

BOOK REVIEWS

von Prof. Tor Andrae. Uppsala, Der Ursprung des Islams und das Christentum, 1926.

The origin of Islam has long been an unsettled problem. Had Mohammed been dependent, like the compiler of the Pentateuch, upon written documents it would have been a much easier matter to discern the sources he used. But dealing, as we are, with information that reached him in the ordinary course of daily life, in chance conversations, from casually overheard fragments of sermons or scripture readings, our problem is infinitely more difficult. And there can be little doubt that the real reason for the lack of unanimity among Islamic scholars is our extreme ignorance of the religious background of Western Asia at the time. It has been too readily assumed that Asiatic Christianity was just the same as European Christianity, perhaps with a dash of heresy thrown in; and it was so difficult to believe that such could have been the main influence on Mohammed's thought, that some have suggested the existence of otherwise unknown heresies, and the attempt has even been made to reconstruct a heresy to account for the facts.

Prof. Tor Andrae turns away from these heretical sects whose very existence is problematical, and directs our attention to the great missionary church of Asia usually known as Nestorian. That it was possible for this church to have influenced the Prophet is first shown by a careful study of all the information available about Christianity in Arabia. The author then proceeds to discuss, not a variety of points in which similarity or difference might be found, but the one circle of ideas most prominent and characteristic of Mohammed, viz. his eschatology with its extraordinary stress on the fear of the judgment day and of hell, and this as the main motive of right conduct. Owing to our ignorance of Asiatic Christianity we had been inclined to look almost anywhere else than in Christianity to find the source of this dread of the *tremendum*. Yet the author shows that these very ideas were current in Syrian Christianity. It was in Syrian monasticism, and in no other form of Christianity, that the evangelical idea of forgiveness and divine fatherhood had completely disappeared, and that men stood before God not as children before their Father but as slaves before their Lord. The dread of hell is traced back from Syrian monasticism to Egyptian monasticism, and from thence still further back to the old Egyptian religion. It might be said that only one aspect of Islam had been considered; but while that is true, it is also true that that one aspect is as central in Mohammed's teaching as the Kingdom of God is in the teaching of Christ. One may reasonably expect that the further investigation which the author hopes for will show other influences from the same quarter. He is careful to guard himself against the charge of making Mohammed a Nestorian Christian by referring to other influences requiring investigation, such as those which gave rise to the narratives in the Koran and its theological terminology, which obviously do not come from Nestorian Christianity.

The importance of Prof. Tor Andrae's work can scarcely be exaggerated. If the later study bears out the conclusions so far arrived at, it means that Islam did not arise in a back-water from some minor Judaeo-Christian sect, but arose in the full stream of the religious life of Western Asia. Then we should have to look for Mohammed's inspiration not in some hidden corner, but in the daily religious thought and practice of the great Nestorian Church; allowing of course for the sort of misunderstanding on Mohammed's part which is inevitable for one who tries to learn about Christianity without joining its fellowship. And the history of the incursion of Islam into Persia and Syria would have no longer to be looked at as the introduction of an entirely new set of ideas.

One trusts that this book will be studied carefully, and that it will be an incentive to other scholars to pursue an investigation which may at length show in its true perspective the part played by Islam in the religious history of Asia and the Near East.

L. E. BROWNE.

In Unknown Arabia by Major R. E. Cheesman, with a Forword by Sir Percy Z. Cox. Macmillan & Co., London, 1926. 433 pp. 25 shillings.

Here we have another important volume unveiling the secrets of the great peninsula, which, even after Doughty, Philby and Shakespeare, remain to be explored. Sir Percy Cox in his foreword characterizes the book as an intensely human tale of desert travel, a vivid and unvarnished record of travel, pursued under the most trying circumstances, with imperturbable patience and perseverance. The writer was primarily interested in zoology and as a naturalist he gives especial attention to the fauna of the region visited, which was Bahrain, Hassa and the oasis of Jabrin. He himself summarizes the results of his explorations as follows:

