WILEY

Review: Across Africa from East to West

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Source: *The Geographical Journal*, Vol. 31, No. 3 (Mar., 1908), pp. 321-322

Published by: geographicalj

Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1777441>

Accessed: 28-06-2016 10:09 UTC

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collected, gathered from the writings of Megasthenes and Herodotus, from inscriptions and sculptures on rocks, and from local records of those early times to the days when that country ceased to be an independent state, and became, as it still is, part of Kashmir and Jammu. As is fitting, the interest of the book is historical rather than geographical; indeed, from the latter point of view it is defective so far that the vague expression "Western Tibet" is not defined. Probably Ladákh is generally meant, but its boundaries extended into Tibet proper on the east, and included Spiti and Lahaul, if not also Kulu, on the west, all three being now subdivisions of the Kangra district of the Punjab. The two first were undoubtedly Tibetan, whilst Kulu is a Rajput state, inhabited chiefly by Hindus; all these were visited by the pilgrim Hiuen Tsang in the seventh century.

Mr. Francke's researches in folklore are evident in the verses he appends to each chapter; some are very quaint, as is the song of a Mon musician to his fiddle, called "Trashī wanggyal"; others are pretty, as that of the maiden tending flocks to a youth across the valley; and one, at any rate, may be called geographical in that it describes the origin of the world.

"How did the Earth first grow?
At first the Earth grew on a lake.
What grew on the water?
On the water grew a meadow.
What grew on the meadow?
Three hills grew there."

And so on till life is developed.

W. BROADFOOT.

AFRICA.

ACROSS AFRICA FROM EAST TO WEST.

'Across Widest Africa.' An account of the country and people of Eastern, Central and Western Africa, as seen during a twelve months' journey from Djibuti to Cape Verde. By A. Henry Savage Landor. Illustrated by 160 half-tone reproductions of photographs and a map of the route. Two vols. London: Hurst & Blackett, Ltd. 1907. Price 42s. net.

Mr. Savage Landor spent the year 1906 in a journey across Africa from Jibuti to Cape Verde. He travelled rapidly, and, with unimportant exceptions, followed routes already known. Nevertheless, his book has a certain amount of information of value to the cartographer. For instance, on several occasions the author found that the sites of native towns in the Ubangi region had been shifted since the time of the Marchand expedition. It is only, however, with respect to the Lake Chad region that any attempt is made to deal in detail with geographical problems. Mr. Landor crossed the south-eastern part of the lake in a small steam-boat, and for about a fortnight skirted its eastern and northern shores—traversing part of the dry bed of the lake. He gives a sketch-map and chart "from latest surveys by French officers and A. Henry Landor," but it is evident that his information is based mainly on the recent labours of French officers. He makes no mention of the prolonged and careful surveys by Lieut. Boyd Alexander and Mr. P. A. Talbot, but observes that "of late years a few French and German travellers have done magnificent work in that region. Among them may be mentioned Barth, Overweg, Nachtigal, Colonel Monteil, Messieurs Foureau-Lamy," etc. Mr. Landor is better informed when dealing with the countries of the middle Niger and Senegal, having received from the French authorities many details illustrative of the astonishing economic development of their West African colonies.

The author appears to be more interested in ethnography than in any of the other subjects that appeal to African travellers—except, indeed, in his own celerity of movement. His scorn of quinine, his belief that to roast one's self in the tropical sun is the best way to ensure health, his touching faith in castor-oil as an almost infallible cure for all ailments—in short (as is very natural) his achievements and his manner of life in equatorial regions bulk largely in these two portly volumes. But next in interest come the peoples he met, some of whom he had opportunities of studying for three or four weeks, some for a few hours only. But of all alike he has much to say.

When Mr. Landor confines himself to describing what came under his personal observation he is well worth attention. His spelling of place-names is generally in the bad French fashion; his photographs are generally good. The map showing his route, on the scale of 1 : 10,000,000, is extracted from that of the Geographical Society of Paris. The index is faulty, and there is no summary of the contents of the chapters. One merit the books certainly have—they are light to handle.

F. R. C.

THE SOUTH-WESTERN PART OF THE CONGO FREE STATE.

'Im Schatten des Kongostaates.' By Dr. Leo Frobenius. Berlin: Georg Reimer. 1907. Price 14m.

Dr. Leo Frobenius, chief of the German exploring expedition of inner Africa, travelled up the Kasai, the Kwilu, the Lulua, Sankuru, and upper Lomami rivers between the years 1904 and 1906. His work has been expected with considerable interest in ethnological circles; it was known that he had made considerable collections to illustrate the culture of the Bakuba and Baluba peoples, and it was hoped, amongst other things, that he would give us some positive knowledge of the little-known Bakuba speech, the classification of which is still a great puzzle to students of Congoland.

It must, I fear, be admitted that the book under review is somewhat of a disappointment.

In the first place, the publishers have gone far to spoil its chances of success in English circles by reverting to the intolerable German type, instead of using Roman letters. The reviewer has had occasion of late to read a great many German books dealing with Africa, more especially African languages, or to subscribe to German reviews of the same purport, and has become so used to all this excellent scientific material being presented in Roman type that he feels indignant any man of science of the standing of Dr. Frobenius should have allowed his important study of South-West Congoland to be printed in the old-fashioned German type. German at its best is not an easy language to read, but it is fifty times more difficult when written or printed in the old black-letter characters.

Except for this fault of type, and the absence of an index, the book is well got up. Many of the photographs are admirable. As to the drawings and the black-and-white reproductions of paintings by Herr Lemme, one's feelings are rather divided. Some of these studies are beautiful works of art, such as the two drawings on pp. 57 and 59 of pineapples growing wild. But they and similar studies are quite unnecessary from a scientific point of view, as the pineapple is not a native of Africa. Some of the sketches of river and other landscapes are clever, but not particularly faithful to actuality, or convincing to those who know anything about Central Africa. For instance, in a sketch supposed to illustrate the Congo at Boma, the artist inserts two Giant cranes of a purely South African species, entirely foreign to the Congo region. Other of Herr Lemme's drawings of trees remind one of studies by Leader, but they might just as well be magnificent clumps of Scotch