

REVIEWS AND NOTICES OF PUBLICATIONS.

Annual Report of the Department of Health for 1924. Government of Palestine.

THIS valuable Annual Report records the continuous progress in the health administration of Palestine and gives facts and statistics over a wide range of subjects relating to sanitation of the utmost importance to those interested in the land. The year 1924 has proved a notable one in the advancement of the control of the two most prevalent diseases—malaria and trachoma. The people of the land are, it is stated, learning to co-operate in the measures taken for the destruction of mosquitoes. There was less malaria than any previous year, and the larger towns and many of the villages are now actually free from infection. Many marshy areas are being drained. No less than 2,688 pumps have now been fitted to cisterns in Jerusalem, whereas before the war there was scarcely a pump in use. The Jordan presents many difficulties in mosquito control; in many parts of the valley to attempt it would be futile.

The field of maternity and infant welfare urgently requires expansion. Midwifery would appear to be the one branch of medicine calling for further development. The numbers of medical men and women are astonishing; in 1924 they were 481 (of whom 285 were Jews). "There would thus appear to be sufficient doctors to meet adequately the needs of a population of some 700,000." (The estimated population was 681,245 "settled population" and 103,331 Bedouin tribes. Of the total 77·5 per cent. are Moslems.) "Unfortunately, owing to the uneven distribution of doctors by area and by community, certain sections of the population have scanty facilities for medical attention, while in some places the overcrowding of the medical profession is probably without parallel in any other part of the world. Thus Hebron, with 17,000 people, had only four doctors—

one doctor to every 4,250 persons ; while Tel Aviv, with a population of about 25,000 persons, had 95 doctors—one to every 264 persons. There were only five doctors living in the Arab villages, which have a population exceeding 400,000, while among the 21,000 members of the Jewish rural communities there were 46 doctors. Generally speaking, the members of the Arab and Jewish Sections of the population prefer to be attended by doctors of their own communities. There was approximately one Jewish doctor to every 350 of the Jewish population and one Moslem or Christian doctor to every 3,000 persons of the remainder of the population of Palestine."

There are many other points to which brief reference may be made. Vaccination appears to be now more thoroughly carried out than in England, with far fewer cases of small-pox than are at present occurring in the latter. Measles is still a great scourge, and in 1924 there were 6,000 cases notified, of which 15 per cent. were fatal. Antirabic measures are energetically pursued : nearly 9,000 animals—largely jackals and foxes—were killed, chiefly by poison, as an antirabic precaution, and 816 persons bitten by suspected animals were treated by antirabic vaccine made at the Government laboratories. Bilharziasis has now been recognised as occurring sporadically in the Jaffa district for some years, but in the year under review that other common Egyptian scourge, Ankylostomiasis (hook worm disease), has also been demonstrated in the area in and around the Jewish colony of Petah-Tikvah.

With regard to hospital accommodation, it is worth noting that whereas 1,012 ordinary patients and 4,442 Government employees were treated in the Government hospitals, no less than 23,000 persons were treated as in-patients in the Voluntary hospitals.

The appendices on malaria are of great scientific value and interest.

E. W. G. M.

The October issue of the *Journal of Egyptian Archaeology* (Vol. XI, parts iii-iv) is a double number, with much that bears, indirectly at least, upon Palestinian studies. Prof. Peet offers a new translation of the well-known Egyptian story of the Capture of Joppa, probably a legendary incident in one of the Syrian campaigns of Thutmose III. It is in this story that there is a reference to the *Aperu*, a people who are popularly, though hazardously, supposed to be identical, at

all events in name, with the Hebrews. Prof. Peet also adds a note to the interesting publication by Messrs. Sidney Smith and C. J. Gadd of a cuneiform vocabulary of Egyptian words, probably, they think, written by an Assyrian or Mitanni scribe. Some papyri dealing with oracles are discussed by Dr. Blackman, who also replies to Mr. W. J. Perry's defence of his theories of Egyptian religion. Later Egypt of the Ptolemaic and subsequent ages enters into Mr. Nock's elaborate notes on Scott's *Hermetica*, and in articles on Greek sculpture (by Mr. A. W. Lawrence), length-measures (by Sir Herbert Thompson), Hadrian's decree on renting state domain (by Mr. W. L. Westermann), etc. Three exhaustive and annotated bibliographies on Ancient Egypt (1924-5), Christian Egyptian (1924-5), and Greek inscriptions (1923-4) by Messrs F. Ll. Griffith, De Lacy O'Leary, and M. N. Tod, deserve special mention.

In *Biblica*, December, 1925, Father Mallon has a note on the Red Sea and the Exodus in support of the "traditional exegesis," and J. Schaumberger discusses the question whether cuneiform texts throw light upon the Star of the Magi. The full bibliography is always a special feature of this journal.

