lived in the time of Sulla and is said to have been the first editor of these poems. He says, “ Bucolic muses, once were ye scattered, but now one byre, one herd is yours.” The second epigram is anonymous, and runs as follows:—“ The Chian is another. I, Theocritus, who wrote these songs, am of Syracuse, a man of the people, the son of Praxagoras and famed Philina. I never sought after a strange muse.” The last line may mean that he wrote nothing but bucolic poems, or that he only wrote in Doric. The statement that he was a Syracusan is confirmed by allusions in the “ Idylls ” (xi. 7, xxviii. 16-18). The information concerning his parentage bears the stamp of genuineness, and disposes of a rival theory based upon a mis­interpretation of Idyll vii.—which made him the son of one Simichus. A larger collection, possibly more extensive than that of Artemidorus, and including poems of doubtful authen­ticity, was known to Suïdas, who says: “Theocritus wrote the so-called bucolic poems in the Dorian dialect. Some persons also attribute to him the following: *Daughters of Proetus, Hopes, Hymns, Heroines, Dirges, Lyrics, Elegies, Iambics, Epigrams.”* The first of these may have been known to Virgil, who refers to the *Proetides* in the *Eclogues.@@1* The spurious poem xxi. may have been one of the *Hopes (cf.* 1. 66, ϵλτris *τωv ύπνων),* and poem xxvi. may have been one of the *Heroines* (cf. 1. 36, ήρωΐναι): elegiacs are found in viii. 33-60, and the spurious epitaph on Bion may have been one of the *Dirges.* The other classes are all represented in the larger collection which has come down to us.

The poems which arc generally held to be authentic may be classified thus:—

I. *Bucolics and Mimes.—*The distinction between these is that the scenes of the former are laid in the country and those of the latter in a town. The most famous of the *Bucolics* are i., vii., xi. and vi. In i. Thyrsis sings to a goatherd how Daρhnis, the mythical herdsman, having defied the power of Aphrodite, dies rather than yield to a passion with which the goddess had inspired him. In xi. Polyphemus is depicted as in love with the sea-nymph Galatea and finding solace in song: in vi. he is cured of his passion and naively relates how he repulses the overtures now made to him by Galatea. The monster of the *Odyssey* has been “ written up to date ” after the Alexandrian manner and has become a gentle simpleton. Idyll vii., the Harvest Feast (θαλi∙<τια), is the most important of the bucolic poems. The scene is laid in the isle of Cos. The poet speaks in the first person and is styled Simichidas@@2 by his friends. Other poets are introduced under feigned names. Thus ancient critics identified Sicelidas of Samos (1. 40) with Asclepiades the Samian, and Lycidas, “ the goatherd of Cydonia,” may well be the poet Astacides, whom Callimachus calls “the Cretan, the goatherd.” Theocritus speaks of himself as having already gained fame, and says that his lays have been brought by report even unto the throne of Zeus.@@3 He praises Philetas, the veteran poet of Cos, and criticizes “ the fledgelings of the Muse, who cackle against the Chian bard and find their labour lost."@@4 Other persons mentioned are Nicias, a physician of Miletus, whose name occurs in other poems, and Aratus, whom the Scholiast identifies with the author of the *Phenomena.*

The other bucolic poems need not be further discussed. Several of them consist of a singing-match, conducted according to the rules of amoebean poetry, in which the second singer takes the subject chosen by the first and contributes a variation in the same air. It may be noted that the peasants of Theocritus differ greatly in refinement. Those in v. are low fellows who indulge in coarse abuse. This Idyll and iv. are laid in the neighbourhood of Croton, and we may infer that Theocritus was personally acquainted with Magna Graecia. Suspicion has been cast upon poems yiii. and ix. on various grounds. An extreme view holds that in ix. we have two genuine Theocritean fragments, 11. 7-13 and 15-20, describing the joys of summer and winter respectively, which have been provided with a clumsy preface, 11. 1-6, while an early editor of a bucolic collection has appended an epilogue in which he takes leave of the Bucolic Muses.@@6 On the other hand, it is clear that both poems were in Virgil’s Theocritus, and that they passed the scrutiny of the editor who formed the short collection of Theo­critean Bucolics.

The mimes are three in number, viz., ii., xiv., xv. In ii. Simaetha, deserted by Delphis, tells the story of her love to the moon; in xiv. Aeschines narrates his quarrel with his sweetheart, and is advised to go to Egypt and enlist in the army of Ptolemy Phila- delphus; in xv. Gorgo and Praxinoë go to the festival of Adonis. It may be noticed that in the best MSS. ii. comes immediately before xiv., an arrangement which is obviously right, since it places the three mimes together. The second place in the MSS. is occupied by Idyll vii., the “ Harvest Feast. ” These three mimes are wonder­fully natural and lifelike. There is nothing in ancient literature so vivid and real as the chatter of Gorgo and Praxinoë, and the *voces populi* in xv.

It will be convenient to add to the *Bucolics* and *Mimes* three poems which cannot be brought into any other class, viz. : xii. (Aïτηs), a poem to a beautiful youth; xviii., the marriage-song of Helen (Ειπ0αλ<iμιos) ; and xxvi., the murder of Pentheus (Λήναι). The genuineness of the last has been attacked by U. von Wilamowitz- Möllendorff on account of the crudity of the language, which sometimes degenerates into doggerel. It is, however, likely that Theocritus intentionally used realistic language for the sake of dramatic effect, and the MSS. evidence is in favour of the poem. Eustathius quotes from it as the work of Theocritus.

