

author, who died at the beginning of the fifteenth century, gives a topographical account of the old Cairo, as well as Fostât and Rode. This is followed by a list of the cities of the country with the outlines of the political economy of each. It also contains a historical sketch of Alexandria.

V. NOTICES OF BOOKS.

THE RIVAL POWERS, OR THE STRUGGLE BETWEEN ENGLAND AND RUSSIA IN THE EAST. Translated from the German of JOSEF POPOWSKI by ARTHUR BARING BRABANT, and edited by CHARLES E. D. BLACK, late in charge of the geographical business of the India Office. 8vo. pp. 235, with a Map. Westminster, 1893.

The purpose of this book is to show how ineffectual have been all England's endeavours by way of diplomacy to arrest the advance of Russia in Central Asia, and to point out that in order to preserve her Indian Empire she must join a coalition of the powers of Central Europe.

The reader cannot fail to be impressed with M. Popowski's learned and dispassionate criticism, though he will also detect a strong anti-Russian bias on every page, and this should put him on his guard against accepting all the author's conclusions. In his historical sketch (Chapter I.) of Russia's advance, while drawing attention to the important services rendered by the Cossacks, M. Popowski omits to mention that these irregular cavalry took a very subordinate part in the campaigns in Central Asia. The conquest of Turkestan was achieved by the regular troops, mostly infantry, aided in some measure by the Cossack Sotnias, who fought dismounted. "Cossackdom," as an institution, accomplished great things in the fifteenth, sixteenth, and seventeenth centuries, but it has long since lost the important place it once held in popular estimation, and hardly a trace of that warlike spirit which animated those lawless

borderers, who fought in turn for Turkey, Poland, and lastly for Russia, can be discerned in the Semirétchia and Siberian Cossacks of the present day. Useful as a militia force, for administrative purposes, and for the punishment of marauders, they are unfitted to take the field against disciplined troops.

The ease and rapidity with which "Central Asia" was won for Russia is attributable, in the first place, to the desire of the inhabitants to be relieved from servitude and the intolerable oppression they had suffered at the hands of despotic native rulers. After overcoming such resistance as the ill-armed and badly disciplined levies of the Khans could bring against them, the Russians were welcomed as deliverers and protectors, who might put an end to the anarchy and confusion everywhere prevalent, and usher in a new order of things. And it is only fair, in judging of the events of the last quarter of a century, to remember how the Russian generals were led from one success to another, and how little active hostility they encountered.

M. Popowski says that all these conquests were undertaken with the definite object of gaining possession of India, and that the idea of universal empire is at the bottom of every Russian's heart. In proof of this view he cites the ambitious projects of earlier Tsars and the schemes of enterprising commanders such as Skobelef. But these aspirations are not shared by sensible people in Russia, for they feel that their territory is already vast enough, and that their overgrown empire might fall to pieces were further extensions attempted. Responsible ministers have repeatedly declared that they wish for no more; that these conquests have been forced on them by the nature of the country and the unsettled predatory habits of the population. They invite Englishmen to come and see for themselves what they are doing, and assist in reclaiming the desert.

A great work has to be done in Central Asia: colonies have to be planted, cotton and other valuable commodities raised, abandoned trade routes have to be re-opened, and

the mineral wealth explored. Russia is deficient in skilled labour for such undertakings; England can supply it. Why then should not the two nations combine to work out the future of Central Asia in accordance with Western ideas and civilization?

Our position in India, say Anglo-Indian administrators, is insecure, the government of that great dependency becomes more and more difficult as the Russians approach its frontier. The bazaars are full of rumours of invasion, the native press attacks the government and incites to sedition. But these difficulties are precisely such as Russia has to face; and though the methods adopted by that power to secure her possessions may differ from ours, the dangers she is exposed to are equally real and pressing. A large Muhammadan population, fanatically hostile to Christians, is scattered over the whole extent of Turkestan and the Trans-Caspian region. Though held in check by a comparatively small army of occupation, and the memory of past defeats, the first reverse inflicted on Russia would be the signal for their uprising, and it would tax all the resources of the latter power to prevent the revolution from spreading. England has the sea-board to fall back upon in the event of disaster in India, and reserves could always reach her in plenty of time. Russia, on the contrary, would have the tedious land transport across enormous distances, compared with which those marched by her troops to the Crimea were insignificant. The Caspian base and the single line of railroad to the foot of the Hindu Kush would, it is true, be available; but how easily such a line of communication might be interrupted, even supposing that Persia were neutral. We have no wish to lay ourselves open to the charge of "self-deception" brought against us by M. Popowski, but assuming, as he does, that Russia might concentrate an army of 200,000 men on the N.W. frontier of Afghanistan in six months' time, would not this be amply sufficient to place an adequate force of English and native Indian troops in the field to meet them? I believe that in three months every point

of danger could be secured, and that invasion would be impossible. Some lessons may doubtless be learnt from an attentive study of the earlier invasions of India, and General Sobolev deserves credit for bringing these together in one volume, but it is difficult to see what parallel can be drawn between the inroads of Alexander the Great, Jinghiz Khan, Timur, Sultan Baber, or any of the great conquerors who crossed the Indus, and the conditions under which Russia would have to repeat the feat.

Perhaps the greatest difficulty in the way of a peaceful solution of the Central Asian question is the love of conquest and desire for war instilled into every military mind and fostered by successful campaigns such as those in the Caucasus and Central Asia. Skobelev, like Alexander the Great, dreamed of new worlds to conquer, and General Kaufmann, or "The Little Tamerlane," as he was called by his officers, may have cast many a longing eye in the direction of India. The militarism of Russia, Austria, and Germany may at any moment involve these nations in war.

It may be easily seen from a perusal of M. Popowski's book how much annoyance England and Russia may cause one another in Asia, and it is to be hoped that all points still at issue between them may be speedily and satisfactorily adjusted.

E. DELMAR MORGAN.

E. KUHN. BARLAAM UND JOASAPH. EINE BIBLIOGRAPHISCH-LITERARGESCHICHTLICHE STUDIE. München, 1893. 4to. Pp. 88. (A bibliographical and literary study about the Legend of Barlaam and Joasaph.)

In this book Prof. Kuhn sums up admirably all that has been written hitherto on the origin and development of the legend of Barlaam and Joasaph. It is well known that Liebrecht was the first to identify this legend with that of Buddha. Since then the study of this legend has assumed large proportions. Every translation has been examined and the numerous parables traced through the literatures of many nations. The authorship of the Greek version,