

which is to be deplored; though it must be admitted that the functions of an index are in part forestalled by a detailed 'Abstract of Contents' for which we may feel grateful.

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*Prehistory: a Study of Early Cultures in Europe and the Mediterranean Basin.* By M. C. BURKITT, M.A., F.G.S.  $9\frac{3}{4} \times 7$ ; pp. xx + 438. Cambridge University Press, 1921. 35s.

The first words set down by the author of this book are all too true. He says in his preface, 'A text-book on prehistoric archaeology is by no means an easy thing to write'. To be able to write a book of the kind, and, having the ability, to sit down and write it, is within the capacity of a very few persons. Whether we turn to the limits of time covered by the subject, or to the geographical side, the mass of knowledge required is, in our times, almost beyond human grasp. For to avoid even the more commonplace pitfalls, the writer must be either familiarly acquainted or on speaking terms with geology, palaeontology, human anatomy, mineralogy, and a host of related branches of science, while he should know something at least of the story of the primitive races living to-day. Starting thus equipped, he should bring to his task a good knowledge of his own language, and a very clear method of demonstration.

I fear Mr. Burkitt falls short of this ideal, and it is a great pity. At no period since the first launching of prehistoric studies on the scientific world has there been so urgent a demand for a fearless and impartial statement of their position. Most of the problems that have come to light during the last twenty years are very cursorily treated by him. It is perhaps as well, for many of them require a Huxley or a Tyndall for their presentation in an unbiassed form, and much more research for their solution. But a volume on 'prehistory' should at least give a summary account of the arguments on two sides—e.g. in the matter of Grime's Graves, among others. In one way at any rate Mr. Burkitt has done well, and that is in his account of the wonderful painted caves of Spain. He has worked in this field under the very able guidance of the Abbé Breuil, the most indefatigable and enthusiastic explorer of our times. The Abbé writes an excellent preface to the volume, and is manifestly grateful to his pupil for putting his work and his views before the English public. It is perhaps this extreme concentration on the Abbé Breuil's work that has made Mr. Burkitt deal with other and equally important productions of early man in rather too hasty a manner. The book as a whole bears evidence of haste. No work of the kind can fully serve its purpose unless fully illustrated, and the illustrations should give the unlearned a true impression, and not be inserted as if they were padding. Very little can be said in praise of Mr. Burkitt's plates; the drawings and photographs are both poor, and his scales are maddening. On pl. vii he says, 'No. 4 is 9.7 in. in length, others in proportion except 5', creating a demand on the unfortunate student for mathematics in addition to the other sciences required by the prehistorian. It is to be deplored that Mr. Burkitt or the University Press was not better

advised in the matter of illustration. The majority of the figures they give would, moreover, be of far greater value if inserted in the text.

I regret to have to say these things; I should so greatly have preferred it had I been compelled to use the superlatives of admiration, for, as I said, the subject is badly in need of being treated with fulness and knowledge.

'Strata' is *not* a singular (p. 27); to set down on p. 68, 'Disc, this implement is round or oval', is in itself a little naïve, but the beginner will be somewhat puzzled on pl. viii to discover 'a square angled flat disc'; on p. 283 'rather inaccessible' reminds one of 'rather unique', a favourite phrase among dealers in works of art. The description of a celt on p. 160 would hardly give a very clear image to a person who had never seen one.

Mr. Burkitt has a great deal of knowledge, and there is evidence of the fact in his book. But he must be content to include a smaller field in the title of his next book, and he should get a competent friend to read his proofs and another to make his illustrations.

C. H. READ.

*Motya: a Phoenician Colony in Sicily.* By JOSEPH I. S. WHITAKER. 9 $\frac{3}{4}$  x 6; pp. xvi + 357. London: Bell, 1921. 30s.

Mr. Joseph Whitaker has published a very useful account of his excavations on the island of Motya, the modern Isola S. Pantaleo, in the Stagnone di Marsala. Motya, though so small, was a very important Phoenician settlement, and in its very smallness is a typical Phoenician site, a town crowded on a small island, like Tyre itself, where the trader-folk could live and traffick safe from sudden attack by the tribes of the mainland. Mr. Whitaker has carried out, assisted by the Cavaliere Giuseppe Lipari-Cascio, very extensive excavations at Motya, which have produced results of great interest, which are published *in extenso* in this book, well illustrated by many admirable photographs. He appends an account of the chief objects preserved in the little museum he has erected on the island, with references to other Phoenician antiquities preserved elsewhere in Sicily. Mr. Whitaker has a keen devotion to the archaeology of Sicily, and especially the district of Marsala, with which he has a close connexion, and has personal acquaintance with archaeological work in other lands, such as Egypt. His labours have therefore been effected with care and knowledge, and cannot be too highly commended. He realizes also the importance of adequate publication of such work, and has carried out this task well.

But we wish he had not preceded his account by a lengthy account of the Phoenicians, not merely in Sicily, but as such, *quâ* Phoenicians, in their own home and elsewhere, which is totally unnecessary. It contains nothing new, and merely repeats commonplaces of ancient history, which might be in place in a general history of the Near East but are uncalled-for here. It would have been more than enough to have referred the reader desirous of information about the Phoenicians generally to some standard history. It is no use repeating what everybody knows, and those who will derive profit from Mr. Whitaker's