Introduction to the study of Latin inscriptions

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INTRODUCTION

TO THE

STUDY OF LATIN INSCRIPTIONS

BY

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PREFACE

It has been generally recognized by classical scholars of the present day that a knowledge of epigraphy forms an essential part of the equipment of a teacher of the classics, and that the subject itself has become so important as to justify its introduction, in elementary form at least, into the curriculum of undergraduate studies. Notwithstanding this general recognition, however, no work in the English language which would serve as an introduction to the study of Latin inscriptions has up to the present time been published. It is to supply this want that the following pages have been written.

The purpose determining the plan of the work has been to combine abundant introductory and explanatory matter with numerous examples for illustration and for practice in reading. The inscriptions, with the single exception of those from movable articles, have been printed in the type ordinarily used for Latin texts, since this form has been considered more satisfactory than any attempt at a typographical imitation of the original letters. Numerous photographic reproductions have been made from the fac-similes of Ritschl’s Priscae Latinitatis Monumenta Epigraphica and from the exempla in Hübner’s Exempla Scripturae Epigraphicae, in order to impress in some degree upon the student the original form and appearance of the inscription.

The debt of the author to the works of other writers is of necessity very great. Whenever another’s writings have been directly used,
acknowledgment has been made in the footnotes; but for assistance obtained from many other sources not noted, the author wishes here to express himself as deeply grateful.

The Cours d'Épigraphie Latine of Professor René Cagnat has been of the utmost service and has, in fact, formed the basis of this work in many particulars. The author has also relied for much of his information upon the Prolegomena of Professor Emil Hübner's Exempla Scripturae Epigraphicae and upon the same scholar's article, Römische Epigraphik in Iwan Müller's Handbuch der Klassischen Altertums-wissenschaft, vol. i., 1892. To Professor Hermann Dessau the author is indebted for material obtained from his Inscriptiones Latinae Selectae, vol i., and also for his kind words in regard to the preparation of this volume.

In passing this book through the press the author has been greatly aided by his friends and associates.

Professor Harry Thurston Peck has read much of the proof and has made possible the author's task by his encouragement and by his advice, so valuable because of wide experience.

Dr. Nelson Glenn McCrea has read the entire proof and has in many instances, in connection with this kindly service, given renewed proof of his scholarship. Mr. George Olcott, a Fellow of this College, has been of most valuable service, inasmuch as he has prepared and verified the Chronological List of the Roman Emperors. The index is also the work of Mr. Olcott.

The author earnestly hopes that this volume will prove to many the open door to a subject so remarkable in its influence upon classical and archaeological study and at the same time so interesting and attractive in its pursuit.

JAMES C. EGBERT, JR.

COLUMBIA COLLEGE, December, 1895.
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INTRODUCTION

To a beginner in the study of Epigraphy, the most important matters for consideration are the works which provide material for research, and the method which should be followed in approaching this material.

The great storehouse of Latin inscriptions is the Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum,\(^1\) which is indispensable for advanced study in this subject; but notwithstanding the importance of this great work, certain minor collections of inscriptions are more useful to the elementary student and for class-room use.

The first of these is the valuable Collectio of Orelli and Henzen:

Inscriptionum Latinarum Amplissima Collectio. Io. C. Orellius. 2 vols. Zurich, 1828. Vol. III. is by W. Henzen:


The last volume contains indices to the entire work.

The most serviceable collection of inscriptions for general use is:


This work contains inscriptions conveniently classified, with Latin notes; also excellent indices.

\(^1\) C. I. L. Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum Consilio et Auctoritate Academicae litterarum Regiae Borussicae Editum. See page 6.
LATIN INSCRIPTIONS

For those who are unable to consult the Corpus Inscriptionum, a more recent work will provide well-selected inscriptions in greater number than the collection just mentioned. This collection is based upon material gathered by William Henzen.


For the study of early Latin, the following will be found to be serviceable:


For a presentation of the inscriptions themselves the student is referred to two great works, one of which gives inscriptions in facsimile, the other by "exempla."

The first of these is the large folio of F. Ritschl, containing inscriptions from the earliest period down to the beginning of the Empire. It is regularly denoted by the letters P. L. M. E.


There are five supplements, which were originally published at Bonn in 1862. They are also found in Ritschl’s Opuscula Philologica, vol. IV. 1878.

The second of these is:


In this book there is a complete introduction in Latin, and over twelve hundred inscriptions with commentary. As the title indicates, this Exempla is a complement to the work of Ritschl, just mentioned.