Review

Author(s): L. W. L.

Review by: L. W. L.

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Sir David Gill had an immense vitality, and great personal skill in match rifle shooting and deer stalking, as well as in mechanism and its employment in the art of observation. His enthusiasm and delight in life made him the best of company and the most convincing advocate with governments and governors. His strong practical sense allowed him to neglect nothing that could contribute to precision, and to permit nothing that was over-elaborate. He was full of ideas and inventions, but it is rare to find anything which he put forward that he did not carry out himself to a triumphant conclusion. Like Airy he "hated suggestions," in the sense that he thought nothing of the man who could not complete what he proposed. And to the lasting benefit of South Africa he "conceived that the traditions of his office at the Cape appeared not only to justify but to demand that some portion of his attention should be given to the geodetic survey of the country." He persuaded the Governments and the Chartered Company to provide for this first essential to the survey which is the basis of good administration; he enrolled and directed a most excellent staff; and he had all the computation done under his own control at the Cape Observatory. He measured bases with the Jäderin suspended wires before the introduction of Invar, and was one of the first to use the new material. He was the great advocate of the theodolite of moderate size but high precision which has contributed so much to the ease and accuracy of geodesy. And he had the courage to sweep away from the computations all that extreme elaboration of "weighting" employed by Everest, which, as he saw, had no real justification in fact. Finally, by his ardent advocacy of the great arc of the 30th meridian east of Greenwich, and by his actual measurement of it to within 70 miles of Tanganyika from the south, he made its eventual completion a scientific obligation.

These are great achievements; and it is no exaggeration to say that Gill's geodetic work in Africa will stand for all time as an imperishable monument to his great and ardent abilities when his immense contributions to astronomy have perhaps been absorbed into the general stock of knowledge, and even to some extent superseded.

The Tropics: their Resources, People, and Future.— C. R. Enock, C.E.
London: Grant Richards. Pp. xxiii. and 451. *Maps and 65 Illustrations.*
16s. net.

This is an ambitious book by a versatile writer, and its ambitions are two—to give a survey of tropical lands, and to found a new science of "Constructive Human Geography." The book is a little difficult, or rather unattractive, to read because of its disregard of some ordinary principles of English grammar; but it is useful to have such a survey in a single volume. The sources of information have been well chosen and well used, and there is a good and full index. The best chapters are naturally those concerned with lands of which the author has direct and detailed knowledge; but throughout there is careful emphasis on the natural capacities of the natives, especially in arts and crafts; and the book is well illustrated.

The claim to have founded a new science can scarcely be maintained. The author says that "the human geography of the geographer is observatory, not constructional;" that "the destruction of human life by famine, or the destruction of native industry by commercialism leave (*sic*) geography cold;" that "it is the part of geography, commercial geography, to encourage commercialism," etc. His new science "will seek the way by which the adjustment of man to his environment may be brought about, and teach how corporate human life may best be lived." No doubt there is no science which combines

ideally geography, economics, and ethics ; but when Mr. Enock goes on to explain that "in the study of constructive human geography we have very early to note that human life depends upon industry ;" that "constructive human geography would operate here with its doctrine that not only nations but localities, should be, as far as physically possible, self-supporting," etc., we remember that Dr. Mill wrote his 'Development of New Lands' twenty years ago ; that the United States recognizes a science of "Prognostic Geography ;" that questions of native capacity, famine, adjustment to environment, are part of the daily work in economic geography in all University courses.

If we are not enthusiastic about the actual survey, and cannot accept the author's claim to have founded a new science, we can praise unreservedly his dignified and earnest attitude to the future of the tropical peoples. He seems to be scarcely aware how much has been done to correct the evils of what he calls "monoculture," and to make full use of what he calls "place-possibility ;" but in both directions there is still very much to be done, and books written in the spirit of this book must be a powerful influence on the side of all that makes for the welfare of the "dependent races."

L. W. L.

Comptes Rendus of Observation and Reasoning.— J. Y. Buchanan, M.A., F.R.S. Cambridge : University Press. 1917. 7s. 6d. net.

In this volume of annotated reprints Mr. Buchanan includes detailed researches in physics and chemistry, criticisms of books and opinions, and the thoughts of a man of science on matters of public importance. The introductory chapter is a review of Antarctic research up to the return of Captain Scott from his first expedition, reprinted from the *Quarterly Review* of 1906. Its main value lies in the critical comparisons of Captain Scott's observations in 1902-4 with those of Sir James Ross in 1841-43 ; but we should like to see this carried farther. Mr. Buchanan adduces reasons for believing in Ross whenever that explorer was contradicted by Scott ; but we think that he does not fully dispose of Scott's contention that Ross overestimated the height of the Barrier.

The remaining papers of geographical interest are those setting forth Mr. Buchanan's investigation of sea-ice and glaciers, and in a less direct degree those describing the observation of solar eclipses. They are all of high value from the fact that Mr. Buchanan is a remarkably acute observer, and an extremely precise and skilful worker in the laboratory. The papers now republished should introduce many new readers to these model researches, and the analytical table of contents furnishes the invaluable comments of the author in full intellectual maturity on the conclusions arrived at during the greater part of his long career of usefulness to science.

H. R. M.

THE MONTHLY RECORD

THE SOCIETY.

Medals and Awards, 1917.

HIS Majesty the King has approved of the award of the Royal Medals for the present year as follows : The Founder's Medal to Commander D. G. Hogarth, R.N.V.R., for his explorations and other geographical work in