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Obst's *Der Feldzug des Xerxes* *Der Feldzug des Xerxes*. Von E. Obst. Klio. Zwölftes Beiheft. 1913.

J. Wells

The Classical Review / Volume 32 / Issue 7-8 / November 1918, pp 178 - 180

DOI: 10.1017/S0009840X00011999, Published online: 27 October 2009

Link to this article: http://journals.cambridge.org/abstract_S0009840X00011999

How to cite this article:

J. Wells (1918). The Classical Review, 32, pp 178-180 doi:10.1017/S0009840X00011999

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printed for 'quin' (p. 389, l. 15) or 'minor' for 'mirror' (p. 658, last line) the mind receives a slight check. In p. 502, l. 10 from bottom, we should surely read 'locus.' Personal names are several times interchanged. In p. 505, l. 4, Herodotus, and in p. 657, l. 19, Homer, seem to have ousted Plutarch himself. The name Autobulus is several times replaced by Aristobulus, and once (p. 458, l. 5) by Autolycus. These are small matters, but so excellent a book will no doubt be soon called for again, perhaps in a time of less stress than the present, and an experienced

press-reader could set them right in a day. He would call attention to a point of prosody on p. 285, l. 7 from bottom. The punctuation and numeral references are correct and careful throughout; of the latter perhaps the only misleading instance is in the list of Errata itself, its first item should run 'p. 15, l. 6.'

The tables and indices appended are very useful so far as they go; a fuller index, especially of persons as 'Boethus,' but also of subjects as 'Antipodes' or 'suicidium,' would be of great assistance.

A. O. PRICKARD.

OBST'S DER FELDZUG DES XERXES.

Der Feldzug des Xerxes. Von E. OBST.
Klio. Zwölftes Beiheft. 1913.

A SURVEY of the whole evidence for the Persian War in the light of modern criticism would certainly be welcome. It is now sixteen years since Dr. Grundy's book appeared, and much has been done in the interval. Hence Obst's book seemed likely to be useful, although some of his previous contributions to Herodotean criticism (as to the account of the hippopotamus in *Klio* XIV., and as to the Scythian Bridge) were the reverse of happy.

He has certainly studied the works of his predecessors, and has paid well-deserved respect to the contributions of English scholars (with one important exception to be mentioned later); not only Dr. Grundy and Dr. Macan's big books, but Mr. Munro's articles in the *Journal of Hellenic Studies* are constantly quoted.

But it must be said at once that his work is most disappointing, and that from his 218 large pages, it is only here and there that any thing of value can be gained. As specimens of new points may be mentioned an ingenious conjecture as to the Aeginetan contingent (Hdt. VIII. 46, pp. 70, 71) and the suggestion as to Sciathus, p. 96.

It would be unfair to expect of him any contribution to History in the wide sense; his aim is 'Quellenforschung.'

But it may be remarked that his historical insight into a situation can be gauged from his remark about the pathetic story of Thersander (Hdt. IX. 16), 'Der heulende Reiser ist eine gar zu komische Figur' (p. 180), and his power of gauging probability from the fact that he believes that Xerxes' project of a mole from the mainland to Salamis was a serious operation (pp. 15, 154).

His treatise must be judged, however, as a criticism of our evidence in detail, and especially of that of Herodotus. It may be said at once that his arrangement is very unfortunate. He begins with a sketch of the whole campaign (twenty-four pages), which in some places can only be understood by a reference to the later sections (this at least was my own experience), and follows this with ten pages of 'Quellenabriss.' All the points in these thirty-four pages, i.e. nearly a sixth of the whole book, might either have been taken for granted, or worked in later—as in fact many of them are.

Even as a criticism of the evidence Herr Obst's book is very unsatisfactory. His two main aims seem to be to show how much Herodotus is indebted to a supposed 'schriftliche Vorlage,' and to vindicate the value of the later authorities—e.g. of Diodorus, Plutarch, and even Ctesias—against Herodotus.

With regard to the first point (for the 'Vorlage' we may refer to pp. 58-60,

134), he has of course been anticipated by others, e.g. by E. Meyer (*Forsch.* II. 23-2). Special importance is attached by Obst to it for the section dealing with Xerxes' march (Hdt. VII. 26-132). But elsewhere he continually refers to 'Vorlagen,' which were common to Herodotus and to Ephorus (e.g. p. 55 as to the march to Tempe). He never attempts, however, to deal with the real difficulty as to these suggestions. What were these 'Vorlagen,' which survived so long, to which Herodotus owed his excellence, and to which his additions are 'worthless'? A passage on p. 98 may be quoted as typical of Obst's method: 'The clearness of the geographical information and the description of the weather and the storm is excellent, so that the whole chapter may be assigned to the "Vorlage"; in VII. 189-191 the worthless tradition begins again.'

It is difficult to believe in excellent written authorities which survived to the next century, and which yet have left no trace in Greek literary history. Herodotus's many ancient critics would surely have told us something as to these authentic sources if they had existed.

With regard to the second point, Obst carries to an extreme the modern tendency to exaggerate the value of secondary sources. Grote's history might have been thought to settle once for all the question between the 'good cloth' of Herodotus and the 'transparent gauze' of Diodorus and Plutarch (to quote the phrases of Jowett); but the methods of 'Quellenforschung,' while they lead to mutually contradictory results, are supposed to have upset Grote's common-sense methods. One instance only of Obst's preference for later authorities can be quoted: Herodotus's account of the battle of Mycale is dismissed as 'ein leeres, athenisches Phantasie-gebilde' (p. 216), while that of Diodorus is accepted; and yet, as he himself says on the same page, that account (XI. 36) is made up of two hopelessly contradictory stories. To put it frankly, criticism on these lines is equally arbitrary and absurd.

