

# The Mimes of the Courtesans



**Lucian**

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# TRANSLATOR'S FOREWORD

In view of the constantly changing standards for adequate translations, the task of the translator is not an easy one.

A rendition which a few years ago might have been entirely satisfactory would now be considered literal, stilted and uninspired.

And so, in our modern requirements for an effective version, something more is demanded than a merely accurate translation of words or even phrases; instead, a genuine appreciation of atmosphere, spirit and intent is insisted upon.

The *Mimes of the Courtesans* presents no exception to this perpetual problem of the translator. In fact, the task is intensified in this case because of the informality of the dialogues and the racy, whimsical style in which they are written.

The frequent occurrence of colloquialisms, of intimate and subtle humor, requires an ease and freedom in translation not permissible, perhaps, in works of scholarly import.

The translator has endeavored to keep constantly in mind the kindly humanism with which Lucian wrote these tales so descriptive of one phase of Greek life.

Lucian discusses intimate sex details with the frankness of one not immoral, but influenced by a system of morals that finds everything that is natural both beautiful and good.

These dialogues can hardly be offensive to the intelligent modern; for, somehow, our own civilization is changing, and as it becomes richer and fuller, it seems to have more in common with the civilizations of antiquity.

A. L. H.

October 1, 1928.

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