In June, 1971, Professor Clarence Allen Forbes retired from the professorship of classics at the Ohio State University after more than fifty years of teaching classical subjects. In his honor a symposium was held at the university on March 12 and 13, 1971, at which the papers gathered in this book were first presented; the contributors are colleagues, friends, and students of Professor Forbes, and their differing professional affiliations and approaches to the classics are in some measure an index of the wide range of Professor Forbes's own intellectual achievements. His record as a scholar may be gauged from the bibliography of his works; but in honoring him we chose to turn to his achievement as a teacher, who with learning and modesty brought alive classical literatures and cultures for generations of students.

The symposium owed its inception to the vision and encouragement of Professor Charles Babcock, who at the time of its planning was dean of the College of Humanities. We also acknowledge with gratitude the help and
support of many of Professor Forbes's colleagues and friends; and special thanks are owed to Mr. Weldon A. Kefauver, director of the Ohio State University Press. Finally, a tribute may here be paid to Mrs. Clarence Forbes, who for half a century has supported and inspired her husband, and on the occasion of the symposium participated at his side. To them both we offer this book in happiness and gratitude.
Foreword

Lass den Anfang mit dem Ende  
Sich in Eins zusammenziehn!  
Schneller als die Gegenstände  
Selber dich vorüberfliehen!  
Danke, dass die Gunst der Musen  
Unvergängliches verheisst,  
Den Gehalt in deinem Busen  
Und die Form in deinem Geist.*  

Goethe, Dauer im Wechsel

In honoring Clarence Forbes, we honor a teacher and scholar who exemplifies the timeless integrity that Goethe’s poem describes. We honor a humanist whose life is inspired by a vision of objective verities, yet one who is humble enough to continue the never-ending search for Truth, so that his grasp of the “Form in his soul” becomes an instrument of motion and change. Few men of intellectual stature have the dynamic quality that “unites the beginning with the end”; for many Truth is clear and immutable, and their attitudes cannot be

* “Let the beginning unite with the end; let yourself fly by more quickly than the objects; be thankful that the Muses in their goodness promise what cannot perish—the values in your breast and the Form in your soul.”
changed. Others are rootless searchers, changeable and superficial. Only among the few who can know and yet inquire will be found the great teachers.

It is tempting, in preparing a festschrift, to gather together a miscellaneous assemblage of contributions from the many friends, colleagues, and students of the recipient. Such a book would be impressive in its broad display of humanism, but it would have little unity. We have chosen rather to limit our scope and, in a brief compass, to consider the permanence of the classical humanities through the vicissitudes of nearly two thousand years of alternating decline and renaissance. Our approach is to some extent eclectic, inevitably, if we consider the range of our subject. Thus we have concentrated on but three periods of history (the fourth, the eighteenth, and the twentieth centuries), each representing a crucial stage for the classical tradition. Three of our contributions are written from a twentieth-century viewpoint, and in Professor McDonald’s chapter we have the retrospective sweep of the historian to balance the more strictly contemporary perspectives of Professors Babcock and Rutledge. Whether we should share the optimism of the latter or should agree with Professor McDonald in his regret for the passing of the classical tradition, only time will show; that such a difference in attitudes is even possible argues, at least, against an ossified tradition and indicates a certain vitality in contemporary classicism. There will be less room for argument about the two periods of the past that we have considered here. Professor Seidlin shows us how “the intelligible forms of ancient poets” (the phrase is Coleridge’s) inspired German literary genius at the end of the eighteenth century, and in so doing he speaks eloquently for the benign influence of the classics upon the German romantic movement. Let us hope that he will
have permanently disarmed the attitude of mind that could entitle a book *The Tyranny of Greece over Germany*. Professor Heimann's study of Saint Jerome takes us back to the borderland of paganism and Christianity, when the classics could have become museum pieces, visible and useless like the inventions in the Erewhonian Book of the Machines; instead, the vitality of the classics and the genius, however imperfect, of Jerome and the Fathers like him transmuted them and saved them for a life that still continues. It is at this stage that the concept of humanism underwent its most radical development since the fifth century B.C., and we may well wonder if we do not now stand at another parting of the ways. If we do, as Professor Babcock suggests, then we may take courage from that distant confrontation of the pagan classics and the Christian Fathers and hope that once again the classics will be a vital part of whatever new humanistic tradition emerges.

