THE ROMANO-GREEK INSCRIPTIONS IN ENGLAND.

By Professor E. C. CLARK.[1]

Some months ago I endeavoured to give a rendering of a remarkable Greek inscription, on what is known as "the Brough stone," from Brough-under-Stainmore, now in the Fitzwilliam museum at Cambridge. In the course of my investigations I had to consider the other Greek inscriptions found in England. They are few in number, and I was struck by some common features which I thought I could discern in them, besides their common language. This is the subject which I have briefly treated in the following paper, asking myself the questions: when and by whom were these inscriptions made, why in Greek, and in what sort of Greek? I will proceed at once to enumerate the five or six Greek inscriptions which appear in the 7th volume of the Prussian *Corpus Inscriptionum*, edited by Professor Hübner. I have added, in each instance, what indications of the nationality of the settlers I can gather from the local names of the *auxiliary* forces stationed in the place. The *legionary* soldiers, though of course more important in their time, do not give us this kind of information, except in one or two instances.

In Chester (*Deva*), where we can trace cohorts of *Aquitani* and *Frisiavones*, was found in 1856, an altar bearing, in neat or elegant letters,[2] an inscription of which this is the legible part:—

ΗΡCΙΝ
ΕΡΜΕΝΕCΙΝ
ΕΡΜΟΓΕΝΗC
ΙΑΤΡΟCΒΩΜΟΝ
ΤΟΝΔ ΑΝΕΘΗΚΑ

[1] Read at the Derby meeting of the Institute, July 31st, 1885.

[2] Hübner, p. 48.

The lacuna is supplied by Hübner [θεοῖς σωτ] ηρσιν [ὑπ] ερμενεσιν.

A slightly different emendation may perhaps be suggested. The last three lines of the inscription form a hexameter. If we can believe the reading intended by the composer, in the previous word, to have been the Homeric ὑπερμενέεσσιν, we may infer the loss of an inscribed line above the fragmentary H P C I N which would give us another hexameter. I cannot however advance this theory with any confidence, as I have been unable to procure a fac-simile of the inscription.[1]

Hübner notes a suggestion that the dedicator of this altar may have been the Hermogenes whom Dion Cassius mentions in his last chapter on that emperor's life as Hadrian's physician. Hadrian's partiality to the profession is otherwise on record: witness the epigram on Marcellus, of Side in Pamphylia, for whose works, or library, a special repository was erected by this prince, or his successor, at Rome.[2] Hübner, however, drily adds that there were a good many doctors called Hermogenes. The form of the letters in the inscription he admits to suit the time of Hadrian.

In the Museum at York (*Eburacum*) are two tablets of bronze, found in the excavation for the railway station, about 1840. On each is a Greek inscription, in punctured letters:—

(I.)

ΘΕΟΙC
ΤΟΙC ΤΟΥ ΗΓΕ
ΜΟΝΙΚΟΥ ΠΡΑΙ
ΤΩΡΙΟΥ CΚΡΙΒ·
ΔΗΜΗΤΡΙΟC

(II.)

ΩΚΕΑΝΩ
ΚΑΙ ΤΗΘΥΙ
ΔΗΜΗΤΡΙ[3]

The ninth or Spanish legion was quartered at York, and this is the only locally named force of which I have

[1] See final note.
[2] Anthologia Graeca, 7. 158
[3] See final note. These inscriptions are not taken from Hübner, (p. 62), but from the latest edition of the handbook to the museum, with which Canon Raine kindly furnished me.

evidence there. A Greek was obviously the author of the two inscriptions, which speak for themselves. The one is to the household gods of the governor's residence. This fact I take to indicate that Demetrius was a dependent of the governor,[1] though it does not throw much light on the occasion of dedication. The other inscription shews, I think, that Demetrius was a person of some culture, perhaps of some consequence, and that he wished to indicate his arrival in the island. Oceanus and Tethys were rather creatures of literary fancy than objects of real worship, even in the times of Domitian. Whether Demetrius was a *scribonius* or a *scriba* does not appear. I should prefer the latter suggestion, which, as well as the probable date, is Mr. C. W. King's.

