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The Greek Commonwealth *The Greek Commonwealth: Politics and Economics in Fifth-Century Athens.*, By Alfred E. Zimmern. 1 Vol. 9½"×6". 454 pages. Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1911.

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tion of socialism should close the eyes of so many thinkers to the great political genius of the Imperial bureaucracy.

III.

When the reader, in his progress through these many pages, comes to the seventh chapter, which deals with Christianity, he will find that his not unpleasant labour is richly rewarded. He will be surprised to find that many of the circumstances of early Christianity fall into their place as part of a movement which in one respect was certainly democratic, although the modern professional democrat sometimes fails to see his face in the mirror. Of the three interpretations of Christianity which are in fashion—the socialist, the eschatological, the mythical—Pöhlmann does justice to the first and the second. He does not express an opinion upon the third (II. 587). Some persons might consider it old-fashioned to speak as if Jesus ever lived. I am sorry to say that in order to complete this review it will be necessary to take account of Pöhlmann's daring in supposing such to be the case. At any rate there is nothing antecedently improbable if, in the Roman world as described by Pöhlmann, a popular leader among the poorer classes should reach the cross. Such a fate was so common in those days that it passed into a proverb. Crucifixion was on a par with hanging as it was practised by the English governing class in the good old days. There is nothing therefore specifically prophetic in such sayings as: 'he who does not take up his cross cannot be my disciple.' And yet there are persons who, not knowing the idiom of the masses, treat a phrase like this as miraculous. It is only those *qui se paient des mots*, who can dissolve the great figures of history in a mist of words and,

by refusing to biography every detail which they do not understand, turn tradition into a mythology.

Even Pöhlmann, as we have seen, omits some of the traits which we might expect in a picture of the early Empire. His total effect errs perhaps on the side of an almost unrelieved gloom. But he enables us to understand how the declaration that the old world was at an end, and that a new world was at hand for the disinherited, should have appealed to the masses. The poor had the gospel preached to them. It is instructive to find that the gospel which shows most traces of Roman influence is precisely that gospel which announces the triumphant revolt of the Christian Church against the Roman world. Mark lays stress upon the majestic interference of Jesus with the existing order. But when we come to the teaching of Jesus, as it appears in the oldest source, we find that the maxims of the new order are such as could least have been expected. Unlike the modern socialist, Jesus did not fight capital with its own weapons. The synthesis in which the two warring elements were dissolved was something entirely beyond the scope of either taken alone. The hatred of the rich was forbidden to the poor. On the other hand, the rich were commanded to lend without expecting any return. It is an exaggeration, perhaps, when Christianity is represented as being in its earliest form a socialist manifesto (II. 587). Renan says indeed that, if it had not been for its wealthy and cultured adherents, Christianity would not have survived. It is also difficult to see how, without the poor and ignorant, the Christian Church could have come into being.

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THE GREEK COMMONWEALTH.

The Greek Commonwealth: Politics and Economics in Fifth-Century Athens.
By ALFRED E. ZIMMERN. I Vol.
9½" x 6". 454 pages. Clarendon Press,
Oxford, 1911.

THERE are some works, which, without being the parents of new philosophies or schools of poetry, are nevertheless original in that they exhibit a new pose to old facts, a new way of regarding

what has been the intellectual inheritance of previous generations, a new interpretation of ancient texts. They mark an epoch in the mental development of a nation, if not of humanity. Such a work was Grote's *History of Greece*: and such a work is Mr. Zimmern's *The Greek Commonwealth*. It were supererogation to review, in the ordinary sense of the word, a book of this character. Scarcely is it given to the world, when all who read learn, by conversation and correspondence, that the list of books it is indispensable to read has been altered or increased. It will be more profitable then to discuss one or two subjects on which Mr. Zimmern touches, and to indicate directions in which it is desirable that the evidence should be once again examined.

For the first chapters on Geography we have only to thank the author; if a few details raise doubts,¹ we feel that we learn more than we knew before. When we reach the chapter on the Soil, we have some questions to raise.

(1) Are we to suppose² that Greece was less fertile than England (or Britain) in Pericles' time? Or ought we to regard the soil of England as now better than it was, partly from climatic changes, partly from intelligent agriculture? Not only in this matter but in several other places, the author seems insufficiently to distinguish the differences that are due to race, to physical climate, and to actual date. Take e.g., the following assertion, used to support the view that the soil of Greece is barer naturally than that of England. 'Devastation' says Mr. Zimmern, 'or neglect may take the life out of it, and reduce it once more to useless grit. Hence the effects of a really serious devastation, as in the Decelian years of the Peloponnesian war, are far more lasting than with us. Attica never recovered from it, though she recovered at once from the desultory burnings of the first ten years.' Yet it is said that one campaign of

William the Conqueror left North England a desert for centuries.