Another less prominent feature of Obst's work is his fondness for cut-

ting out whole passages that seem to him improbable. The luxury of the Persian army train (Hdt. VII. 83) is made to be a mere invention of Herodotus, because it would 'hinder' and not 'facilitate mobility.' It would do such critics of Herodotus good to study the accounts of Oriental armies in the field which have been given by Englishmen who have seen and conquered them. But has a German professor ever been known to quote this kind of authority? Still more bold is the excision of the whole story of the first mission of Sicinnus (pp. 140-1), and what is the most reckless of all, the denial of the encircling movement of the Persian fleet outside Salamis (pp. 150-1). This second fact, which is related by two contemporary authorities and which is denied by none, must have rested on the evidence of hundreds of eyewitnesses. Yet it has to go because it will not square with Obst's theory of the Persian numbers.

But such arbitrary methods of criticism are believed in by many; it is old-fashioned to question their value. It remains then to give evidence that Obst does not practise his own methods well. In the first place he does not show an adequate knowledge of his authorities; two instances may be given, one ancient, one modern. The former is as to the Persian-Carthaginian alliance (pp. 40-1); he accepts it as a fact, but he never even refers to the evidence of Aristotle against it. The latter is as to the site of the Battle of Salamis; he accepts the old view that it was fought actually in the Bay, but has never heard apparently of Goodwin's paper in the *Journal of the American School of Athens*, which proved almost conclusively that the old view was impossible. It certainly does not inspire a student with confidence in Obst's knowledge of his authorities, when he is found quoting the inscription on the Corinthian dead at Salamis from Bury! In the second place his quotations always need verification; they are often incomplete or inaccurate. He quotes Grundy (p. 151) as saying that the Egyptian squadron at Salamis was too far off to take part in the fight; but he omits the other part of Grundy's statement, that the

squadron completely barred the Greek retreat. He quotes E. Meyer as refuting the statement that the Athenians 'were very unpleasantly surprised' that the Peloponnesians did not after Thermopylae meet Xerxes in Boeotia (p. 135); but what Meyer refutes is the idea that such strategy was wise or possible (G. des A. III. p. 384). He charges Herodotus with inconsistency in IX. cc. 99 and 107, because, having said the Milesians were posted on the heights at the time of Mycale, he yet allows the Persians to escape over those heights; but Herodotus in the later chapter expressly says that only 'a few' escaped (ἐόντων οὐ πολλῶν), which is exactly what his own narrative would lead us to expect.

The above may serve as specimens of omission. The following examples of inaccuracy may be given. Obst says that Hydarnes was 'Feldherr,' but not 'Befehlshaber' (presumably he means στρατηγός and ἄρχων); but though the usual words for Hydarnes are στρατηγός and στρατηγέω, yet ἄρχω is used of his command in VII. 211. 1. And Obst is absolutely without authority for making him 'commander of the Asiatic coast peoples before the campaign.' This is not only never stated, but is in itself

improbable. (These mistakes are made in an attempt to discredit what is probably the best method for estimating the numbers of Xerxes' army, viz. the ingenious suggestion of Dr. Macan and Mr. Munro that it consisted of thirty corps of 10,000 each.)

Again on p. 89, Hdt. VII. 40, 41, are quoted to prove that the whole cavalry of Xerxes 'at most numbered 12,000'; but Herodotus expressly says these 12,000 were all 'Persians,' pointedly implying there were other contingents.

On p. 139 Herodotus is not only misquoted but mistranslated. 'The Greeks at Salamis "waren nicht in sorgst um sich, sondern sorgten sich um den Peloponnes"' is given as a rendering of VIII. 74 οὐχ οὕτω περὶ σφίσι αὐτοῖσι δειμαίνοντες ὥς περὶ τῇ Π.; the omission of οὕτω ὥς completely alters the sense.

The subject of the Persian Wars is one of perennial interest. It seemed worth while therefore to show in some detail the failure of this recent attempt to rewrite the history of them. The up-to-date summary which will combine respect for evidence and rational criticism has yet to be written.

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PATRISTIC AND BIBLICAL TRANSLATIONS.

- (1) *The Treatise of Irenaeus of Lugdunum against the Heresies*. A translation of the principal passages, with notes and arguments, by F. R. MONTGOMERY HITCHCOCK, M.A., D.D.
 (2) *Gregory of Nyssa: The Life of St. Macrina*. Translated by W. K. LOWTHER CLARKE, B.D.
 (3) *The Wisdom of Ben-Sira*. Translated by W. O. E. OESTERLEY, D.D.
 (1) Two vols.; (2) one vol.; (3) one vol. Pp. (1) 146, vol. ii. 151; (2) 79; (3) 148. London: S.P.C.K., 1916. (1) 2s. net per vol.; (2) 1s. net; (3) 2s. 6d. net.

DR. MONTGOMERY HITCHCOCK'S two volumes are meant to serve, together with his previous work on *Irenaeus of Lugdunum*, as an introduction to the study of Irenaeus. They consist of

extracts from the treatise *Against the Heresies*, linked up in many places by short summaries of the intervening passages. A general idea is thus given in brief compass of the whole treatise, and many readers will doubtless find these volumes useful, in spite of their necessarily scrappy character. As a work of scholarship, however, they are not satisfactory. The translation is free, at times to the point of being loose. Words, clauses, and even considerable sections of the original, are omitted without warning, so that what is left is often no more than a paraphrase. There are literally scores of inaccurate references to Irenaeus, the figures being usually not more than one or two out, though far enough to waste a great deal of the reader's time if he attempts to compare text and transla-