All the other Greek inscriptions come from the Roman wall or near it. At Ellenborough (*Uxellodunum*), near Maryport, south west of the wall, was found a stone tablet, now at Netherhall, bearing the dedication, to Æsculapius,

ΑCΚΛΗΠΙΩ
Α·ΕΓΝΑΤΙΟC
ΠΑCΤΟΡ ΕΘΗΚΕΝ

On a squeeze of this inscription (exhibited) I think a sort of stop is perceptible after the first letter of the second line. The whole is obviously a hexameter, the final S of Egnatius being, as is often the case in provincial and late Latinity, not sounded, and the A before this word representing a spondee. A succession of antiquaries has "restored" this A as the *praenomen* Aulus, which restoration is accepted by Hübner. This old *praenomen* occurs once elsewhere in British inscriptions. I doubt it here, and am almost inclined, in spite of the mixture of languages, to suggest an abbreviation for ARAM. AR for ARAM has been found, at Lincoln last year.[2] The cognomen, if it be one, *Pastor*, does not occur elsewhere in Hubner's book. The local auxiliaries at Ellenborough were Baetasii (a German race), Dalmatians and Spaniards.

Making my way north-east to the Roman wall, by the

[1] For this general sense of ἡγεμών see Matthew xxvii, 2; Luke iii, 2, and Alford's note on the latter. πραιτώριη is exactly our Residence.

[2] *Archæological Journal*, vol. xli, p. 217, and p. 150 of this volume.

route through the head of the Lake country, I must mention, as connecting links, one or two Latin inscriptions.

At *Old Carlisle* (Roman name uncertain) I find an Egnatius Verecundus erecting a votive tablet for the welfare of the emperor Septimus Severus, who spent the failing years of his life (208-211 A.D.) in Britain.[1] At the same station was also found an interesting Latin inscription of the time of Gordian (A.D. 242) now in the library of Trinity College, Cambridge. I cannot be sure about the local auxiliaries here.

I now proceed eastward to where the great north road, the Watling street, crosses the wall. On Watling street, north of the wall, I find a Greek inscription,[2] of which the letters ΘΕΟΙΣ are all that can be read with certainty, on a small altar at High Rochester (*Bremenium*). From other inscriptions we learn that a cohort of *Vardulli* was stationed here, in the times of the emperor whom we call Elagabalus (218-222 A.D.), and Gordian (238-243 A.D.). An altar was raised *Deo invicto soli* for the welfare of Elagabalus, under his proper name of M. Aurelius Antoninus Pius, by a tribune of these *Vardulli*; and another, to the genius of their standards, by an Egnatius Lucilianus, legate of Gordian.

A votive tablet from Lanchester, on Watling street, south of the wall, is preserved in the library of the palace at Durham. The identification of Lanchester with its true Roman original is not certain. The inscription is bilingual—Greek and Latin—and appears, by a probable restoration, to be a dedication to Æsculapius. The dedicator is T. Flavus Titianus, tribune, as we learn from another inscription, of a cohort of *Vardulli*.[3] There is nothing else remarkable about the inscription and I have not got a facsimile of it. It may be observed, however, that at this station a bath and basilica were erected for the emperor Gordian by the same Egnatius Lucilianus just mentioned. Finally, at Corbridge (*Corstopitum*), on Watling street, south of the wall, I find, besides the altars next noticed, a monument erected by another Egnatius, surnamed (*sic*) *Dyonisius*, together with his coheir *Surius*, to the memory of a Roman soldier their testator.[4] The

[1] Hübner. p. 82, No. 382.
[2] Ibid., p. 178.
[3] Ibid., pp. 93, 94, Nos. 431, 440.
[4] Ibid., p. 98, No. 477.

inscription is in Latin, but the names of the two coheirs are Greek and Oriental, with a mis-spelling which may perhaps indicate that Latin was not the language of the author or inscriber.

I have put together these two or three last inscriptions, because they possibly shew a thread of connection in the family of the Egnatii or the corps of the Vardulli. Of the former I shall speak presently. The latter are believed, on the authority of Ptolemy and Strabo, to have come from Celtiberia, in the north-east of Spain.

