

the use of polytheistic material in the Byzantine novels in the twelfth century; M.-A. Calvet-Sebasti on the protagonist's relation to God in the *Greek Acts of Andrew*).

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ZEHNACKER (H.) (ed.), MÉTHY (N.) (trans.) *Pline le Jeune: Lettres. Tome III, Livres VII–IX*. (Collection des Universités de France publiée sous le patronage de l'Association Guillaume Budé 404.) Pp. ix + 212. Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 2012. Paper, €45. ISBN: 978-2-251-01464-7. doi:10.1017/S0009840X13003545

This volume completes the updated Budé edition of Pliny's personal letters. The business letters of Book 10 and the *Panegyricus* are yet to come. Some would say that the book is like Pliny himself, straightforward, with few surprises. There was some controversy over Z.'s manuscript readings in the first volume, Books 1–3 (G. Liberman's review [*BMCR* 2009.07.17] prompted a response by Z. [*BMCR* 2009.08.15], which prompted another response from Liberman [*BMCR* 2009.09.44]). Although the tradition of Pliny's text does not present insuperable problems, the three families of manuscripts do offer a few puzzles, and the earliest printed editions introduce other issues because of their use of manuscripts which no longer exist.

This reviewer found the translation and the commentary of considerable interest. The letters in Books 7–9 seem to belong to the period between 107–108. They show Pliny at his literary peak and introduce some friends who have not appeared in the earlier letters. Z.'s commentary certainly shows the influence of M.'s interpretation of Pliny as defining a new kind of man, the *honnête homme* (N. Méthy, *Les Lettres de Pliny le Jeune. Un représentation de l'homme* [2007]). Such a man recognises his own imperfections and, through his literary efforts, has discovered an interior life, the cultivation of *honestum otium*.

M. and Z. appreciate that Pliny has too often been dismissed as a self-satisfied prig but in fact can be seen, if one takes the time to look, as 'a man one would like to have known' (B. Radice, *Pliny: Letters and Panegyricus* [1969], Vol. 1, p. xvii). I made a similar argument some years ago ('Pliny the Younger: the Kinder, Gentler Roman', *Classical Bulletin* 66 [1990], 37–41) and have found Pliny's mind interesting enough to make him into a detective in a series of historical mystery novels (the most recent is *Death in the Ashes: a Fourth Case from the Notebooks of Pliny the Younger* [2013]). Two letters which demonstrate Pliny's personality appear in this volume, and the commentary shows Z. and M.'s appreciation of the *honnête homme* that he is. In 8.10 and 11 Pliny must inform his wife's grandfather and her aunt, who raised her, that Calpurnia has had a miscarriage. He is matter-of-fact in letter 10, to her grandfather, but must be more delicate when writing to her aunt. He even stresses that the miscarriage was not Calpurnia's fault. As Z. says, 'Même dans des circonstances aussi douloureuses, Pline s'adapte à merveille à la personnalité de son correspondant' (p. 148).

The volume is a welcome addition to the literature on Pliny.

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