

the United States has of winning over the Greek people in the struggle against Communism. Both critics thought that the author was misled, presumably by the opposite group.

In this particular case there should be no question about the motives or the character of the author. He is a scholar of impeccable honesty and integrity. The only shortcomings of the book are connected with the problem of space. One volume is too short to present with all necessary detail the drama of Greece. This work, nevertheless, fills a great need in our historico-political literature. Anyone who wants to get an accurate and thought-provoking picture of modern Greece should read it.

The Truman Doctrine was an experiment. Mistakes were committed, some goals were achieved, some people were befriended, others were alienated. We should know what really happened in Greece. On March 31, 1946, the rightist Populist party received nearly 50 per cent of the vote cast in a general election while the left was estimated by American pollsters to be 9.3 per cent of the voting population. In the elections of September 9, 1951, after five years of bloody fighting, and following four years of the Truman Doctrine, the Populist party received only 6.6 per cent while the left got 10.5 per cent of the popular vote. Another left-of-center party had 23.5 per cent of the vote. The extreme left, *United Democratic Front*, elected to the Greek Parliament ten deputies, all of them in prisons or concentration camps. The government would not release them and a second team was sent to represent the former generals and other leaders of the guerrilla movement in the *Boulé*.

What had happened? Were the Communists really defeated, or had the Greek government with all the American assistance won a Pyrrhic victory against them? These and many other questions are answered carefully by Professor Stavrianos in his *Greece: American Dilemma and Opportunity*.

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History of Syria; Including Lebanon and Palestine. By PHILIP K. HITTI. (New York: The Macmillan Company. 1951. Pp. xxv, 749. \$10.00.)

Professor Hitti's Syria is not a political entity, having almost never "stood as an independent sovereign state"; neither is it a geographical, ethnic, or cultural one, for its "conglomeration of different regions" contains "a crazy quilt of ethnic groups and religious denominations." What then is Syria? It is the largest area to which the name has ever been (however incorrectly) applied. It contains Palestine and Lebanon, since there was a time when each was included "in its ancient boundaries"; by the same token Aylah and Maqnah, both on the Gulf of Aqabah, are con-

sidered "places in Syria," and the ancient Hebrews are "early Syrians." "Syria" discovered copper and wheat and "gave the world the alphabet, monotheism, and the discovery of the Atlantic Ocean," to say nothing of Christianity, another purely Syrian product, "though the civilized world does not always appreciate this fact." The greatest of all inventions, we are told, was the alphabet, "developed and disseminated by the ancient Lebanese." Would anyone but a Lebanese think of making that strictly modern title synonymous with the name of an ancient and vanished civilization?

To match an area so vast, Dr. Hitti must cover in a single volume the history and prehistory of Palestine, the religion of Israel, the Hellenistic world, the rise of the Christian Church, the Crusades, and a large segment of Greek literature, to mention but a few highly specialized fields into which he conducts the reader. Naturally there are slips (did the walls of Babylon really stand 300 feet high?), and one is disturbed by the author's habit of annotating his remarks by references to Biblical and classical sources (e.g., Ammianus Marcellus — sic) instead of the modern authors from whom he got them. "What Greece was to the Romans," we are told, "Syria was to the Arabians." Say rather that what Greece was to the Romans Greece was also to the Arabs, thanks to Syrian transmitters; but to make Syria the creative equivalent of Greece goes much too far and certainly overlooks the claims of Persia, which Professor Hitti hardly deigns to notice.

However, all is forgiven when Dr. Hitti launches into the last sections of the book, a good three hundred pages presenting as useful and instructive a guide to the Near East in Medieval and Modern times as has yet appeared. Here the author is completely at home and handles his materials with confidence and skill. Others have opened windows on these vistas, but none offers a broader, clearer, more comprehensive view of the whole scene than that which Professor Hitti gives us here. As he moves rapidly from event to event and from century to century the author is allowed all too little space for those picturesque diversions and anecdotes that are the delight of Oriental history, but his choice of materials is masterful, and the things he chooses to tell us are invariably the things the student needs most to know. This is textbook history at its best: orderly, comprehensive, accurate, and remarkably complete. For the purpose of familiarizing a generation of American students with an era of our past which is almost a complete blank in the minds even of educated Westerners it would be hard to improve on Dr. Hitti's splendid chapters on the Arab Era. Students everywhere of history, political science, and the humanities should receive this valuable work with joy and gratitude.

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