and was thus perhaps a fitter medium of connexion between the genius of Greece and that of Italy than if he had been a pure Greek or a pure Italian ; just as in modern times the Jewish type of genius is sometimes found more detached from national peculiarities, and thus more capable of repro­ducing a cosmopolitan type of character than the genius of men belonging to the other races of Europe.

Our knowledge of the life of Terence is derived chiefly from a fragment of the lost work of Suetonius, *De Viris Illustribus,* preserved in the commentary of Donatus. Confirmation of some of the statements contained in the *Life* is obtained from later writers and speakers, and also from the prologues to the different plays, which at the same time throw light on the literary and personal rela­tions of the poet. These prologues were among the original sources of Suetonius ; but he quotes or refers to the works of various grammarians and antiquarians— Porcius Licinus, Volcatius Sedigitus, Santra, Nepos, Fene­stella, Q. Cosconius—as his authorities. The first two lived within a generation or two of the death of Terence, and the first of them shows a distinct animus against him and his patrons. But, notwithstanding the abundance of authorities, there is uncertainty as to both the date of his birth and the place and manner of his death. The doubt as to the former arises from the discrepancy of the MSS. His last play, the *Adelphi,* was exhibited in 160 B.c. Shortly after its production he went to Greece, being then, according to the best MSS., in his twenty-fifth (“nondum quintum atque vicesimum egressus@@1 annum ”), according to inferior MSS., in his thirty-fifth year. This uncertainty is increased by a discrepancy between the authorities quoted by Suetonius. Cornelius Nepos is quoted for the statement that he was about the same age as Scipio (born 185 b.c.) and Lælius, while Fenestella, an antiquarian of the later Augustan period, represented him as older. As the authority of the MSS. coincides with that of the older record, the year 185 B.c. may be taken as the most probable date of his birth. In the case of an author drawing originally from life, it might seem improbable that he should have written six comedies, so true in their apprehension and delineation of various phases of human nature, between the ages of nineteen and twenty-five. But the case of an imitative artist, reproduc­ing impressions derived from literature, is different ; and the circumstances of Terence’s origin and early life may well have developed in him a precocity of talent. His acknowledged intimacy with Scipio and Lælius and the general belief that they assisted him in the composition of his plays are more in accordance with the statement that he was about their own age than that he was ten years older. Terence, accordingly, more even than Catullus, Tibullus, or Lucan, is to be ranked among those poets who are the “ inheritors of unfulfilled renown.” He is said to have been born at Carthage, brought to Rome as a slave, and carefully educated in the house of Μ. Teren­tius Lucanus, by whom he was soon emancipated. A difficulty was felt in ancient times as to how he originally became a slave, as there was no war between Rome and Carthage between the Second and Third Punic Wars, and no commercial relations between Africa and Italy till after the destruction of Carthage. But there was no doubt as to his Phoenician origin. He was admitted into the intimacy of young men of the best families, such as Scipio, Lælius, and Furius Philus, and he enjoyed the favour of older men of literary distinction and official position, such as C. Sulpicius Gallus, Q. Fabius Labeo, and Μ. Popillius. He is said to have owed the favour of the great as much to his personal gifts and graces as to his literary distinction;

and in one of his prologues he declares it to be his ambi­tion, while not offending the many, to please the “ boni.”

Terence’s earliest play was the *Andria,* exhibited in 166 B.c., when the poet could have been only about the age of nineteen. A pretty, but probably apocryphal, story is told of his having read the play, before its exhibition, to Cæcilius (who, after the death of Plautus, ranked as the foremost comic poet), and of the generous admiration of it manifested by Cæcilius. A similar instance of the recognition of rising genius by a poet whose own day was past is found in the account given of the visit of Accius, on his journey to Asia, to the veteran Pacuvius. The next play exhibited by Terence was the *Hecyra,* first pro­duced in 165, but withdrawn in consequence of the bad reception which it met with, and afterwards reproduced in 160. The *Heauton-timoroumenos* appeared in 163, the *Eunuchus* and *Phormio* in 161, and the *Adelphi* in 160 at the funeral games of L. Æmilius Paulus.

After bringing out these plays Terence sailed for Greece, either to escape from the suspicion of publishing the works of others as his own, or from the desire to obtain a more intimate knowledge of that Greek life which had hitherto been known to him only in literature, and which it was his professed aim to reproduce in his comedies. The latter is the more probable motive, and we recognize in this the first instance of that impulse to visit the scenes familiar to them through literature which afterwards acted on many of the great writers of Rome. From this voyage to Greece Terence never returned. According to one account he was lost at sea, according to another he died at Stym­phalus in Arcadia, and according to a third at Leucadia, from grief at the loss by shipwreck of his baggage, con­taining a number of new plays which he had translated from Menander. The old grammarian quoted by Suetonius states that he was ruined in fortune through his intimacy with his noble friends. Another account speaks of him as having left behind him property consisting of gardens, to the extent of twenty acres, close to the Appian Way. It is further stated that his daughter was so well pro­vided for that she married a Roman knight.

The tone of the prologues to Terence’s plays is for the most part apologetic, and indicates a great sensitiveness to criticism. He constantly speaks of the malevolence and de­traction of an older poet, whose name is said to have been Luscius Lavinius or Lanuvinus. The chief charge which his detractor brings against him is that of *contaminatio,* the combining in one play of scenes out of different Greek plays. Terence justifies his practice by that of the older poets, Nævius, Plautus, Ennius, whose careless freedom he follows in preference to the “ obscura diligentia ” of his detractor. He recriminates upon his adversary as one who, by his literal adherence to his original, had turned good Greek plays into bad Latin ones. He justifies him­self from the charge of plagiarizing from Plautus and Nævius. In another prologue he contrasts his own treat­ment of his subjects with the sensational extravagance of others. He meets the charge of receiving assistance in the composition of his plays by claiming, as a great honour, the favour which he enjoyed with those who were the favourites of the Roman people.

We learn from these prologues that the best Roman literature was ceasing to be popular, and had come to rely on the patronage of the great. A consequence of this change of circumstances was that comedy was no longer national in character and sentiment, but had become imi­tative and artistic. The life which Terence represents is that of a well-to-do-citizen class whose interests are com­monplace, but whose modes of thought and speech are refined, humane, and intelligent. His characters are finely delineated and discriminated rather than boldly conceived,

@@@1 Ritschl reads *ingressus,* which would make him a year younger.