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Giza I. Bericht über die von der Akademie der Wissenschaften in Wien auf gemeinsame Kosten mit Dr. Wilhelm Pelizaeus unternommenen Grabungen auf dem Friedhof des Alten Reiches bei den Pyramiden von Giza. Band 1: Die Mastabas der IV. Dynastie auf dem Westfriedhof. In Verbindung mit K. HOLEY herausgegeben von HERMANN JUNKER. (Akad. d. Wiss. in Wien, Phil.-hist. Klasse, *Denkschriften*, 69. Band, 1. Abhandlung, Wien und Leipzig, 1929).

In 1902 the pyramid field of Giza was divided up by the Service des Antiquités into three concessions, allotted to American, German and Italian excavators respectively. In 1903 the withdrawal of the Italians from this field of work left their area to be added to that of the Americans under Dr. Reisner, and in 1911 the German concession was, by mutual agreement, handed over to the Akademie der Wissenschaften in Vienna. Anxiety has often been felt with regard to the ultimate publication of the vast excavations carried out here almost annually by the various concession-holders; for, though all have issued interim reports, there seemed little or no sign of final publications commensurate with the importance of the site and the magnitude of the work done. The present volume will do much to allay this anxiety. Dr. Junker tells us that it is but the first of a series which will deal with the work done by him and his colleagues in 1912-14 and from 1926 onward in the middle section of the western cemetery. The purpose of the publication, he tells us, is not only to secure a complete and reliable reproduction of the material, but to give a thorough treatment of all relevant questions of date, development, artistic value, etc.

These aims are all fully achieved in the present volume. Both in the more general sections and in the detailed descriptions of the various mastabas the arrangement is clear and the treatment adequate. The plans and sections of tombs are excellent, and the photographs reproduced in the plate by the half-tone process are of the highest quality. Dr. Junker's discussions of the inscriptions are such as might be expected from a scholar of his standing, and this part of the work is a mine of philological information, in which the reviewer has already more than once found pure gold.

Dr. Junker and Professor Karl Holey, who was responsible for the architectural side of the excavation, are to be congratulated on a work which is a model of what such reports should be. It is not their least merit to have shown that an excavation report of such intricacy and importance can perfectly well be brought within the limits of space and cost imposed by the format and style of the *Denkschriften* of the Vienna Academy. In these days, when the very existence of our science is being threatened by the expense and extravagance of its publications, this is a fine example to have set.

T. ERIC PEET.

Études sur les origines de la religion de l'Égypte. Par S. A. B. MERCER. (The Oriental Research Series.) London, Luzac, 1928. Pp. 105 + xi.

To say that Dr. Mercer's book is unsatisfactory would be to give a disproportionately critical impression of a work in the writing of which at all there is much to admire. The origins of Egyptian religion are, as yet at least, out of our reach, and any book which deals with them is bound to be unsatisfactory—the same impression is left by the conclusions on the same subject of so great an authority as Professor Sethe—but it is better that such books should be written to make us think, disagreement being a half-way house to thought, than that we should remain immersed in details because the time is not yet ripe for synthesis. It never will be, for that is merely a way of saying that we do not know everything.

I am inclined to think that the most pressing need of the study of Egyptian religion at present is a series of statements of what the Egyptians themselves said at different periods; work up to the present seems to have been concentrated on taking certain passages and explaining at great length what they ought to have said. If a series of works were published dealing with the periods of, say, The Pyramid Texts, The Coffin Texts, The Middle Kingdom, The Eighteenth Dynasty, The New Kingdom, and The Ptolemaic Period, then we should have a basis for study. Each work should confine itself rigidly to a statement of what we find written in the texts of that period, without any attempt to explain it from material of other dates. Such books would be of inestimable importance—we have a sketch for one in Dr. Allen's invaluable booklet on Horus in the Pyramid Texts—and we could then deal with the development of any given belief without being held up by the necessity of reading everything that the Egyptians ever wrote which might possibly contain something about it. Difficulties might arise in deciding the effective date of certain texts, but these could easily be surmounted by some such compromise as dealing with them at the date of our earliest copy and mentioning their possible range. Each author might be allowed the luxury of noting in a separate section those texts which he believed effectively to come within his purview. By this means the origins would be somewhat cleared and many problems which now puzzle us would not arise.