Review: Rockhill's 'Rubruquis': Review

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which are a division of the Euplankton, are in turn subdivided into the Raphidoplankton, Skaphoplankton, Desmoplankton, and Kremastoplankton. They at least suggest that the initiator of the resounding series "was a scholar and knew Greek," Prof. Forel says of it all—

"Are these foreign words ever necessary? It is seldom that an idea or a fact cannot be expressed in familiar language. New words, even when they are not absolutely necessary, are often very convenient for their coiner, but they are usually only useless ballast to the reader. . . . If our beautiful science is not to become repulsive, we must abstain from disfiguring it by the introduction of too many foreign words, and take care that limnology be not made incomprehensible to the many general readers interested in the study of lakes by the use of such expressions."

A very brief bibliography completes the volume, but, though it contains few entries, it records the sources where bibliographies of the subject appear periodically. There is a serious omission, however, in the shape of the "Geographical Literature of the Month" in the *Geographical Journal*, which contains as full a record of the progress of limnology as any of the German and French works which are cited.

ROCKHILL'S 'RUBRUQUIS.'—REVIEW.

By C. RAYMOND BEAZLEY.

THE Hakluyt Society has published this year a new version of the Journey of William of Rubruck, or Rubruquis, the Itinerary of John de Plano Carpini (Pian de Carpine), and the Narrative of Benedict the Pole. Mr. W. W. Rockhill, the editor, has accompanied his translation with many useful notes, and an introduction that provides a good summary of the great movement of missionary and diplomatic travel from the Christian to the Mongol courts in the middle of the thirteenth century. The translator's knowledge of Chinese, Mongol, and Tibetan sources has enabled him to throw additional light on several passages, and, with some exceptions, he has taken into account all the leading Western authorities.

It seems ungracious to criticize a work which has absorbed so much of the time of a public man, and in which there is so much valuable information, but Mr. Rockhill himself would be the last to wish for a merely formal reception of his edition from those who have consulted it. We may venture to suggest for his consideration the following points: Has he, while approaching Rubruquis, so to say, from the side of China, Mongolia, and Tibet, given sufficient attention to his author from the side of Russia? Has he not also, in pleading for a proper sense of his author's great and undoubted merits (undoubted now,

whatever they were in the past), greatly under-estimated John de Plano Carpini? As to the former point, Mr. Rockhill obviously does not pretend to deal with the Western or Russian aspect of Tartar conquest and Rubruquian travel as he deals with the Eastern; here, therefore, he is occasionally led into misconceptions, and his spelling of Russian names and references to Russian geography and history are not always satisfactory. Thus, on pp. 3, 4, 8, etc., we have Kiew, Danilow, Alexandrsk; but also Volga and Vladimir, like Saratov on p. 121; again, the isthmus of Perekop is not the sole connection between the Crimean peninsula and the mainland, as seems implied on p. 92, note; and it should not be suggested, as on p. 100, that the *Kerkis*, Cherkess, or Circassians any longer occupy the Caucasian slope of the Black Sea and Sea of Azov. As to Carpini, he surely has a right to the indulgence of all modern readers who fairly consider his work of exploration, the immensity and daring of his journey, his pioneer position among the Friar travellers of the thirteenth century, his revelation of "Scythia" to the Christian and Latin world, his admirably lucid and informing narrative, his superiority to all other mediæval writers *de moribus Tartarorum*, as the first European ethnologist of Central and Northern Asia. If, in the case of Rubruquis, we must "be to his faults a little blind, and to his virtues very kind," why should not Friar John have the same privilege? Thus, while the latter is rather severely dealt with for his confusion about the sea into which the Volga and Ural rivers flowed, the former is praised (p. 97) for "correctly locating the sources of the Don" at Ivan lake, in Tula province, whereas he really derives the Tanais from the Mæotid Fens extending to the ocean in the north. The ever-recurrent and sometimes excessive obscurity of Rubruquis' language (as in the reference to Sartach on p. 256) might surely have been admitted and contrasted with the illuminating clearness of John de Plano. And it seems to be straining the point to ignore or deny (p. 42, 109) that Carpini mentions the Turks, when he names *Turkia* and the Sultan of Rûm. The excellent description of the people of Cathay (quoted on p. 155, n. 1), as well as the account of Mongol views on a future life, so curiously similar to those of the American Indians (quoted on p. 54, n. 1), are among many (over fifty) passages cited by the editor from Carpini, which not only illustrate the text of Rubruquis, but themselves establish beyond cavil the value of that John "of Polycarp," whom Friar William misnames and utilizes.

