakles, and Triballus. The first of these is the god of the sea, and therefore directly representative of the maritime supremacy of Carthage. In the supposed Homeric reflex of the Phœnician empire of wealth, luxury, and seamanship, found in the Phœacians of the "Odyssey," Poseidon is the local god, whose cult dominates in the Phœacian capital, and whose dangerous wrath is represented as appeased by the transformation of the Phœacian galley to a rock in the harbour's mouth. Herakles,[1] the next deity, has Carthaginian affinities through the Syrian Herakles, or Melkarth, besides his traditionary hold upon the west through the legend of Geryon and its localization at Gades. He may well, therefore, be the colleague of the sea-god here. The third represents the local deities of aboriginal barbarians generally; although the best known to the Greeks, those namely of their own northern border, the Triballi, naturally furnish the denomination of the deity actually introduced in the play. The popular mind would appropriate this symbolization readily, while any actually western Celtic or Iberian name would have only puzzled his audience, if the poet had known of any. Thus we are inclined to solve the riddle of the "Birds."

The "Wasps" plants us face to face with the most cherished, frequented, and characteristic of all the Athenian institutions —that of the Heliastic Courts or "Dikasteries." The great political assembly (*Ekklesia*) met monthly, or on special occasions; but on most days of most months, some or all of these courts would be found sitting. Let us consider what they were. Every year six thousand citizens of thirty years or upwards were selected by lot, from whom, in batches of five hundred, the members constituting the courts were empanelled. Each was awarded about sixpence a day for his services; and, as far as we know, no fine or censure lighted upon anyone for non-performance of the duty. The consequence naturally was, that only the poorer and older class would find it worth their while to attend, unless in exceptional cases of high public interest, such, perhaps, as the impeachment of Sokrates. The fact of seniority would be some guarantee for experience and sobriety of judgment. The fact of poverty would create a bias against men of wealth, and incline the court to view them as fair game for fines, etc.,—

[1] Homer, "Odyssey," xiii., 125 foll., cf. vii. 56 foll.

would, in fact, tend to make it a "poor man's court." It would further, with wealth, exclude the higher education and the more liberal standard of public sentiment. A court thus constituted, though its individual members might often be changed, would not be modified in its moral and social elements. It would thus tend to generate and fix its own traditions of class-feeling, and the better born or better educated citizens of the higher class, on the probably rare occasions when they took their turn of duty, would find themselves without influence and with little support. But two further considerations lead us to depreciate the efficiency of such courts as instruments of justice: 1. The numerous body, probably seldom less than four hundred, among whom the responsibility was shared. To divide responsibility is notoriously to dilute it. The lowest moral standard current among the various members is then apt to prevail. Men who are packed in courts four or five hundred strong feel the weakness of conscience in exact proportion as they know the power of numbers is on their side. To empanel such a phalanx, even of men individually without reproach, would be to abase their sense of public duty and to give free play to the more corrupt instincts of their common nature. But much more would this be the case when they came from the promiscuous civic body, with no guarantee whatever for personal rectitude. But, 2. The unwieldy and irresponsible mass were wholly without judicial experts to guide them, and consequently without any traditional rules of evidence or collected body of precedent. They were judges at once of law, and of fact, and of the application of the former to the latter, and all without appeal. The whole thing forms such a ready-made caricature of judicial institutions that the work of the satirist was nearly done to his hand. The nervous horror with which such a court was regarded by men made sensitive by higher culture, and whose wealth led them to court retirement and seek leisure, may easily be conceived. Nor should we lose sight of the army of spies, informers, pettifoggers, and perjurers, whom such a system was sure to encourage, and who found their harvest in the intimidation of the former. That this was the bane of Athenian life would seem pretty certain, if we had not the testimony of Aristophanes abundantly in the play before us, and occasionally in various others. But if the Athenians themselves suffered much, the subject foreigners, whether resident at Athens or not, must have suffered vastly more. And the oppressiveness thus felt must have made heavy a yoke of subjection which every dictate of sound policy should have made as light as possible. This accounts largely for what else we should have found it difficult to assign an adequate

reason for, tho inherent unpopularity and consequent weak hold of Athens upon her subject states. The payment of tribute and other strictly public burdens are comparatively little felt by individuals; but the liability to be haled before an Athenian court, where the weakness of popular government was a standing peril to justice, and the contemptuousness of the sovereign citizens invited to a studied outrage of its claims—this brought home to the private citizen of Lesbos or Byzantium the feeling of how little account his interests were in the eyes of his political masters.

