

**INGRAM BYWATER, THE
MEMOIR OF AN OXFORD
SCHOLAR, 1840-1914**

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Ingram Bywater, the memoir of an Oxford scholar, 1840-1914 by William Walrond Jackson

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WILLIAM WALROND JACKSON

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THE MEMOIR OF AN
OXFORD SCHOLAR

1840-1914

BY

WILLIAM WALROND JACKSON, D.D.

HONORARY FELLOW, FORMERLY RECTOR, OF
EXETER COLLEGE, OXFORD

OXFORD
AT THE CLARENDON PRESS

1917

For we were nursed upon the self-same hill,
Fed the same flock by fountain, shade, and rill.
MILTON, *Lycidas*.

PREFACE

A FEW words of preface are necessary in order to explain the origin and aim of the present memoir.

Soon after Bywater's death on December 17, 1914, Professor Cook Wilson, to whom he had left his unfinished literary work, was asked by the British Academy to write a memoir of his distinguished colleague on their behalf. Professor Cook Wilson did not become intimate with Bywater until some twenty-five years after the election of the latter to a Fellowship at Exeter College. He therefore asked me, as Bywater's oldest surviving friend and colleague, to assist him in the memoir. This I readily undertook to do; but before we had discussed matters together, or fixed any time for beginning the work, Professor Cook Wilson died in August 1915. His lamented death was an irreparable loss. Nobody had known Bywater more intimately in his later years, or was better acquainted with the merits of his work as a scholar, or in closer sympathy with his aims and ideals.

Some of Bywater's friends, however, still desired a fuller record of his life than had been contained in the notices that appeared after his death. Sir Herbert Warren, K.C.V.O., President of Magdalen College, whom I specially consulted, kindly expressed a wish that I should take up the project which had fallen from Professor Cook Wilson's hands, and offered to place any material that he possessed, together with his own reminiscences, at my disposal. Bywater's repre-

sentatives were also anxious that a memoir should still be written, and that it should deal more fully than had been at first contemplated with his private life and characteristics.

After ascertaining from the British Academy that they had no intention of appointing a successor to Professor Cook Wilson, I resolved to undertake the task. In arriving at this decision, I was moved partly by a natural wish to aid in keeping alive the memory of a friend, and partly by the conviction that a memoir, if written at all, should be attempted by one who had known Bywater intimately in early life, and was personally familiar with the circumstances and various influences which then determined his future career, as well as with the movement of opinion at Oxford during the last fifty years, so far as Bywater was affected by it.

The materials for a memoir of Bywater, compared with those ready to the hand of some biographers, such as those of Jowett for example, are comparatively scanty. He left no diary of any kind, and was in the habit of destroying all private papers. His interests were severely limited. He wrote very few letters of an intimate character, or dealing with subjects out of his own sphere. On the other hand, his life presented a singular unity in all its different aspects. It was always the life of an Oxford scholar. The same characteristics were everywhere traceable both in his intercourse with his friends and in his literary work. Neither half of his life could be understood without the other.

The materials at my disposal, other than my own recollections, may be briefly enumerated. There is first of all a short, but very characteristic, autobio-

graphical account of his early life, and some of his later opinions, given to a representative of the *Morning Post* and published in that newspaper on June 27, 1914, the seventy-fourth anniversary of his birth. There is also a certain number of papers, partly of a private nature and partly referring to his literary work, which have been most kindly placed in my hands by his executrix, Mrs. Charles Cornish. This memoir is under the deepest obligation to her for the care with which she has sought for any document that could be of use. I am also greatly indebted to Mrs. Bywater's nephew, Dr. Vaughan Cornish, well known in the world of science, both for advice and for his very interesting reminiscences of Bywater's private conversation prepared specially for this memoir.

There is also a box of letters deposited by Bywater in the Bodleian Library, to which the Curators of the Bodleian have most kindly given me free access. This box contains a few papers and letters referring to the late Mark Pattison, and a great number of letters and post cards addressed to Bywater by various scholars, chiefly foreigners. Many of these are of little or no value, except from the personality of their writers; but many of them have been of service, and there are a few drafts of important letters from Bywater himself. There is, fortunately, among these papers a small number of letters addressed by him to Professor Bernays, almost all of which are printed in this memoir. From inquiries which I have made, I am inclined to think that there are few, if any, other letters from him of much value in existence, unless there should be some in Germany, which under present circumstances are inaccessible.

Many of the letters preserved in the Bodleian refer to rare books, especially those from Monsieur Legrand, which doubtless contain much information that would be valued by an expert bibliophile. Of these letters I have ventured to print a few as specimens, and must express my special obligations to Monsieur Henri Omont, the eminent French savant, for his kindly interest in this memoir, and his permission to print one of his own letters, as well as for the authorization he has obtained for me to print those of Monsieur Legrand and others.

Bywater's merits as a scholar could not be adequately treated except by a scholar of the same calibre as himself. The best tribute to his work as a scholar would be a volume of selections from his miscellaneous papers, edited by some competent hand.

I have attempted, however inadequately, to give such an account of Bywater's literary aims and performance as may enable persons who are not specialists to understand their general character and significance. In doing so, I have derived great assistance from documents which I have been able to print, and from the estimate of his position as a scholar for which I am indebted to some of those who are entitled to speak with authority, especially to Professor J. Burnet of St. Andrews, who has kindly furnished me with an account of Bywater's work on the text of Diogenes Laertius which no one else could have supplied. The insertion of such testimony in these pages may, I venture to hope, impart to this portion of the memoir a value which it would not otherwise possess.

It remains for me to express my thanks to a few of those besides the persons already named, to whom I am