Review

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It also contains some excellent advice most sensibly given regarding a right attitude to the people in the area we have liberated. The two sketch-maps attached to the cover considerably add to the neat little volume's usefulness.

Syria and the Holy Land. Sir George Adam Smith. London: Hodder & Stoughton. 1918. Pp. 56. *Two coloured maps.* 1s. net.

This booklet contains a fascinating sketch of the main geographical features of Syria and of its position in the Near East, and is illustrated by two valuable maps coloured to show the orographical features. In about fifty pages the author deals not only with the exceedingly interesting geographical facts concerning this land but touches upon the past history, economic questions, colonization, and the very thorny political questions concerned with Palestine's future.

The blight that has fallen upon this land with the coming of the Turk is emphasized. "Save for some sporadic efforts, the Turk has been wanting in all for which a government exists—justice and security, the development of public utilities, the encouragement of industry and trade—not to speak of education." He has turned "nine-tenths of the country" into a social desert. Many do not realize that the Turk is an utter alien to Syria "with no native claim to the soil and few or no family ties to the people."

In looking to the future, the author considers that the land holds vast possibilities of development. Many districts require little but industry, settled government, and some capital to develop them. Others require skilled and special treatment. "There are steppes and arid bottoms in the land as ready to be transformed by irrigation or dry farming as similarly unpromising districts have proved in California and other Western States of America." Even with afforestation—neglected in the land for many centuries—"it does not appear that a full chance of proving its capacity as a timber-bearing country has ever been given the land."

Sir George Adam Smith points out (what is but too often being forgotten to-day) that no race demands more care from a just government than the *fellahin*—the true natives of the land—who through long centuries have borne the sorest service and suffering under the Turks. Their claim must not be forgotten in the more widely advertised "claims of the Jews." To the excellent work done by the Jewish Agricultural Colonies the author pays ample tribute, and along these lines, expanded under happier conditions, he sees a great future of development. With regard to the "political" or "national" aspirations of the Jews he, like many others, both Gentiles and Jews, foresees great difficulties. Wise statesmanship will be needed to surmount the very contentious questions concerning the claims of the various religions and the position of the "sacred sites." On the economic side, "How do Zionists propose to preserve the legal rights and secure the social health of the *fellahin* or prevent the continuation of that process of buying and crushing them out of their communal property, by which so many of them have already been reduced to the position of serfs?" And what of the native Christians—Syrian and Greek? "They doubtless claim that their faith is the moral heir of all that was best in ancient Judaism. Have not the 'living Christian Communities' been as long in possession of their portions of the land as ever the Jews were?" "In short, the Jewish question in the Holy Land cannot be decided by itself, nor merely upon general assurance that 'the rights of the creeds and races will be respected' under Jewish dominance."

The author truly states that the problems awaiting the future political

administration of Syria are "quite as heavy as those which gather along the northern and north-western frontiers of the Indian Empire." The booklet cannot be too widely read among all interested in after-war problems.

GENERAL

The Statesman's Year-Book.— Edited by **Sir John Scott Keltie**, assisted by **M. Epstein**. London: Macmillan & Co. 1918. Pp. xlviii., 1488. *Maps*. Price 18s. net.

An acquaintance with the 'Statesman's Year Book' extending over thirty years has led the present writer, and doubtless very many others, to look carefully at the Introductory Tables and the additions and corrections. It is only by combining this matter with that in the text that full value is got from the Year Book. The 1918 edition—the fourth volume produced in war conditions—illustrates this point. Two examples may be cited: (1) the information in respect to Russia; (2) the notes on Arabia. As to (1) the text alone is not complete or sufficiently up to date, though a laudable effort has been made to put lucidly the theoretical working of the Soviet constitution. But add the information in the Introductory Tables (which include more than tabular matter), and in the additions, and you get as comprehensive a view of Russia in mid-1918 as it is possible to obtain in an annual which takes the whole world as its province. There are for instance useful particulars concerning the Ukraine, and summaries of all the border-state treaties. As to (2) the page in which is analyzed the political condition of Arabia is most timely in view of the part the Arabs are playing in the war. It is a real help to all students of affairs in the Near East, for it puts in concise form the precise status of such states as Nejd, Asir, Koweit, the Hidjaz, etc., information not easy otherwise to find.

For the rest Sir John Keltie and Mr. Epstein deserve congratulation for the manner in which despite war difficulties information concerning belligerent states has been gathered. The articles on the British Empire, for the revising of which Mr. A. D. Webb is responsible, contains all the information that one can reasonably expect. One sometimes regrets that with regard to officials of various kinds the Year Book does not give the information to be found in the 'Almanach de Gotha.'

F. R. C.

Geography of the World's Agriculture.— **V. C. Finch** and **O. E. Baker**. Department of Agriculture, Washington, U.S.A. 1917. Pp. 150. *Maps and Diagrams*.

This is a valuable compilation in a fairly handy form. Its aim is to summarize the geographical distribution of important agricultural crops, and to suggest the various controls, especially of soil and climate, in each case. It might be called a "Companion" to the various publications on the same subject issued by the U.S.A. Census officials. Experts from different Bureaus (plant industry, animal industry, farm management, etc.) contribute the text or the diagrams, and the whole is admirably edited.

The work has many merits, especially on the mechanical side; but it is scarcely an up-to-date scientific treatise on the subject, and it is very far from fulfilling all the expectations roused by the title. For instance, there is no mention of such important crops as rubber, bananas, and cacao, nor of *any* palms (coconut, sago, oil, date), or of timber. On the other hand, there are sections on, *e.g.*, mules and goats. Every section contains maps, text, and graphs. There are considerably over two hundred diagrams and two coloured maps—