

developing such a plan is obvious. It might have furnished a satisfactory course of University Extension lectures delivered with the animation of an enthusiast to an eager audience, and some passages (e.g. p. 122) suggest that, like Huxley's "Physiography," the book owes its literary form to notes taken from extempore speaking. If, however, the object was not to stimulate general interest but to guide serious study, a more systematic treatment and more sedulous revision would have done fuller justice to the author's wide knowledge.

No one can bring a great subject within the compass of a small book without leaving out much which is really of importance. Hence an author should not be taxed with omissions which he probably recognises and regrets; still, it is surprising to find that even so brief a history of the oceans as this could be written without mentioning the name of Maury. The publication of Maury's "Physical Geography of the Sea," in 1855, seems to many of us to have been the launch of the modern science of oceanography, and the memory of the great American sailor deserves to be kept alive.

I confess that I do not know enough of geology or ancient history to pass an opinion on the exposition of these subjects, but I do venture to question Prof. Johnstone's subdivision of the oceanic depression (p. 11) into *Continental Shelf* and *Ocean Bed* with the boundary between the two taken as the line of 1000 fathoms. If room could have been found for a notice of the hypsographic curve, the advantage of a more detailed subdivision of the ocean floor and slopes would probably be recognised. Even granting that the 1000 fathom isobath is to be taken as a physical boundary, it is unfair to give to the region on its landward side the name of the Continental Shelf. Most other oceanographers have accepted that term as meaning the gently sloping zone covered by shallow water extending from low-water mark to a depth of about 100 fathoms, or in rare cases, as on the Antarctic coasts, to 200 or 300 fathoms. It corresponds to the old nautical 'in soundings,' and at its deeper end there is always a sudden increase in the gradient of the Continental Slope which leads to the ocean depths. When I introduced the term in 1888, I was impressed by the wide flat expanse of the Vidal Bank west of Scotland, and recognised that it was not a local but a world-wide feature of the transitional area between land and the deep sea. Prof. Johnstone has no doubt excellent reasons for departing from the international nomenclature settled for the great Monaco bathymetrical chart, and he may have stated them in some work with which I am not familiar. It would, however, have saved confusion and perhaps perplexity if he had chosen for this zone covered with water from 0 to 1000 fathoms deep, a name which was not already

in use for a definite and restricted portion of the area which he includes within it.

The book has the advantage of a good index and a brief bibliography, which might well have been supplemented by reference to the foreign literature of the subject.

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### Our Bookshelf.

*Ancient Greece at Work: an Economic History of Greece from the Homeric Period to the Roman Conquest.*

By Prof. Gustave Glotz. Translated by M. R. Dobie. (The History of Civilisation Series.) Pp. xii + 402. (London: Kegan Paul and Co., Ltd.; New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1926.) 16s. net.

IN "Ægean Civilisation," a previous volume in this series, Prof. Glotz traced Mediterranean culture from its beginnings to its culmination in Minoan Crete and its decline on the mainland. To present as complete a picture as possible he sketched such an outline of the social organisation of these early periods as may be deduced from archæological remains, eked out with evidence from other sources. In the present volume he takes up the social and economic story of Greece at the point where the previous volume ended. Beginning with the pastoral society of Homeric times, he traces the development of social and economic organisation through the archaic period, the predominance of Athens, and Hellenistic times. Each period has its peculiar characteristic and, as he points out, no general statement is applicable to Greek economics as a whole, but only with special reference to some one of these periods.

Those who are not already familiar with the data will probably be surprised at the amount of information Prof. Glotz has been able to gather together relating to the early Homeric period. The manner in which he extracts his material from incidental references and allusions in the Iliad and Odyssey commands our sincere admiration. At the same time, his deductions are capable of being checked by comparison with what we know of pastoral societies elsewhere which are organised in groups similar to the Greek *gene*. The archaic period, notwithstanding that evidence of a more direct character is available, is really more obscure. The treatment of the period of the Athenian hegemony is illuminating. It is, of course, recognised that slavery is the essential factor in the social and economic organisation, but it is especially in relation to the position of the metics that Prof. Glotz is most suggestive. Is it not possible that the influence of this element in the population in the subsequent development of the characteristics of the Greek people has been underrated?

*The Chemistry of Drying Oils.* By Dr. R. S. Morrell and H. R. Wood. (Oil and Colour Chemistry Monographs.) Pp. 224. (London: Ernest Benn, Ltd., 1925.) 21s. net.

CHEMICAL industry has become so highly specialised that at the present day it is practically impossible for one person to write from first-hand knowledge a trustworthy text completely covering even one industry. It is only by a series of monographs continually being