WILEY

Review: The Shans

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was not the first European to visit the lake, nor Hedin the first Swede. These and other affirmations of less importance are refuted by Dr. Hedin in this pamphlet. Strahlenberg and Schönström, he says, obtained their information about Central Asia by inquiry, and Renat, who lived among the Kalmukhs, never went so far as Lop-nor.* On the whole, Dr. Hedin's work lay west of Prjevalsky's. A sketch is here given of the well-known Lop-nor controversy, and the change in the position of the lake is certainly confirmed by Renat's map, which, however, is only a copy of a Mongolian original in the library of the Upsala university. Renat's map and the original are here reproduced for comparison.

THE SHANS.

'The Shans at Home.' By Mrs. Leslie Milne. With two chapters on Shan history and literature by the Rev. William Willis Cochrane. London: Murray. 1910. 15s. net.

The authoress visited the Northern Shan states in 1906, and resided at various towns for several months at a time, her chief object being to study the language and trace the origin of a people called the Palaungs, or Pales, who descend from their homes in the hills to trade with the Shans of the valleys, but are not allied to them either in race or language. We are furnished with very full information regarding the Shan people generally, and their mode of living, and the impression is decidedly pleasing. They are naturally sociable, generous, and kind-hearted, and always very hospitable. The climate of the upland plateau of the Shan states is healthy if certain precautions, such as the use of mosquito curtains, are taken against fever. The winters are cool—the mornings from November to February being really cold, the ground often white with hoar frost. Fruit is found in profusion, and the authoress thinks it strange that no attempt has been made to cultivate fruit and make jam, especially raspberry jam, for British residents in the East, whose jam is at present imported from England. The population of the Northern Shan states is at least 370,000, and their position east of Upper Burma makes it not unlikely that when communication is facilitated between Burma and China their country will play an important part in the opening up of the contiguous regions. For this and other reasons, we regret the absence of a map, which would have greatly helped the reader.

CHINA.

'Gleanings from Fifty Years in China.' By the late Archibald Little. London: Sampson Low. 1910. 7s. 6d. net.

The late Mr. Archibald Little has been truly described as a merchant by the accident of career, but a scholar and traveller by bent of character and patience. Having arrived in China as far back as 1859, his experiences cover a period of nearly half a century, and his widow has undoubtedly done useful service in putting together a collection of interesting fugitive pieces, consisting chiefly of his contributions to periodical literature in China, America, and England. Roughly, these articles may be grouped, in point of subject-matter, into four categories, viz. trade and politics, travel, drama and legend, and religion and philosophy. These are varied and supplemented by an original play, in the Chinese manner, entitled "Plot and Counterplot," and an ancient Chinese farce, called "Browning Boots," neither of which had been published before. A reference to other writings of Mr. Little, and a brief account of some of his

* Dr. Hedin seems to have since modified his views, for in a note in *Petermanns Mitteilungen* (1911, No. 2), following one by Strindberg, he fully endorses the latter's conclusions as regards Renat.