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Review: English Local Geography

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Source: *The Geographical Journal*, Vol. 38, No. 2 (Aug., 1911), pp. 190-191

Published by: geographicalj

Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1778707>

Accessed: 11-06-2016 16:27 UTC

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practical kind, and suggesting fresh means of dealing with them. I hope that, as one outcome of the discussion to-day, there will be some official announcement of the magnitude of the error of our own triangulation in view of the statements which have become current as to the extent of this inaccuracy. I imagine there will be no very serious difficulty. Mr. Hinks suggested, as another practical outcome, that it might be possible to make experimental trial of the new invar wires or tapes in this country, and the suggestion was pressed home by another speaker that Mr. Hinks at Cambridge, in collaboration perhaps with the Oxford School, might find it possible to do something of that kind. I hope he will take Dr. Herbertson into conference, and see whether something could not be done. A practical demonstration in geodesy of this sort would do much to bring home to the student the exciting possibilities of what at first sight is unwisely believed to be a repellant part of geographical work, though it is one which Mr. Hinks has succeeded in making extremely attractive to us all on this occasion.

## REVIEWS.

### EUROPE.

#### ENGLISH LOCAL GEOGRAPHY.

'The Reigate Sheet of the 1-Inch Ordnance Survey: a Study in the Geography of the Surrey Hills.' By Ellen Smith. London: Adam & Charles Black. 1910.  
*Maps, Plates, and Illustrations (Maps in separate case).*

WE heartily welcome a book of this description as making a commencement of that detailed local study of the geography of England which still remains to be taken up in schools. The authoress is intimately familiar with every acre, one might say, of the area of 216 square miles represented by the Reigate Ordnance Sheet, No. 286, and her clearly-written book, issued under the auspices of the London School of Economics, does full justice to a region which for both scientific interest and picturesque beauty can scarcely be surpassed in England. The sharply defined geological and topographical zones of Surrey with the characteristic differences of vegetation to which they give rise, as also the interesting relation of the economic resources and industries, the lines of communication, the place-names, etc., of the country to these zones are discussed in a very thorough scientific manner.

On page 54 Miss Smith quotes the Act 27 Eliz. cap. 19, entitled "An Act for the preservation of tymbre in the Wildes of the Counties of Sussex, Surrey, and Kent, and for the Amendment of the High Waies decayed by carriage to and fro Iron Mylles there." This, of course, relates to the old iron industry of the weald, and to the great oak forest of that area which at that time had to supply wood for the navy. This quaint old English clause suggests rather vividly to the imagination what the "wildes" of the three counties named were then really like, for to this day there are large areas in Kent, Sussex, and Surrey which present that wild, picturesque, tangled character seldom met with in the flatter, tamer, and more cultivated shires just north of the Thames. Miss Smith speaks truly concerning the surprisingly primitive character of the people who live in the deeply furrowed region around Leith hill, many of whom know not the luxury of a coal fire. The deep and tangled woodlands that stretch away from the pine and heath-clad slopes of Leith hill are extremely beautiful, and we know of few districts at the same short distance from London where there is so strikingly manifested that sweetest phase of

the flowering year, namely, the blooming of the wild hyacinths in the oak woods (and here even in the meadows) during the second and third weeks of May.

We cannot but deplore how continuously Surrey is being robbed of its rural charm by the penetration into the heart of the country of London's outer suburbs, even though a certain compensation may not be entirely wanting in the softened tones of culture which proximity to the great metropolis has thrown over a salubrious tract of country, once a singularly uncouth, wolf-ridden wilderness.

L. C. W. B.

'The Danube with Pen and Pencil.' By Captain Granville Baker. (London : Sonnenschein. 1911. Pp. xvi., 191. *Illustrations*. 16s.) This is a very pretty volume, in spite of an occasional descent to a level almost of caricature in the portrayal of men and women. Ample justice is done, both with the brush in colour and with pen and ink, in the illustration of the sites of inspiration to the artist which abound on the banks of the Danube. The text is a medley of narrative, description, and history. The style of a past generation would seem in certain particulars (such as the frequent personification of the rivers) to have inspired the author.

'Scrambles in Storm and Sunshine.' By E. Elliot Stock. (London : Ouseley. *N.d.* Pp. 210. *Illustrations*.) This is a book of mountain-climbers' adventures, more easily readable by the ordinary lover of mountains than others of its class, as it hardly touches the technicalities and extreme details of the sport. It deals with the Matterhorn, the Schreckhorn, the Mönch, and other famous Alpine peaks, and also with our own Lake District.

## AFRICA.

### VEGETATION OF AFRICA.

'Die Pflanzenwelt Afrikas insbesondere seiner tropischen Gebiete. Grundzüge der Pflanzenverbreitung in Afrika und die Charakterflanzen Afrikas.' Von A. Engler. Band I. "Allgemeiner Überblick über die Pflanzenwelt Afrikas und ihre Existenzbedingungen." *Maps and Illustrations*. Leipzig : Wilhelm Engelmann. 1910.

Slowly but surely the great and monumental work, 'Die Vegetation der Erde,' edited by A. Engler and O. Drude since 1896, is progressing. We have before us the two parts forming the first volume of a further monograph of the series, in which Engler has undertaken to describe the vegetation of Africa, and more particularly that part which lies in the tropics. This particular monograph will be complete in five volumes. The first volume contains (in over 1000 pages) an introductory review of the vegetation of Africa and the conditions by which the plants are surrounded. The next three volumes, one of which appeared in 1908 (*Journal*, vol. 33, p. 584), will be devoted to a systematic account of the African plants. The last volume will contain a detailed survey of the plant-formations of tropical Africa and their ecology. The first volume, now under review, is of the most direct interest and use to the readers of this *Journal*, but at the same time the very numerous plates and figures contained in the other volumes, and illustrating plant-formations and plant-species, are indispensable to any one who wishes to study thoroughly the vegetation of tropical Africa, be he geographer or botanist.

After giving a detailed list of the travels in and expeditions into Africa, from which botanically important results were obtained, the author, by way of introduction to the African flora, takes the reader on an imaginary journey