

A REPORT ON THE CLASSICAL ASSOCIATION OF SOUTH AFRICA, 1956—1957

EARLY HISTORY

The first Classical Association of South Africa was founded in March 1927 at Cape Town, among others by the Hon. J. H. Hofmeyr, Professors C. S. Edgar, W. Rollo, A. Petrie and T. J. Haarhoff. Local centres were established at Johannesburg, Cape Town, Stellenbosch, Wellington, Bloemfontein, Grahamstown and Pretoria. Conferences on a national basis, however, proved impracticable and during the 'thirties the Association virtually ceased to function as such. In 1956 the Johannesburg Classical Association was the only local centre still maintaining an active annual programme. A survey of the activities of the Association during its first three years can be found in *Proceedings and Selected Papers of the Classical Association of South Africa*, first issue, period 1927-1929 (Cape Town, 1929).

2. FIRST NATIONAL CONFERENCE, PRETORIA APRIL 1956.

A national conference of university teachers of the Classics in South Africa was held at the University of Pretoria from 4th to 7th April, 1956. This conference was called by Dr. W. J. G. Lubbe at the request of a number of local and other colleagues, with the express purpose, inter alia, of considering the founding of a national association for the promotion of classical studies. The conference was attended by 18 persons while the Classics departments of all the universities were either represented or assured the meeting of their moral support.

The conference resolved that 'The Classical Association of South Africa' be founded, with the aim (as later formulated) of 'promoting the study, knowledge, appreciation and teaching of the Classics in South Africa'. The details of its organization as formulated at this and at the second conference can be found incorporated in the Constitution of the Association which is printed on a following page. The conference unanimously elected the two Nestors of Classical studies in South Africa as their joint Honorary Presidents: Prof. A. Petrie (emeritus professor of the University of Natal) and Prof. Dr. T. J. Haarhoff (University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg).

The first committee, for the duration of the conference, was constituted as follows: Prof. H. L. Gonin (Pretoria) — chairman, Dr. W. J. G. Lubbe (Pretoria) — secretary, Dr. C. P. T. Naudé (Witwatersrand) — treasurer.

The second committee, for the next year and for the second conference, was constituted as follows: Prof. A. H. R. E. Paap (Cape Town) — chairman, Prof. F. Smuts (Stellenbosch) — secretary, Prof. G. P. Goold (Cape Town) — treasurer.

The conference instructed the committee to investigate the possibilities of publishing a journal devoted to classical studies; it also instructed the committee to arrange for the compilation of a centralized catalogue of all publications on the Classics which are available in South African libraries, and to begin with a catalogue of such periodicals; the committee was instructed to negotiate with the council administering the cultural agreement between the Netherlands and South Africa the invitation of a classical scholar from the Netherlands under this agreement during the next year; the conference appointed Prof. H. L. Gonin as its official delegate to the international congress on the contemporary use of Latin to be held at Avignon in September 1956.

The following papers were read in the course of the conference (except that of Mr. Lagouros all were in Afrikaans):

Dr. C. A. van Rooy (Bloemfontein): *The Library in the Greek and the Hellenistic world down to the Roman period*, with slides.

Prof. F. Smuts (Stellenbosch): *Stoic influence on Tiberius Gracchus*.

Mr. J. P. Louw (Bloemfontein): *Prohibitions in Greek with particular reference to mê with present imperative and aorist subjunctive*.

Mr. A. Lagouros (Witwatersrand): *Byzantine Art, its nature and the circumstances by which it is determined*.

Dr. C. P. T. Naudé (Witwatersrand): *The Technique of the Greek Vase*.

Dr. G. van N. Viljoen (Univ. of South Africa): *Foundlings in classical Athens*.

Dr. E. L. de Kock (Pretoria): *Some remarks on Aristotle as a Critic.*

Mr. W. Richards (Bloemfontein): *Remarks on the Satire as handled by Juvenal.*

Dr. W. J. G. Lubbe (Pretoria): *Christian Latin language and literature: a beckoning field of study.*

SECOND NATIONAL CONFERENCE, STELLENBOSCH, 12-15 FEBRUARY, '57.

This conference was attended by 23 members, including some school teachers and non-classicists. Prof. F. Smuts (Stellenbosch) was elected acting chairman in the absence of Prof. Paap.

The following papers were read at the conference:

Prof. T. J. Haarhoff (Witwatersrand): *What is a tragedy? The Aristotelian concept with reference to (D. J. Opperman's) 'Periandros van Korinthe'* (in Afrikaans).

Dr. O. A. von Weber (Univ. of South Africa): *Archilochus and Homer* (in Afrikaans).