(2) Merely to ask the question, can it honestly be said that anything but unfamiliarity makes the Athenian months more 'cumbrous' (p. 46) for dating than our own? ἐνᾶτη φθίνοντος more 'cumbrous' than twenty-second?

(3) It has been said that beer-drunkenness, promptly attacking the locomotive nerve-centres, leaves the Englishman harmless in his cups, whiskey-drunkenness, first exciting the passions, makes the Irishman murderous. Is it owing to the character of the ancient Greek wine—of the potency of whiskey—that the drunk Greek could dance?

(4) The author thinks the English standard of cleanliness 'unprecedentedly high.' Has he never learnt the Hindu opinion of us? and the ancient Egyptian it may be surmised would have thought with the Hindu. The Greek's abstinence as a rule from flesh-eating would make his teeth superior to ours, according to our dentists.

(5) Does Mr. Zimmern seriously mean that Thales' 'knowledge of the stars enabled him to predict a good crop'?

(6) The occurrence of olive-signs in Cnossus, Thera, and Crete, hardly disposes of the tradition that the olive came late to the mainland.

When we pass on to the chapters on Politics we are confronted with the good and doubtful qualities of the work. How stimulating, and yet how irrelevant and misleading, is such a sentence as this: 'The Greek peasant understood and enjoyed the plays of Euripides . . . but he had never thought of so simple a contrivance as a windmill.' We might challenge the word 'peasant': we shall certainly refuse the epithet 'simple.' No invention is simple till it is invented. The same confusion between the age of development and the genius of a people recurs elsewhere (e.g. in pp. 58 and 62). But we may point out graver misconceptions, as they must appear to those who are not carried with the author.

(1) He writes from the standpoint of one who exalts exclusive masculinity. If a reinterpretation of Greek life is

¹ Is it not more plausible, e.g., to suppose that Atlantis is a recollection of Minoan Crete than the product of 'Carthaginian mystifications' (p. 23)?

² See p. 39 with p. 44 note.

needed to-day, as it must continually be needed, this is an element that needs rehandling, if a prejudice of the proletariat (of which the author seems unconscious) is to be met, and the influence of the classical tradition to be entirely progressive. More than this, the facts of classical literature do not bear out Mr. Zimmern's beliefs. Men,¹ he thinks, meeting and talking 'will naturally talk about things of general interest. Now the chief thing of general interest in a small simple-minded community . . . is . . . the State'. He has only to look at the opening scene of the *Lysis*, or to recall a well-known anecdote about a conversation between Pericles and Sophocles to realize how far the actuality of Athens fell below this virtuous standard. When again he speaks of the Englishman—unlike the Athenian—'brought up to believe, as a matter of course,' that 'every man may do as he likes with his own' and seeks to point this by imagining Pericles trying 'to drive a motor-car through an Attic township,' he forgets the recorded proceedings of Cimon and Alcibiades. And while he eloquently tells how religious the Greek was, and patriotic, 'and never tired of listening to his father and his uncles telling stories of raids and battles,' he omits to bring out how idle therefore the Greek must have been. He was indeed a specimen of 'the idle rich,' and needs explanation if he is to be justified. And this brings us to another serious matter.

(2) The work is written, overtly from a modern standpoint, but it is from the standpoint in reality of 'the classes,' 'the public-schoolman,' and not as a modern work should be, from the standpoint of those who wish to reconcile the interests of all Englishmen in one. Mr. Zimmern deplores indeed the miseries of our industrialism: he sees as an ideal the Periclean craftsmen, but in doing so he betrays the same limitations as I have just suggested. He appears to know something of the

