

*Readings in the History of the Ancient World.* By William C. McDermott and Wallace E. Caldwell. (New York: Rinehart and Company, Inc., 1951, pp. xxii, 489. \$4.00.)

The purpose of this volume is to provide the student of ancient history with a handy collection of important source materials to be used in connection with a general textbook of ancient history. The selection of the specific items to be included in one single volume of this scope is far from simple; no teachers of the subject would be in agreement. In this case passages from the ancient writers have been very well selected; and the choice of non-literary materials is even more satisfactory. In most instances the authors have used standard translations, but in some cases they have made their own. It was an excellent plan to begin with a chapter consisting of passages in which eight Greek and Roman historians explain their personal concepts of history and historians. Later chapters contain representative selections both from these same historians, and from the philosophers, dramatists, and poets. The passages chosen cover a wide range of interests: personal, political, military, economic, and religious.

The outstanding advantage of this book is the inclusion of many items which most teachers and students would have considerable difficulty in locating. For example the interesting passages from Pseudo-Xenophon, Arrian, Strabo, Josephus, the Augustan History, and Lactantius are frequently not at hand in small libraries containing the better-known works of classical literature. This may also be true of the lesser-known works of the famous authors themselves. Even more inaccessible would be such valuable items as the following, reproduced here either in full, or in fairly extensive excerpts: Four Tablets from Lagash; The Gilgamesh Epic; The Code of Hammurabi; The Behistan Monument; Two Egyptian Hymns; Treaty with the Hittites; Law of the Twelve Tables; Letter of the Consuls on the Bacchic Rites, complete; The Deeds of Augustus (*Res Gestae*), complete; The Minutes of the Secular Games; Claudius' Letter to the Alexandrians, complete; The Charter of Salpensa, complete extant portion.

This book would be more useful if it contained more material of this type. Some space could have been saved by eliminating entirely the selections from the famous literary works which are readily available in standard translations and are often contained in comprehensive collections such as F. R. B.

Godolphin (ed.), *The Greek Historians* (Random House, 1942), and in numerous inexpensive editions. *The Classical Weekly*, Vol. 45, pp. 116-19 (January 21, 1952), provided an up-to-date list of inexpensive books for teaching the classics. The inclusion of short selections from the ancient historians, biographers, dramatists, poets, and orators may well stimulate the reader's desire to read the entire work; but if the teacher were to require the student to read at least one complete book of Herodotus and Thucydides, some biographies of Plutarch, and selected Greek plays and dialogues of Plato in full, this end would be served even better. It is probable, however, that the present volume will actually reach a wider group than if the literary passages had been eliminated.

Nevertheless, the usefulness of the book would have been enhanced if some of the following items had been included: Selections from the Athenian Tribute Lists and other inscriptions dealing with Athenian democracy and imperialism; some papyri of the Hellenistic period, in whole or in part, such as the Revenue Laws of Ptolemy Philadelphus, and *P. Teb.* 703; a few samples of inscriptions and papyri of the Roman period, instructive for provincial and local administration, cults, *et. al.*; possibly some short literary works of special historical importance in full, such as Aristotle and Pseud-Xenophon on the Constitution of the Athenians, of which the authors already provide extensive portions.

Unquestionably this is by far the best collection of readings of source material for ancient history yet available in any single volume. The value of the items included far outweighs any shortcomings due to omissions. If used as intended in connection with a good text, it will help the teacher enrich his course by giving the student a keener insight into the character and importance of the sources for ancient history. For teachers in small colleges or schools with inadequate library facilities, and especially for those unacquainted with the languages involved, this book fills a real need.

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*Johnny Appleseed and Shorter Poems.* By Ernest C. Leverenz. (New York: Exposition Press, 1951, pp. 88. Appendix, biographical note, historical notes, and bibliography. \$2.50.)