as a model, though as a translation it is far inferior to what Ferwerda has produced). On an even more practical note, for ease of reference the line numbers of individual chapters should be placed in the margin (compare another recent treat for the Greekless reader, the new Bollingen Aristotle).

I would like to end with a further, more general suggestion. Could not classicists take a leaf out of the book of our Biblical colleagues? I am thinking particularly of Nestle-Aland's edition of the New Testament, which has its margins crammed with indispensable cross-references. Plotinus is an author who inclines to quasi-repetition, and many a difficult page can be illumined if one adduces passages from other treatises. A translator (or editor) might be able to supply these references from his extensive study of the author's writings. Cross-references could be gradually accumulated in subsequent editions or, if need be, sifted out. Let us not be afraid of sulllying those white margins with useful print!

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The existence of a tradition of ancient ethnography with fixed topics and even with fixed stylistic devices was brilliantly established by Ed. Norden in the first half of his book on *Die Germanische Urgeschichte in Tacitus Germania* (1920) and at the same time by K. Trüdinger in his Basle thesis of 1918. The topical tradition was conveniently summarized by A. Schroeder in his Halle thesis *De ethnographiae antiquae locis quibusdam communibus observationes* (1921) and more recently by K. E. Müller in the two volumes of his *Geschichte der antiken Ethnographie* (1972, 1980). R. F. Thomas' (T.) brief and by no means exhaustive monograph differs from those of his predecessors in that he traces the impact of this tradition on Roman poetry (Horace, Virgil, Lucan) in a felicitous selection of passages, going on from *Quellenforschung* to determine the literary function of this assimilation. Sometimes his focus and method lead to highly illuminating results, as e.g. when he recognizes a parody of ethnography in the 16th of Horace's *Epistles* (lines 1-16, ch. I, entitled 'The Landscapes of Horace', pp. 8-35); the conclusion of his short chapter V ('The Stoic Landscape of Lucan 9', pp. 108-
that the figure of Cato is in harmony with the environment in
which he appears, is likewise convincing if less surprising. In the
field of Latin epic poetry of the Silver Age at any rate much
ethnographic study remains to be done.

All the same I have read T.' book with mixed feelings because
in the central part consisting of three chapters devoted to
ethnographic sections in Virgil's Georgics and Aeneid (pp. 35-107) he
shows himself to be a firm believer in the soundness of a certain
trend in modern American Virgil criticism associated with the
name of Putnam as tribal chief.

T. reveals his critical stance in two casual sentences which appear
to be accepted as dogmas rather than offered for debate. On p. 108
we read that 'when approaching Augustan poetry, we feel at ease
in seeing significance in verbal reminiscence, in a particular
stylistic or metrical feature, even in the use of a particular word'.
I have to confess I never felt at ease reading T.' chapters on Virgil.
For several objections of principle against this dogma I may refer
to my review of Putnam's commentary on Tibullus in this journal
in note 1 on p. 103) shows a grave lack of literary sensibility by its
mechanic fixation on allegedly significant recurrences and its
incapacity to appreciate stylistic or metrical features as aesthetic
phenomena in their own right.

Another casual yet significant sentence is T.' comment on a
judgment of R. D. Williams (p. 70): 'It is, therefore, rather sur-
prising to read such statements as: 'It (the Fourth Georgic) is about
bees before it is about anything else'. T.' naive comment betrays
the distance and the alienation between a modern American critic
and ancient didactic poetry as a literary challenge to bestow poetic
glory on a 'humble' subject (cf. Virgil's own words in Georg. III
289-90, IV 6-7 in tenui labor which incidentally do not refer to style
as T. has it (p. 81) but to subject matter), i.e., as 'descriptive
poetry' (Wilkinson's term) containing (among other things)
ethnographic elements as a source of captivating beauty and exotic
interest in themselves (cf. K. E. Müller on the Hellenistic and Roman
interest in ethnography per se, and L. Friedländer's highly infor-
mative comments on 'Die Interessen der römischen Reisenden',
Sittengeschichte Roms I 444 ff.).

Everyone will nowadays accept the complexity of the Georgics,
this literary exploration of the agricultural world in all its aspects
and with all its literary, philosophical, scientific, and mythological