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REVIEWS.

AFRICA.

THE KAMERUN.

'Kamerun und die Deutsche Tsädssee Eisenbahn.' Von C. René, Unter . . . Mitarbeit des Herrn Prof. Dr. F. Wohltmann. Berlin: E. S. Mittler u. Sohn. 1905. *Maps and Illustrations.* Price 6s. 6d.

IN this manual the author, a traveller with considerable knowledge of the Mohammedan states of Central Africa, takes summary stock of the most promising of the German colonies in respect of its geography, geology, climate, vegetation and fauna, population, natural waterways, trade, and railway capacities. The work, which is written in a clear, genial style, and animated by an undertone of colonial enthusiasm, is provided with three maps, one of them incorporating hitherto unpublished surveys and a number of illustrations, but has yet to be provided with an index. Geographically the colony is distinguished into four main sections: (1) The southern part, stretching northwards to 4° N. lat. and comprising some 40,000 square miles, consists of hilly woodland rising from the flat coast to over 2000 feet high, but gradually declining towards the east. (2) To the north, again, is the Kamerun highland proper, a plateau-like formation crossed by high mountain ridges and *massifs*, but falling off gently towards the east. Abutting on the Central African highland, this region is the source of numerous rivers flowing to all the cardinal points. It rises in terraces to over 4000 feet high, and the question of its availability for cattle-rearing settlements will come up later on for determination. In any case, it seems to the author in every way well adapted for cotton culture. Its area is roundly calculated at 130,000 square miles. (3) Further north the highland sinks into the Chad lake depression, and of this region Germany claims over 10,000 square miles. (4) In the south-west of the colony there rises by the sea the volcanic *massif* of the Kamerun mountains, which, with its spurs, may cover an area of about 3500 square miles. The mighty Kamerun mountain occupies by itself some 80 square miles. As to the economic resources of the colony, the richly basaltic region of the coast, more particularly about the Kamerun mountains and in Bakossiland, as also in Adamaua, is credited with decided fertility. The coast region is covered with a mighty primeval forest, in places much more than 100 miles broad. The red and yellow earth, too, the product of the weathering of archaic rock, which constitutes the main basis of the colony, is claimed to be much more fruitful than the coffee lands of east Usambara. In the low flat lands of the south and the Bakossi mountains, Prof. Wohltmann finds a vast area of most fertile soil, holding out the best promises to plantations of every kind. In respect of temperature, Duala has a yearly mean of 77·5° Fahr., and in the warmest month (February), 80° Fahr. In Bali the temperature ranges from 63° to 67·5°. In the mountain lands the climate is fairly cool. The rainy season is March to October, whereas December to February is almost rainless. Thunderstorms are frequent. In the coast region the rainfall is heavy, the west and south sides of the Kamerun mountains approximating to the rainiest places of the world. The population, hitherto reckoned at 4 to 5 millions, is by Prof. Wohltmann estimated at 10 to 12 millions at the very least. In the north are towns of large population. Bamum has 60,000 inhabitants; Dikoa, 35,000 to 40,000; Ngaundere is larger than Dikoa. Starting from Rio del Rey on the Nigerian frontier, the railway will skirt the shore south-eastwards to Port Victoria. The next station, Duala, is the chief harbour of Kamerun, a town of 23,300 inhabitants, possessing ample elbow-room, and, in the author's estimation, every qualification for

unlimited commercial development. From Duala two lines are projected: a north-east line to the Chad lake, and an eastern line following the lower and middle course of the Sannaga.

AMERICA.

HISTORY OF CANADIAN DISCOVERY.

'The Saint Lawrence Basin, and its Border-lands. Being the Story of their Discovery, Exploration, and Occupation.' By Samuel Edward Dawson, LITT. D., F.R.S.C. *With Illustrations and Maps.* (The Story of Exploration. Vol. 4. Edited by J. Scott Keltie, LL.D., Sec. R.G.S.) Pp. xl, 451. London: Lawrence & Bullen, Ltd. 1905. 8vo. 7s. 6d.

This admirable history of the river of Canada, dedicated to Sir Wilfrid Laurier, is well worthy of its position in its series. The King's printer at Ottawa has found time, amid the pressure of Parliamentary duties, to give us a volume of scientific history which almost approaches a romance. It is an advantage, too, that only a portion of a continent, and not a whole continent, is here set before us. The first volume in this series, also full of romance, was not quite commensurate in size with the importance of its subject.

In the introductory sketch of the discovery of America, it is interesting to read of the little son of Geoffrey Chaucer, for whom his father compiled a treatise on the astrolabe, which also shows that the study of astronomy in its practical application to latitude and longitude was a favourite one among the learned in England in the fourteenth century. To Spain, Portugal, and Italy, however, are due the first steps towards the discovery of America, and the intellectual and the commercial prominence of the Italian people can best be realized when we reflect that a Genoese, Columbus, discovered America for Spain; a Genoese-Venetian, John Cabot, discovered the mainland for England; a Florentine, Juan Verrazano, created a claim for France by his voyage along the northern coasts and Acadia; while the whole Western world was named America after another Florentine, Amerigo Vespucci.

The discovery of the Western world was largely assisted by the island outposts upon the western ocean, such as Fayal, in the Azores, famous for its connection with Martin Behaim. But among these islands on the early charts are many existent only in sailors' fancy, and William Faden's Atlas, published in London as late as 1766, actually gives Magda island and Green island.

The Behaim globe, still preserved in Nuremberg, shows that it was no surprise to the scholars and mariners of Europe when Columbus found land across the western ocean, but the surprise was when the land found proved not to be Cathay. Even in the Royal Commission to Cartier, and in the maps of the French school of cartography, it was thought that on the north Asia was continuous with the northern part of America.

The first discoverer of what is now the Dominion of Canada was John Cabot, of Genoa, who sailed from Bristol, and in 1497 landed upon the shore of one of the eastern provinces of Canada, while in that and the following year he sailed along its Atlantic seaboard, as well as along the outer coasts of Newfoundland. Bristol, the second city in all England, was well to the front in the path of discovery, even before 1497, and it is comforting to our national pride to read that it was an English ship and an English crew which first touched the continent of America, though the moving spirit was an Italian, born in Genoa and trained in Venice.

King Henry VII. cautiously empowered the Cabots to sail "with as many mariners . . . as they will have them . . . upon their own proper costs and charges," and his subjects were to give the Cabots "all favour and help . . .