

MINOR NOTICES

The Origins of the Islamic State. Being a translation from the Arabic accompanied with Annotations, Geographic and Historical Notes, of the *Kitâb Futûh al-Buldân* of al-Imâm abu-l 'Abbâs Aḥmad ibn-Jâbir al-Balâdhuri. By Philip Khûri Hitti, of the Syrian Protestant College, Beirut, Syria, Gustav Gottheil Lecturer in Columbia College. Volume I. [Studies in History, Economics, and Public Law, Columbia University, vol. LXVIII., no. 163.] (New York, Columbia University, Longmans, Green, and Company, 1916, pp. 518.) The present volume is a translation of part (316 out of the 474 pages) of de Goeje's edition of the Arabic text of al-Balâdhuri's *Kitâb Futûh al-Buldân* published in 1866, and is a valuable addition to the list, still far too short, of English translations from the Arabic. After a short "Foreword" by Professor Gottheil follows a table of contents (pp. vii-xi). Then comes (pp. 1-11) the translator's introduction entitled: "Arabic Historiography with Special Reference to al-Balâdhuri". As long as the translator frankly admits in this (see especially pp. 3, 7, 8) some of the defects of Arabic historians, he will not feel surprised if some readers should feel that the title of this volume is somewhat misleading, especially as no translation of the Arabic title appears on the title-page, or indeed elsewhere in the book, so far as the reviewer has been able to determine. To one unacquainted with histories by Arabic authors the title chosen might well seem to promise more of a philosophic treatment of the history of the origins of the Islamic state than he will find. However, the attentive reader of Dr. Hitti's book will find plenty to reward him, for by his study of this Moslem historian of the ninth century he will ever after have a better understanding of the problems which confront the student of early Moslem history.

The translation is divided into ten parts entitled, respectively: Arabia, Syria, Mesopotamia, Armenia, Northern Africa, Andalusia, Islands in the Sea, Nubia, Al-'Irâk and Persia, Media [Al-Jibâl]. These parts are subdivided into chapters and these again into sections. These sections have each a descriptive title printed in italics and underlined, which facilitates the use of the volume. Notes are put at the foot of the page. Pages 495-515 inclusive are occupied by an index of proper names of persons and places, and this in turn is followed by a table of errata (pp. 517-518).

Critical comment will have to be reserved till the publication of the translation has been finished. Meantime however it is quite clear that Dr. Hitti has done a very useful piece of work, and it is a pleasant duty to thank him and Columbia University for this handsome, well-printed volume.

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Étude Critique sur Dudo de Saint-Quentin et son Histoire des Premier Ducs Normands. Par Henri Prentout, Professeur d'Histoire de Normandie à l'Université de Caen. (Paris, Auguste Picard, 1916, pp. xxxii, 490.) The biographies of the early Norman dukes composed by Dudo of St. Quentin early in the eleventh century constitute the standard history of Normandy down to 996 and one of the most ample narratives which has reached us for that obscure period of European history. Warmly defended by its last editor, Jules Lair, Dudo's work has been regarded with increasing suspicion by recent scholars, but a detailed critical examination of the whole has heretofore been wanting. This need has now been supplied by M. Prentout, who examines chapter by chapter and point by point the problem of Dudo's sources and compares his account closely with the statements of annals, sagas, and lives of saints. The result is highly damaging for Dudo's authority. So far as his assertions are specific, they can usually be traced to the contemporary annals of northern France, notably Flodoard, which are supplemented by elements drawn from popular tradition and the *chansons de gestes*, and considerably amplified by Dudo's sonorous phrases in prose and verse. The order of events is confused by biographical treatment, and the whole is distorted into a rhetorical panegyric of the ancestors of the author's patron, Duke Richard II. The work contains singularly little on Norman life and institutions, even of the author's own time; the lack of personal information is strikingly shown by the relative fullness of the account of Richard I. down to 966, where Flodoard stops, and the meagre pages on the duke's later years, respecting which Dudo might have obtained contemporary knowledge. Although used by all subsequent writers, Dudo is not an original source, and what he adds to known authorities can be used only with the greatest caution.

Such, in brief, are M. Prentout's general conclusions, to which the reviewer fully subscribes. His volume also contains a series of important studies upon various episodes in the history of the tenth century, many of which were discussed more briefly in 1911 in his *Essai sur les Origines du Duché de Normandie* (*American Historical Review*, XVII. 391). Here and there further documentary evidence could have been used to advantage. A charter of Richard II. for St. Ouen expressly states that the grants of Rollo and William Longsword were not put in writing (Valin, *Le Duc de Normandie*, p. 145, where *minime* is mistranslated). Charters of Richard I. are so few that one is surprised to see no mention of the one for Fécamp (*Neustria Pia*, p. 208). Reference to Liebermann's *Gesetze* would have given a later date to Ethelred's privilege to London. The disputed sense of *funiculus* as a mode of dividing land is illustrated in a document of ca. 1024, which makes it equivalent to *corda* (Lot, *Études sur Saint-Wandrille*, no. 9); and in this connection account should perhaps be taken of the term *mansloth* in a charter of Robert I. and his uncle Robert for the chapter of Rouen (Le