Review

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‘Short Manual of the Amharic language.’ By Major J. P. Alone. (London : 1909. Pp. 114. 5s.) A little essay on a very difficult form of speech, which the author has prepared for the General Staff. There is a copious English-Amharic vocabulary, and also a clearly printed table of the curious syllabic alphabet of the language, which is a degraded member of the Geez (Himyaritic) family imported into Abyssinia from South Arabia over two thousand years ago.

‘The Statesman’s Year-book.’ Edited by J. Scott Keltie and I. P. A. Renwick. (London : Macmillan. 1910. Pp. civ., 1404. *Maps.*) The forty-seventh annual volume of this publication contains no important departure from precedent, while maintaining its standard of utility. The preface informs us of certain conversions from foreign to English measures, which are moves in the right direction. There are several important maps. The development of Belgian Congo is illustrated, as also the movement of urban and rural population in the United Kingdom, the course of the proposed Clyde-Forth and Georgian Bay canals, the union of South Africa, new South American frontiers, and the federal district and capital of Australia. The valuable bibliographies bear the usual marks of careful revision to date.

THE MONTHLY RECORD.

EUROPE.

“**Transhumance**” in Spain.—An admirable sketch of the history and conditions, in Spain, of “transhumance,” or the periodic movements of sheep between their summer and winter pastures, has lately been contributed to the *Annales de Géographie* (May 15, 1910) by Mr. A. Fribourg. Spain, it is pointed out, is one of the countries in which the natural conditions—the violent contrasts of relief, soil, climate, and consequently of vegetation—are specially calculated to foster such movements. While one district is burnt up by the summer sun, another, at no great distance, will be clothed with luxuriant grasses, and it thus comes about that, at every season, the animals are sure to find in some part or other the vegetation necessary to its existence. The past history and social condition of Spain likewise fostered the development of the system. The incessant wars and disturbances favoured stock-rearing rather than agriculture, the mobility of flocks and herds enabling them to be moved to a place of safety in the case of a hostile inroad. When, in due course, the inevitable conflict of interest between herdmen and agriculturists arose, the former enjoyed a long continuance of royal protection, and special privileges were secured by the “*Mesta*” or association of owners of flocks—only to be abolished during the first half of the last century. Thenceforth the migratory movement declined, and statistics published in 1892 showed that the numbers of sheep, subject to periodic change of pasturage, were then only half what they had been in 1482, and only about one-tenth of the total number of sheep in the kingdom. Mr. Fribourg shows by a pair of sketch-maps (1) the total distribution of sheep in Spain, and (2) the distribution of migratory sheep. While the two distributions show a broad general resemblance, both being, *e.g.*, far more intense to the north than to the south of the parallel of 40°, there are important divergences in detail. Thus, while the mountainous and well-watered province of Navarre, with a large actual number of sheep, shows no migratory movement at all, the neighbouring province of Huesca, with a much smaller total, shows a particularly strong movement, owing to the attraction exercised by the vast winter pasturages on the banks of the Ebro. Broadly speaking, the main centres of migration are