Of course, the moral evil of the system came home most surely to those engaged in it. The temper of wanton arrogance and waspish intolerance, the love of doing mischief in order to display power, was what debauched the political mind of Athens, and degraded her civic type. Aristophanes probably exaggerates least in this of all his broader pictures. We will sketch from his draught.

In this play an old thorough-paced court-monger, Philocleon (*i.e.*, fond admirer of Cleon, the demagogue), has a son, Bdelucleon (*i.e.*, detester of the same), who, impatient of his father's disease of Law Courts "on the brain," blockades the dwelling-house to keep the latter at home.

The symptoms are humorously detailed as follows:—The old man is always in the rush for the first bench in Court; can't sleep a wink for dreaming of the Clepsydra (or water-clock, by which proceedings were timed); then starts up with two fingers and a thumb firmly grasping nothing; the attitude of one fingering his ballot-pebble—then chides the cock, though it crows overnight, for not waking him soon enough, from corrupt motives; calls for his walking shoes the first thing after supper; repairs at once to Court, and is found fast asleep there with his head against a pillar, "like a limpet sticking" to a rock. Wax clings to his thumb-nails, as if he secreted it like a bee, from his everlastingly scratching on the waxed tablet, the sign of condemning a culprit; and for fear voting-pebbles should ever run short, he keeps "a whole beach of them" in a closet. Boxed up by his son by main force, who has tried persuasion in vain, he makes an amusing scene by his efforts to escape by roof, window, gutters, bath-drain vent, etc. At last they pitch a stout net over all possible exits, and catch him attempting to escape, like Ulysses under the ram's belly from the Cyclops' cave, by hanging on under a donkey. There would clearly be plenty of room for stage business of the most farcical kind here. Supposing they have him safe at last, guard is relaxed. Enter the chorus of fellow-jurymen, all accoutred as magnified wasps with prodigious stings, and led by link-boys, for it is

not yet daylight. They come to rouse their mate, whose unwonted tardiness, so unlike his eager appetite for business, they account for by supposing that it must be the effect of letting a defendant slip through his fingers the day before. The following is part of their song (278-90):

CHORUS-LEADER.

Of our lot he was aye the most resolute found,
Most rough to persuasion,
Whom no supplication
Could move; but who'd sit with his eyes on the ground,
And answer each moan
A suitor could make with "You're cooking a stone!"[1]
But in yesterday's Court, one defendant o'ercame us
With false protestation
Of zeal for the nation,
That "he was the first to inform against Samos;"
And letting him go,
To our friend's such a blow,
That to-day he's in bed, and can't hold up his head—
That's exactly his sort. But (*to* PHILOCLEON) old fellow, instead
Of eating your heart with vexation—rouse up!
Here's a sop for your cup!
Here's a promising case!
From the frontiers of Thrace
A very fat traitor is come to be bled!
In court when we've got him,
Look out that you "pot" him.
(*To Link-boy.*) Lead on, boy!

BOY (*coaxingly*).

Please y'r honour, remember the boy!

CHORUS-LEADER (*patronizingly*).

Of course, little fellow, you'd like a nice toy:
It's dumps or it's marbles, you'd wish me to buy.

LINK-BOY.

No, not if I know it; figs, guv'nor, says I—
Them's nicest!

CHORUS-LEADER.

Want figs?—want a whipping, I'm thinking!

LINK-BOY.

Then, next time you get some one else to come linking.

CHORUS-LEADER (*indignantly*).

Why, it's all I've got
To boil the pot,
For me and two others *this* pays the scot!
To find all three
On a sixpenny fee,
And then to be bothered for figs by thee!

The reader will notice the tempting prospect of fleecing a rich plaintiff, which is expected to set the old limb of the law on his legs again at once; also the trumpery benevolence

[1] Greek proverb for "You're flogging the dead horse," or the like.

offered to the link-boy, and the recoil of the leader of the chorus of pauper jurymen the moment the gratuity demanded threatens a serious tax on their sixpence a day!

As a sample of insolence revelling in the limitless democratic power wielded by poverty-stricken jurors over wealthy suitors, and the abject court paid to them by the latter, take the following (548-575), where the father, Philocleon, is declaiming on these sweets of office to his son, Bdelucleon, who takes notes here and there with a view to his reply:

FATHER.

