

**General History of Western Nations.** Vols. I. and II. Antiquity. By EMIL REICH. Pp. xxvi+485 and x+479. London: Macmillan & Co., 1908.

In an elaborate Introduction the author explains the method of his history, the object of which is, he says, 'to do for history what Bichat did for Anatomy, Bopp and Pott for Linguistics, or Savigny for Roman Law.' In other words his aim is to explain broad historical facts as the result of certain general laws. One of the most potent of these laws he terms 'geo-political,' a force resulting from the geographical situation of the country itself and the influences exercised upon it by surrounding peoples. Few will doubt the value of such an attempt to evolve general historic laws, though many may consider the author over-hasty in drawing his conclusions. Of the part of the work dealing with Greek history, the most satisfactory is that which discusses the Spartan state. The author's championship of the historicity of Lycurgus against modern destructive criticism is whole-hearted and successful. His main argument is that so stringent a rule of life as the Spartan *ἀγωγή* could only have been enforced, like the discipline of the Orders of the Catholic Church, by a single dominating personality, be his name Lycurgus or some other. The attempt to account for the extraordinary outburst of genius at Athens in the period between the Persian and Peloponnesian wars cannot be regarded as equally successful. It is not enough to say (as is usually said) that it is accounted for by the splendid victories over Persia, and that the shortness of the golden age is explained by the fact that the life-and-death struggle of Athens with Persia lasted but a short time. Does this explain the unique glory of the city? Why should not Syracuse have sprung into equal glory after the victory at Himera? Dr. Reich finds the answer in the fact that 'Carthage was not sensibly stronger than Syracuse.' Hardly an adequate answer. It might be suggested that a victory won by the citizens of a free state is far more inspiring than a victory won under a tyrant. But there are many historical facts which defy adequate explanation, and the glory of Periclean Athens is one of them. It may be remarked incidentally that Syracuse probably exercised a greater influence in shaping the institutions of Rome than is commonly supposed.

The second volume of the work, which deals with Rome, need not here be discussed. The book as a whole is full of suggestive passages and displays wide reading. The illustrations from mediæval and modern history will be welcomed by many. The chief fault of the work would seem to lie in the excessive dogmatism with which very doubtful general 'laws' are often enunciated, and in a rather ungenerous depreciation of the German historical school. Without the laborious researches of generations of 'philological' historians no 'General History' would be possible.

**Atlas Antiquus.** By EMIL REICH. Macmillan & Co., 1908.

This Atlas consists of forty-eight maps, designed to present in graphic fashion the great military movements of classical antiquity. The campaigns depicted range from the first Persian War to the Civil Wars of the time of Caesar. There are also maps of Athens, Rome, and the Roman Empire at the time of its greatest extent. The progress of armies is indicated by lines in different colours, and their direction by arrow-heads, while the names of generals, dates, and the results of battles are shown by abbreviations or signs. The maps are supplemented by a text, which gives the leading events of the different campaigns, without, however, any reference to authorities. Many of the maps present a rather crowded and confused appearance, but the atlas as a whole should prove of undoubted assistance to the student. The danger is that he may try to use it as a short cut to knowledge, and neglect the indispensable study of his authorities.