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Review: The Founder of Physical Geography

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ECONOMICS OF SOUTH AMERICA.

'Panama to Patagonia.' By Charles M. Pepper. London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1906. Size 9 x 6, pp. xx + 398. *Map and Illustrations*. Price 10s. 6d. net.

The commercial relations of South America will undergo certain changes by the construction and opening of the Panama canal. In 1905 the author visited the Western Republics, and his book describes the country traversed; but his chief object is to describe the present, and speculate on the future, economic and industrial development of the republics of Ecuador, Peru, Bolivia, and Chile. The point of view is that of the United States, which country, by its control of the canal, will benefit materially by the shortening of its sea route to the west coast of South America.

The author claims that not only will most of the trade of the west coast, which at present goes by way of the Magellan straits, go through the canal, but that, by the series of railways across the Andes now under construction or in contemplation, some of the rubber of the Amazon, wheat of Argentina, and minerals of Bolivia, which at present flow to the Atlantic, will be captured for the Pacific and Panama route, but—we shall see. The trade of the headwaters of the Amazon may be interfered with, but it is questionable whether much will travel upstream. As regards the Argentina wheat—why should it cross the Andes? for what market?

There are full statistics. Products, shipping tonnages, populations, distances between ports, and the saving of mileage and time between the United States ports and those of South America due to the canal, all are given. Discomforts and incidents of travel, the manners and customs of the people, are noted. Climates are discussed and temperatures given. There is a chapter on the nitrate deposits of Peru, and another on Chilean social questions in which an amusing tale of the ballot-box is related. In the chapter discussing the Munro doctrine and its application to South America, comparisons are drawn between the "blundering, even stupid" English policy of investments and that of the "timid, over-cautious" Germans, and the author thinks that probably the English have been paid greater dividends "in proportion to the capital."

The book is well illustrated, there being fifty photographs depicting harbours, towns, industries, and native life. There are four very indifferent maps: on one it is allowed that the "boundaries between countries are indicated only approximately," reference notes are omitted from that of the Panama canal, while there is no scale on the other two.

W. B.

GENERAL.

THE FOUNDER OF PHYSICAL GEOGRAPHY.

'Klassiker der Naturwissenschaften herausgegeben von Lothar Brieger-Wasservogel.'
IV. Band. Varenius. Von Prof. Dr. S. Günther. Leipzig. [1906]. Verlag von Theod. Thomas.

Probably less is known of Varenius than of any of the early geographers whose books have been landmarks in the history of science, and Prof. Günther has performed a grateful service in piecing together the scattered references to a life which was in truth itself but the fragment of a life, breaking off at the moment when the masterly 'Geographia Generalis' gave promise of a brilliant future. This memoir devotes six chapters to facts about Varenius, the bibliography of his great book and the opinions of later generations upon it, and then seven chapters to the book itself, summarizing the argument and throwing much light upon the state of contemporary geographical knowledge. The text occupies 125 pages; the notes which follow, 644

in number, fill 87 pages more, and these of smaller type, constituting, we cannot but suppose, a bibliography as nearly exhaustive as diligence and learning can produce.

Bernhard Varen (whose name is universally known in the Latin form Varenius) was a German, born at Herford in Westphalia in 1621 or 1622. He studied at Hamburg under Jungius, an enlightened and progressive teacher, and passed thence to the University of Königsberg, where the studies were bounded by the writings of Aristotle, and mathematics taught in its applications to three subjects of modern interest—geography, astrology, and fortification. He studied mathematics from inclination and medicine as a duty; moved to Holland, where he lived for some time by private teaching, and, in 1649, graduated as a doctor of medicine at Leyden. But mathematics and its applications held his heart, and instead of medical practice he took to literary work for the famous firm of Elzevir, for whom he compiled a little book on Japan in 1649 for a series of geographical studies; and, in 1650, for the same firm, he produced his '*Geographia Generalis*,' a single small volume in Latin. From this point nothing further is known of Varenius; he vanishes, and is presumed to have died in that year; but the book lived. After three editions of the Latin text had appeared in Holland, Sir Isaac Newton produced a revised edition at Cambridge, with the addition of diagrams, in 1672. Nearly a hundred years later the Latin text was translated into English, Dutch, and French, and it is not too much to say that the book remained the best text-book of geography for a century and a half.

In a series of chapters dealing in turn with the introductory, mathematical cartographical, nautical, meteorological, oceanographical, and geomorphological sections of the '*Geographia Generalis*,' Prof. Günther shows how in each Varenius had grasped the correct guiding principles and laid down in his terse Latin sentences the main lines of the future development of the science, and justified Prof. Hermann Wagner's dictum that "Varenius is the founder of physical geography."

H. R. M.

WATER CARRIAGE.

'Our Waterways.' By Urquhart A. Forbes and W. H. R. Ashford. London : Murray. 1906.

'British Canals. Is their Resuscitation Practicable?' By Edwin A. Pratt. London : Murray. 1906.

'Ocean and Inland Water Transportation.' By Emory R. Johnson. London : Appleton. 1906.

Of the three books noted above, all dealing at least in part with a subject which is now engaging a good deal of public attention, that of inland waterways, the first two are more or less controversial, the one favouring, the other contesting the practicability of reinvigorating the inland water traffic of this country. The sub-title of the book by Forbes and Ashford describes it as '*A History of Inland Navigation considered as a Branch of Water Conservancy*,' and as a history it contains much of great interest, including much of special geographical interest, more particularly in the chapters treating of the conservancy of rivers in England and Wales, both before and subsequent to the canal era; and the value of the work, both from a geographical and historical point of view, is enhanced by the appendixes giving various figures relating to the rivers and lakes of the British Isles, an alphabetical list of the canals and river navigations of the United Kingdom, distinguishing the length under railway control and that of the independent waterways, another alphabetical list of the navigations that have become derelict or got converted into railways, a chronological list of statutes, charters, grants and letters patent referred to in the work from 1225, a note on commissioners of sewers, and a list, in chronological order (from 1655), of authorities cited.

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