



NEW ZEALAND
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NEW ZEALAND ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER



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REVIEWS

Bones, Bodies and Disease - Calvin Wells. Thames & Hudson, London, 1964.

The subtitle of this book is "Evidence of Disease and abnormality in Early Man". Its range includes Pithecanthropus, Australopithecines and Rhodesian Man to the present day. Fossils, mummies and all manner of skeletal and other animal remains yield secrets of their lives and deaths. Cave drawings and sculpture, paintings and pottery, monuments, engravings and ancient writings all make their contribution. As a conductor draws harmony from many players, so Calvin Wells draws from both the artist and the scientist. Techniques for analysis and examination by Xray and microscopy and the many other instruments of modern science are explained. So successful is he that poor human relics are restored and vividly pass once more as living people. Most of these folk are nameless as they individually and collectively reveal the manner of their lives but some are familiar names from history. As we close the book we fully agree with Dr Well's belief that the fusion of anthropology and medicine makes for the wider and deepest understanding of both.

R.M.S. Taylor

The scope of the book is sufficiently wide to provide the student with an adequate basis for understanding and paleo-pathology and to apply this knowledge to the pre-historic remains likely to be found in New Zealand. The style, partly anecdotal, does not over-simplify the subject and is sufficiently technical to take the place of a longer textbook. Polynesia receives only scant mention, and then only non-specific bone adaptations are noted: the far more specific anatomical characteristics of the Polynesian femur are not noted, nor are any references to publications of the Pacific area given in the otherwise comprehensive bibliography. There are 88 excellent photographs and 33 line drawings all of which illustrate clearly the points at issue.

Four monographs from "The Library of Early Civilizations" Ed. by Stuart Piggott for Thames and Hudson have been received from the New Zealand agents and will be reviewed in the next issue of the NEWSLETTER.

Editor

The Art of the Romans by J.M.C. Toynbee. Thames and Hudson 1965

Roman sculpture is the principal topic of this volume in the series "Ancient Peoples and Places," the emphasis on sculpture (93 pages of text, 62 illustrations) being due to the bulk and variety of the material which has survived. The final third of the book deals with Roman painting (38 pages, 14 illustrations) and mosaics (14 pages, 9 illustrations); and there is a brief reference to minor arts. All in all the 48 plates provide 91 illustrations, which have been chosen very skilfully; they are interesting in themselves and at the same time representative of the numerous monuments briefly described or referred to in the text. As one would expect from

its author, the text is clear, factual, and scholarly, with not a word wasted; the documentation is meticulous; and those who, in spite of Professor Toynbee's quiet confidence in the appeal of her subject, tend to find Roman art impressive rather than captivating, will find themselves carried along by her swift and lively descriptions, whether it is of the Rain God on the column of Marcus Aurelius in Rome, "with water streaming from his hair, beard, wings, arms, and finger-tips, perhaps the most haunting and imaginative figure that a Roman artist ever created, or the "mean eyes" of Pompey's bust and "Diocletian's endearingly retroussé nose

Essentially an introductory survey, the book makes clear the range, in content, style, and geographical extend, of these three major arts, and shows their principal achievements: the development of portraiture, of the narrative style in historical sculpture, and of landscape painting. The student and the general reader who have no special knowledge of the art of Rome have long needed a book of this kind; and it is to be hoped that the series will soon include a companion volume on Roman architecture, both for its own sake and to complete the excellent survey of Roman art here presented.

M.K.S.