At Corbridge were found two most interesting altars dedicated, in beautiful Greek inscriptions, to *Astarte* by one *Pulcher*, and to the *Tyrian Hercules* by a high-priestess *Diodora*.[1]

(I.)

ΑCΤΑΡΤΗC
ΒΩΜΟΝΜ
ΕCΟΡΑC
ΠΟΥΛΧΕΡΜ
ΑΝΕΘΗΚΕ

(II.)

ΗΡΑΚΛΕΙ
ΤΥΡΙΩ
ΔΙΟΔΩΡΑ
ΑΡΧΙΕΡΕΙΑ

These inscriptions are alike in caligraphy.

Not much light is thrown on them by the names of the dedicators, which do not occur again in our British inscriptions. Pulcher is the well-known cognomen of a family of the patrician Claudii, some of whose members we learn from coins to have held office under the earlier emperors. But I find no Roman Pulcher in our island. Diodora is obviously Greek.

These are the only Greek records in Hubner's British Inscriptions upon which we can rely. Beside potters' marks, the sole succession of words amounting to an inscription is a fragment said to have been found in London, now lost, probably a modern importation from Italy, and possibly not genuine to begin with.[2]

[1] Hubner, p. 97. [2] Ibid., p. 21.

Since the publication of Hübner's *Inscriptiones Britanniae* two important records have been discovered, bearing on the connexion of Roman settlers with the east. One is the grave-stone of *Regina* at South Shields, with its bilingual inscription in Latin and Aramaic. The other is the Brough stone. The former scarcely touches my present subject, except as shewing the settlement of a native of Palmyra, at the east end of the Roman wall. The second bears the most important Greek inscription in this country. It is an epitaph written in Greek hexameters, on a youth of 16, named Hermes, from Commagene, the northern part of Syria. I cannot take up your time at present with the difficulties of interpretation in this inscription, which are considerable. My own view as to that matter is fully stated in the Cambridge University Reporter for March 3 of this year, and in the transactions of the Cumberland and Westmorland Antiquarian Society, pp 205-219, and briefly epitomized by Mr. Watkin in his paper on Roman inscriptions recently found in Britain. (See above, pp. 146-7). You will there find the original reading of the stone, so far as it has been made out, a reading with the *lacunae* supplied and the errors corrected according to my view, and an English metrical version. The points which bear on my present enquiry are, not so much the exact interpretation of the inscription, as its general character, style and form.

Reverting, then, to the questions with which we began, I ask myself, when and by whom were these Greek inscriptions made, and why in Greek? These three questions go together—the other, in what sort of Greek, is a rather different matter.

The *when* I have to some extent answered by anticipation, in calling the inscriptions *Romano-Greek*. I have no hesitation in dating them all during the Roman occupation, not later, that is, than the beginning of the 5th century A.D.

All are from known Roman stations; the York and Lanchester inscriptions are connected with Roman officers; and the documents generally denote a degree of settled life and tranquillity which can scarcely have existed for a long time after the departure of the Romans. On the last ground, too, I should be disposed to put these inscriptions certainly not earlier than the construction of

the wall by Hadrian (about 121 A.D.); probably not earlier then the time of Septimus Severus, who more securely established the peace of the North at the beginning of the third century. You will have observed that they all come from the northern part of England.

The only approximation to a more exact date at which I can arrive is on the supposition of some connexion between the Egnatius of the Ellenborough inscription, and the Egnatius of the times of Severus, or of "Elagabalus" and Gordian, more probably the latter. This would place the Ellenborough inscription about the middle of the third century, A.D.