social conditions of Southern England, but the true Labour-centre of modern England—Lancashire, Yorkshire, Durham, and Northumberland—he does not understand. He thinks with sorrow and sympathy of specialism in manufacturing processes; but 'social growth, like biological, is differentiation of the units, so as to perform the necessary tasks with the greatest economy,' and in the North he would find, by means of this, short hours of labour, large wages, leisure, an interest in politics and sport, and a musical skill which is at least the equal in art of the Athenian capacity in statuary. And not to omit definite issues, where is the proof that the true interpretation to put on the drachma a day wage for all labourers, free men or slaves, is that 'the Greek never recognized any distinction between a craft or "trade" and a "profession" rather than that they were all regarded as 'hands'—the free-man forced down to the level of the slave? All the statements of Mr. Zimmern on this question (pp. 254 ff.) seem to allow the view that the Greek system of work was no better than, if as good as, what is to be found in the Lancashire cotton trade. The Greek workmen were often dishonest, they were ill-paid; in the special circumstances of Pericles' time, it is true, there was no unemployment, but we cannot answer for other periods; the potter's home would be more dirty than one of our factory men's, because his work was not in 'a large unsightly modern factory,' and we may ask whether the reason that 'two painted vases exactly identical do not exist' is not that the Athenian craftsmen were incapable of painting two identically.

(3) The author insufficiently realizes what the Greeks before Socrates did know—that Natural Science supplies an intellectual training, (p. 216). We have not room to pursue this and other topics further. We must be content with a few statements by way of contrast to Mr. Zimmern. When we are bidden (p. 213) to admire the Athenians because 'they bravely refused to submit either in mind or in body to the squalid tyranny' Poverty and Impossibility 'have imposed upon the great mass of

¹ The example of the Abors near the Dihong might be a valuable counterpoise to the Ghag parallel of p. 338. And what of the history of the word 'Bulgarian'?

human kind,' we reply (*cf.* p. 407) 'Pericles took the allies' money and paid therewith for the devoted piety and artistic employment of his fellow citizens.' What wonder if he later preached the doctrine of Universal Sea-Power? (p. 427). When we are exhorted to 'get behind the Industrial Revolution' (p. 218), we reflect that there have been countless such revolutions, and that the last must not obscure to us the reality of others. Lastly, it is easy to attribute to social conditions, to climatic or political, what is really the conse-

quence of race. In Northern India there survives to-day a genuine building tradition. The Solomon Islander, the Papuan, and the Basuto are known to exhibit special aptitudes. It is dangerous to speak as if it were possible by copying Athenian institutions to secure Athenian capacities. But we must stop: not the least merit in Mr. Zimmermann is that where he is not convincing, he is provocative of thought and of investigation.

T. NICKLIN.

ΑΤΘΙΣ.

Ατθίς, *Storia della Repubblica Ateniese.*

GAETANO DE SANCTIS. 8vo. Pp. xii+508. Torino: Fratelli Bocca, 1912. L. 12.

THIS is the second edition of a work which appeared in 1898. The original views there maintained are upheld in the present issue, which has been enriched by additional notes, referring to all important works and articles that have been published in the interval, and by two long chapters, one on 'Themistocles and Athenian Imperialism,' the other on 'Pericles and the Victory of the Popular Party.' The narrative is thus carried down to the ostracism of Thucydides. The result is an important and authoritative work, usually fresh and stimulating, and hardly ever dull, which will maintain the reputation that Professor de Sanctis has won in another field, and which it is to be hoped will become better known in this country than it was in its earlier form. Professor de Sanctis is of the school of Beloch, and his criticisms of the traditional chronology are generally in agreement with, where they are not the origin of, the views of the German historian: as in the view that Pisistratus suffered exile once only, in the dating of Cylon's conspiracy between the first and second tyranny, and of Periander and Alcæus in the age of Pisistratus. But our author's radical treatment of the tradition is not confined to dates. The general tendency of his work is to

minimise Solon's part in the foundation of democracy, and to assign the chief credit for the greatness of Athens to Pisistratus, who almost takes on the character of a benevolent Italian prince. Some will no doubt feel that too much is denied to Solon, and will be inclined to question whether it were not better to pay more deference to our best authority, and attach less weight to arguments from probability or continuity, which in many cases seem to lack solid foundation. The argument from continuity has little value here: the fact that Solon's work was almost at once superseded invalidates it, and our knowledge of Pisistratus' attitude to the constitution is too slight to fill the gap. Thus, on pp. 241 foll. the introduction of lot by Solon is questioned, and on p. 251 the Solonian βουλή is done away and the powers of the Solonian assembly whittled down. On the other hand, the account of Solon's law-courts, which likewise rests on late evidence, errs perhaps on the other side. In his chapter on Pisistratus Professor de Sanctis maintains that to him were due the ναυκραρίαι, which he connects with the general tax and the needs of the navy. He discounts the references to naucraries which Aristotle quotes from certain laws of Solon. He thinks it probable (p. 311) that Pisistratus reorganised the citizen army and himself appointed στρατηγός in addition to the popularly-elected polemarch; the prowess of the victors of Marathon is