
Review

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ASIA

Modern Japan.— **W. M. McGovern.** London: T. Fisher Unwin. 1920. 15s. *net*.

In a preface Sir E. Denison Ross claims for Dr. McGovern a familiarity with Japanese modes of thought which has been gained by few Englishmen—a claim which lends weight to Dr. McGovern's main thesis, that modern Japan has been and is being organized by a small group of bureaucrats whose aim and methods possess a striking similarity with those with which the Prussian has made us painfully familiar. The parallels are important: a patriotism based upon a complete and sometimes non-logical veneration of the Emperor; military success comparable with that of Prussia before 1875; a feeling of constraint within the existing political boundaries and a demand for a place in the sun; an efficient internal and external administration of the country's affairs on paternal lines; and, finally, China as the counterpart of Eastern and Central Europe lying ripe for exploitation. Dr. McGovern's chapter headings in Part III.: The Administrative System, Aspects of Modern Japan, Militaristic Nationalism, Efficient Bureaucracy, Imperial Socialism, tell their own story. In Japan a man's career depends almost entirely upon his successes, or failures, at school; the bureaucracy leads, and drags the people after it, it has absolute political control, has a free hand commercially, and is successful. The results of this centralized efficiency are becoming daily more manifest in all departments of industrial life.

For the geographer this book is an illustration of a somewhat rare condition, man transcending the limitations of his material environment.

B. C. W.

AFRICA

Cotton in British West Africa.— **N. M. Penzer.** London: Federation of British Industries. 1920. 5s. *net*; *sewed*, 2s. 6d. *net*.

Mr. Penzer has given us a concentrated but valuable summary of the factors which control the efforts of the British Cotton Growing Association, efforts which have led to success in Nigeria but to comparative failure elsewhere. Not the least valuable portion of the memorandum is the bibliography, with about 300 entries, of books, etc., dealing with cotton and published between 1881 and 1920.

B. C. W.

Initia Amharica: an Introduction to Spoken Amharic.— **Charles Hubert Armbruster, M.A.** Part III. Amharic-English Vocabulary with Phrases. Vol. I. H-S. Cambridge University Press. 1920. 84s. *net*.

For one of the Powers most interested in Abyssinia, Great Britain had, until Mr. Armbruster began to publish his books on the language, played an insignificant part in the scientific and linguistic studies of that country. Isenberg's 'Dictionary of the Amharic Language' (London, 1841) is so inferior to those of Guidi and D'Abbadie that the English student was obliged to prosecute his studies through the medium of the Italian or French tongue. Mr. Armbruster's vocabulary,* which does not suffer in comparison with that of Guidi, and is far superior to any other similar work, now relieves him of that necessity, and removes from Great Britain the stigma of philological apathy with regard to Abyssinia. It is a most valuable work, and bears the impress of a wide erudition, meticulous accuracy, and painstaking research. The

* Part I. of the series, 'Grammar,' appeared in 1908; Part II., 'English-Amharic Vocabulary,' in 1910.