Right along from start to finish, take this with you all the way;
Dikasts we: our lot is royal, absolute our kingly sway.
Jollier life than ours, or happier, find me; oldish though we be,
Find a creature half so pamper'd, half so idoliz'd as we!
When we quit our beds, escorted, waited for within the bar,
By your men of wealth and riches: almost, ere I've got so far,
Some one puts in mine a hand with peculation in the palm;
Down he knuckles, humbly truckles with persuasion's softest balm—
"Won't your worship have a fellow-feeling, when you call to mind
How *you* pick'd the public pocket, now in money, now in kind—
Perquisites and contracts?" All this from a fellow who'd ignore
My existence, but for one fact—that I'd let him off before!

SON (*interrupting*).

If you've with supplications done,
There's memorandum number one.

FATHER (*not heeding*).

In I go, while such entreaties smooth my anger's edge away.
Once inside, I just do nothing of the things I always say.
But I hear defendants whining to elude the verdict's blow—
Nothing they won't say to win me—none of 'em can cringe too low.
If I'm deaf to this palaver, in their children next they trail
By the hand, both sons and daughters, our compassion to assail.
Down they crouch—a bleating chorus; like a god I keep my seat.
On behalf of all, the father, like a suppliant at my feet,
Pleads with agonized entreaty: "Only let me off my bail;
If a lambkin's voice can move thee, be not deaf to childhood's wail."
Then we let judicial sternness down a peg or two—declare,
Aren't we kings downright, and *don't* we make the wealthy abjects stare?

A machinery here appears ready to hand, by which public security was loosened, and the social bond sensibly relaxed. Any political enemy might on frivolous pretences be impeached. The same voices which howled him down in the Ekklesia were ready to inflict ruinous fine or imprisonment in the Dikastery. The villain army of hireling informers flourished and fattened on every such job. The judge and juror, both in one, or rather equally everywhere in five hundred, came to the decision flushed with political rancour, eager at once to insult and injure. The primary conditions of social atmosphere which make justice possible were wanting here. This, far more than the bitterness of the Spartan ravages, or the collapse of costly

armaments, had a disintegrating effect on Athenian patriotism, by making the worthiest citizens a constant prey to the vilest. A legalized terrorism of extortion, under the forms of justice, made civic life unbearable, and led men to seek a remedy in revolution. Hence the frequent and violent fluctuations between the "few" and the "many" which mark the latter years of the Peloponnesian War. After all the costly sacrifices made, the men who had made the most felt that they were made in vain. Domestic peace and personal security within the walls of Athens were a vain dream, while each Dikastery was a band of guerillas armed each with his stiletto vote. Why not join hands with the Spartans outside? The result of the Peloponnesian War, up to this time, had been to crowd the city with those who should have been pursuing their special industries without its walls. The rural homestead was no more; agriculture was, over the greater part of Attica, stamped out, and the soil lay fallow in the cold ashes of the farm-buildings, with their stock and plant which had stood upon it. Driven from occupation as well as domesticity, the rustic was demoralized by the laziness of the Agora, and became a needy shiftless recruit of the lower class of population in the capital. The one small, sure wage which he could now earn lay in the business of the Courts; he made the plunge, accepted the situation, and became a Dikast, as the only means to "keep the wolf from the door." The pauperized citizen soon became ardent in his new calling, and a standing menace to all whose fortunes were better than his own. This background of circumstance, inseparable from the enforced domiciliation within the walls, throws out in salient angles the harsh, hunger-sharpened features which the Dikasteries, as an institution, had newly assumed when Aristophanes drew them. The real caricature contained in the "Wasps" is the latter portion, and the piece, like its namesake, carries its sting in its tail. Here a moral *tour de force*, such as belong to extravaganza rather than to comedy, is supposed to suddenly convert the elderly Dikast into a fashionable debauchee. Being persuaded by his son to set up Court at home, he tries the house-dog *in foro domestico* for pilfering the larder, and by a stage-trick, not perhaps more violent than Hamlet's exchange of rapiers, drops his pebble in the wrong urn, and acquits when he would condemn. On discovering this error his remorse rises to a tragic pathos of self-abhorrence, and he bewails his unwitting act in terms worthy of Œdipus on discovering his woe. Taking advantage of this moral collapse of his whole nature, his son with little difficulty persuades him to utterly abjure all that he has been hitherto. Gradually coaxed into a new dress, the father drops (if a pun may be excused in such