To come to a lesser matter: Would it not have been better, in a version which does not attempt to be archaic, to relegate to the foot-notes such archaic forms as *Hermenia*, *Turkie*, *Turkemans*, *Yconium*, *Silicia*, *Eufrates*, *Curges* and *Curgia*, *Catalogna*, *Tefilis*, *Mulihec*, *Azasins* (pp. 118, 271, 275, 280, etc.)?

The repeated and rather emphatic references to Mandeville (*e.g.* p. 120, 122), as if an independent authority of some weight, are

surprising; the *agriobous* of Cosmas ('Christian Topography,' 360) is only by conjecture, and perhaps questionably, identified with the yak (p. 151, n. 1); Rubruquis' *supertunicale diaconi* cannot well be translated *chasuble*, as on p. 153; *books*, on p. 253, is a misreading for *children* (*libros* for *liberos*); the name of *Seres*, as derived from a city, may surely be traced further back than Isidore (p. 155); *Jordanes* is a preferable form to *Jornandes* (pp. 42, 100, 157); *ickon* is apparently a misformation for *ikon* or *eikon* (on 272, n. 1); and it is not easy to see how an *eikon* could be mistaken for a cross, as the editor suggests. Again, the feast of St. Mary Magdalene is not June 22, but July 22 (p. 96); and the *Sentences* which Rubruquis mentions among the books of which he was specially fond (p. 106) are probably the famous work of Peter Lombard, the *Magister Sententiarum*, and not a "breviary." It seems an exaggeration to say (p. 119, n. 2) that all Herodotus' successors down to Ptolemy believed the Caspian to be an inlet of the ocean; nor was the sea of Aral quite "unknown to the ancients" (p. 131, note 2); for Ammianus Marcellinus apparently refers to it; while Ptolemy's *Oxiana palus* may conceivably be meant for the same. Lastly, a more careful revision of the proofs would probably have discarded the forms and phrases Lepinsk, south of *Baikal*, for Lepsinsk, south of *Balkhash* (p. 139, n.); Michel for Michael, or Mikhail (p. 135); *Iugurs* for *Uigurs* (p. 234, cf. 147, etc.); *Capchac* and *Capchat* (pp. 92, 93, 101) for *Kipchak*; *Policarp* for *Polycarp* (p. 123); *Tului* for *Juchi* (p. 122); *patene* for *paten* (p. 216); *pailing* for *paling* (p. 220); *court* for *coast* (p. 201); *Tyr* for *Tyre* (p. 51); *lent* for *Lent* (p. 11); and also the "second Sunday of Quadragesima" (pp. 272, 273) would doubtless have been replaced by the more usual form, if the editor had had time and opportunity thoroughly to overhaul this volume, for which all students of mediæval geography owe him their sincere and cordial thanks.

THE MONTHLY RECORD.

EUROPE.

The Origin of the Scenery of the Lake District.—At a recent meeting of the Geological Society, Mr. R. D. Oldham, of the Indian Geological Survey, read a paper on the origin of the Dunmail Raise. Its form, he says, is that of an old river-valley, now occupied by much smaller streams than that which formed it. Such a gap cannot have been formed by recession of watersheds or capture through erosion; for in either case the stream on one side or the other of the watershed must necessarily fit its valley, while in the Dunmail Raise there is a misfit on both sides. The gap was in existence before the Glacial period, and consequently cannot have been formed by ice; and so by a process of exclusion the explanation is arrived at that the gap of the Dunmail Raise was formed by a river which flowed across the hills from north to south, and cut down its channel *pari passu* with the