Review

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Source: *The Geographical Journal*, Vol. 52, No. 6 (Dec., 1918), pp. 385-386

Published by: geographicalj

Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1780273>

Accessed: 27-06-2016 08:47 UTC

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part of the latter reproduced in the 'Commentarj'), with one small exception: in the description of the shifting sands translated above, there is another character, apparently struck out, just before the word "wind" in the Vatican map, for which there is no room in the R.G.S. copy. All the other legends and names correspond exactly, so that we are justified in regarding the R.G.S. map as a re-issue of the 1602 edition, printed from the same blocks after a few trifling corrections had been made.*

Few Chinese towns are given apart from the provincial capitals. Neither Shiuhing,† where Ricci stayed for so long, nor Shiuchow † (Trigault's *Xaucea*) is marked, but we find *Chi* (Kianfu) in Kiangsi, which is undoubtedly the *Chiengan* of Trigault.

(*To be continued.*)

REVIEWS

EUROPE

London and its Environs.— Edited by **Findlay Muirhead, M.A.** The Blue Guides. London: Macmillan & Co.; Paris: Hachette & Cie. Pp. lxvii. and 501. 30 *Maps and Plans*. 7s. 6d. *net*.

THIS is the first volume of a new international series of guide books, to be issued jointly by publishing houses in London and in Paris (where they will appear in French as "Les Guides Bleus"). From the general excellence, moderate price, and handiness of this volume, it may be predicted that as the series grows it will—at all events here and in France—probably supplant the once ubiquitous "Baedeker." The demand for the famous German guides will certainly shrink to small dimensions in Allied countries; and it is significant that the editor of this Guide and Mr. James F. Muirhead, one of his collaborators, were formerly associated in the English editorship of the Leipzig "Handbooks."

The difficulty of preparing a comprehensive guide to London at the present time must have been very great; and it might well be thought that the period when many public collections and other "sights" are inaccessible to the public, and when the whole of London life is subjected to abnormal restrictions—these conditions fluctuating from day to day—was the least opportune for such an enterprise. Such changes are, however, as the editor says, "more functional than organic," and the aim appears to be to describe as far as possible the London after the war. This has necessitated a good deal of compromise. The usual descriptions are given of the contents of the museums and picture-galleries, with warnings that some of these are entirely closed until peace-time; while elsewhere the writer even projects himself into the future in such statements as: "during the Great War its [the Tower's] former use as a prison was revived."

The Guide opens with several chapters by various hands upon aspects of

* Ricci writes on 10 May 1605: "Il Mappamondo che mandai doi anni sono, è stato ristampato più di dieci volte" ('Lettere dalla Cina,' p. 272). It is not likely that further reprints were made after the publication of Verbiest's World map, so that the date of the R.G.S. copy probably falls between the years 1644 and 1670 or thereabouts.

† Post Office spelling, based on local pronunciation. The Wade spelling is *Chao-ch'ing* and *Shao-chou*, respectively.

London as a whole ; valuable essays, which may be read profitably by those who have lived in London all their lives. These introductory chapters comprise : "History and Administration of London," by the former Librarian at the Guildhall, Mr. Charles Welch ; "British Art," by Dr. D. S. MacColl, Keeper of the Wallace Collection ; "London Architecture," by Prof. Lethaby ; and "Literary Walks in London," by Mr. James F. Muirhead. There is also a useful Bibliography. Of the general texture, so to speak, of the Guide proper no more need be said than that it appears to be extremely clear and helpful, and that an admirable feature is the abundant reference to the literary associations of places and houses, especially with regard to Dickens's works. It should be noted that the word "environs" is interpreted very liberally, and is made to include such outlying places as Tilbury, Burnham Beeches, and Waltham Cross. The maps and plans are also clear and very practical in arrangement. Travellers who have known the annoyance of having to open out and replace large maps on windy days will be pleased to see that here the trouble has been done away with as far as possible ; for the large general map of London and the suburbs which is indispensable to the work has been simply cut into horizontal pull-out strips of the height of the pages, these strips being secured by the left-hand ends.

The volume is not quite free from error. Testing its accuracy as regards one corner of London, the reviewer has noticed two mistakes. On the map facing page 462, as also in the Index, Stamford Brook Station is omitted ; and "Old Mill Lane," mentioned on page 422, should be "Oil Mill Lane." Such however are probably printers' errors and do not seriously impair the value of the work.

L. F. G.

Le Bas-Maine : Étude Géographique.— **René Musset.** Paris : Armand Colin. 1917. *With Plates, Maps, and Text Figures.* 15 fr. and 20 per cent. increase.

French geographers before the war were already noted for the number of detailed and painstaking regional studies which they had produced, on a scale unrepresented here. We congratulate Dr. Musset and his publisher on the proof, which this book affords, that even the war has not been permitted to interrupt the sequence. It forms a notable achievement under present conditions ; but we must add a hope that, in the future, bulky volumes, requiring serious study, will cease to appear in a form such that they promptly go to pieces in the hands of even the most careful reader.

The Bas-Maine is a part of the old province of Maine, practically coinciding with the department of Mayenne ; in other words it is the area drained by the upper part of the Mayenne River, itself a right-bank tributary of the Loire. Structurally, it forms the eastern extremity of the Armorican massif of Brittany, separated from the latter by the desolate region between the valleys of the Vilaine and the Mayenne, which has been a frontier belt throughout history. It shows some resemblance to Brittany in climate, for this is mild and damp, better suited for apples and buckwheat than for corn or vine. A country of large rather than of small properties—"a corner of rural England which has strayed into France"—it is distinguished by the prevalence of the *métayage* system. The department, indeed, forms part of an isolated area in which—and here only—this system is practised north of the Loire. With a naturally infertile soil, and a position remote from main lines of communication, the region has always been backward, a fact reflected in the bad condition of the local roads, and the paucity of local railways.