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La République romaine. Conflits politiques et sociaux. By
G. BLOCH. Paris, 1913. Pp. 333.

To have persuaded Professor Bloch to write one of the volumes in their series is a triumph for the editors of the Bibliothèque de Philosophie scientifique. The subject of the Roman Republic, however, may have been a temptation to a man who not only was an authority in that field, but who also aspired to be of national service, for in the political and social conflicts which made and then unmade the Roman Republic there are many opportunities, in telling a true tale withal, to point a moral which should give pause to the reading and thinking members of a democracy.

Professor Bloch has written just what might be expected in such a book; a sober, sensible account of the Protean struggles of the Roman aristocracy to elude the tightening grip of the plebeians, of the decadence of the middle classes before the rising power of the city proletariat, and of the attempts to reform the state made by the successively more competent individuals, such as the idealist Tiberius Gracchus, the realist Sulla, and Augustus the opportunist. But Professor Bloch knows too much and is too conscientious to make a complete success of such a book. He compels himself to omit nothing, and therefore the perspective is lost in the details. Surely a man of his standing is entitled, if for no other reason than to vary the monotony, to make an occasional *ex cathedra* generalization.

La République romaine is a good, solid, valuable book, clear in its diction, dull in its dicta, but not without its brilliant phrases. It is perhaps not too much to say that Professor Bloch makes fairly definite statements about the origin of the clients, of the early Senate, and of the plebeians, which will probably gain neither universal approval nor acceptance. His statements about the early kingdom (p. 18 ff.) seem also to push rather hard the present state of knowledge for the sake of some clever antitheses. The early history of Rome has been amplified of late years considerably on the archaeological side, but little on the political side. Professor Bloch makes the same mistake that other historians have made in looking at a country through the magnifying glass of its deeds. The *vast* plain of Thessaly, the *vast* Attic plain, are two phrases often used, and here one finds the *vast* plain of Latium (p. 24). The writer has walked in one day the width of the vast plain of Latium, and within a few miles of its length also in a single day. Rather more apropos would be a comment on the vast amount the Romans accomplished on so small a plain. The author isolates the germ (*germe funeste*, p. 92) that destroyed the Roman Republic, and identifies it as that thing which convinced the

Roman soldiers that pillage was more lucrative than domestic occupations. The comment (p. 145) on the unique destiny of Rome cannot be too often repeated, namely, that it always remained a city and yet of all ancient cities was the only one to found an empire and to admit conquered peoples to participation in its civic rights.

Professor Bloch takes issue (p. 169 ff.) with the historians who say that the Roman Republic was Hellenized into an early grave. After citing the circle of Scipio Aemilianus as a shining example, he says that a higher and finer culture such as that of Greece ought not to be an evil; and while admitting that it was the late comedy and other samples of artistic decadence that influenced Rome, he implies that Rome ought to have known enough to choose the best rather than the worst of what Greece could offer. He inclines to the view that Rome lost its head with conquest, and that it was the irresistible opportunity to make money too fast that ruined it. This may be enough to put the author in the ranks of the economic interpreters of history.

'L'Etat romain était religieux, non théocratique' (p. 68) is a short, keen phrase; the author's definition (p. 96) of *impe-rium* as 'la plénitude de la puissance, politique, militaire, judiciaire', is satisfying; and his description (p. 240) of the Roman practice of 'following the leader' in comitial voting, 'cette espèce de fascination consacrée par l'usage', is delightful. The proletariat of Rome has been often qualified, not to say dis-qualified, by many objurgatives, but when the author speaks of their habits of 'fainéantise' he seems to have hit a most happy word, and lovers of the Black Knight in *Ivanhoe* will read into it a mighty power under a lazy appearance. However, when all is said, the reviewer rises from the perusal of Professor Bloch's *La République Romaine* enlightened, but not refreshed.

A Collotype Reproduction of that Portion of Cod. Paris 7989.

Commonly Called the Codex Traguriensis which Contains the Cena Trimalchionis of Petronius, Together with Four Poems Ascribed to Petronius in Cod. Leid. Voss. III.

With Introduction and a Transcript by STEPHEN GASELEE.
Cambridge Press, 1915.

The Cambridge Press has done a notable service in printing a photographic facsimile of part of the famous Paris manuscript 7989. The volume before us has, first, eighteen pages of introduction. Then come the photographic plates of the manuscript with a transcription opposite each plate, the pagina-