matter of farce) his old *habits*, and at once out-herod's fashionable vice in its most offensive forms. From this transformation scene the moral tone of the piece, which has been comparatively pure hitherto, drops down below zero. This probably became a dramatic necessity when this line of development was once adopted. It would be only by gross exaggeration that the comicality of the situation could be sustained. But the result is a compound of bibulous ribaldry, quarrelsomeness, coxcombry, and sensuality, in which all trace of the graces of manner of an Athenian symposium vanish under the influence of Comus.

A recent commentator[1] supposes that the poet, finding his improved edition of his "Clouds" still unsuccessful, in which, and in some earlier plays he had attempted to chasten the style of the comic stage, and having up to that time written the first part of this play, the "Wasps," upon his own higher canon, now in disgust abandoned it, and finished the latter part by pandering to the baser Athenian instincts in a style of coarse and vulgar buffoonery. That the two parts of the "Wasps" do not cohere, is certain. Poverty is, we have seen, the proclaimed characteristic of the average Dikast. Yet here Philocleon is arrayed, by a turn of the poet's wand, in luxurious attire, and supposed to be introduced as a matter of course into the society of *bon-vivants* and fashionable profligates, who, we are to suppose, receive him with open arms. The absurdity of this is manifest, when judged by any possible social standard, past or present. And this leads us to note the weak point of Aristophanes' poetical development. That he had in him the power to draw and sustain original character with wholeness and consistency, we can hardly doubt, from the partial sketches which he has given us in his "Dikaeopolis," his "Trygæus," his "Peisthetærus," and others. But he always wrote with a motive, at once to teach and to amuse, and the exigencies of the double task—the web and woof, as it were, of this motive—obliged him to cut his characters according to his cloth. The ethical march of each of them accordingly halts, and no harmonized result of the character and its surroundings is ever achieved. With all the artist touch for face and figure in their higher types, he has condemned himself to caricature, and the result is one which seems a blending of Raffael with Gillray,

[1] See some remarks by Mr. B. B. Rogers, late fellow of Wadham College, Oxford, who has lately revised and translated this play with much merit. The "Clouds" appeared twice, the last time with some piquant additions in 423 B.C., but not even thus remounted was successful. The "Wasps" appeared some two months after this failure. The poet had thus plenty of time to revoke his first ideas and remould the termination.

Thus moral consistency and consequent dignity is perhaps the only point at which Molière surpasses him, while in poetic brilliancy of imagination and sudden flashes of Parnassian lightning he leaves Molière far behind. But Molière travels on a paved road, where all the comic writers of the old world, besides the mighty Spaniards of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, had been his pioneers. Aristophanes had to hew and pave his own way, through rock and quagmire. Aristophanes is the explorer of an unknown ocean in the infancy of navigation. Molière sails on a sea with the chart before him, where all soundings are registered and all shoals lighted by the experience of those who have gone before.

HENRY HAYMAN, D.D.

(*To be continued.*)

ART VI.—DISESTABLISHMENT AND THE GENERAL ELECTION.

CHURCHMEN of all schools and of both political parties have a very unwelcome alternative thrust upon them. A General Election is evidently impending, and the active preparations for it on all sides have already generated amongst us something of the heat of the contest. Everyone who has "a vote and interest" has already laid on him the duty of considering what he will do and say. We Churchmen find, to our regret, that the Church is pressed into the foreground of the political strife. We must either stand passively by and see her made now the theme and ultimately the victim of unscrupulous calumny and unmeasured misrepresentation, or we must speak out and act too with a vigour, a determination, and a unanimity which thus far we have never yet applied. Concession after concession has been made in the hope of appeasing those gentlemen who bear the question-begging appellation of "Liberationists," and, far from being satisfied, they are only emboldened to demand the instant and total destruction of the National Church. Wherever they can bring any influence to bear that is worth using they exercise it without the smallest reserve or compunction, and the effect has already been marked in more than one constituency. Professor James Stuart, when he asked the electors of the University of Cambridge for their votes at the General Election, pledged himself definitely against Disestablishment. And why? Because he knew well enough that his cause was hopeless unless he did so. But when he had last year to solicit the suffrages of the electors of Hackney