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The Egyptian Nomes *Die Ägyptischen Gaue und Ihre politische Entwicklung*. By Prof Georg Steindorff. From the 27th vol. of the Abhandlungen of the Phil. Hist. Class of the K. Sächs. Gesellschaft der Wissenschaften, No. 25. Leipzig: Teubner, 1909.

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another Semitic city in the train of Aurelian, and the god of Hannibal ruled over the posterity of his conquerors. To the undiscerning eye of the old-fashioned Roman it seemed as if the dregs of the East were choking the Tiber. The converted Pharisee, however, was a better prophet than Juvenal. Upon Paul and his friends τὰ τέλη τῶν αἰώνων κατήντηκεν. The ends of the worlds did, indeed, meet in the religion which was ultimately victorious.

Cumont dwells with sympathy upon the contributions which were made to philosophy by the priests and thinkers who took the religions, often rudimentary, of local centres, dwelt upon what was common to them all, and, by referring even coarse usages to a spiritual purpose, lifted them up towards a higher morality and a profounder consolation. The worshippers of Cybele found themselves treated as individuals after being merged in the formalism of a purely state religion. Egypt, with its mysteries, appealed to, and thereby almost created, a sense of the after-life. When Syria gave to Aurelian the Baal of Palmyra, she gave also the belief in the unity of God. Babylon with its astrology raised the afterworld from the depths of Sheol and Hades to regions beyond the stars. Lastly, and chiefly, the Persian view of the world, as the scene of the great conflict between good and evil, led to an eschatology which in some respects is that of the gospels.

The priests and thinkers of Babylon and Alexandria 'before and along with Christendom spread doctrines which at the end of the antique world reached general recognition along with Chris-

tianity.' They scattered doctrines out of which innumerable philosophies were to rise, and baulk many a modern thinker of the claim to originality. Nietzsche mounted '6,000 feet beyond men and time' for the moment when 'the fundamental idea of his work—namely, the Eternal Recurrence of all things'—should occur to him. This dogma had already been tried and found wanting by the antique world. Nietzsche's conception of the antique was too narrow.

The sincere student of religious history need not boggle at those usages and ideas which Christianity inherited. They belonged to the whole world which environed Christianity. Lactantius and Arnobius and Augustine mislead us by their attacks upon the moribund religions of Rome and Greece: moribund for the worshippers of Mithra and of the almighty Sun, no less than for the worshippers of Jesus. We can turn over the pages of the 'Consolation of Philosophy' which repeats the commonplaces of the time, and wonder whether the author is a pagan or a Christian. So wide-spread was the common fund of moral ideas!

Once more in the history of the world the East stands face to face with the West. Once more an Eastern kingdom stands face to face with a Western empire, as Persia, under the Sassanids, stood over against a less noble Rome. Will a second Athanasius arise, or are we at the beginning of a new era? Such are some of the questions which Professor Cumont forces upon us.

FRANK GRANGER.

THE EGYPTIAN NOMES.

Die Ägyptischen Gauen und Ihre politische Entwicklung. By PROF. GEORG STEINDORFF. From the 27th vol. of the *Abhandlungen* of the Phil. Hist. Class of the K. Sächs. Gesellschaft der Wissenschaften, No. 25. Leipzig: Teubner, 1909.

PROF. STEINDORFF'S short critical monograph on the Egyptian nomes will be of use to all students of Ptolemaic

and Roman Egypt. In a short space he traces the history of the local divisions of Egypt and their government from the earliest times till the end of the native monarchy, showing that the nome-divisions which we meet with in the Revenue Papyrus and elsewhere under the Ptolemies are by no means the same in number or extent as those which existed either under the Old Kingdom (3500—2500 B.C.), or under

the (Thothmosid and Ramessid) Empire (1500—1000 B.C.). To give, as is habitually done, the list of nomes which was inscribed upon the monuments as a true list of the local divisions of Egypt at all periods, is an error. These lists perpetuated till the Ptolemaic age (for reasons of solemn religious conservatism) the nome-divisions of the Old Kingdom; the real Ptolemaic divisions differed widely from these, and bore different names. Yet not so widely as the Imperial local departments had differed from the old nomes. Under the XVIIIth Dynasty (perhaps already under the XIIth) the nome-provinces and their noble rulers disappeared in favour of departments based upon the chief towns, and ruled by royal officials. Prof. Steindorff shows how, under the weak government of the later Empire (XXth Dynasty) and the Priest-Kings, Tanites, and Bubastites, these departmental 'sheriffs' became hereditary chiefs (as the old nome-princes had from the Vth to the XIIth Dynasty), and founded little local kingdoms always fighting with one another and submitting alternately to Assyrian and Ethiopian conquerors. Then came the renaissance under the Saïte Psammetichos, and, true to the archaistic spirit of the time, which wished to forget the Empire and to restore the primitive simplicity of the Old Kingdom, the whole system of the town-departments was abolished, and an attempt was made to restore the ancient nome-system of three thousand years before. This could not be done either entirely or correctly, and the result was the actual nome-system as we have it in the Ptolemaic papyri, which differs considerably from the fictitious nome-system perpetuated on the walls of the Ptolemaic temples.

This thesis is maintained by Prof. Steindorff with vigour and success; he seems to have proved his point. On matters which do not affect his main contention, his conclusions are here and there open to question, however. Thus his tacit refusal to accept the usual identifications of Het-bennu, the capital of the Eighteenth Nome of Upper Egypt (Sepa), with the classical Hipponon, and of Hesebka or Kaheseb, capital of the Eleventh Nome of Lower Egypt

(which bore the same name) with Kabasos, the modern Shabbâs, is curious. These identifications seem likely, in default of anything else more probable. His criticism of the current theory which explains the hieroglyphic symbols of the nomes literally as the 'Nome of the Hare,' or of 'The Sceptre,' the 'Oryx-nome,' and so forth, a theory adopted by Prof. Eduard Meyer in the new edition of his *Geschichte des Altertums*, is interesting, if not entirely convincing. It looks as if from the beginning some of the ancient nomes had names of this type ('Oryx-nome,' etc.), while others were known by the names of their chief towns (as Ueset or Tj'emet, the Theban nome) or by the names of the gods worshipped *κατ' ἐξοχήν* in them (as Anubis, the Seventeenth nome of Upper Egypt). In Greek papyri of Ptolemaic and Roman times the designation after the name of the chief town is exclusively found; and probably this practice, taken over from the imperial town-department system, was retained in popular *parlance* under the Saïtes, the old provincial names having been forgotten.

Prof. Steindorff points out what has not been noticed before, that the symbol—a crocodile with a feather on its head—of the Sixth Upper Egyptian nome (which has therefore been called the 'Crocodile-nome'), is in the oldest representations a crocodile with a knife in its head; and it was at Tentyra, the capital of this nome, that, as Strabo says (17, 814), in opposition to the rest of Egypt 'ὁ κροκόδειλος ἡτίμωται καὶ ἔχθιστος τῶν ἀπάντων θηρίων' *νερόμισται*, while Aelian adds that he was here killed by being wounded in the eyes. 'Besserer Kommentare zu dem uralten Gaubilde bedürfte es kaum'; the nome was originally called that of the Crocodile-killers, and the picture-hieroglyph shows how the people of this peculiar province killed the elsewhere sacred animal.

Researches such as these are always useful to the classical student, and it is not seldom nowadays that the modern critical study of the monuments of Egypt yields explanation of otherwise inexplicable facts or illustration of interesting passages in the authors who refer to the Nile-land.

H. R. HALL.