

REVIEWS

Hellas Revisited. By W. MACNEILE DIXON, M.A., LITT.D. (Regius Professor of English Literature, University of Glasgow). Edward Arnold & Co., 1929 (repr. 1930). Pp. xi+209; 16 reproductions of pencil sketches. 10s. 6d.

Professor Dixon has written a delightful account of a six-weeks' holiday in southern and eastern Greece, full of keen observation and fresh comment, with an eye for the picturesque and an ability to relate past and present in a charming way. One feels occasionally that by travelling in so apolaustic a fashion he missed contact with some of the humbler and naïve sides of Greek life, but his diary would be a pleasant companion for any one intending to visit Greece. His interpretation of Greek character, his brief but suggestive views on sculpture and architecture, and his gift of description make this record singularly attractive.

Did Homer Live? By VICTOR BERARD; translated by BRIAN RHYS. Dent, 1931. Pp. 234. 6s. net.

An attempt by the Directeur à l'École des Hautes Études to summarize the researches of thirty years on the authorship of the *Odyssey*. The author is mainly interested in the sources of the plot, the tales of wonder brought from Egypt and the East to the Ionian settlement in Asia Minor, the sailors' yarns and the log-books and Periplus of Phoenician navigators. He tries to identify the sites of the adventures of Odysseus, and finds in place-names a clue to the Semitic origin of a great deal of the narrative. He claims that when exploration in Iraq has had the chance which Turkish dominion denied it, it will be found that Greece in the period following the Dorian invasion was very intimately connected with Semitic civilization. The book cannot be said to justify its title, for the personality of Homer is lost sight of in the discussion of his environment. But we are grateful to M. Berard for giving us plenty of food for speculation, and if some of the conclusions are unsound or unnecessary, we have learnt much that we did not know before. The book has no index.

Rome. By F. S. BURNELL. Arnold, 1930. Pp. 303; 8 illustrations. 7s. 6d. net.

A guide-book written with commendable enthusiasm, which, indeed, runs riot in a feverish first chapter. But when the author sobers down, he has a fund of information and a genial method of imparting it which makes him an entertaining guide as we ramble through the centuries. A book to read before you go to Rome and to re-read after your return,

but not to hold in your hand as you patrol the streets. The illustrations are from sixteenth- and seventeenth-century pictures and prints, and so are far more valuable than contemporary photographs, for the greatest interest of Rome is her chequered career.

The Greek Language. By B. F. C. ATKINSON, PH.D. Faber and Faber, Ltd., 1931. Pp. viii+354. 15s.

Our welcome to this, the first of a projected series of books on the Great Languages, is tempered with a certain disappointment. All lovers of Greek are waiting for an authoritative statement of the latest views and the latest evidence upon the relationship between Greek and the various non-Greek tongues of the Aegean world; it is a long time since Kretschmer's *Einleitung* appeared, and perhaps we can't all read German; and we feel that Dr. Myres is a safer guide in matters of ethnology and archaeology than in linguistics. Mr. Atkinson does give us a chapter on Origins, but it is all too brief and indefinite; and one feels that in his attempt to separate out of the vocabulary of Greek those words that have no Indo-European origin he is going too far. An Indo-European origin can be suggested both for βασιλεύς and for θάλασσα, and since ὀβελός occurs also in the form ὀδελός, the probability that it is a loan-word is remote.

If the first section is too short, the following 100 pages on morphology and syntax are too long; and it may also be said that many of the explanations of points of syntax are out of date; thus, the Subjunctive and Optative are defined as the moods of Will and Wish; ellipse of a governing word is postulated in the imperative use of the infinitive, the genitive absolute, and the construction after οὐ μή; the genitive of price is explained as the same as that with verbs of filling; and although *Aktionsart* is mentioned in a footnote on p. 319 in connexion with modern Greek, its all-pervading influence in the classical tongue, seen, for instance, in χάλειπὸν τὸ ποιεῖν, τὸ δὲ κελεῦσαι ῥᾶδιον, passes without notice.

The chapter on Dialects is much more satisfactory, though it would be safer not to write accents on inscriptions in dialect; the unwary might think they were indicated on the stone; and the views put forward on the Homeric question are interesting, though, of course, they will not convince every one; and when the writer says that 'in this island (Chios) we find in Homeric times an Ionic dialect established with an underlying stratum of Aeolic', one asks for an approximate date for Homeric times.

The section on literature is rather perfunctory; the writer rapidly