Review: 110

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Africa, Central.**Macleod.**

Chiefs and Cities of Central Africa. By Olive Macleod. Edinburgh and London : William Blackwood and Sons, 1912.

110

This is an interesting record of travel; brightly written, well illustrated, and invitingly got up.

The Botanical Appendix enhances the value of the book itself; while the carefully compiled index is of service to the reader, and the maps are helpful.

The authoress deserves much credit for the plucky manner in which she has carried out her programme, undismayed by the misfortunes of her cicerone, who appears to have endured more hardships than fall to the lot of the average African traveller.

The pacification and development, under—more or less—European influence, of the country traversed has been practically altogether accomplished since the beginning of this century, and the story here related is a well-merited tribute to the good work done by the Colonial administrators who have been sent to their respective spheres of influence by France, Britain, and Germany.

Leaving out of account the activities along the Benue of the Niger Company, what time it held its Royal Charter, the advent of the three Powers was, chronologically, in the order given above, and the influence of all three has, on the whole, made for the good of the regions and peoples concerned.

The authoress gives a good picture of the juxtaposition and intermingling of Mohammedans and Pagans; she indicates the chronic slave-raiding formerly practised by the former on the latter, the termination of which in itself has justified European intervention; and her account supports the opinion, held by many, that all the stages of civilisation to be observed among the peoples of the West Central Sudan in particular, and of West Africa in general, indicate devolutions from higher stages.

She has done well to dwell on the figure of Abegga, the Chief of Lokoja. That old man is an interesting link with the past: he came to Europe with the famous African traveller, Barth, in the fifties of last century; he reads and writes English well, and his memory is good, although the weakness of age has blunted his former bright intelligence; and, now that the native companion of his European travels—Dorugu, a Government schoolmaster, who died at Kano last autumn—is dead, he furnishes the last useful link with the European explorers of his part of Africa in the middle of last century.

The irruption of Rabe undoubtedly gave local development a set-back; for chaos resulted from his conquest and he did not remain long enough in power to restore order; and it is now impossible to say whether the consolidation of his power would have made for reformation or the reverse.

It is well shown how higher races—*e.g.*, the Kanuri and the Bagirmi—have retrograded when they have settled down permanently in the regions under consideration; but this is nothing new, nor is it an unmixed evil. The Vandals and the Moors retrogressed when they settled in North Africa; so did other higher races who entered West Central and West Africa from the north and east; but their advent probably raised the level of the indigenous peoples among whom they partially lost themselves. Certainly, at the present day, the traveller can see Mohammedan immigrants, at the expense of a certain amount of retrogression in the case of their own progeny, raising the grade of development of the Pagans among whom they are settling. This is how Islam seems to be the means destined for the regeneration of Africa: its advent everywhere means miscegonation; within its confines is no racial or colour line; it is innocent of the fatuous European tendency to regard the half-cast as a white man; and it realises that, while a mule is an aristocrat among donkeys, if one call him a horse everybody will laugh. The

dice are thus loaded in favour of Islam : the Christian will give his life, but not his blood, for Africa ; the Mohammedan will, and does, give both.

It is stated that Garua was only occupied in 1904 : as a matter of fact, it was first occupied by the late Major Hans Dominik at the end of 1901. The British law regulating the minimum legal weight of elephant tusks is designed to prevent the slaughter of immature elephants, and it is quite in keeping with the wise demarcation of a game reserve at Lake Chad.

The nebulous location of towns complained of in Bornu is not entirely—not even chiefly—due to defective mapping. A town may consist of a congeries of hamlets dotted over an area of twenty square miles or so ; and the natives will occasionally suddenly move off in a body to a new location ten or twenty miles away, endowing the new town with the designation of the old one. Northern Nigeria has always had an Intelligence Department commensurate with its means, which has served it well ; the Administration has never slept over the matter of mapping ; and now, in due course, an accurate and exhaustive survey has been systematically taken in hand.

In describing the life of the people, indications are rightly given of the relatively influential position held by the Mohammedan women near Chad ; but it would have been well had a full description of the ravages of the ubiquitous white ant been given—the greatest pest and most prominent natural force to be observed in the region. This part of Africa is not likely to escape notice in the future, if for no other reason than that a great part of it is a natural granary ; and the authoress has succeeded in supplying those touches of local colour which are lacking in the picture apt to be limned by more scientific authors. We shall receive with interest future efforts which she may make in the same direction. N.

India : Baluchistan.

Bray.

Census of India, 1911. By Denys Bray, I.C.S. Vol. II., *Baluchistan*, Part I. and II. Price, 4s. 6d.

111

This is one of the most important contributions to our knowledge of the sociology of India published since the late Sir Denzil Ibbetson's classic report on the Punjab Census of 1881 appeared. Though Baluchistan cannot be said to form part of India proper, its tribes have fed the Indian population for generations, and the Brāhūi speak a Dravidian tongue, though what proportion of Dravidian blood they may now possess is, of course, another question. The Pathān and Balūch tribes—to use a conventional but inaccurate term—have preserved features which appear to be older, and, it must be confessed, ruder than anything to be found nowadays throughout even the Western Punjab, into which they have overflowed, though traces of their most primitive usages occur in scattered parts of it. From those usages we can gather some idea of what the primitive Punjab tribes, largely drawn from Irān, must have been. One must say *some* idea, for custom is anything but immutable. The Brāhūis have copied the bride-price from the Pathāns almost within living memory. A much older form of marriage was, Mr. Bray thinks, that of exchange, *adal-badal*, *kanōvaṭi*, *vaṭāndra*—the two latter have a strong Punjabi sound. Still less conservative (and more priest-ridden) are the Pathāns, who are endeavouring, like a good many people in the Punjab, to merge betrothal and marriage into one, not merely in order to come into line with the *shariat* or Muhammadan law, but also in order to draw the betrothal tie taut once and for all by hallowing it with the *nikāh* or wedding rites. So far, then, from a fanatical devotion to Islām leading the Pathān to emancipate women to the extent laid down in the Qorān, all that it does is to rivet the fetters still more closely upon them. And at first sight it certainly looks as if the denial to females of many legal rights, such as that of inheritance, had a disastrous effect on the