Upon the question *by whom* were these inscriptions made, certain scattered facts about this family of Egnatii have some bearing—at least as to one possible source. I will give the upshot, not to weary you with detail.[1]

There is some reason to connect the origin of these Egnatii with Spain, the country of the *Vardulli*, whom they and the Greek inscriptions appear in two or three cases curiously to accompany. There is also reason to connect the subsequent fortunes of one Egnatius, at least, with Tarsus in Cilicia and the learning of Tarsus Greek or Oriental or both. There is nothing special to be made out of the *Vardulli* themselves, as bearing directly on the Greek inscriptions. I have given the local names of the auxiliaries when I could find any in proximity to the Greek inscriptions. But they afford us little or no clue. The soldiers of the cohorts were mostly occidentals, coming, with the exception of the *Hamii*, whom I shall mention directly, almost exclusively from Europe. There is nothing in the nationality of Spaniards, or Germans, or Gauls, which would lead one to expect any special leaning to Greek literature or Oriental worship. I think then

[1] Catullus (37. 19) speaks of an Egnatius, a complaisant Roman busybody, as coming from Celtiberia, which was the home of the *Vardulli*. A descendant or connexion of this man may have been the Egnatius who adopted the Stoic philosophy at Tarsus in Cilicia, and obtained an infamous notoriety at Rome under Nero in 66 A.D. He was the betrayer of his friend Barea Soranus, and the informer against Soranus' daughter, whom he had himself instructed in the magic art for which she was condemned (Juvenal, iii. 116-119, and Schol. on vi. 552). This Egnatius was rewarded by Nero with riches and honour, but afterwards condemned and exiled (Tacitus Ann. 16. 32; Hist. 4, 10, 40. Dion Cassius, 62. 26). Was his place of exile Britain, and were the Egnatii whom we find in office under Severus and Gordian his descendants?

that, if there is any common element in the three or four inscriptions to which I am now referring, it is the influence of the Egnatii, of the times of Elagabalus and Gordian, or that of their friends and dependents. I take T. Flavus Titianus, of the bilingual inscription to Æsculapius at Lanchester, to have been connected with Egnatius Lucilianus, possibly availing himself of the same medical services, and no doubt using Egnatius' baths. I take *Pastor*, of the Greek inscription to be Æsculapius at Ellenborough, *Dyonisius* and his co-heir *Surius* of the Latin monumental tablet at Corbridge, to be Oriental Greek freedmen of the same family. Pastor is not a *cognomen* likely to belong to an imperial Roman family; Dionysius and Surius speak for themselves.

To a similar source I am inclined to attribute other inscriptions, besides those connected with the Egnatii, viz. to Greek dependents upon Roman patrons. In this class I should place Hermogenes of Chester and Demetrius of York.

Most of the cases hitherto treated are evidently votive offerings by, or prompted by, medical men. I do not quite take the cynical view that they were mere advertisements. I rather think that a real gratitude may have been felt, to some power of healing, by the doctor who had brought his dangerous patient safe through, or by the patient who had come safe out the hands of his doctor. So much then for Asclepius, and his votaries, who were undoubtedly Greeks, and apparently often Oriental Greeks.

Another class of deities is connected with two of our Greek inscriptions (and with many Latin ones), of a more definitely oriental character. I mean the Sun, *Mithras;* the Moon, *Astarte*, or *Dea Syria;* and the mysterious *Hercules* of *Tyre*. The introduction of such worship into the far provinces of the West, from Syria, is sometimes connected with the accesion of Elagabalus to power in 218 A.D. But it possibly preceded, as it certainly survived, the priest of the Sun; and, as it has, except perhaps in the one case of the *Hamii*, nothing to do with the nationality of the auxiliaries, I am disposed to attribute it to a general demand, and a consequent supply. The demand was, a craving which the Roman settlers

seem to have felt for some more spiritual or mystical religion than the old effete worship; the supply was due to the influx of dependents and traders from the East. These adventurers, whether Greek Asiatics, or Asiatic Greeks, brought over the religious ideas of Syria and Cilicia, which were sometimes translated into uncouth Latin, and sometimes remained in their Greek form. *Pulcher* may have been a Roman patron, but I should rather incline to consider both him and his highly titled colleague, the chief-priestess *Diodora*, as foreign setters forth of strange gods.

