Kamerun Hinterland

Vom Atlantik zum Tchadsee. Kriegs- und Forschungsfahrten in Kamerun by Hans Dominik

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YUN-NAN.

'Yun-nan, the Link between India and the Yangtze.' By Major H. R. Davies, 52nd Oxfordshire Light Infantry. Cambridge: University Press, 1909. 16s. *net*.

It is somewhat refreshing to come across a book of travel which contains so much really useful information, put together in a logical and business-like form. The average traveller has no time to spare, in his short and rapid journeys, to thoroughly investigate the resources of the country he visits, consequently he frequently fills up his book with little stories connected with everyday marching which have no interest for those who really want to gain information from the experience of others. Not so Major Davies. His first journey in Yun-nan began in 1894, and his fourth, of seven months' duration, ended in 1900. During these four journeys he travelled a distance of 5553 miles, and visited nearly every part of the province. With this experience he speaks with no little authority when he writes of Yun-nan and its problems.

The discussion of the various railway projects for connecting the country with Burma and Tonkin is extremely clear, and the whole question admirably stated, both as concerns ourselves and the French. This portion of the book is strongly to be recommended to those interested in the development of trade in that part of the world. If we do not soon bestir ourselves, we shall be out-distanced in such a way as to make recovery almost impossible.

The province seems very rich in minerals, and mines are constantly referred to. The great difficulty in their development lies in the question of transport, and until railways are constructed nothing much is likely to be done; yet there seems to be a field for energy and capital. A report by an expert on the mines of Yun-nan would be most interesting, as on it would largely depend the prospects of successful railway development.

An excellent map is provided, perhaps the best map yet published of Yun-nan. There are still large areas shown as 'unsurveyed,' especially in the north-west and south-east portions of the country. The author has very wisely added a note on the map, explaining how the different material on which it is based was derived.

H. L. C.

AFRICA.

KAMERUN HINTERLAND.

'Vom Atlantik zum Tchadsee. Kriegs- und Forschungsfahrten in Kamerun.' Von Hans Dominik. Berlin: Ernst Siegfried Mittler und Sohn. 1908. 6m.

Captain Dominik is one of the numerous band of officers whose military duties have led to a large increase of our knowledge of Africa. Chosen for service in Kamerun, his sphere of work was comparatively restricted. In the opening up of the hinterland of that colony he has, however, played an honourable part. In 1901 he effected the occupation of Garua, and followed this up by the taking of Marua in 1902. Subsequently, as the routes marked on the sketch-map at the end of his book sufficiently demonstrate, he not only journeyed to Lake Chad, but repeatedly traversed that part of the colony north of 10° N., including the *bec du canard* now surrendered to the French. He returned by Yola and the Benue to Lagos, a route which gave him opportunities for comparing British and German methods. This record of his campaigns and explorations is neither a military report nor a scientific treatise, but a general account of the regions visited, and in especial of the peoples encountered. As the author points out, his accounts of the different tribes, their customs, beliefs, industries, etc., have the value of presenting these peoples as they lived at the last hour before the transition stage which results

from contact with European culture. This is most true of such tribes as the Tuburi, Kungs, Wulhas, and Musgu, hitherto scarcely known. But Captain Dominik has also much of interest to relate concerning the Fula, Hausa, Bagirmi, Kanuri, and other fairly well-known peoples, as well as of the tribes living nearer the Cameroon estuary. The flora and zoology of the country also receive attention. Some excellent photographs accompany the text, and enable the reader the better to understand the descriptions given. The illustrations of scenery are remarkably good.

FRANK R. CANA.

THE CONGO.

'Il Congo.' By Dr. E. Baccari. Pp. xxvi. + 670. *Maps and Illustrations*. Rome: Office of the *Revista Marittima*. 1908.

Early in the year 1903, Dr. Baccari, a distinguished physician attached to the Italian Royal Navy, was commissioned to visit the eastern parts of the Congo State about Lakes Tanganyika and Kivu, in order to ascertain how far this region might be suitable for Italian settlement. He was also to study the condition of those Italian officials who were already engaged in the service of the State, and had displayed so much ability and intelligence that a district about the Kivu-Tanganyika divide was set apart for permanent occupation by such desirable citizens, or any of their fellow-countrymen willing to join them from Italy.

The results of the mission, which lasted over a great part of the years 1903-04, formed the substance of some thirty official reports, which are embodied in this bulky volume, the publication of which has been delayed pending the now accomplished transfer of the administration from the Congo State to Belgium.

On the main issue Dr. Baccari's verdict is negative and final. On behalf of his fellow-countrymen he declines to accept the proffered west Kivu tract, which is too rugged, unfertile, and unhealthy. The whole land between the two lakes and west of Tanganyika is everywhere malarious, save in a few favoured oases dotted over "un deserto di morte." Then the survey is extended to all the Congo basin, which is emphatically declared to be unfitted for European colonization, or for European agricultural processes, and suited only for the exploitation of the natural resources of the land, or for the plantation system worked by the natives under proper European control. Hitherto the control has not been "proper," and all the methods of the Independent State are denounced in language stronger almost than any used by English and other outside observers.

As an expert medical man, our author has much to say on the climate of Congo-land, and his "diagnosis" of the prevalent diseases—fevers, blackwater, sleeping sickness, beri-beri, sunstroke, etc.—contains some valuable information and suggestions of a practical nature. Thus we are told that, while in most cases quinine and a milk diet are preferable to champagne and ipecacuanha, the too free use of quinine is to be deprecated. It is asked whether this drug should be taken as a prophylactic, and, if so, in what form? is it necessary or at least useful, and not possibly a remedy worse than the evil? Satisfactory answers are given to these queries, and sound advice imparted on many other points, together with far from unneeded warnings on the recurrent subjects of *Bacchus et Venus*. When it is added that there are vivid pictures of the geographical features, the fluvial and orographic systems, and the Bantu populations, while the marine or inland origin of the Congo basin and of Tanganyika with its quasi-marine fauna is somewhat fully discussed, nothing more need be said to show what a valuable contribution the author has made to the physical, political, and social relations in central equatorial Africa.

There is a full subject-index, besides several good maps, a fine engraving of King Leopold, and 161 illustrations from photographs and original sketches.

A. H. KEANE.