

ANTIQUITY

of each. The infeasibility of the Egyptian theory of the origin of megalithic building is touched upon. As for the Carnac area, it is suggested that the culture there was derived from Crete by way of Spain, and that it was either of Chalcolithic or Early Bronze Age date. Mr. Burkitt devotes a chapter to Art, and shows the similarity of the engravings on the stones of Gavr'inis to those at Sess Kilgreen in Ireland, and the connexion between the stone at Clonfinlough and the Spanish art group III. The effects of climate on the development of culture are dealt with, and stress is rightly laid on the importance of accurate distribution maps. The book can be strongly recommended. It is not too abstruse for the amateur and the serious student will derive much benefit from it.

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A CENTURY OF EXCAVATION IN THE LAND OF THE PHARAOHS. By JAMES BAIKIE, F.R.A.S. 8vo, pp. 252; plates 32. London: The Religious Tract Society. 1926. 7s. 6d.

At the present day too many of the popular books on archaeology are written with the sole object of airing some crazy misconception. Dr Baikie however has written a popular book giving an outline of the work that has been done for archaeology in Egypt and incidentally he refutes such whimsical theories as that the Pyramids were astronomical observatories or standard measures. He champions the cause of true scientific research and recounts the harm that has befallen archaeology through the cupidity of selfish collectors and ruthless vandals. The book gives in a very readable form the story of the pioneers, hampered as they were by lack of knowledge and the interference of officialdom, and goes on to describe the Pyramids with their sad story of pillage in ancient times. It was the fear of such robbery that impelled the Pharaohs to make their tombs so massive and so intricate, cherishing the hope of a future life similar in detail to that which they enjoyed upon earth. There remain in the different pyramid fields about 70 pyramids of various sizes and forms and constructed with slightly differing degrees of mathematical precision. What is left of the great temples of Karnak, Luxor, Edfu, Dendera, and that of Queen Hatshapsut are witnesses to the skill of those master builders whose edifices were not only beautiful in themselves but also conformed to their surroundings. It was a good day for Egypt and science in general when the Egyptian Exploration Fund began work in 1893 at Der-el-Bahri. Thanks to its labours we have learnt much of the every-day life of the man in the street in ancient Egypt, and consequently more of its history—for history is the story of the ordinary man and not of that of potentates alone, and as Dr Baikie aptly remarks “broken potsherds may mean far more for the reconstruction of history than intact colossi.” It was from the 17th to the 18th Dynasty that the fashion of pyramid building flourished. The tombs of the kings at Abydos had all been previously rifled, but the exquisite bracelets of the Queen of Zer and the other few remaining pieces of jewellery indicate that life even in those times was highly organized. The tombs in the Valley of the Kings have long been known and Strabo mentions 40 of them. Belzoni's discovery of the sepulchre of Sety I was eclipsed by the finding of that of Tutankhamen in 1922 by Lord Carnarvon and Mr Howard Carter. Such wealth and magnificence of grave furniture belonging to a little-known and short-lived monarch makes us wonder what must have been found in some of the tombs of the greater kings by those who were the first to open them. Dr Baikie treats of the unequalled craftsmanship of the jewellers, the greatness of the monumental sculptors and the skill of the portrait sculptors. This book should be widely read; it is well written, and the enthusiasm of the author for his subject is evident in every page.

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