To the Greek *trader*, pure and simple, belongs, I think, the touching epitaph of Brough, in memory of son or friend. In writing on this inscription, I endeavoured, I hope with some success, to shew the presence of a corps of *Hamii* near Brough, who have, with some probability, been referred to *Hamath* on the Orontes, and whose proximity might give a special reason for the occurrence of a Syrian at Brough. I referred also to the curious leaden seals found at the same place (Brough) some years ago, as another connecting link with the East. I have vainly endeavoured to get possession of one of these seals, and can only shew you Mr. Roach Smith's carefully engraved sheet of some of them.[1] I adhere to the opinion which I have previously expressed, that these were the fastenings or seals of traders' bales. They bear, in general, on the one side, a sort of address to the legion or cohort for which they were intended; on the other side, less intelligible inscriptions and emblems, which I think may have been the trader's private mark. Some of these last are what we should generally call Oriental in their character; though I am not good enough scholar in Oriental languages to speak very definitely; some few are Greek.

The question, by whom were these inscriptions made, and why in Greek, I have tried to answer: the question, in what kind of Greek, is not perhaps quite intelligible, nor can I give it a very satisfactory reply. Grammatically all the inscriptions are well enough—certainly no laxer than the later epigrams in the Greek Anthology. They are, I think, by people writing their own language and fairly versed in its literature. The author, for instance,

[1] Collectanea Antiqua, vol. iii. Pl. xxxii.

of the Brough epitaph was certainly acquainted with Homer and the tragedians. In type, this last-named inscription and that by Egnatius Pastor resemble one another and differ from the rest, the difference being most marked in the Brough stone. You know, of course, that this inscription presented at first so much difficulty as to be taken and read for Runic. I think you will see the reason if you look at the autotype. While the letters of most of the other inscriptions are bold and round, these are cramped and elongated almost beyond recognition. I have heard it suggested that the peculiarities of these inscriptions may be due to local stone cutters. This I cannot believe. Local stone cutters might account for blunders—for omissions and transpositions—but their *forms* would almost inevitably approximate to the normal *Roman* type. So, the British coins, although derived originally from old Greek models, when they begin to bear letters, bear Roman ones. I have been driven, then, to look in other quarters for the solution of this curious question. I have tried the coins of the time of Elagabalus and thereabouts, from Tarsus and Syria, as well as from other Roman provinces, but not with much success. Some of the letters, it is true, approximate to the peculiar forms on the Brough stone. Some of the ligatures or abbreviated representations of one or two letters together, which we find elsewhere in inscriptions and coins, appear both in the Corbridge and in the Brough inscriptions. But in both we have ligatures which cannot be thus accounted for, which would be perfectly gratuitous in working at first hand on a hard surface—and in the latter case (Brough) we have the unmistakeable resemblance to a cramped *handwriting*. I have therefore ultimately come round to a very ingenious suggestion of Dr. Taylor, that the peculiarity of such inscriptions as these may be due to their being copied somewhat servilely from *manuscript*, as would not be improbable if a language foreign to the stone-cutter had to be inscribed. This theory accounts, to my mind, for the occurrence of junctions or ligatures which would naturally be made in writing with a reed upon papyrus, as well as for the difference in type between the Corbridge, Ellenborough and Brough inscriptions.

The Corbridge lettering appears to me to be copied from a MS. of what we call the *uncial* type, though we have no uncial MS. actually in existence so old as this must have been. The Brough, and possibly the Ellenborough, inscription has had for its model an early Greek *cursive* handwriting, the existence of which we learn from papyri discovered in Egypt. It is in a fourth or fifth century papyrus from Thebes[1] that I have found the nearest approach to the peculiarities of the Brough stone. Egypt is the source of our knowledge on the subject, because in Egypt alone has this early cursive hand been preserved. But the copy for the Brough inscription was probably a *Syrian* Greek MS. furnished, by the mourner for the Syrian boy, to his British or Roman stonecutter.

FINAL NOTE.

Since writing the above paper, I have inspected the Chester inscription and decided that there *is* room on the altar for Hübner's suggested additions, but *not* for my own. In printing the inscriptions generally, I have been unable to give exact fac-similes, particularly in the case of the ligatures and of certain leaf stops on the Corbridge altars, which also occur on the Brough stone. The very peculiar types of the last named monument can only be represented by photography.

[1] Palæographical Society, Series i. pl. 38.