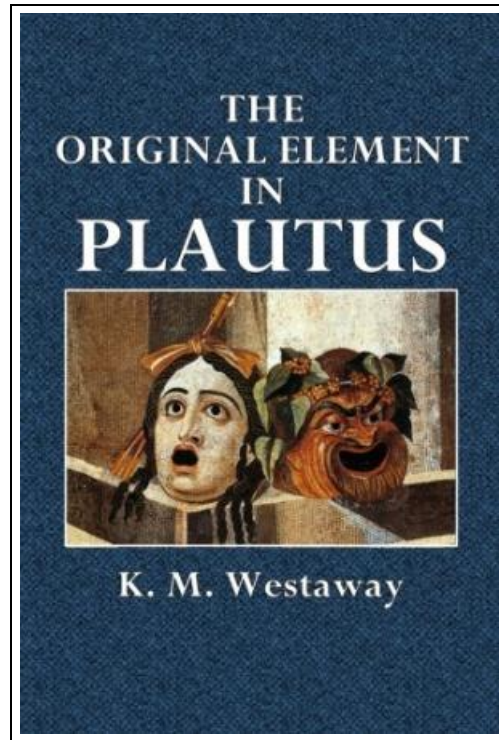


The Original Element in Plautus



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THE ORIGINAL ELEMENT IN PLAUTUS



Createspace, United States, 2015. Paperback. Book Condition: New. 229 x 152 mm. Language: English . Brand New Book ***** Print on Demand *****.From the Introduction. It is essential to remember that he [Plautus] stands very early in the line of Latin writers. In his own country he had singularly little literary tradition behind him. To a degree which we find it hard to reconstruct in imagination, he had to be tentative, ingenious, resourceful, and self-dependent. He is actually the most ancient of extant Latin authors, and as he is in this way, to us, isolated from the few other writers of his age, we cannot fathom any of the motives, other than mercenary, which turned his activity in the direction of play-writing, nor can we estimate the ideals at which he aimed. This at least is certain, that he did not aspire to provide twentieth-century scholars with specimens of pure Greek or pure Roman comedy. He recognized an immediate requirement of his age, and, unaware that Quintilian would have reason to lament his countrymen's lack of aptitude for comedy, he met this need by a literature which retained unbroken popularity on the stage till the time of the actor Roscius a hundred years later. It is unlikely that he anticipated or even desired literary immortality. Of all forms of literature, comedy is perhaps the least likely to win permanent appreciation. We shall try to trace his growing recognition of this fact as seen in his treatment of the bygone Greek drama; and probably if he ever estimated the prospective life of his own works, he took this lesson to heart. Certainly he never supposed that anyone would enquire into his original element, and, apart from his untiring vivacity and exuberant realism, his vivid imagination and power of expression, he...



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