

VERGIL.

"O degli altri poeti onor'e lume."

I.

If it be written, as Capulet's servant avers, that the shoemaker should meddle with his yard, and the tailor with his last, the fisher with his pencil, and the painter with his nets, no lengthened apology is necessary for a teacher of English who meddles with Vergil. Besides, I hope to show that the relation of Vergil to English literature is closer than is generally suspected, and, by so doing, explain and justify my presence in this particular classical galley. In order to make my position quite clear, I must risk the reproach of egotism and offer frankly some autobiographic details, believing as I do that my experience, in part at least, is typical. I speak as a Canadian to Canadians.

At a certain stage of his journey through the wilderness of this world, the pilgrim I know most about lighted upon a Canadian High School, and began the study of Latin. He learned to *con mensa, mensæ* in Harkness, and went through declension and conjugation in the orthodox way, writing prose exercises and translating easy sentences until the time came to attack a real author. To this day he remembers the point in the dark backward and abysm of time, when he was confronted with the page of Vergil containing the lesson for the coming day. The volume had come down to him from his father's school-days, and was in fact the text which the learned Carolus Ruæus, S. J., prepared for the use of His Serene Highness, the