Review

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Source: *The Geographical Journal*, Vol. 40, No. 1 (Jul., 1912), pp. 74-75

Published by: geographicalj

Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1778900>

Accessed: 20-04-2016 16:40 UTC

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Among these are included the ascents of well-known summits, such as Ararat, Elbruz, Kazbek, Dykhtau, Ushba, and Koshtantau. Finally, a short list of maps of the Caucasus is given, the most important being that on the scale of one verst to the inch drawn from surveys of the military topographical department, which has also been reduced on the 5-verst scale. These maps are, unfortunately, only to be purchased by permission of the military authorities, but they may be inspected at the rooms of the Russian Geographical Society, and the Russian and Crimean-Caucasian Mountain Clubs. The accompanying map (1: 840,000) extending from Novo Rossisk to Vladikafkaz and Tiflis, and having an inset going to the neighbourhood of Ararat, contains much valuable information, though its scale is too small to admit of accurate mountain detail. The forested and bare regions are distinguished, distances are marked on all roads and horse-paths, and in addition to the heights given on the sheet itself, tables are printed on the margin giving the heights of the chief peaks and passes of the Western and Central Caucasus, and of the lower ends of the principal glaciers. The heights in some cases vary, though as a rule very slightly, from the table published in the last number of the *Alpine Journal* (No. 195, p. 97), and it would be desirable to ascertain from which of the more recent Government publications they have been taken, the one verst or the revised 5-verst map. These are not always in accord.

‘Les Royaumes des Neiges.’ By Charles-Eudes Bonin. (Paris: Colin. 1911. Pp. x., 306. *Illustrations*. 4 francs.) It is claimed for this volume that it fills a gap in Asiatic literature by dealing generally with the Himalayan countries bordering the Indian Empire. The author is not only well acquainted with the Far East and therefore able to appreciate the influence of Chinese rule in the outlying territories of that empire, but he has also travelled in Tibet and among the Lolo, Mosso, and other frontier peoples. He has an interesting chapter on the sources of the Ganges, and incidentally touches on many other topics of the physical geography of the region; and though the various subjects which furnish headings for his chapters do not always appear to hang very closely together, the book is a valuable compendium for the great area with which it deals.

‘China.’ (Story of the National Series.) By Sir R. K. Douglas. 4th edit., revised by I. C. Hanna. (London: Fisher Unwin. 1912. Pp. xx., 492. *Map and Illustrations*. 5s.) As to the text of this well-known history, it is necessary to say nothing at this stage except that it has been briefly but adequately brought up to date. The same process might also have been applied to some of the illustrations and the map which still appears, though it must have been old when the first edition was published.

AFRICA.

THE GAMBIA.

‘The Gambia.’ By Henry Fenwick Reeve. With Illustrations and Maps. London: Smith, Elder & Co. 1912. 10s. 6d. *net*.

The full title of this book is ‘The Gambia, its history, ancient, mediæval; and modern, together with its geographical, geological, and ethnographical conditions and a description of the birds, beasts and fishes found therein,’ and Mr. Reeve lives well up to his title-page. He writes with knowledge—having spent fifteen years in West Africa—and with an enthusiasm for the Gambia and its place in the British Empire which makes his historical chapters appeal strongly to the reader. Into the reasons which cause him to fear that Britain may part with the

Gambia to France we need not enter, but it may be noted that Mr. Reeve states that France is likely to select a spot much lower down the river than Yarbou Tenda as the port granted to it by the 1904 agreement.

Mr. Reeve's chapters on the geography and geology of the Gambia are fuller and better than any others with which we are acquainted. He traces the river from its source to its mouth, gives the story of its exploration, describes the towns on its banks, the nature of the surrounding country and the character of the river itself, while a comprehensive survey of what the valley of the Gambia looks like opens the chapter on geology. Ironstone cliffs are numerous, and Mr. Reeve concludes that the iron ores, ochres and china clay may be found rich enough to work commercially. The chapters on ethnology, if they supply little absolutely new to the student, are a brave attempt to elucidate a puzzling problem. That part of the volume dealing with natural history is admirable, from its notes on former authorities to its list of birds, beasts and fishes with their native names. Dr. Hopkinson contributes the chapter on birds, and Capt. W. B. Stanley a chapter on wild animals and hunting. With the partial exception of the flora, which is not treated systematically, no aspect of the Gambia goes unrecorded in this volume. Well written, capitally illustrated, with excellent maps, it is a model which we should like to see copied by authors who could write with equal authority of other British possessions.

F. R. C.

BECHUANALAND AND THE KALAHARI.

'Trekking the Great Thirst: Travel and Sport in the Kalahari Desert.' By Arnold W. Hodson, F.R.G.S., Sub-Inspector of the Bechuanaland Protectorate Police. Edited by A. E. Nellen. 4 *Maps*, 85 *Illustrations*. London and Leipzig: T. Fisher Unwin. 1912. 12s. 6d. net.

Mr. Arnold Hodson, in his account of his travels in the Bechuanaland Protectorate from 1903 to 1910, describes several regions, especially in the Kalahari, which are very little known. The principal topographical results obtained have already been published in the *Journal* (see vol. 25, pp. 166-172). In the volume before us we have details of the author's various expeditions, descriptions of the fauna and flora, of the inhabitants of the Protectorate, and valuable information concerning climate and health. One of the most important of Mr. Hodson's journeys was that which opened up a route along the western border of the Kalahari from Lehututu to Ngami. The "great thirsts" of the desert are vividly portrayed; just as vividly does the author depict the danger of death through excess of water during the rainy season in the region between Francistown and the Mababe flats. The water-logged country rendered hunting impossible; and on one journey Mr. Hodson's Bushmen were reduced to eating their skin sandals. Yet in the dry season this very region is practically waterless.

The narrative is simply and pleasantly told. Scattered through the pages is a good deal about the life and beliefs of the Bushmen, which is new and of value. It is a pity that these particulars are not brought together. That method might also with advantage have been followed with respect to the information given about the topography of the country. Thus the worth of the book to the student is lessened. It is in character with the author's methods that four sectional sketch-maps are given, but no general map. The description of the big game and of hunting adventures is excellent; as Mr. Selous says in a "foreword," to the sportsman and lover of nature the book cannot fail to appeal very strongly. The reader will, too, be impressed by the good work in the public service done by Mr. Hodson.

F. R. C.