Review: South Africa

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Source: *The Geographical Journal*, Vol. 32, No. 1 (Jul., 1908), p. 75

Published by: geographicalj

Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1777884>

Accessed: 27-06-2016 10:59 UTC

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completely disappeared, and "c'est le désert qui prendra possession de l'Afrique centrale française."

A large part of the book is occupied with numerous appendixes, in which are tabulated and described the geological, mineralogical, zoological, and botanical specimens collected by the mission. There are also six maps, eight plates, and 112 illustrations, which, however, are not all worthy of French art.

A. H. KEANE.

SOUTH AFRICA.

'Südafrika: Eine Landes-, Volks- und Wirtschaftskunde.' By Prof. Dr. Siegfried Passarge. *With 47 Plates, 34 Charts, and numerous inset Illustrations.* Leipzig: 1908. Pp. xxv. + 355. Price 7.20m.

For this general survey of the southern section of the African continent a special value may be claimed, both on account of its comprehensive character, and more particularly because it is no ordinary library-chair compilation, but the outcome of serious studies made largely on the spot by a trained observer of acknowledged authority in most branches of the natural sciences. It is not addressed so much to specialists as to ordinary intelligent readers desirous of acquiring a competent knowledge of a land presenting an unusual number of problems interesting alike to the naturalist, the political economist, and the statesman. One of these problems turns on the long-standing difficulty of reconciling the geographical environment with the ethnic and social relations, a difficulty scarcely felt in small areas such as Iceland or Sicily, but almost insurmountable in wide continental domains. It is rather naïvely remarked that here we have to help ourselves as best we can, and the plan adopted by the author is first to discuss the general physical features of the land; then its climate, on which so largely depend the flora and fauna; and, lastly, the human elements, their culture, social and political status. If, with all this, Dr. Passarge does not quite succeed in establishing complete harmony between the various factors under consideration, he at least follows an excellent programme, which is here developed with exceptional skill and competency. A jarring note, however, is struck when he attempts a solution of the racial problem, which in the near future must become the most pressing of all.

Another problem, not of the future, but of the remote past, concerns the origin of the Zimbabwe monuments and associated gold-mines. This question is handled with the strictest impartiality, and, after duly weighing the arguments for Bent's and Maciver's views, Dr. Passarge winds up in favour of the former as much the more probable. He aptly remarks that, apart from all other considerations, the civilization represented by these remains is an intruder in South Africa. It is not native-born; "it comes from without, and it is most unlikely that it was developed from small beginnings in Africa itself."

Rather a novel feature are the numerous small-scale maps, which will be heartily welcomed by the geographical student, as greatly helping to understand the orographic, hydrographic, meteorological, and other physical conditions in this geologically ancient section of the continent. Thus there are charts clearly showing highlands, plateaux, terraced lands (karcos), and marine currents; divides, watersheds, and fluvial basins; isothermals and isobars, with their annual variations; summer and winter rainfall, and geological formations in connection with the characteristic transitions from the reptilian to mammal life in the Austral lands. All this makes it an ideal handbook for educational purposes, and from this point of view an English edition should command a wide circulation.

A. H. K.