Review

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REVIEWS.

EUROPE.

IRELAND.

'Ireland, Industrial and Agricultural.' Edited by William P. Coyne, Superintendent of Statistics and Intelligence Branch, Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction for Ireland. Dublin. 1902.

The first edition of this encyclopædic work on the industrial resources and industrial occupations of Ireland was prepared for the Glasgow Exhibition of 1901, in which the sister island won exceptional renown by the general excellence of her exhibits. The present edition, the second, is a much-improved and greatly amplified version. Amongst the practically new sections there is one of great merit on the canals of Ireland, a factor which ought to be made to play an important part in the future development of the country. Although written in the first instance as a handbook to the Irish section of the Glasgow Exhibition, this book is very different, in its plan, its scope, and its treatment, from the majority of such works. It invites comparison with, as it was probably suggested by, those first-rate compilations, 'Norway' (1900) and 'Sveriges Land och Folk' (1900), both written for the last Paris Exhibition. All three books would be not incorrectly described by calling them special encyclopædias, the object being to give a fairly full account, under a diversity of headings, of the various phases of national activity, the constituent features of the country itself, and a fair summary of its economic condition and prospects. It should, however, be stated that the Irish book is less comprehensive in its scope than either of the other two with which we have compared it, in that it confines itself entirely to the agricultural and industrial factors, and only steps outside of those limits for the purpose of making clear the essential conditions which underlie those factors, and which have governed their growth and development. In fact, it may be said to be the first systematic attempt made since Sir Robert Kane wrote, in 1844, his 'Industrial Resources of Ireland,' to present anything approaching to a complete survey of the economic resources of the Emerald Isle. From the point of view of physical geography, the most important contribution to the volume is a paper on "The Topography and Geology of Ireland," by Mr. Grenville A. J. Cole, which, although couched in popular language, and covering a good deal of ground in a comparatively few pages, is distinguished by breadth of knowledge, a wide imaginative grasp of the subject, and remarkable lucidity of expression. One is able to gather from it a vivid conception of the way in which this outlying buttress of the primeval European continent came to be built up and assume the aspect it wears to-day. Ireland's woes began long antecedent to the advent, or even the presence, of man upon her shores. Although she was once richly endowed with coal-measures, the life-blood, so to speak, of modern industrialism, she was not allowed to retain them. The thrust and pressure of later geologic upheavals, aided by the influences of an unfriendly climate, swept them all away. Yet even this did not happen without some compensating advantages being vouchsafed to the island. She has her lovely lakes and crumpled hills of Killarney and the south; she has her rugged western and north-western coasts; she has her useful limestones, marbles, and granites, which, however, are not employed to anything like the extent their inherent beauty would suggest they ought to be; and she has her great inland plain, with its evergreen pastures, and its endless miles of bog—this last, too, not without its value should any of the numerous schemes for converting turf to industrial uses ever prove commercially successful.

Two of the most interesting features in the geography of Ireland are the fjords

of her western coasts and the peculiar formation and direction of her rivers. The former, as this book points out, exhibit several close resemblances and parallels with the west coast of Norway. A glance at the map will show that most of the rivers of Ireland flow to the south; though the upper courses of several of the largest, *e.g.* the Bandon, Lee, Blackwater, and Suir, run in a west-east direction. The primeval direction was to the south; but after the great foldings which took place subsequent to the Carboniferous era, the eastward-flowing affluents gained the ascendancy, owing to the main rivers being unable to cut their way through the obstacles presented by the new anticlinal folds. This, however, was fully explained by Prof. Jukes as long ago as 1862. We have left ourselves barely space to allude in the briefest fashion to the astonishing progress which Ireland has made in agriculture, more particularly in dairying, during the last ten or a dozen years, an advance which is principally owing to the Hon. Horace Plunkett and his persuasive power in getting the Irish farmers to co-operate for their mutual advantage. The great things which have been already done for the awakening of Ireland agriculturally surely justify hopes of her ultimate regeneration, hopes which are now entertained by several thoughtful and far-seeing men, amongst them, we gladly note, such shrewd statesmen as Sir Wilfrid Laurier and President Roosevelt.

FRENCH HYDROLOGY.

‘1^{er} Congrès du Sud-Ouest Navigable tenu à Bordeaux les 12, 13 et 14 Juin 1902.’
Compte Rendu des Travaux. Paris and Bordeaux: L. Mulo, etc. 1902.

For some time past a movement has been on foot in the south-west of France for the improvement of the system of inland navigation in that part of the country, where it has been exposed to a steady and progressive deterioration for many years. This movement—the need for which is shown by the almost entire neglect of south-western France in the Government schemes for the improvement of French waterways—led in September, 1900, to the foundation of an association at Bordeaux for the purpose of impressing on public opinion the need of decisive action in the matter, and this association, known first as the “Société de la Garonne Navigable,” but subsequently widened in scope by the substitution for “Garonne” of “Sud-Ouest,” has since been strengthened by the formation of branch associations with similar objects in many of the towns of the region affected. The first general congress of the several branches was held at Bordeaux last summer, and the proceedings of the meeting have been printed in the volume now before us, which extends to close on 500 pages.

These proceedings include several valuable papers dealing not only with the more technical question of the improvement of waterways, but with the wider subject of the general regularization of water-supply, and from this point of view the volume is an important contribution to physical geography. The evil to be combated is shown to arise from the increasingly irregular flow of water in the streams which descend from the Pyrenees, and are at times raging torrents, while at others they carry hardly any water at all. The activity of the erosion which takes place when the streams are full is such that, as shown by M. Bouquet de la Grye in a communication on the present state of the Gironde estuary, the river channels are blocked with sand and gravel, which, at ordinary level, the streams are quite unable to clear away. The readers of papers were unanimous in showing that the fault lies with the destruction of the natural vegetable covering of the soil in the mountains from which the rivers spring, owing to the increase in cultivation and pastoral industries, and that the only effectual remedy is the reforestation of the mountains, or the

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