Review: South American Ethnology

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AMERICA.

SOUTH AMERICAN ETHNOLOGY.

- 'Antiquités de la Region Andine de la République Argentine et du Désert d'Atacama.' 2 vols. By Eric Boman. *Numerous Maps, Plates, and Illustrations.* Paris: H. Le Soudier (Imprimerie Nationale). 1908. 25 francs.
- 'Géographie des Hauts-Plateaux des Andes.' By V. Huot. (Same publishers and date.) 5 francs.

Both of these works, which are issued in uniform type and format, belong to the comprehensive series which is now appearing as a result of Messrs. G. de Créqui Montfort and E. Senuchal de la Grange's 'Mission Scientifique.' M. Boman, sole author of the 'Antiquités,' is the Swedish explorer who had already been associated with Baron Erland Nordenskiöld's expedition of 1901 to North Argentina and Bolivia. He had also visited the provinces of Catamarca and Tucuman, and afterwards returned to the same region as an active member of the "Scientific Mission." Here he has done excellent service, especially in investigating the prehistoric remains and pre-Inca culture of the *Diaguitas*, perhaps better known as *Calchaquis*, with whom the 'Antiquités' is mainly occupied. This semi-civilized and warlike nation, which commanded most of the region between the Peruvian empire and the Brazilian wilds, had already been often referred to by the early Spanish writers, and recently more fully by M. Ten Kate of Buenos Aires, so that we have now a somewhat ample account of the people who, next to the Incas, ranked as the most powerful and progressive nation in South America.

The Calchaquis, it should be mentioned, were the chief and dominant members of the Diaguita family, whose influence appears to have been felt as far west as the Atacamenos lands, and even at some points down to the Pacific seaboard. The historical student is often surprised that the Incas were unable to extend their empire much beyond the northern parts of the present state of Chile. But the explanation is now afforded by the predominance of the hitherto much-spoken-of but little-known Atacameños, no doubt in alliance with the potent Calchaquis farther east. From this alone may be inferred the great value of the archaeological researches of Ten Kate and M. Boman amid the Calchaqui ruins scattered over their former domain. These remains are centred chiefly in Catamarca, Tucuman, and Salta, which provinces had been conquered by the Inca, Huaina Capac, about 1450, whence, on the arrival of the Spaniards, everything was supposed to be Peruvian, much to the surprise of those familiar with the real Peruvian industrial objects. The people themselves were taken for Peruvians, since many had at that time adopted the Quechuan language, which even still survives amongst some scattered groups in the more secluded uplands. Cacan, their own tongue, differed altogether from Quechuan, and was no doubt a stock language. But it is quite extinct, and most of the Calchaquis are now merged in the general Hispano-American population of Spanish speech. Their very name was thus forgotten, and their history had to be reconstructed from a study of the old graves, mounds, ramparts, forts, pottery, and other remains recently discovered in the northern parts of Argentina and the adjacent Bolivian and Chilean districts. From a study of the human remains found in the graves, it appears that the Calchaquis practised cranial deformation to an extreme extent, and nearly all the skulls presented a high degree of brachycephaly; in fact, the highest yet recorded, rising even to over 100°, with a mean of about 90°, where, of course, artificial deformation has to be allowed for.

The second part of the 'Antiquités' (pp. 390-948), including tables of contents, lists of illustrations, indexes, etc.) is mainly devoted to "La Puna and its Present Inhabitants." By "Puna" are here to be understood all the lofty table-lands which have been more than once explored by M. Boman, and the position of

which has already been outlined. It is safe to say that we have here the fullest and most attractive monograph ever written on the rarely visited natives of these remote uplands. Their social organization, industries, religion, traditions, folklore, amusements, superstitions, languages, food, and drink are amply described, and few gleanings are now left for M. Boman's successors to pick up. Much attention has been given to the curious petroglyphs, or rock carvings, which occur almost everywhere, and many of which present such remarkable uniformity in outline, general design, and character as to suggest a common origin. These are generally illustrated and grouped together for comparative study, and M. Boman notices that most of them occur along the highways that were frequented in pre-Hispanic times, especially in districts where these routes traverse narrow parts of the valleys or run along the foot or summit of mountain passes and gorges. From this and other indications, he thinks that they date from the same epoch, and betray no trace of different peoples that may have successfully occupied this region at different times.

Several instances are given of the strange way the old primitive beliefs still survive amid the present veneer of Christianity. A mythical hermaphroditic being called Coquena appears to be still venerated, and some educated people are mentioned to whom he (or she) is supposed to appear from time to time. He is represented as a dwarf born of the Earth without father or mother, and several pages are filled with his exploits and adventures amongst the present inhabitants, who are absolutely convinced of his existence.

These volumes are richly furnished with 3 maps, 83 plates, 73 illustrations in the text, a very full bibliography, and copious index.

The accompanying 'Géographie' by M. Huot calls for no special remark. It is a short but well-digested account of the main orographic features of the Central Andine uplands without any claim to novelty.

A. H. KEANE.

BRITISH GUIANA.

'Handbook of British Guiana.' 1909. Edited and compiled by G. D. Bayley, Georgetown (London: Dulau & Co.). 1909. 5s.

This handbook contains an admirable account of the geography and general development of British Guiana. The geography and topography has been contributed by Mr. C. Wilgress Anderson, F.R.G.S., whose large photograph of the Kaieteur fall, nearly five times the height of Niagara, is in the possession of the Royal Geographical Society.

The forests of British Guiana cover about six-sevenths of the whole area, and have as yet been very little exploited, except for the purpose of obtaining balata and rubber. If means can be found to transport the timber to the coast, there is little doubt that the valuable woods of the interior will form an important asset in the resources of the country. The savana lands cover about one-seventh of the area, and are divided into two varieties—the coast land savanas and the elevated hinterland savanas. Agriculture is practically confined to a small area near the coast, and sugar is still the most important industry. Successful experiments have been made in the growth of bananas, cacao, and coffee, and it is probable that these products will increase in importance.

The illustrations accompanying the book are excellent and well chosen, and the Permanent Exhibitions Committee must be congratulated on the production of a thoroughly satisfactory account of the country's resources. A. W. A.

'En Haïti.' By Eugène Aubin. (Paris: Colin. 1910. Pp. xxxv., 348. *Maps and Illustrations.* 5 fr.) The writer, we are told, spent eighteen months in Haiti, and travelled extensively there, visiting parts hardly known to the present