

SHORT ARTICLES.

1. INTEREST IN THE LOST BOOKS OF LIVY IN SEVENTEENTH CENTURY WRITINGS.

BY DR. W. J. RUTHERFURD.

IN the *Times Literary Supplement* for 30 October of last year, Professor G. C. Moore Smith made a learned—and, it should be said, a humorous—contribution to the discussions that had been taking place over the alleged discovery by the notorious Dr. di Martino Fosco of the missing books of Livy. He suggested that their *locale* had already been given three hundred years ago, and quoted the following lines “On the Æthiopian Mountaine, Amara” from Thomas Bancroft’s *Two Bookes of Epigrammes* (1639):

On this faire Mountaine, sphericall and high
Stands (as fame goes) a precious Library,
Where Livy’s whole worke, Enoch’s Oracles,
Salamon’s Physicks, and some mysteries else
That did survive the Flood, entreasur’d lye,
Insulting o’re Times wastefull tyranny.
O could I thither reach! Then should I stand
High in the Muses’ grace, and all command!

Professor Moore Smith remarks, with a gentle irony, that even if Bancroft made no reference to a new Gospel or to a Life of St. Januarius, “it is an interesting confirmation of the truth of Bancroft’s account that two ‘Ethiopic’ manuscripts of the Book of Enoch were brought by Bruce from Abyssinia in 1773, and the work is now one which no gentleman’s library should be without.”

Professor Smith did not inquire into the origin of Bancroft’s information. The source of this false allusion to an existence in Abyssinia of these lost books of Livy was *Purchas, his Pilgrimage or Relations of the World and the Religions observed in all Ages* (London, 1613), where there is an account, commencing on page 565, “Of the Hill Amara : and the rarities therein.”

This matter of the mountain and its literary treasures has been described at length, and with great ingenuity, in a lecture on "Prester John's Library" delivered in the Divinity School, Cambridge, in 1892, by Dr. Rendel Harris, and subsequently published by him in his *Hermas in Arcadia and other Essays* (Cambridge University Press, 1896; see pp. 26-42). It may be pardonable to recall a few of the steps in this inquiry, which seems to have been strangely overlooked although it is entirely to the point, and is as satisfactorily carried through as the most mathematical eye could wish to see—to use Professor Smith's expression, "no gentleman's library should be without it!"

Firstly to shew that the "fame" of this Library and of its contents had reached Bancroft by way of Purchas. It is said (Purchas, p. 565) that the mountain "is situate in a great Plaine, largely extending itself every way, without other hill in the same for the space of 30 leagues, the form thereof round and circular, the height such, that it is a dayes worke to ascend from the foot to the top." This explains the second line of Bancroft's poem. A further statement (on p. 561), said to be on the authority of Fr. Alvarez, is to the effect that "here in Amara is a steepe Hill, dilating itself in a round forme, fiteene dayes iourney in compasse."

For the books in the Library we are told that "the Queene of Saba (they say) procured Bookes hither from all partes, besides many which Solomon gave her"; and again, "there is very much of Salomon, a great number passing under his name"; and also, "T. Livius is there whole, which with us is imperfect." Again, "there are the writings of Enoch copied out of the stones wherein they were engraven, which intreate of Philosophie, of the Heavens and Elements."

There is still, however, a question to be answered before Purchas can be cited as the authority for locating *Livy's whole worke* in Abyssinia. Where did Purchas derive his information, and to what extent was it to be accepted as genuine? Unfortunately the conclusion to be reached from the facts displayed in this lecture on "Prester John's Library," in which the matter is gone into, is that we have again stumbled on a mare's nest. It would appear that Purchas had relied on the *Historia de la Etiopia* of Friar Luys de Urreta, published at Valencia in 1610, three years before the first edition of Purchas.

De Urreta's account "de los dos Monasterios que ay nel Monte Amarà, y la famosa libreria que tiene en uno de ellos el Preste Juan" (t. i., c. 9), where were to be found "todas las Decadas de Titoliuio, que por la Europa no se tenian," was challenged in 1615 by Godignus in his *De Abassinorum rebus*, and Ludolf in his seventeenth century *History of Ethiopia* announced that Godignus had successfully exposed Urreta's fiction.

Finally it was left to Dr. Rendel Harris to shew that what de Urreta had done was to blend with some little real information that he perhaps possessed about Abyssinian MSS., a series of copious extracts from the *Biblioteca* of Sixtus Senensis, even to the extent of reproducing printers' errors from the latter. It was from this that he got Livy, and a host of other details. His imaginative power in the art of discovering lost works was thus made to appear greatly in excess of those who live in a post-war world of depreciated values.

Whether Bancroft had access to the sources behind Purchas is a point on which we must be content to remain ignorant. No wonder he felt that if he could attain to such treasures of knowledge he would stand high in the Muses' grace, and all command. "He who knows where all this treasure now is, is a great Apollo, I'm sure I am not he," are the last lines of Sir Thomas Browne's *Musæum Clausum, or, Bibliotheca abscondita*; and with this sentiment the matter may fittingly be left.

2. A SAHIDIC VARIANT IN A RYLANDS MANUSCRIPT.

BY THE REV. P. D. BUCKLE, M.A.

IN the BULLETIN, Vol. 4, No. 2, pp. 312-317, a Coptic homily was examined for the purpose of indicating its Biblical citations. In its 16 pages over 60 quotations from the Bible were discovered and noted. The article was intended to follow the method applied in Mr. Crum's catalogue to some other manuscript and to supply material for textual criticism. Comparisons were made with Sahidic and Bohairic texts and the original Greek. Two passages were found however in which no Sahidic text had been printed, viz., Mark xvi. 3 and 1 Peter i. 8, 9. The second of these quotations has now for the first time been printed this year in the Oxford edition, which has been completed by the recent issue of its seventh volume through the industry of the Rev.