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Books of Special Interest**The Prophets**

THE PROPHETS AND THEIR TIMES.

By J. M. POWIS SMITH. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press. 1925. \$2.25.

Reviewed by HENRY J. CADBURY
Harvard University

NO part of Biblical study is better supplied with readable English handbooks than the Old Testament Prophets. Nevertheless we are glad to welcome another to the list from the pen of Professor Smith of Chicago. The author's familiarity with the field is attested by his earlier books and articles and is evident from his treatment of the theme in the several chapters of the present publication. He is in touch with recent commentaries and histories and embodies some new data such as the changed date of the fall of Nineveh. (His dates for the later Greek period should have been more carefully verified or else omitted entirely.) He refers also to the interesting new departures into the investigation of prophetic psychology, but makes no fresh adventures of his own in this direction.

In such a book new departures are perhaps not in place. The emphasis is partly upon the political circumstances in which the prophets lived, partly upon their message. The latter requires the use and interpretation of the Hebrew text, which because of corruption, obscurity, and interpolation presents extremely difficult problems. Here Professor Smith does not burden the reader with technicalities or debates. He quietly adopts decisions in accord with current scholarship. Often he follows the excellent modern custom in such books of printing important citations *in extenso*. Though the method is historical rather than biographical the experiences of the pre-exilic prophets are made to yield a certain amount of personal portraiture which will engage the interest of the reader. In the later and anonymous literature this gives place to a rather more tedious method, the mere analysis of subject matter. The later apocalyptic of the Old Testament is legitimately inserted at the conclusion, but it is only a concession to canonical tradition which permits the inclusion under the title of the volume of the tales of Jonah and of Daniel.

The general impressions on the reader of this book will be various, but no one will fail to see how directly the prophets' message was intended for the nation rather than for individuals. The prophets dealt with politics and made foreign affairs a principal concern. Their approach was religious and moral and from this combination they developed not only admirable ideals of statesmanship but many of their most sublime religious conceptions. It is interesting to note that spiritual religion would not have developed if the modern demand to keep politics out of religion had been followed. On the contrary, it was precisely the prophets' interest in social and political problems which gave them religious insight and moral earnestness such as philosophical speculation or ethical reasoning can never attain. Although Professor Smith does not draw the modern inferences from his narrative he is evidently aware of them and the sympathetic reader will catch them too. He will understand the superior patriotism of the defeatist Jeremiah and will kindle to the program of the famous Servant Songs in the later chapters of Isaiah before which, as Professor Smith well says, "our 100 per cent Americanism shudders in terror." The problem of post-war luxury is more insistent in our days than in those of Amos, while the complexity of our life makes it quite as difficult for us as for these ancient spokesmen of Jehovah to reach a confidence in the goodness and the justice of God. For

these reasons as well as for its capable presentation of the principal facts ascertained by competent scholarship in this field this new handbook may be commended both for students and for the general reader.

A Little Known Land

MADAGASCAR: LAND OF THE MAN-EATING TREE. By CHASE SALMON OSBORN. New York: Republic Publishing Co. 1924. \$2.25.

Reviewed by REXFORD W. BARTON.

MARCO Polo, in the course of his travels, visited the great island of Madagascar (and gave it the name by which it is now known on the maps of the world) and was promptly discredited for his remarks about it; it has been known to the Persians and Arabs for untold centuries and was the home of the great Roc of the "Arabian Nights", the tremendous *apyornis*, but recently extinct, twice the size of an ostrich whose eggs, forty inches in circumference, are still to be found. In 1510 the Portuguese, with their ready gift for acquisition, claimed its discovery; the American clippers and whalers out of New Bedford and Salem knew Madagascar well and left their imprint on the Malagassy in enriching their language with the word *jaka* from *jaktar* which now means salted or preserved meat; Captain Kidd used its sheltering bays and bights from which to launch many a free-booting expedition; Benjamin Franklin inadvertently sponsored an expedition whose purpose was to overthrow the small French colony at the same time that he was negotiating with the French for aid during our Revolution; today Madagascar is one of the most valuable and most beautiful colonies of France, yet it is still, at least to Americans, a little-known land, and is constantly being rediscovered.

Mr. Chase Salmon Osborn has made the most recent re-discovery and, of the many strange places he has visited and studied, he finds this "singularly continental" island all in all, ethnologically, anthropologically, zoologically, geologically, historically, and romantically the most interesting. He approaches his subject from the point of view of a student familiar with the sciences necessary to an honest understanding of the material with which he is confronted. And, like the student, his work gives ample evidence of considerable research. But his book is not essentially in the nature of a treatise; it is a narrative; opinion interspersed with fact with ready sympathy and understanding of the problems of a people of undetermined origin whose traditions and insular history give them a distinct unity and make them worthy of a separate chapter in the long chronicle of the world's development.

Although we cannot always agree with the analogous conclusions that Mr. Osborn draws, and though they sometimes appear a bit captious, they are well to consider, some of them seriously, and they add unusual enjoyment to a most engrossing travel book.

No review would be complete without a mention of the numerous interesting photographs and the tracing of the old map, *Carte de Madagascar par Gastaldo* (1560), that appears as a frontispiece. And, because of the third sentence in the book, we must forgive the author its sub-title. "... I am going to tell you that the purpose of the title of this chapter is at once to mesh your interest. . . . I do not know whether this tigerish tree really exists or whether the bloodcurdling stories about it are pure myth." But he tells the story as set down by a Pole in 1878 who claimed to be an eye-witness of this carnivorous plant. Marco Polo would rattle his bones could he but know the "scoop" he had missed.



