Review: East Africa

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work indeed makes no pretensions to be much more than a "wanderer's diary." He devotes some space to a description of the country and people of Sistan, on the importance of which he insists, not merely for its great fertility, but on account of its position relatively to the surrounding countries; and bears full testimony to the influence with the people which Major Sykes has acquired by his *bonhomie* and tact. With respect to much of the other districts traversed, the impression conveyed by the narrative is one of dreary monotony and desolation, leading one to the conclusion that, in themselves at least, they can never afford an adequate occasion for international rivalry. Of Birjand, however, and its apparently increasing trade, a somewhat brighter picture is drawn.

NEPAL.

'Durch Indien ins Verschllossene Land Nepal.' By Dr. K. Boeck. Leipzig: F. Hirt & Son. 1903.

The author, who has visited India frequently in the course of the last twelve years, describes his book as a series of sketches from Ceylon to Nepal. In these literary sketches and the numerous photographs that accompany them, the first place is given to the native population and its daily life; architecture, particularly in the strange temples of the south, Madura and Seringham, is also well illustrated. Less attention has been paid to the better-known Mohammedan architecture of the north. Dr. Boeck was fortunate in obtaining leave, generally restricted to the Resident's guests, to visit Katmandu and its environs, and his photographs of the local architecture are numerous and interesting. From the Kakani heights, some few miles north of Katmandu, previously visited by H. Schlagintweit, he obtained a view of the snow mountains visible to the east, amongst which he was pointed out "Gaurisankar-Everest."

SYRIA AND PALESTINE.

'The Semitic Series.—The Early History of Syria and Palestine.' By Lewis Bayles Paton. London: Nimmo. 1902.

The general reader is here presented with a clear outline of the history of the Western Semites from the earliest times down to the establishment of the Persian empire, so far as it can be pieced together from the narratives of the Bible and other ancient sources, and from the results of the most recent explorations both in Syria and Palestine, and in the neighbouring Eastern lands with which those countries were brought so much into contact. The story of Israel and the Phœnicians will be told more fully in other volumes of the series, but the present work gives a valuable insight into the general movements of the Semitic peoples in ancient times.

AFRICA.

EAST AFRICA.

'Mittheilungen über Meine Reise nach Aequatorial-Ost-Afrika und Uganda 1896-1897.' Von Dr. Max Schoeller. Vols. i. and iii. Maps. Berlin: Reimer. 1901.

The journey of which the results are given in these volumes was carried out some five years ago, and was described in some detail at the time in the *Journal*. In his preface the author explains the reasons which have delayed its appearance, and which have even now led to some curtailment of the original plan. Of the three volumes which are to constitute the complete work, only the first and third

(which consists entirely of maps) have yet been received, and much of the most valuable material is being reserved for vol. ii. The work is produced in a sumptuous style, and, in spite of its somewhat late appearance, is to be welcomed as a valuable addition to East African literature. The greater part is taken up with the narrative of the journey so far as it relates to German East Africa, while the larger section of the route, which led through British East Africa to the Victorian Nyanza and Uganda, will be dealt with in the second volume. Though not, of course, of the nature of a systematic treatise, this narrative section abounds with instructive remarks on the various branches of science which engaged the attention of the author, especially the structural geology, and affords yet another proof of the power of observation so generally characteristic of German travellers. We find, *e.g.*, full discussions of the great fault systems which traverse East Africa, both in the Pangani region—where the original rift-character is still traceable, though modified by subsequent river-erosion—and in that of the “Natron” lake, a careful comparison being also drawn between the two regions. Economic questions are also touched upon, especially with regard to Usambara, the possibilities of which the author is disposed to rate highly. A zoological discovery was that of the existence of the striped hyæna in German East Africa, which had not been proved before; while a striking picture (recalling those of Sir Harry Johnston) is drawn of the bird-life of the Olgeju lagoon, the central of the three basins into which the “Natron” lake is divided.

The text of the first volume concludes (apart from a section devoted solely to sport) with a very brief summary of the scientific results under the head of cartography, geology, botany and zoology, and ethnology. The route-map, which was the work of Herr Kaiser, is reproduced in vol. iii. in a number of sheets, on, perhaps, an unnecessarily large scale, for it depends solely on the work of the expedition, no other maps being utilized. It is based on careful compass surveys, controlled by bearings to prominent peaks; but whether, in cases of divergence from previous maps, which are not unfrequent, greater reliance is always to be placed in the newer work than on the old, is not easily decided. An extensive series of altitudes, determined by aneroid observations, is given, and these results also differ considerably from those of other travellers. The fact that several instruments were used, so that one checked another, gives some weight to the results, but these do not seem to have been controlled by simultaneous observations at sea-level. A meteorological record was also kept during the journey. In his suggestive sketch of the geological history of East Africa, Dr. Schoeller holds to the view that a land connection with India and South America was maintained through Jurassic times, owing to the similarities observable in the littoral forms of Mollusca dating from that time. Attention must lastly be drawn to the fine series of photographs of native types, though the ethnological remarks are reserved for the second volume.

FRENCH CONGO.

Émile Gentil, ‘La Chute de l’Empire de Rabah.’ Paris: Hachette. 1902.

A stirring chapter in the history of the partition of Africa is supplied by this volume, which deals in a concise yet comprehensive manner with the latter stages of the French advance from the Atlantic coast to the shores of Lake Chad. No one man has played a more important part in that advance than M. Gentil, who, whatever may be the future of the territory, will deserve to be remembered, side by side with his predecessor De Brazza, as one of the chief instruments in the realization of the French dream of territorial extension in Western Equatorial