WILEY

Review: The Congo

Author(s): A. H. Keane

Review by: A. H. Keane

Source: *The Geographical Journal*, Vol. 34, No. 1 (Jul., 1909), p. 76

Published by: geographicalj

Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1778000>

Accessed: 27-06-2016 03:49 UTC

Your use of the JSTOR archive indicates your acceptance of the Terms & Conditions of Use, available at

<http://about.jstor.org/terms>

JSTOR is a not-for-profit service that helps scholars, researchers, and students discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content in a trusted digital archive. We use information technology and tools to increase productivity and facilitate new forms of scholarship. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

Wiley, The Royal Geographical Society (with the Institute of British Geographers) are collaborating with JSTOR to digitize, preserve and extend access to *The Geographical Journal*

from contact with European culture. This is most true of such tribes as the Tuburi, Kunga, Wulhas, and Musgu, hitherto scarcely known. But Captain Dominik has also much of interest to relate concerning the Fula, Hausa, Bagirmi, Kanuri, and other fairly well-known peoples, as well as of the tribes living nearer the Cameroon estuary. The flora and zoology of the country also receive attention. Some excellent photographs accompany the text, and enable the reader the better to understand the descriptions given. The illustrations of scenery are remarkably good.

FRANK R. CANA.

THE CONGO.

'Il Congo.' By Dr. E. Baccari. Pp. xxvi. + 670. *Maps and Illustrations*. Rome: Office of the *Revista Marittima*. 1908.

Early in the year 1903, Dr. Baccari, a distinguished physician attached to the Italian Royal Navy, was commissioned to visit the eastern parts of the Congo State about Lakes Tanganyika and Kivu, in order to ascertain how far this region might be suitable for Italian settlement. He was also to study the condition of those Italian officials who were already engaged in the service of the State, and had displayed so much ability and intelligence that a district about the Kivu-Tanganyika divide was set apart for permanent occupation by such desirable citizens, or any of their fellow-countrymen willing to join them from Italy.

The results of the mission, which lasted over a great part of the years 1903-04, formed the substance of some thirty official reports, which are embodied in this bulky volume, the publication of which has been delayed pending the now accomplished transfer of the administration from the Congo State to Belgium.

On the main issue Dr. Baccari's verdict is negative and final. On behalf of his fellow-countrymen he declines to accept the proffered west Kivu tract, which is too rugged, unfertile, and unhealthy. The whole land between the two lakes and west of Tanganyika is everywhere malarious, save in a few favoured oases dotted over "un deserto di morte." Then the survey is extended to all the Congo basin, which is emphatically declared to be unfitted for European colonization, or for European agricultural processes, and suited only for the exploitation of the natural resources of the land, or for the plantation system worked by the natives under proper European control. Hitherto the control has not been "proper," and all the methods of the Independent State are denounced in language stronger almost than any used by English and other outside observers.

As an expert medical man, our author has much to say on the climate of Congo-land, and his "diagnosis" of the prevalent diseases—fevers, blackwater, sleeping sickness, beri-beri, sunstroke, etc.—contains some valuable information and suggestions of a practical nature. Thus we are told that, while in most cases quinine and a milk diet are preferable to champagne and ipecacuanha, the too free use of quinine is to be deprecated. It is asked whether this drug should be taken as a prophylactic, and, if so, in what form? is it necessary or at least useful, and not possibly a remedy worse than the evil? Satisfactory answers are given to these queries, and sound advice imparted on many other points, together with far from unneeded warnings on the recurrent subjects of *Bacchus et Venus*. When it is added that there are vivid pictures of the geographical features, the fluvial and orographic systems, and the Bantu populations, while the marine or inland origin of the Congo basin and of Tanganyika with its quasi-marine fauna is somewhat fully discussed, nothing more need be said to show what a valuable contribution the author has made to the physical, political, and social relations in central equatorial Africa.

There is a full subject-index, besides several good maps, a fine engraving of King Leopold, and 161 illustrations from photographs and original sketches.

A. H. KEANE.