II. *Epics.—*Three of these are Hymns, viz., xvi., xvii. and xxii. In xvi. the poet praises Hiero 11. of Syracuse, in xvii. Ptolemy Philadelphus, and in xxii. the Dioscuri. The other poems are xiii., the story of Hylas and the Nymphs, and xxiv. the youthful Heracles. It cannot be said that Theocritus exhibits signal merit in his *Epics.* In xiii. he shows some skill in word-painting, in xvi. there is some delicate fancy in the description of his poems as “ Graces" (Χάριτ«), and a passage at the end, where he foretells the joys of peace after the enemy have been driven out of Sicily, has the true bucolic ring. The most that can be said of xxii. and xxiv. is that they are very dramatic. Otherwise they differ little from work done by other poets, such as Callimachus and Apollonius Rhodius. The flattery heaped upon Ptolemy is somewhat nauseous. From another point of view, however, these two poems xvi. and xvii. are supremely interesting, since they are the only ones which can be dated. In xvii. Theocritus celebrates the incestuous marriage of Ptolemy Philadelphus with his sister Arsinoë. This marriage is held to have taken place in 277 b.c., and a recently discovered inscription shows that Arsinoë died in 270, in the fifteenth year of her brother’s reign.@@6 This poem, therefore, together with xv., which Theocritus wrote to please Arsinoë *(Schol. χaρι{6μevos* τ∏ *βaσιλlδι)* must fall within this period. The encomium upon Hiero 11. would from internal reasons seem prior to that upon Ptolemy, since in it Theocritus is a hungry poet seeking for a patron, while in the other he is well satisfied with the world. Now Hiero first came to the front in 275 B.c. when he was made “General” *(στρaτηy6s) :* Theocritus speaks of his achievements as still to come,@@7 ’and the silence of the poet would show that Hiero’s marriage to Philistis, his victory over the Mamertines at the Longanus and his election as “ King *” (βaσιλe(n),* events which are ascribed to 270 B.C., had not yet taken place. If so, xvii. and xv. can only have been written within 275 and 270.

III. *Lyrics.—*Two of these are certainly by Theocritus, viz., xxviii. and xxix. The first is a very graceful poem presented together with a distaff to Theugenis, wife of Nicias, a doctor of Miletus, on the occasion of a voyage thither undertaken by the poet. The theme of xxix. is similar to that of xii. A very corrupt poem, only found in one very late MS., was discovered by Ziegler in 1864. As. the subject and style very closely resemble that of xxix., it is assigned to Theocritus by recent editors.

IV. The *Epigrams* do not call for detailed notice. They do not possess any special merit, and their authenticity is often doubtful. It remains to notice the poems which are now generally considered to be spurious. They are as follows:―

xix. “ Love stealing Honey ” *(Kηριoκλtπτηs).* The poem is anonymous in the MSS. and the conception of Love is not Theo­critean.

xx. “ Herdsman ” (Boι>κoλfo∙κos), xxi. “ Fishermen ” (,AλιΛ), xxiii. “ Passionate Lover ” (,E∕>αστ⅛s). These three poems are remark­able for the corrupt state of their text, which makes it likely that they have come from the same source and possibly are by the same author. The “ Fishermen ” has been much admired. It is addressed to Diophantus and conveys a moral, that one should work and not dream, illustrated by the story of an old fisherman who dreams that he has caught a fish of gold and narrates his vision to his mate. As Leonidas of Tarentum wrote epigrams on fishermen, and one of them is a dedication of his tackle to Poseidon by Diophantus, the fisher,@@8 it is likely that the author of this poem was an imitator of Leonidas. It can hardly be by Leonidas him­self, who was a contemporary of Theocritus, as it bears marks of lateness.

xxv. “ Heracles the Lion-slayer ” (AtoFτo≠⅛w>s). This is a long

@@@1 “ Proetides implerunt falsis mugitibus agros.”—*Ecl.* vi. 48.

@@@2 Two explanations are offered by the Scholiast: either that the poet was “ snub-nosed" (σιμ⅛t), or that he was the son of Simichus. The second is obviously a mere guess.

@@@8 τά !rov *κal* Zi7s,⅛ *iπl θρόνον iyaye φ6μa,* 1. 93· It is possible that Zeus refers to Ptolemy: cf. Horace, *Ep.* i. 19, 43, *lavis auribus ista Serras,* where *Iupiter≈* Augustus.

@@@4 Some think that there is an allusion to Apollonius Rhodius.

@@@5 Cf. Hiller, *ad loc.*

@@@6 The evidence is contained in a new fragment of the Mendes Stele. Cf. von Prott in *Rheinisches Museum* (1898), p. 464.

*@@@7 iσσtτcu ovτos άνήρ* õs *tµeû κeχfrf∣σer, ixnhoι>,* 1. 73∙

*@@@8 i* 7pαre⅛ *∆ιiφavτos ίνάκτορι* 0⅞καro *τlχvas (Anth. Pal.* vi. 4,7).