Review

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NOTICES OF RECENT PUBLICATIONS

The Oxyrhynchus Papyri, Part X. Edited by B. P. GRENFELL and A. S. HUNT. pp. xiv+311. 6 plates. London: Egypt Exploration Fund, 1914. 25s.

The outstanding features of the new volume of *Oxyrhynchus papyri* are the re-appearance of Dr Grenfell's name on the title-page, which will be welcomed by all who know his services to the science of papyrology in the past, and the new fragments of Sappho. Fragments indeed they are, unfortunately, and not all the skill of Prof. von Wilamowitz-Moellendorff can make them into complete poems; but they are fragments of high quality, and contain lines and phrases worthy of the name they bear. They rank higher in poetic merit than the ode to Charaxus published in the first *Oxyrhynchus* volume, and are only matched, among recent discoveries, by the vellum fragments at Berlin, first published by Schubart in 1902. The subscription of the roll shows that it contained the first book of Sappho's lyrics, comprising 1320 verses. At this date, therefore (the second century after Christ), Sappho's poetry was extant in complete books, and we need not despair of recovering one of them some day. Another papyrus, of slightly later date, contains fragments of another poem of Sappho, in a dactylic metre, on the subject of the marriage of Hector and Andromache.

The remaining classical texts include fragments of two MSS. of Alcaeus (unfortunately much mutilated), the second being accompanied by scholia. In the first MS. the passages which approach nearest to completion are in the same metres as those of Sappho, but lack the passionate quality which shines through even her mutilated fragments. The second MS. contains political poems, and here we can perhaps discern more of the note of genuine feeling. Alcaeus seems to have been the André Chenier of Greek poetry. Menander, who at first was strangely lacking among the discoveries of Greek papyri, is now assuming a prominence more in proportion with his recorded popularity. The present volume contributes a portion of a digest of the plots of his plays, some thirty lines of the *Epitrepontes* (incidentally establishing the proper position of a leaf of the Cairo MS.), and a few imperfect lines of the *Colax*. A handbook of general information (Pap. 1241) includes an account of the librarians of Alexandria, and helps to fix the order of their succession.

The new papyri of extant classical authors include small portions of Apollonius Rhodius, Herodotus, Thucydides, Plato, Babrius, and Achilles Tatius; but much the most important is Pap. 1251 (part of the same MS. as 1097), which contains a really substantial portion of Cicero *In Verrem* II and *Pro Caelio*. The text (repeating a phenomenon now familiar in early papyri) has characteristics in common with both of the main streams of tradition preserved in our mediaeval codices. The papyrus contains nearly 250 long lines of writing, and is the most considerable Latin literary text yet found on papyrus, with the exception of the Epitome of Livy, which, though more novel, has not the same importance as a contribution to textual criticism.

The volume also contains seven theological texts, of which the only new one is composed of two small fragments of a papyrus codex, perhaps of the fourth century, containing an uncanonical Gospel or collection of sayings of our Lord. The contents are too small, and in part too conjectural, to have much positive value. The Biblical papyri (fragments of Leviticus, Psalms, Matthew, John, James, and Revelation) are also very small; but the fragment of John is said to be as early as the latter part of the third century.

The non-literary texts are of the usual miscellaneous character, and range over the first five or six centuries of the Christian era. The chronological classification contemplated at the commencement

of the Oxyrhynchus series has long been abandoned, and no grouping by subjects has been attempted, except within the limits of each volume. The circumstances of the case make this inevitable; but the result is that each volume contains a number of isolated contributions to papyrological science. Further, as no facsimiles of non-literary texts are given, no palaeographical instruction in these scripts is obtainable. It is unfortunate that the Oxyrhynchus papyri have to be scattered to their various destinations in Europe and America without any collective study of them for palaeographical purposes having been undertaken.

F. G. KENYON.

The Ancient History of the Near East from the Earliest Times to the battle of Salamis. By H. R. HALL, M.A., F.S.A. pp. xxiii+602, 33 plates and 14 maps. London: Methuen & Co., 1913. 15s. nett.

Mr. H. R. Hall, of the Department of Egyptian and Assyrian Antiquities in the British Museum, to whom all students are so often indebted for assistance in, and contributions to, their own work, has now written an "*Ancient History of the Near East*." Some years ago, in collaboration with his colleague Mr L. W. King, Mr Hall gave to the general reader a very useful account of *Egypt and Western Asia in the Light of recent Discoveries*. The main interest of that book was archaeological, and it showed how well acquainted the author was with Egypt, its people, and its monuments. In this present book Mr Hall narrates the historical events of what Sir Gaston Maspero has called "the classical Orient." The volume, fully illustrated and containing maps and very useful chronological tables, appeals to the general reader as well as to the student. Classical scholars, especially, will find great interest in perusing the chapters on the "Older Civilization of Greece," the "Hittite Kingdom and the Second Egyptian Empire" (to my mind, perhaps, the best part of the book), and the "Renovation of Egypt and the Renaissance of Greece." I wish also to draw special attention to the Prolegomena, although I am unable to agree with every single point in it (viz. the challenge to Professor Petrie's arguments for a long gap between the XIIth and XVIIIth Dynasties, in which the author seems not to have sufficiently considered what has been said in my *Denkmäler ägyptischer Skulptur*—text to Plates 36, 37, 39, 40, etc.—about the voluntary archaism of the early XVIIIth Dynasty), I hold this exposé of the sources of our knowledge about ancient oriental history to be the best ever yet written. It is interesting to notice how the author comes to exactly the same conclusion as Maspero and myself, namely, that there is as yet no fixed datum for any fact in the history of the Near East before 1600 B.C. Probably Mr Hall's calculations of the time in which the kings of the Ist, VIth, and XIIth Dynasties lived err on the side of brevity, whilst on the other hand he seems inclined to overestimate the length of Mesopotamian history as compared with Egyptian (p. 30). He is perfectly right in commenting on the deficiency of our knowledge of the beginnings of Mesopotamian civilization, but it does not seem necessary therefore to conclude that Babylonia passed into the age of metal at an earlier period than did Egypt. Both civilizations seem, as Meyer has well pointed out, to be pretty well contemporaneous and independent the one of the other.

As to the sources of Mesopotamian civilization, Mr Hall follows E. Meyer in supposing a Semitic country to have been invaded by the Sumerians, who then formed what we call the oldest Mesopotamian culture. Undoubtedly from extremely remote times there were Semites and Sumerians side by side in the southern part of Mesopotamia, and it seems a probable deduction, from all we at present know, that the Sumerian invaders pushed back the aboriginal Semites to the north, but M. Heuzey has brilliantly shown that the archaeological facts put forward by E. Meyer in favour of his theory cannot bear the meaning he gives them. It is impossible to call all bearded men, including the Semitic gods, and all clean-shaven men, with the prince of Kish on the Ennatum stele, Sumerians. I may add, what seems to have been overlooked by all writers on the subject, that the difference between the bearded warriors, kings and gods, and the shaven priests, clerks and so-called eunuchs, reappears in the monuments of the Assyrian as well as of the Hittite kings. Now, if in Babylonian tablets of about 2500 B.C. we are to take the one type as Semitic and the other as Sumerian, why should we not do the same as regards Assyrian reliefs of 900 B.C. or Hittite stelae of 780 B.C.? In every case the only independent evidence for the existence of a Sumerian people apart from the Semites is a philological and literary one. By no means do I agree with the late Professor Halévy's theory on the nature of the Sumerian texts, but we may safely say that