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Review: A Royal Adventurer in the Kara Sea

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AFRICA.

AFRICA MINOR.

'L'Afrique du Nord. Tunisie—Algérie—Maroc.' Avec 27 gravures dans le texte et 3 cartes hors texte. Par Henri Lorin. Paris: Librairie Armand Colin. 1908. 3 fr.

This is a well-informed, clearly written manual upon Africa Minor, a more accurate designation of the region of which he treats than that chosen by M. Lorin. The essential physical unity of the three countries is one of the commonplaces of the geographer. This is shown by the author (who is well acquainted with Algeria and Tunisia) in his opening chapter. Then follows a chapter of twenty-eight pages—a good piece of work—in which the whole history of the land is summarized, while the preliminary survey is closed by an account of the different races of Africa Minor. The greater part of the book is occupied with regional studies (excellent pen-pictures readily bringing to mind the aspect of the district described), and with accounts of the economic resources of the land. The closing chapters deal with political and racial questions. M. Lorin discusses a subject which has much troubled the French colonial party. Though France be mistress of Algeria and Tunisia, in addition to her "reversionary rights" in Morocco, the majority of their European inhabitants are Spaniards and Italians. The country is not for the Frenchman of pure lineage. But the three races mix freely, and a new type, called by M. Lorin the Neo-Français, is being somewhat rapidly evolved. "Dans l'amalgame qui se fait, le sang français représente le ferment intellectuel, le bouquet; le sang des races latines de la Méditerranée apporte au type final une physiologie mieux assouplie aux climats méridionaux, plus de résistance avec moins de finesse." At the other end of the continent, in the evolution of the Afrikander, we are witnessing a similar phenomenon, though one which is much slower in development. To each of his sections the author appends a brief *résumé* of its contents; he gives also useful bibliographical notes (French works only being cited). 'L'Afrique du Nord' altogether forms an admirable introduction to a subject of ever-present interest. F. R. C.

POLAR REGIONS.

A ROYAL ADVENTURER IN THE KARA SEA.

'La Revanche de la Banquise. Un été de dérive dans la mer de Kara.' By Monseigneur le Duc d'Orléans. Paris: Plon Nourrit et Cie. 1909. Price 30 fr.; bound, 45 fr.

This sumptuous volume, with its beautiful illustrations, is equal in artistic and literary merit to the previous one in which the royal author described his successful voyage of 1905 from Spitsbergen to the west coast of Greenland, under the title, 'A travers la Banquise du Spitzberg au Cap Phillipe.' The Duc d'Orléans had not the privilege, in his cruise of 1907 to the Barents and Kara seas, to visit hitherto unknown shores, nor to raise the flag of France on soil previously unvisited by civilized man. The unbounded good fortune which favoured the royal explorer in his previous voyage deserted him in 1907, and a long and weary drift in the pack-ice of the Kara sea is the main feature of the narrative. To felicitously detail the record of a wait of many days in an ice-bound ship, dependent for progression on the winds and currents of the Kara sea, would tax the powers of most writers; but so delightfully facile is the pen of the Duc d'Orléans, so vivid are his descriptions, in which gravity, gaiety, sentiment, and sound sense are so pleasantly intermingled, that there is not a dull passage in the entire letterpress. The *Belgica*, with the Duc d'Orléans and his party, left Vardö on the evening of July 8. The ice conditions in Barents sea were most favourable; the coast of Novaya Zemlya, in the vicinity of Cape Britwin, was sighted on the 12th, and the 13th saw the vessel inside of the

Matyushin Shar. By July 15 this strait had been traversed, the only obstacles met with being two barriers of season ice, which were forced without much difficulty. The outlook from the eastern entrance of the Matyushin Shar was most unpromising; the ice-pack of the Kara sea was pressed up against the eastern shores of Novaya Zemlya and extended as far as the eye could range, from a considerable elevation, to seaward. It was determined, however, to push the *Belgica* into the pack-ice, with the result that on July 16 the vessel was beset in lat. $72^{\circ} 51' N.$, a few miles to the eastward of Cape Shubert. Then commenced the painfully slow drift down the east coast of the south island of Novaya Zemlya. The winds were persistently unfavourable, chiefly from north-north-east to east, pushing the ice-pack against the land, and it was not till August 16 that the *Belgica* drifted abreast the eastern entrance of the Kara strait, in lat. $70^{\circ} 37' N.$, exactly a month from the date of her being beset. The vessel had taken thirty-one days to drift 133 miles, or an average of a little more than 4 miles a day. The drift through the Kara strait was safely accomplished, though the imprisoned *Belgica* was more than once in great peril of being forced on some of the rocks and inlets that stud that dangerous channel. By August 20 the vessel was back in the Barents sea, and a course was set along the west coast of the south island. The chapter of misfortune had not, however, closed. Turning aside to investigate Gribova bay, the *Belgica* ran on to an uncharted rock. After throwing overboard twenty tons of coal and otherwise lightening the ship, she refloated without much damage, but the loss of fuel put a stop to any prospect of a return to the Kara sea. The *Belgica* next proceeded to Pomorsky bay, at the western entrance of the Matyushin Shar, having completed the entire circuit of the south island of Novaya Zemlya. Leaving Pomorsky bay August 29, the voyage was continued along the west coast of the north island in an ice-free sea. The magnificent scenery of this little-known Arctic land is splendidly illustrated in the work under review. The highest latitude attained directly to the north of Novaya Zemlya was 78° , on September 1. The ship's head was then set for Norway, which was reached on September 11. Throughout the voyage scientific observations, dredgings, and soundings were carried out by highly competent observers; large biological collections were obtained. Want of space forbids more than a passing reference to this subject, but the valuable appendices attached give solid value to this attractive volume.

H. W. F.

SIR LEOPOLD MCCLINTOCK.

'Life of Admiral Sir Leopold McClintock.' By Sir Clements Markham. London: Murray. 1909. 15s. net.

No one is better qualified to write the life of Sir Leopold McClintock than Sir Clements Markham. He was Sir Leopold's messmate in the "Happy and jolly *Assistance*" in the years 1850-1 in one of the search expeditions, hoping to solve the mystery of the fate of Sir John Franklin and his unfortunate companions; he had also seen a great deal of him at other times. I was also a messmate with McClintock and Markham in the *Assistance*, and almost one with the former in the *Resolute* from 1852-4 in the succeeding search expedition, when he commanded the *Intrepid*, her tender. So I have a right to express my opinion on the admirable manner in which the life has been edited, and on the correctness of every fact narrated in it. Enough naval and military officers and eminent civilians volunteered for service in the Arctic expedition had there been no seamen. Amongst the volunteers was Sir Richard Burton. On looking back on those days, we realize how much McClintock in his quiet way contributed to the harmony that prevailed on board our ship. I cannot recall an instance of any dissension amongst us in our mess-place, and only one in the steerage outside the mess-place amongst our

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