Prof. H. L. Gonin (Pretoria): *Report on the Congress of Latinists at Avignon, September 1956* (in Afrikaans).

Dr. W. Luiks (Holland): *Research in connection with old Christian Churches in North Africa*, with slides (in Dutch).

Prof. K. D. White (Grahamstown): *The Value of Coinage in the Study of the History of the Early Roman Empire.*

Prof. J. P. J. van Rensburg (Stellenbosch): *The Spelling of classical Proper Names in Afrikaans* (in Afrikaans).

Prof. G. P. Goold (Cape Town): *The Decipherment of Cretan Scripts.*

In addition a symposium was held on the teaching of Latin at school, introduced by Mrs S. Fitzpatrick de Vries (Stellenbosch) with a talk on a survey she had conducted in the Eastern Cape Province (since published under the auspices of the National Council for Social Research: *Report on the Position of Latin in Sids IX and X in some Schools of the Cape Province*, Stellenbosch 1957).

The most important resolutions of the conference include: the final approval of a constitution for the Association; the adoption of the first *Brief Annual Report*, 1956 tabled by the acting chairman and envisaging a visit to South Africa by Prof. H. Wagenvoort of Utrecht during Sept.-Oct. 1957; support for a museum exchange scheme between Italy and South Africa, as proposed by prof. White; a decision to start a publication of the Association, for the present in the form of the *Acta* of its conferences; and the appointment of *ad hoc* committees for the following purposes:

(i) to maintain contact with the movement launched at the Avignon congress and to promote the use of Latin as a scientific medium in South Africa (convener: Prof. Gonin);

(ii) to consider the spelling of classical proper names in Afrikaans in consultation with Die Suid-Afrikaanse Akademie (convener: Prof. van Rensburg);

(iii) to compile a catalogue of classical and related periodicals in South African libraries and to start on a centralized bibliography of all books on the Classics available in South African libraries (convener: Dr. Viljoen).

The executive for the next two years was constituted as follows: Prof. F. Smuts (Stellenbosch) — Chairman, Prof. K. D. White (Grahamstown) — vice-chairman, Dr. W. J. G. Lubbe (Pretoria) — secretary-treasurer, Prof. C. A. van Rooy (Bloemfontein) and Dr. G. van N. Viljoen (Univ. of South Africa) — additional members. The next national conference was appointed for February 1959, in Bloemfontein.

4. REGIONAL CONFERENCES OF THE ASSOCIATION.

The Northern Region of the Classical Association of South Africa was constituted on October 20, 1956 at Potchefstroom, and comprises the members from the Transvaal, the Orange Free State and Natal. The Northern Region decided to make it its special task to establish closer contacts among school teachers of the Classics. At its first meeting a paper was read by Dr. C. P. T. Naudé (Witwatersrand) on *The historian Ammianus Marcellinus* (in Afrikaans). The Northern Region held its second meeting on October 26, 1957, at Potchefstroom, and was addressed by Prof. W. N. Coetzee (Potchefstroom) on *The Rôle of Latin in our Secondary Schools* (in Afrikaans).

Though the southern universities have not formally established a regional branch of the

Association, the classical departments of the Universities of Stellenbosch and Cape Town held informal meetings and discussions twice annually during 1956 and 1957.

Special mention should be made of the Johannesburg Classical Association which celebrated its 30th anniversary in 1955 under the presidency of Prof. T. J. Haarhoff. During the past three years the following papers were read at its meetings:

1955 — Prof. A. Petrie on 'Wit and Wisdom from the Greek Anthology'; Mr. A. E. Thorpe on 'The Lyrics of Catullus'; Mr. A. Lagouros on 'Byzantium and its Arts'; the annual Vergil Lecture by Prof. T. J. Haarhoff: 'Vergil Prophet of Peace — with some reference to Dante'.

1956 — Dr. C. P. T. Naudé on 'The Technique of the Greek Vase'; Dr. W. G. Hesse on 'The Concept of Antiquity in German Classicism'; Dr. W. J. G. Lubbe on 'Christian Latin Literature — a beckoning field for study'; and the annual Vergil Lecture by Prof. T. J. Haarhoff: 'Vergil's Country Revisited'.

1957 — Dr. C. P. T. Naudé on 'Julius Caesar — his place in history'; Prof. H. Wagenvoort of Utrecht on i) 'Ancient Roots of Modern Superstition', and ii) 'The Dilemma of Lucretius' (in Dutch); the annual Vergil Lecture being Prof. Haarhoff's farewell lecture: 'The Bees of Vergil'.