

THE RYLANDS LIBRARY, MANCHESTER.

THE Rylands Library, Manchester, formally opened on October 6th, became accessible to students on the first day of the new year. It may, therefore, be of interest to note what scholars may expect to find there. Mrs. Rylands, to whom this noble benefaction is due, started with the thought of honouring her husband's memory by founding a thoroughly good library of reference, mainly for students of theology. But while she was engaged in securing a site, and collecting books, it came to be known that the Spencer Library at Althorp was in the market. Mrs. Rylands secured this at a cost, it is said, of £200,000: and thereupon enlarged her plans. The original design was not abandoned, but it was extended. The acquisition of this unrivalled collection at once raised the Rylands Library to a place not of local, but of national importance. The distinctive characteristics of the Spencer Library are of course known to all book-lovers. It contains a unique collection of early editions of the classics, of the incunabula of printing, of first editions both of English and of Italian authors, a very valuable series of Aldines, and of pseudo-Aldines, and the best editions of seventeenth and eighteenth century classics. There are excellent specimens of block-books: the first edition of *Il Decamerone* (and seven other editions dating from the fifteenth century); the first four folios of Shakespeare; in fact treasures of all kinds abound on every hand. To the Spencer Library Mrs. Rylands made very large additions, especially in the direction of theology, philosophy and modern

history; but no department has been neglected, which is requisite to make it a scholar's working library of reference. An excellent catalogue, in three quarto volumes, has been prepared by the accomplished bibliographer Mr. E. Gordon Duff, who is the senior librarian. In the housing of the library nothing has been left undone, which thought, judgment and an apparently unlimited generosity could provide to add to its beauty and dignity. A trifling sign of this is to be found in the fact that no iron is to be seen in the building: all metal-work is of gun-metal, even the casings of the heating apparatus. Mrs. Rylands will be President of the Library during her life-time, but she will be aided in the administration by a council of eighteen governors, ten representative, eight co-opted, two of the former being nominated by the Victoria University, two by the Owens College. A considerable proportion are to be Protestant ministers of religion, but there is abundant provision for the representation of laymen.

Manchester has long been fortunate above most cities in the matter of libraries. It has had collections, each with their own strong points, at the Chetham College, the Literary and Philosophical Society, the Owens College, the Lancashire College and the Whitworth Institute, as well as an admirable Free Library with its branches. But the creation of the Rylands Library raises it to a position which in some respects even Oxford and Cambridge can only look upon with envy.

A. S. W.

HOMERICA (VI).

ON THE TERMINATION $-\epsilon\hat{\iota}$ (FROM VERBS IN $-\epsilon\omega$) BEFORE VOWELS IN HOMERIC VERSE.

It is often difficult to feel sure in dealing with a question of Homeric usage that the point has not already been the subject of discussion elsewhere in one or other of the innumerable articles which the study of Homer has evoked. Nothing short of the comprehensive erudition of the Provost of Oriel in this sphere could remove the misgiving. Subject then to this reservation I venture to think I am not

trespassing on occupied ground in suggesting that the accepted ideas with regard to the contraction of verbs in $-\epsilon\omega$ may in one, perhaps not unimportant, detail be expanded and improved.

We may take it as ascertained and admitted that in the third pers. sing. pres. indic. of these verbs, except where an original f or σ interposed, $-\epsilon\epsilon\iota$ is freely contracted into $-\epsilon\hat{\iota}$. On this point it will suffice