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Literature Abroad

A New Mann Novel

DER ZAUBERBERG. By THOMAS MANN.
Berlin. S. Fischer. 1925.

Reviewed by A. W. G. RANDALL.

THOMAS MANN, it is said, has been engaged on his latest novel for the past ten years. It is true that since the beginning of the war, apart from a short story and one short novel about his favorite dog, he has published nothing substantial that was not political. We can now see that this diversion from his normal profession of novelist has not been without profit to the imaginative side of his work. In making his protest against the *Bildungsphilister*, against the easy, dilettante cosmopolitanism affected by some of his fellow-writers, in making his defence of the German national genius, in composing his satire on the *Zivilisationsliterat*—all these things may be found in his works "Betrachtungen eines Unpolitischen", "Friedrich der Grosse und das Grosse Koalition" and the volume of essays, "Rede und Antwort"—it seems that Mann has been studying character, observing the newer social tendencies and types, bringing up to date, and on a larger canvas, the study of character he gave in his "Buddenbrooks" more than twenty years ago.

The plot of "Zauberberg", which is the least important thing about it, is soon told. A young man named Hans Castorp, son of a wealthy shipping family of Hamburg—that type Mann knows so well—arrives one day at Davos Platz at a sanitarium where his cousin, Joachim Ziemssen is undergoing a cure for lung trouble. The cousins are well contrasted—Hans the young dilettante, Joachim the earnest young studious type of German who one day descends the mountain to do his military service—it was all a few years before the outbreak of the Great War—and so aggravates his malady that he dies. Hans remains on the "Zauberberg", conversing with the various types who are thrown across his path—with a sensuous young Russian woman, Madame Chauchat, with whom he falls desperately, but inconclusively, in love, with Settembrini, a skeptical, anti-clerical Italian free-mason, with the Jew Naphta, Settembrini's antithesis, with his defence of absolutist philosophy and statecraft and his mystical belief in authority, with Dr. Behrens, director of the sanitarium and the embodiment of twentieth-century physical science, proud of its achievements, but not anxious to philosophize about them, with Dr. Krokowski, who might be any one of the Zurich school of psychoanalysis, with Mijnheer Peepkorn, a rich, comfortable, generous-hearted Dutch coffee-planter. The talks between all the characters in this remarkable gallery really make up the substance of Herr Mann's twelve-hundred or so pages. At the end Hans Castorp is in the trenches and we lose sight of him. Will his creator bring him through the fight? We are not told, but we hope so, for so penetrating a study in national types of before 1914 must surely be completed by a portraiture of young Germany, or young Italy, or young Europe as a whole, as it has emerged from the struggle.

A word must be said in conclusion about Mann's technical success. Twelve hundred

pages must seem a large number to sustain merely on dialogue and character expressed through conversation. But Mann has carried it off. For this not only his skill in writing dialogue and in drawing character, line by line with the conscientiousness of a Flaubert, must be given the credit. He chose the right design for his work and so won half the battle. By his device of the Zauberberg, a remote place, above the world, the *Flachland*, and yet in relation to it, he has contrived to convey the essence of pre-war European thought and action without being under the horrid necessity of busying himself with political and social actuality, with the stock-in-trade of newspaper correspondents. For all his realistic method, therefore, he has made his work far superior to any transcription of life; he has, in fact, largely succeeded in turning history into literature. It is a lesson in the technique of fiction that he has given us in his "Zauberberg". He is hardly likely to be deposed from the position he held even before he wrote it—of being the most considerable of living German novelists.

Foreign Notes

A VOLUME of interest to the student of art has recently appeared in Italy under the title "La Pittura Italiana del Seicento e del Settecento" (Rome: Bestetti & Tumminelli). It covers the period from the end of the sixteenth century to the middle of the eighteenth, thus supplying a survey of Italian painting over a stretch of years not generally chronicled with any fulness. The book is the joint product of U. Ojetti, L. Dami, and N. Tarchiani, contains an excellent historical analysis, copious biographical and bibliographical notes, and a large number of excellent plates.

Of Gerolamo Calvi's "I Manoscritti di Leonardo da Vinci—Dal Punto di Vista Cronologico Storico e Biografico," recently issued in Bologna by Zanichelli, the critic of the *London Times Literary Supplement*, says: "It is only doing justice to the results attained to say that the vast field of the Leonardo manuscripts has never before been surveyed with such skilled unity of purpose, and that the book is one which cannot be neglected by any future student of the subject. The study of it leads to the conviction that, despite the permanent value of the labors of Dr. Richter, Müller-Walde, and other outstanding figures, the final word in the interpretation of obscure points in the manuscripts must rest with the Italians."

A new book is to be published in the fall by David Garnett, author of "Lady into Fox" and "The Man in the Zoo." It is entitled "The Sailor's Return, or The History of William Targett, Mariner, and His Tulip."

André Maurois, author of "Ariel," is now writing a life of Disraeli.

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Here is an excellent summary of the merits of "The Great Gatsby," written by Herschel Brickell in the *New York Evening Post*:

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