

REVIEWS OF BOOKS

BOOKS OF ANCIENT HISTORY

Geschichte der Meder und Perser bis zur Makedonischen Eroberung. Von JUSTIN V. PRÁŠEK. Band II. *Die Blütezeit und der Verfall des Reiches der Achämeniden.* [Handbücher der alten Geschichte, Serie I., 5 Abteilung.] (Gotha: Perthes. 1910. Pp. xii, 255.)

THIS volume forms the sequel to the author's recent book which had brought the history of Media and Persia from the earliest times down to the reigns of Cyrus and Cambyses and the usurping sway of the False Smerdis. Like its companion-piece it is a work of genuine importance, even if it has its limitations and though the critic be obliged to make strictures on some of the views which it sets forth.

As its title implies, it deals with the period of Persia's greatest glory, under the Achaemenians, and of its decadence, culminating in the conquest by Alexander the Great. One-half of the volume—and with perfect fitness—is devoted to Darius. We can follow in detail, and with abundant references to sources and authorities, the early events of his reign from the moment when he first had to engage in putting down insurrections against his power and suppressing rebels who laid claim to the throne.

Darius was above all an organizer—"huckster", he was called; but he simply gave Persia what would be termed to-day a businesslike administration. It is appropriate, therefore, that Professor Prášek should devote thirty pages (pp. 44-74) to showing how the great king's genius came to the front in that manner as soon as the reins of government were once firmly in his hands. The two long chapters on Scythia, the Scythian campaign, and the invasion of Greece, will be of special service to classical scholars; and, in this connection, mention may be made of the four pages devoted to "Dareios und Aegypten".

But now for a warning! The whole of the eleventh chapter—an important one, on Darius and the Zoroastrian religion—is marred by a most unfortunate conception into which the author, who is not an Iranian specialist, has been led by following misguided authorities. He should have checked his view by conference with a broader number of scholars, who would have been glad at least to comment in advance on some of the positions taken, for they appear to command too limited a horizon. The point is this:

The view that Zarathushtra, or Zoroaster, lived at the time of Darius and that his patron, Vishtaspa, was the same as Hystaspes, father of the great king, as Prášek assumes, is a view that goes back as early as Anquetil du Perron, and much earlier. Even as late as thirty years ago it was pushed to an extreme by Victor Floigl, *Cyrus und Herodot* (1881)—a book which the author does not seem to quote. Nevertheless, in spite of the unquestioned philological identity of the names “Vishtaspa” and “Hystaspes”, the best students of the subject are unanimous in agreeing that Zarathushtra’s patron was *not* the father of Darius. The present reviewer has been the strongest champion of assigning a late date to Zarathushtra (B. C. 660–583), based on the traditional chronology in the Pahlavi books of Sassanian times; but he has, at the same time, been no less strong than others in emphasizing the fact that evidence shows that the two rulers, Hystaspes and Vishtaspa, were *not* identical. Zoroaster’s appearance in the realm of religion and history was prior both to Cyrus and Darius, although we may be practically certain that Darius was a follower of the prophet’s faith. As so much is made of Zoroaster in this particular chapter, “Dareios und die Zoroastrische Religion” (pp. 113–130, compare also p. 25), the Prague historian, with his judicial sense, should not have failed to bring out the other side of the question.

To have to make this criticism on an important chapter—for Zoroastrianism was an important factor in Persia’s history—is not a pleasant task, nor may it seem a gracious one; but it is done in the interest of historic accuracy. In a second edition, which it is to be hoped the book may reach, Professor Prášek should turn to a larger number of specialists who are working in the field, and in this way be guarded also against adopting some fanciful etymologies, like that which distorts Zoroaster’s name “Zarathushtra” into a supposed form “Zotravastra”, “Opferstauden habend” (pp. 122–123), and against a half-dozen other explanations of Persian names that seem equally fantastic. But this detail belongs to the realm of philology, not history.

The estimate of the historic character of Darius (pp. 131–141) is just and is well put; but it may be doubtful whether the view adopted in regard to the Magophonia (p. 140) will meet the approval of all scholars. The summary of the reign of Xerxes, and the judgment with reference to this monarch’s place in history, appear to the reviewer to be accurate and fair. The reader may miss at first, under the reign of Xerxes (p. 155), some treatment of the romantic story of the Bible in regard to Ahasuerus, Esther, and Mordecai, as the names Ahasuerus and Xerxes are really the same, the former being a Hebraicized form of the latter. He will find, however (p. 219), that the author would prefer to transfer this episode, if treated at all, to the reign of Artaxerxes II.

The closing chapters, covering the successive reigns from Artaxerxes I. to the death of Darius Codomannus and the break-up of the

Persian Empire, are valuable for reference; in fact the whole book is a work to refer to, not a history to read. It is to be wished, when the author prepares a second edition, that the name of so important a scholar as Darmesteter—misprinted as “Darmestetter” (p. 113) and “Darmesstetter” (p. 129)—may be correctly given.

These comments must not be regarded as ungenerous carping. The writer would be the last one to engage in that, as Dr. Prášek must know from previous correspondence. They are made as suggestions—and others might be added—to make this erudite work and its predecessor more perfect when published in a new edition, best wishes for which are given.

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Roman Cities in Italy and Dalmatia. By A. L. FROTHINGHAM, Ph.D., Professor of Ancient History and Archaeology at Princeton University. (New York: Sturgis and Walton. 1910. Pp. xix, 343.)

THIS book is a distinct addition to our literature on Roman history; it is also among the most important works on classical subjects lately produced by American authors. The topic is unhackneyed, in fact there is no book covering precisely the same subject in the English language. The literary treatment although sometimes too technical for the general reader will satisfy every seriously minded scholar.

On rather more than three hundred pages Professor Frothingham has tried to bring together the results of his own trained observations upon the smaller cities of ancient Italy and of the Romanized Dalmatian coast. Imperial Rome is of course practically excluded, as are also Milan, Pompeii, Naples, and many other seats of civilization and power. Then too there is no discussion in a systematic way of Aquileia, or of several other cities of one-time importance. On the other hand there is an abundance of careful discussion of a number of towns which are probably little more than names to many fairly careful students of Roman history. Praeneste, the Hernican cities, Norba, Terracina, Circeii, the pre-Roman and Roman city of Perugia, Falerii, the Umbrian towns, and certain north Italian cities such as Turin, Aosta, and Verona, are taken up in succession, their remains analyzed, and in many instances excellent and unusual photographs are given. A feature very welcome in some quarters is the reproducing of scientific reconstructions of ancient buildings and monuments by such authors as Durm.

The main object of the book—and one which on the whole it accomplishes very well—is to make plain that to understand Rome, particularly the Rome of the Republic, and even the Rome of the Kings, it is necessary to examine the numerous small but very venerable towns of Italy. Imperial Rome destroyed nearly every monument of her great past, and yet it was the city of Camillus and of the Scipios that made the capital of Hadrian possible. But in the unspoiled hill-towns of