"It may be useful to summarize here the results of my journey. The Al Murra tribe and their mysterious oasis of Jabrin had been visited and photographed. The Great South Desert had at last been penetrated, and the route mapped for a distance of a hundred and fifty miles in previously unexplored country. Wadi Sahba had been seen for the first time by European eyes, and its connection with Wadi Hanifa in Nejd confirmed. Equally important from the point of view of Arabian hydrography was the proof of the nonexistence of two immense rivers or drainage channels that have figured largely in Arabian maps from the earliest times, under the names of Wadi Jabrin and Wadi Aftan. Our route ought to have crossed their line had they existed, and they now must be regarded as mythical. The information imparted by Saleh as to conditions in the centre of the Great South Desert is of value, particularly as regards the existence of an intermittent water-flow in wells at Magainma, a place that had never been heard of before, and he has added to our knowledge of the shape and extent of the great sand-dune tracts. The discovery of the ruin-field at Abu Zahmul has strengthened the claims made by previous historiographers, that Oqair is the site of the ancient Phoenician port of Gerra.

"The latitude and longitude of Oqair, Hufuf, and Jabrin, and the latitude of Wadi Sahba were astronomically determined. All these had been provisionally placed on maps, but their positions had not previously been accurately fixed. Philby had, however, obtained the latitude of Hufuf."

The most interesting chapters for the general reader deal with Arab life in Hufuf. Here the old discussion as to the reliability of Palgrave, which was attacked by Philby, is taken up. The book contains valuable appendices on the mammals, birds, reptiles, fish, insects, plants and the geological formations of East Arabia. An excellent map and superb illustrations add to the value of this important work. Z.

The Arab Civilization. By Joseph Hell, translated by S. Khuda Buksh. W. Heffer & Sons, Limited, Cambridge. pp. 128. 8/6.

An excellent translation of the well-known German work, *Die Kultur der Araber*, remarkable because it is translated by a distinguished Moslem, a Fellow of the Calcutta University and Lecturer on the History of Islam. There are additional foot-notes and an excellent up-to-date bibliography. In his foreword, Khuda Buksh looks back to the early days of Islam and compares them with the state of hopeless torpor that followed. "Since then till the nineteenth century, Islam sleeps the sleep of death. It is then aroused afresh, quickened into new life by the vigorous impact of Western influences. The Arab civilization ends, but a new era dawns for Islam. Islam, today, is as full of life and vigor and vitality as it was in its early conquering days. There is something eternal, all-conquering in Islam—something which defies the assaults of time." Z.

L'Occupation de Tombouctou. General G. Bonnier. 288 pp. Editions du Monde Moderne, Paris. 1926. 25 francs.

This monograph on the conquest and occupation of Timbuctoo by the French forces, sketches the origin of the settlement by the Arabs until 1893, the first contact with the French, and the subsequent occupation of the city. We then have the story of the administration of the French Sudan; an account of the transfer of the remains of the officers who fell in the taking of Timbuctoo and their interment at Marseilles, with picture of the monument; and appendices, also biographies of General Bonnier and others. Z.

Arabic Literature. An introduction by H. A. R. Gibb, M.A. Pp. 128. Oxford University Press, American Branch, New York. \$1.00.

This is one of the most valuable in the series of *The World's Manuals* for Arabic literature. Arabic even today maintains its prestige as the universal language of Islamic theology, philosophy and science. One could scarcely imagine a better manual than this to the vast and voluminous literature of a people that carried their alphabet and their conquests across the seven seas. A mass of dates, names and facts—the book is not easy reading, but every page has its own interest to the student and the little gems of Arabic poetry quoted will stimulate a desire to explore this wide field—a college library founded at Bagdad in 990 A. D. contained 10,400 books, while the old libraries in Cairo and Cordova had ten times that number on their shelves. The author divides his subject as follows: The Heroic Age (500-622); The Age of Expansion (622-750); The Golden Age (750-1055); The Silver Age (1055-1258); The Age of the Mamelukes (1258-1800); and ends with a brief epilogue on the writers of the nineteenth century and the revival of Arabic in Syria and Egypt, especially through the press.

With such admirable sense of proportion in every chapter, we regret that the writers of the Renaissance receive such scant notice.

Z.

Abrogation in the Koran. By Rev. Anwarul Haqq. Pp. 108. Methodist Publishing House, Lucknow. 1s. 6d.

