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Review: A New Life of Columbus

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land-bridge having no existence—even in the Lower Eocene or Post-Cretaceous—in the series of maps by Prof. W. D. Matthew, illustrating the hypothetical outlines of the continents of the world in Tertiary times, published in the *Bulletin* of the American Museum of Natural History for 1906 (vol. 22, pp. 353-383).

R. L.

GENERAL.

THE STEREOSCOPE IN GEOGRAPHY TEACHING.

'Geography through the Stereoscope': (a) 'Students' Field Guide,' pp. 362 and index. (b) 'Teachers' Manual,' pp. 151. By Philip Emerson and William Charles Moore. London and New York: Messrs. Underwood & Underwood.

Both these volumes show a considerable amount of ingenuity and care in their compilation, and the authors have demonstrated the use of the stereoscope as a means of teaching geography. The results of experiments in two American schools are shown in a complete scheme dealing with the world, and it must be acknowledged that the method advocated would produce more realistic knowledge and rouse, in all probability, a livelier interest in the pupils. The claims made on behalf of the method are somewhat extravagant; it has frequently been applied by good teachers to the joint use of maps and pictures—the latter carefully selected—in this country. Being American in its outlook and designedly produced to advocate the more extended use of the stereoscope, one is apt to not entirely concur with the selection of the stereographs, since some of the subjects depicted in the list would be regarded here as dealing with interesting information rather than seriously studied geography. The treatment gives a good example of a method thoroughly worked through, and in that respect the two books are likely to be most suggestive to teachers who would doubtless apply it to their needs. The authors advocate working in groups varying according to the number in the class and the number of "groups" to be dealt with. Such class-room organization is not new, as is claimed. In addition to the set "groups" of stereographs, subsidiary sets are provided to be used for reference purposes. The 'Students' Field Guide' affords a useful running commentary for each pupil on the sets of "graphs," and contains many suggestive remarks and questions designed to bring out the fundamental geographical principles which they illustrate. The cost of the outfit would, however, be considerable, and no doubt further experiment will lead to the elimination of all such subjects as are not strictly geographical in aspect. The 'Teachers' Manual' forms a running commentary as to method combined with a general geographical summary of the countries studied. There is no attempt to treat these regionally, and hence the method can only supplement real geographical classwork. If regarded as an attempt to devise some more systematic form of illustrating the geography lesson, the books must be considered ingenious, carefully prepared, and stimulating. Useful references for teachers' or students' reading are made throughout, mainly to American literature.

F. G. APHORPE.

A NEW LIFE OF COLUMBUS.

'Christopher Columbus, and the New World of his Discovery.' By Filson Young. Two vols. 25s. net. E. Grant Richards.

In these two handsome volumes Mr. Filson Young has added one more to the many biographies of the great explorer, and has shown at least one of the qualifications for the heavy task, the possession of the pen of a ready writer. The work is avowedly an attempt "to bridge the immense gap existing between the labours of the historians and the indifference of the modern reader." Unfortunately, some

of the quarries in which the author has delved appear to yield rock of an indifferent quality. Mr. Vignaud, to whom special thanks are given in the preface, and whose views seem largely to colour the work, states, in a letter printed as an appendix, that "our belief that the discovery of America was due to an attempt to carry out a scheme for reaching the Indies by way of the west rests . . . on the word of Christopher Columbus, who was not a truthful man." Following the same writer, the Toscanelli letter is rejected as a forgery. The arguments for this are given in another appendix, and their value may be partly gauged by the statement that the information it contained about China was based "on an old and fantastic tale recounted by a Pisan traveller, Rusticiano, to Marco Polo, a Venetian, and by him published under the title of 'Il. Millone,' at the end of the thirteenth century." Shade of Ser Marco Polo, was ever a more "fantastic tale" than this, to ascribe the authorship of the grave and sober narrative of those wondrous travels to a mere amanuensis!

It is probably due to too close adherence to the idea that Columbus did not seek a route to the east by way of the west, that the author makes the remarkable statement that "it is an error continually made by the biographers of Columbus that the purpose of Prince Henry's explorations down the coast of Africa was to find a sea route to the West Indies by way of the east." It is as difficult to believe that any writer could have said that the Portuguese sought the *West* Indies, as not to believe that as certainly as they sought the Indies by an eastward route round Africa, so did Columbus seek the Indies by a western route across the Atlantic. The very name "Indies" was given by Columbus to the islands he reached, the term "West" being a later addition to prevent confusion with the real Indies, for which he had naturally mistaken them.

Mr. Young hardly devotes as much space to the actual voyages as might have been expected, but this to some extent is made up for by an appendix on the course of the first voyage by the Earl of Dunraven, in which the details of the actual run are given, with an attempt to estimate the interesting effect of the magnetic variation. The volumes are illustrated by some good photographs, but the maps leave something to be desired, a reproduction of Behaim's globe being particularly unfortunate, for that famous and jealously guarded earliest globe of modern times is represented by the quadrant from China eastwards, clapped on to the quadrant from Africa westwards, with no indication of the intervening hemisphere having been omitted.

Of books about Columbus there will probably be no end. To some he will seem as to one quoted in these volumes, "boastful and lying, greedy, violent, and brutal," to others a saint inspired; but nothing will probably ever remove the fascination of the story of that humble weaver's son of Genoa, who rose to be an admiral and a viceroy, and whose high honour it was to enlarge the boundaries of human understanding by the revelation, even though it was an unconscious one, of a new and unsuspected world.

H. Y. O.

SHORT NOTICES.

Europe.—'Rock Climbing in Skye.' By Ashley P. Abraham. (London: Longmans. 1908. Pp. xxiv., 330. *Map and Illustr.* 21s. net.) The mountaineer must be a geographer in one of the most eminent senses of the word, and leaves his mark upon the map and in geographical literature, even if his object is the purely sporting one of rock-climbing. Mr. Abraham's book adds much to detailed knowledge of the Coolin, a group of mountains which he, a Cumbrian, concedes to be "the finest in the British Isles." Climbers have specialized and