Mr. O. G. S. Crawford, of the British Ordnance Survey, contributes to the New York *Geographical Review* (January, 1926) an interesting article on the "Birthplace of Civilization." It is concerned with the origins of Sumerian and Egyptian civilization, although the view that the Sumerians came from India is now somewhat to the fore, owing to the cultural points of contact which have been found; the possibility that Indian culture was of Sumerian origin is not to be ignored. In both Egypt and Mesopotamia an original influence from outside can be recognized, and, arguing that the Sumerians came from the south, Mr. Crawford suggests that southern Arabia was the common source for both Sumerians and what has hitherto been regarded as direct Mesopotamian influence on Egypt. Convincing evidence is wanting, but Mr. Crawford notes that Major Cheesman, visiting the Al-Murra in Jabrin in 1923, observed that they had features which resemble those seen on early Sumerian sculptures, and he quotes from him that "it is not unreasonable to suppose that they are the remnants of this, the earliest civilization." A noteworthy article by Paul Popenoe deals with the distribution of

the date-palm. It is calculated that the total number in the world is 90,000,000, and Iraq stands well to the front with one-third of this number to its credit. "On the whole, the interior of Arabia plays little part in the world-commerce of dates—a fact well known to geographers but not in accord with popular tradition. It is not even self-supporting. . . . There are still a few palms in the hot valley of the lower Jordan, where in classical times the tree flourished; and there is a small production at Gaza. North of this palms are found at isolated points, particularly in the plain of Philistia and near Beirut and Tripoli, but at no point in sufficient numbers to have commercial importance."

Dr. Eberhard Hommel, in the *Journal of the Society of Oriental Research* (January, 1926), has a detailed study of the name of Mt. Hermon and of all the myths and legends associated with it. The rich lore of the Greek and Roman ages had its predecessors, and the effort is made to recover some of the early forms, with results which, if uncertain, are extremely suggestive. Prof. Mercer's discussion of Ikhнатon's religion is of more general interest; he concludes that "it came nearer to a technical monotheism than any other ancient religion before the days of the Hebrew prophets."

In the *Journal of the Palestine Oriental Society*, Vol. V, No. 4, Mr. T. Canaan continues his valuable study of Mohammedan Saints and Sanctuaries in Palestine. The present instalment deals with rites and practices (pp. 163–203). We read, *inter alia*, that the Bedouins living around Gaza, and many of the inhabitants of this city, believe that the Turks lost the battle of Gaza only because they had failed to respect the sanctity of a local shrine and levelled the sanctuary of Sheikh Nūrān and cut down a tree of Sheikh Hūreri. St. George is, of course, the great healer. In one case the "Sanatorium" is built near his church; it is composed of a dozen rooms, each with a chain fastened to the wall for restraining the unfortunate mental patients, and to transmit the healing power of the saint a wire connects the new building with the old!

In the *Revue Biblique*, January, of literary interest, especially for the New Testament, is Father Abel's useful survey of the Greek *koinē* and its problems. Father Dhorme continues his discussion of the dawn of Babylonian history. R. P. R. Tonneau writes on

Joshua's sacrifice on Mount Ebal, and, after a topographical discussion, conjectures that the altar should be located on the Rās Kikis where, in fact, is to be found a small construction of unhewn stones. Father Vincent summarizes the archaeological year 1924-5 in Palestine: the Byzantine ruins at Amwās and traces of pre-Byzantine buildings, investigation of two important North Syrian sanctuaries (Sheikh Barakāt and Ḥoṣn Suleimān), the Ophel excavations, Beisan, Caphargamala, and miscellaneous. To him is also due a critical review of E. T. Richmond's *The Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem*.

In the last number of the *Zeitschrift für die Alttest Wissenschaft* by far the most valuable article for readers of the *Q.S.* is the fine account of Byblos, by the editor, Dr. Gressmann (pp. 225-42). It is a concise treatment of the French discoveries there, and their significance for the history of civilization in Palestine. New questions arise concerning the depth of Egyptian influence and points of contact with the Caspian and Caucasus region, and all the indications seem to suggest that trade between Egypt, the Levant and the Caucasus goes back to the fifth or fourth millennium B.C. In Phoenicia itself there are signs of no little ability of native art, though the fusion of very diverse *motifs* goes back almost to the earliest times. The Phoenician coastlands played an important part in the history of the Ancient East long before written tradition arose, and the progress of archaeological research is emphasizing the fact that the "Old Testament period" belongs to what is relatively a late stage in the history of the "Bible lands." More attention is paid in this well-known international journal to British scholarship—a feature which should commend it to English readers. Prof. Welch of Edinburgh contributes articles on Deuteronomy and also on the death of Josiah (in the light of the new knowledge of the fall of Assyria), and Dr. Wardle of Manchester writes on the origins of Hebrew monotheism.

In the *Orientalistische Literaturzeitung* attention may be called to the reviews of Palestinian and related books, e.g., Val. Müller's review of K. Galling's monograph on the altar in the various religions of the Ancient East (January issue), Karo's review of Deonna's *Archaeology*, its scope and its aim, and L. Curtius's review of Springer's *Kunst des Altertums* (12th ed., by P. Wolters) in the February issue.

The *Reallexikon der Vorgeschichte* (Gruyter & Co., Berlin) continues to make progress and Dr. Peter Thomsen sends reprints of his articles on Palestinian archaeology : (1) Weights (*Gewicht*), a list of all the known weights with deductions ; (2) Vault (*Gewölbe*) with illustrations ; and (3) a long article on Gezer, with plan and illustrations. Dr. Thomsen shows a wide knowledge of the whole archaeological field, and his excellent series, of special value to biblical students, is one of the best features of this important lexicon.

S. A. C.