A careful list, classified and with an index of all the abrogating and abrogated verses (*nasikh* and *mansukh*) in the Koran. It is based on the Arabic work of Abdul Qasim (Cairo), and gives the Arabic text with English translation from Rodwell. We note a few misprints in addition to the errata given, but the whole does credit to author and publisher as an excellent manual for reference.

Z.

Die Zwölfer-Schia. Zwei Religionsgeschichtliche Charakterbilder aus der Mongolenzeit von R. Strothmann. Leipzig, Otto Harrassowitz. 10 Marks. pp. 183.

The Professor of Oriental languages and literature at the University of Giessen recently contributed an essay on the problem of the Shiah sect and the origin of its peculiar teachings as an introduction to a collection of Shiah literature in Arabic, Persian, Turkish and other languages. This essay and the bibliography appear in catalogue No. 405 of Otto Harrassowitz; both are invaluable to all students of Islam. Now we have a monograph on orthodox Shiah doctrine and life in the form of two character studies: the first, Nasir-ed-Din Tusi, a man of the world, an astronomer and mathematician at the court of Hulagu, who was distinguished also for his knowledge of dogma and mysticism; the other a man of quite different type, pietist and ascetic, Radhi-ed-Din Ta'usi. In these two lives we have a mirror of what Shiahs thought and felt at the period of the Mongolian invasion. In a closing chapter we have the learned author's conclusions. He finds the philosophical significance of the Imamate dogma and the martyrology of the Shiahs and *their* unity, in a comparison with the Christian doctrines of the Epiphany and the Passion. Altogether a remarkable book and worthy of careful study.

L'Afghanistan: Geographie, Historie, Ethnographie, Voyages. By Raymond Furon. Librairie Blanchard, Paris. pp. 133. 14 fr.

A traveller's manual of considerable value. The author left Peshawar in January, 1923, on a mission of exploration to Kabul. In three short chapters he crowds a mass of information on present conditions—the houses, dress, family life, festivities, industries, agriculture and transportation facilities of New Afghanistan. The illustrations are excellent and the little book contains three maps and a plan of Kabul.

A Great Emancipation: A Missionary Survey of Nyasaland. By Wm. J. W. Roome. World Dominion Press, London. pp. 60, with map in pocket. 4s.

This is one of the best of the series of World Dominion Surveys and prepared by a writer well qualified for the task. A brief history of Nyasaland since its discovery by Livingstone, and a sketch of the principal tribes, is followed by chapters on the Church and Missions. "Islam wheels around the south of Lake Nyasa and extends up to Kota-Kota, which was of old noted as a slave-export place, and is now

known for Islam and syphilis. Islam hardly extends at all into Angoniland, on the southwest of the Lake, and not at all on the lower Shire river." The Yao tribe, however, is nearly wholly Moslem. The latest census gives 73,000 Mohammedans in Nyasaland, yet Islam is dying out in some districts where it once had an incipient hold. A large scale map indicates every mission station, Protestant and Catholic, and the language areas.

A Grammar of the Colloquial Arabic of Syria and Palestine. By G. R. Driver, M. A., Oxford. 12s. 6d. Probsthain & Co., London. 1925. pp. 250.

What an amount of diligent work behind the thousands of examples and expressions from Jerusalem, Aleppo, Lebanon, Damascus and fellahin-talk! When you read the book as a missionary who knows the spoken Arabic fairly well—at any rate of one district—you will often meet with new expressions, and then you will remark to yourself: "These are certainly not, as indicated, commonly used." Sometimes you will dispute the correctness and accuracy of the remarks of the author, and in a few places you will even venture the word "mistaken." Of course, some of these mistakes are only misprints, for such there are, although it should be readily acknowledged, as the author does in his preface, that great care has been bestowed by the printers on a very difficult piece of work.

ALFRED NIELSON.

Un Crépuscule d'Islam: Fez en 1905. By André Chevrillon. 5th ed. 1925. Hachette, Paris. 10 francs.

A miniature sketch of Islam in the West, as seen through the windows of Fez, by a keen observer who contrasts it with Islam in the Near East.