Since the contributions gathered here were delivered orally at a symposium, the limitations of time compelled us to leave out significant stages in the history of the classical tradition. Professor McDonald touches comprehensively on the great classical renaissances of the Carolingian Age and of the Italian Renaissance, but the inquiring reader will nevertheless miss a more detailed consideration of those periods. The parallels between our own time and the eighth century are obvious and misleading. According to Sir Compton Mackenzie (as quoted in the *Illustrated London News* for April 25, 1970, p. 13) "The time will come when . . . it will indeed be a distinguished person who can read"—an ominous reminder of an earlier dark age. Few now study Latin, fewer still understand it, and Greek is virtually excluded from all but the most rarified levels of academic pursuits. Yet knowledge of the Greek and Roman
civilizations is more widespread than it ever has been, and the potential for spreading the classical humanities through the printed word and the media of mass communication is there to be realized. The eighth century had its Alcuin and its Charlemagne who, although (in Gibbon’s phrase) “his own studies were tardy, laborious and imperfect,” yet was the patron of distinguished teachers and scholars and the unwavering supporter of education and its concomitant revival of learning. The scholar-teachers of our time no less need encouragement by the leaders of their society, who in a democracy must lead in response to the wishes and tastes of the people. The problem, then, of preserving an ancient and fundamental tradition is infinitely more complex, and its solution must depend even more on devoted and widespread education by the trustees of that tradition than on patronage by the rich and powerful, whether they are governments or individuals.

The Italian Renaissance, like fifth-century Athens, is proof of the need for a commitment by society in general to humanistic ideals if those ideals are to be a part of a living educational and intellectual milieu. The patronage of the Church and the wealthy could not alone have enabled a Petrarch or a Poggio to revitalize classical learning, without a more generally favorable climate of opinion. In the limited society of the city-state, where a single man or family could sway the whole people, these favorable conditions were brought into existence with comparative ease. Yet the task is not impossible with a modern democracy living in the post-McLuhan age. If we, as classical humanists, conceive our task to be merely the conservation of the classical tradition, we shall betray our trust, and our studies will inevitably be the preserve of an elite, to many of whom the classical languages and cultures will be as much a social passport as an intellectual stimulus. This has already proved to be the case in
some European countries, where the end result may yet be the elevation of the classics to the status of museum exhibits. On the other hand, if we conceive our mission to be the vitalizing of the educational and intellectual life of society, then our opportunities are limitless if our courage is great and we have imagination to match it. For "democratic" in education need not mean acceptance of the lowest common denominator, and the instruments of mass communication need not be the enemies of liberal studies but their potent allies.

It is here that Goethe's unity of the beginning and the end falls into place. The classical teacher and scholar is uniquely equipped to speak to the modern age in its own terms though his own intellectual foundations are laid in that distant past which is itself the basis of western culture. His humanism interprets the human ideal in terms that change from age to age while always drinking from the endless fountain of classical antiquity. Greek humanism was adopted by Rome; Roman humanism fused with Christianity; the Frankish barbarians gave new life to classical literature; the Italian Renaissance rediscovered the literature, thought, and art of the Greeks and Romans and used them as a living part of contemporary cultural life; the German romantics and their contemporaries were equally true to the classical ideal and, at the same time, were men of their own time. In our time the opportunities and obstacles are as great as in the times of those earlier challenges; it is the privilege, and the challenge, of the classical teacher to show to his contemporaries the unchanging values that underlie an ever changing culture. The true classicist is he who, like Blake's bard, "present, past and future sees," and with integrity unites his knowledge of the truths of the past with a sympathetic understanding of the changing present.
The Endless Fountain

*Essays on Classical Humanism*