WILEY

Review: An Old Dutch World-Map

Author(s): E. H.

Review by: E. H.

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GENERAL.

AN OLD DUTCH WORLD-MAP.

'World Map, 1605.' William Jansz Blaeu. Facsimile . . . in 18 sheets, with key-plate and text by Edward Luther Stevenson, PH.D. New York: Hispanic Society of America. 1914.

This, the latest map-facsimile brought out under the auspices of the Hispanic Society of America, is of great interest to geographers as making known to them for the first time one of the earliest productions of the great Dutch cartographer, Willem Jansz Blaeu, dating probably from 1605. The unique original is in the possession of the Hispanic Society, which is in the fortunate position of having the means, both to acquire first-class rarities of the kind, and to reproduce them in a style worthy of their intrinsic importance. In the present case the condition of the map, portions of which have been entirely lost from the original backing of canvas, has made the task unusually difficult, but it has been carried out with great skill under the superintendence of Prof. E. L. Stevenson, who supplies a suitable commentary in the form of a concise sketch of the life and activities of the author of the map. For this he acknowledges his indebtedness to the excellent study brought out in 1871 by P. J. H. Baudet; but as this was written in Dutch, and has not been widely known in this country, the particulars thus given should prove of considerable use.

Prof. Stevenson has added a good deal also from the results of personal research. Thus he has himself been able to locate no fewer than sixty Blaeu globes, while Baudet could trace only five or six. On the other hand, in speaking of Blaeu's other geographical productions, he has apparently missed one or two facts that have come to light within recent years. While accepting Baudet's demonstration that the first two volumes of the 'Licht der Zee-vaert' must have originally appeared in 1608, he is unaware that a copy of this edition has since been met with, and is now (we believe) in the library of Amsterdam University. Nor does he mention the long unknown English edition, published at Amsterdam in 1612, of which a copy was offered for sale a few years ago by the well-known bookseller at the Hague, Martinus Nijhoff. But it would be unjust to criticize the memoir on this account, as it makes no claim to supply more than an outline of Blaeu's geographical output. Still less would it be fair to expect from the writer a knowledge of later finds in Holland and elsewhere, such as those described by Dr. Wieder in the *Tijdschrift* of the Netherlands Geographical Society for November last (cf. *Journal*, February, 1915, p. 163), which had not become matters of common knowledge when the memoir was written. But Dr. Wieder's researches have an important bearing on the question of Blaeu's early work, though the exact conclusions to be drawn are not yet evident. The Valencia map of 1592, now shown to be almost certainly the lost map of Peter Plancius, is said by Dr. Wieder to have been the basis both for Blaeu's world-map of 1606* and for Hondius's of 1611, and if this be the case, one might expect to trace a similar indebtedness in the 1605 map now before us. A good general idea of the Plancius map is said by Dr. Wieder to be supplied by the Hoeius map (originally issued about

* No map of this undoubted date seems to be known, and it may be supposed that Dr. Wieder is referring to the world-map in the 'Toonneel des Aerdrycx' of 1635, which has been thought to have been originally issued in 1606. A reduced facsimile of this is given by Prof. Stevenson. Hondius's map of 1611 was reproduced in facsimile, under the editorship of Profs. Stevenson and Fischer, in 1907.

1600), reproduced in the 'Remarkable Maps' of F. Muller & Co., of Amsterdam; and this certainly shows a strong resemblance to the Blaeu and Hondius maps. In fact, apart from the difference of projection, the points of similarity between the Hoeius map and the Blaeu map of 1605 are almost equally striking with those between the latter and the Hondius map of 1611, to which Prof. Stevenson draws special attention. In any case caution is necessary in attributing exceptional credit for originality to Blaeu, the outstanding feature of his work being rather the excellence of its technique. As a fine specimen of engraving, and for its pictorial and other embellishments, the 1605 map must, in its original condition, have been a worthy forerunner of the later productions of the Blaeus. The whole measures 8 feet in length, and shows the world in two circular hemispheres on the stereographic projection. An inscription at the top runs: "Nova universi terrarum orbis mappa, ex optimis quibusque geographicis hydrographicisq; tabulis . . . depicta a Guliel. Iansonio Alcmar."

E. H.

A LIFE OF FLINDERS.

'The Life of Captain Matthew Flinders, R.N.' By Professor Ernest Scott. Sydney: Angus & Robertson. 1914. Pp. xviii., 492. *Maps and Illustrations.*

A biography of Matthew Flinders has its proper birthplace in Australia, and its proper parent in the professor of history in one of the great new universities of that continent, Melbourne. There is no previous complete review of this great explorer's life and work. He was not only a highly skilled navigator, who made the very best of bad conditions, on his most important voyage handling a poor vessel and getting all he could out of her; he was also a fine adventurer by temperament and a most conscientious and accurate observer. The writer acknowledges assistance received from authoritative sources, and may fairly claim to have filled the gap in the literature of exploration and travel which he set out to fill. The history of Flinders' family connections and early life occupies two chapters. In the subsequent account of his life-work full attention is given to collateral subjects: thus, a chapter is devoted to 'Australian Geography before Flinders,' while the book incidentally supplies a fairly complete biography of George Bass, the discovery of the strait which bears his name forming the subject of a chapter. At a later stage it has been necessary to deal with the career of the French General Decaen, as a prelude to the circumstances under which Flinders came into his power under such unfortunate conditions. The author's estimates of Flinders' work and character are always temperate and well balanced, and the book is free from tendencies towards the hero-worship of its subject. Opportunity has been taken to correct a variety of errors, both in perspective and in fact, which have crept into the literature concerning the "early" history of Australia; two singular examples will be noticed on p. 109. The volume is well illustrated, and contains maps above the average of Australian production, but it argues a paucity of resource on the part of the printer, unmerited by the standard of the rest of the work, when a fount of type very different from the rest of the letterpress has to be used for letters bearing accents.

O. J. R. H.

'The Oil Conquest of the World.' By F. A. Talbot. ("Conquests of Science" series. London: Heinemann. 1914. Pp. x., 310. *Illustrations*. 6s.) The object of this volume is to bring before the general reader the modern commercial importance of oil, and the methods of obtaining it, from whatever source it is derived. It is easily and never tediously written; the stories of prospecting for oil are, indeed, the very reverse of tedious.