Die Gegenwärtige Gestalt des Islams. By A. Bertholet. Tübingen, Verlag von J. C. B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck), 1920. M. I. 20.

A lecture delivered at the University of Tübingen.

Nos Soeurs Des Harems. By Henriette Célarié. 1 vol. in-12. Paris. Hachette. 9 francs.

Describing the visit made by a French lady to the homes of the desert-dwellers of the oases of Tagourt. Throws much light on actual conditions.

Les Sanctuaires preislamites dans l'Arabie Occidentale. By P. H. Lammens. 1 vol. in— pp. 140. Imprimerie Catholique Beyrouth.

A reprint, recently issued, of an important study on the sources of Islam, and the pagan origin of many of the obscure practices of the annual Hajj.

Max Havelaar, or the Coffee Sales of the Netherlands Trading Company. By Multatuli, 1860. Translated from the Dutch by D. H. Lawrence. With an Introduction by D. H. Lawrence. London Knopf. 10s. 6d. net.

This book is a new translation of an old Dutch classic. The book once startled Holland because of its revelation of conditions in Java. The real name of the author was Eduard Douwes Dekker. The book in fact is an autobiography. Happily the conditions described of exploitation and selfish cruelty are things of the past.

Aus Dem Jemen. Hermann Burchardts letzte Reise durch Sudarabien. Bearbeitet von Eugen Mittwoch. Leipzig: Brockhaus. 1926. pp. 74 + 28 pl. Sketch-map and Illustrations. In Arabic and German.

Burchardt visited Yemen for the third time in 1909, and after a stay of some duration at Sanaa, passed down the Aden road to Qataba, and thence by Taiz to Mocha. He returned to Taiz accompanied by Signor Benzoni, Italian Consul at Mocha; and the two proceeded to Ibb, whence with a small escort they set out on December 19 for Udain. The party had passed a village, Mashwara, where a Sunday market was in progress, and descended into the Wadi ed-Dor, when it was set upon, at about an hour's distance from Udain, by a band armed with stones. Burchardt and the Consul were killed, and their bodies were buried on the spot.

This volume consists of his notes prepared by his Arab secretary. This accounts for the Arabic text. The volume includes notes on the dialect spoken in Sanaa. The book contains only a sketchy map but sixty beautiful photographs.

Z.

Revolt in the Desert, by "T. E. Lawrence". Pp. 335. George H. Doran Company, New York, 1927, \$3.00.

"Revolt in the Desert" has become one of the "best sellers" these past months, and like most "best sellers" it is written to be a best *seller* and nothing else. Lawrence's part in the World War was certainly a picturesque one and one that appeals to the imagination. His adventures during the Arab revolt against the Turk make interesting reading—for "T. E. Lawrence"—with everyone else we wonder at the quotation marks. "T. E. Lawrence" is certainly a master of style and a pastmaster of description. However, others have had as interesting experiences, have lived as intimately with the Arab and have written their story—with less popular appeal, perhaps, but with more real value.

A. R. V.

Slaves and Ivory. By Major Henry Darley. Pp. 219. H. F. & G. W. Witherby, London, 1927. 12/6 net.

An account of the author's adventures as an ivory hunter and explorer on the Abyssinian-Sudanese frontier. He gives an excellent picture of the strange political customs, of the country, and of its inhabitants.

A. R. V.

Cedars Saints and Sinners in Syria. By E. S. Stevens. Pp. 258. With numerous illustrations. Hurst & Blackett, London, 21s.

An excellent popular book—a tourist's view of the life, customs and tradition of Syria. In the last chapters the author gives an account of the political situation under the French Mandate—but we wonder if she is not too much of an Anglophile to be unbiased?

A. R. V.

Mille et un Contes, Recits et Legendes Arabes. Par René Basset. Tome II Contes sur les femmes et l'amour, Contes diverses. pp. 495. Maisonneuve Frères, Paris. 1926.

This is the second volume of Arabic folk-lore and stories collected from many sources by the Orientalist René Basset, doyen of the faculty of the University at Algiers. The author has gleaned many fields, Siyuti, Isfahani, Tha'alabi, Tabari and other writers and compilers. The first part, pp. 1-197 resembles the "Arabian Nights," and if there