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The Story of the Pharaohs by James Baikie

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the two divisions the former will be of greater interest to scholars. The reaction which set in immediately after Josiah's death shows how short-lived was his religious work. This fact, together with Jeremiah's attitude to "the book religion," introduced by Hilkiah (see Jer. viii. 8, cf. however xi. 1-10), seems to justify the contention that the reformation was based on "the illusion" of the finding of the law Book (2 K. xxii. 8); and historical parallels are not wanting. If Josiah's objective was the destruction of the North Arabian cults of Baal and Ashtart and the inclusion of the border-land in the dominion of Jahweh, we cannot quarrel with the belief that the present text, giving the circumstances and place of his death, is hopelessly corrupt. Dr. Cheyne has no hesitation in emending it wholesale in the interests of his theory. At the same time he is aware that he has only the balance of probability on his side. Thus Josiah met his death not at Megiddo, but at a southern Migdol in North Arabia, nor at the hand of Pharaoh Neko King of Misraim, but of P'ru, a king of Misrim—"and he slew him at Migdol in Ashtar" (E.V. "when he saw him"). In support of his reconstruction of the text Dr. Cheyne draws attention to the message of Neko to Josiah (2 Ch. xxxv. 21) and to the change of his vassal's name from Eliakim to the equally Judaite Jehoiakim (2 K. xxiii. 34).

The great objection, as we have already said, to Dr. Cheyne's theory arises from its almost complete dependence on unauthorized textual revision. That there are insuperable difficulties in the traditional text, mainly arising from corruption, few will be bold enough to deny, but it is evident we shall have to wait for some external evidence before we can accept so drastic a change from the time-honoured belief that Egypt exercised a profound influence on the history of Israel and Canaan. While compelled, however, to reject a large part of the conjectural reasoning of this book, we cannot suppress a feeling of admiration for the thorough-going character of the author's work; nor can we hesitate to assure our readers that *The Decline and Fall of the Kingdom of Judah* will fully repay a careful and sympathetic study. If he will guard against a hasty acceptance of what at best are only tentative solutions of difficult problems, the student of the Old Testament will be amply rewarded by giving it his closest attention.

J. R. W.

THE STORY OF THE PHARAOHS. By James Baikie, F.R.A.S. (Adam and Charles Black.) 7s. 6d.

It has always been a difficulty to name a popular and at the same time a reliable Egyptian History to the person

who, without any particular knowledge of the subject, is anxious to lay the foundation for further study; because no such book existed, so far as we know. It is useless to offer to the beginner Professor Petrie's invaluable *History of Egypt*, it is too technical; nor Brugsch's *Egypt under the Pharaohs*, as it pre-supposes considerable knowledge; nor Maspero's three monumental volumes, with their extraordinary wealth of knowledge; these are more or less books for reference. The nearest approach to the desired book is Budge's *History*, but then it is in eight volumes. Lady Amherst's *Sketch of Egyptian History*, attempting as it does to compress into one volume the history of Egypt from the earliest times to the present day, has attempted too much, and is consequently far too sketchy.

But we venture to think that in this admirable volume by the Rev. James Baikie, anyone interested in the subject will find just what he wants—a clear, well-written, continuous, and scholarly story of the great Empire.

And it is no easy task which the author has undertaken. The literature of Egyptian archaeology has assumed gigantic proportions. Every spring the return of the many explorers adds fresh matter. When nearly every cultured nation of Europe,—French, English, Italian, German—have their “diggings” and publish endless memoirs and innumerable papers, it is obvious that the correlating of their discoveries demands much study and much labour.

It is in this direction, while preserving the perspective of events, that Mr. Baikie is so successful. He has not been satisfied to take the statements of others, but has carefully read the documents, and has skilfully woven them into his narrative. Consequently his story, particularly where he deals with the great critical periods of Egyptian history, is full of vigorous detail. We can only refer to two portions in illustration of what we mean. Anyone who reads the chapters on “The Conquest of Syria,” and “The Struggle for Syria,” cannot fail to be keenly interested in the fortunes of the combatants in the two old-world battles of Megiddo and Qadesh.

His account of the character and religious life of that strange fanatic, Akhenaten (Amenhotep IV.) is excellent, and the only regret we have is that Mr. Baikie did not print *in extenso* that wonderful hymn to the Aten, the *Benedicite* of the pagan world, one of the few compositions of unquestionable literary flavour amongst the quantity of documents which have been handed down to us on Temple-wall and papyrus. And in blending the many “Tales,” partly historical and partly legendary, with his history, Mr. Baikie has been equally happy.

With so much that is good, it is perhaps hardly gracious to point out some details, to which we think exception may not unfairly be taken. In giving two systems of chronology for the first seventeen dynasties, he has, we think, introduced unnecessarily an element of confusion for the ordinary reader. It would have been better to have adhered throughout to Professor Petrie's system, which has been worked out in masterly fashion, and which has not, so far, been satisfactorily upset.

In the earlier portion of the narrative, when dealing with the difficult subject of the pre-Dynasts, Mr. Baikie has made one or two assumptions, which are, we venture to think, not warranted by the facts. It is well known that there is no evidence that the predecessors, or as we may now call them, the ancestors of the dynastic Egyptians, possessed any knowledge of the art of writing. There are certain pottery marks which have been collated by Professor Petrie and others, but unsuccessfully so far as proof of a written language; and yet Mr. Baikie states that they, i.e., the pre-Dynasts, "evidently possessed some rude form of writing" in which they recorded certain invocations and prayers, which he states are incorporated in the Pyramid Texts of the 5th and 6th Dynasties. These, to our mind, do not indicate pre-existing documents, but are rather references to customs, chiefly those of burial, which might easily have survived in oral form.

It is also too great an assumption to state definitely that the famous tomb found at Abydos, is that of Mena, the first true sovereign of Egypt. The statement rests on a very doubtful reading of a single symbol by Borchardt, which has been rejected by some eminent scholars, such as Wiedemann and Naville.

But these are among the very few points in this excellent book which may be said to be open to serious doubt, and we have no hesitation in recommending a delightful and well illustrated volume to the general reader as well as to the scholar.

L. E. S.

PREHISTORIC ARCHAEOLOGY AND THE OLD TESTAMENT: Being the Donnellan Lectures delivered before the University of Dublin 1906-7, enlarged and with notes and appendices. By H. J. Dukinfield Astley, M.A., Litt.D., Edinburgh. (T. and T. Clarke.) 6s.

Mr. Astley states in the preface to this volume of Donnellan Lectures that his

"aim is to trace the course and progress of modern scientific discovery in regard to the earth and man, and