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Review: The Heart of Asia

Author(s): F. E. Y.

Review by: F. E. Y.

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northern limit of the area studied corresponds with a linguistic frontier, that of the Catalan tongue; the southern is a climatic and vegetational limit, marking off a humid region characterized by the high development of foliage trees.

The larger part of the work is devoted to "modes of life." M. Sorre shows how the forms of life vary according to the proportion in which they combine the influences of the two worlds here in contact—the Mediterranean and the Mountain. Mediterranean modes of life are met with in the plain and in the lower hills (represented in the former by the irrigation system of Roussillon, the *vegas* of the Seu d'Urgel, and in the latter by the sub-Pyrenean agricultural valleys and the cork-oak region of the Gavarra hills). The Mountain has evolved a mode of life of its own by varying combinations of agriculture and pastoral industry in accordance with varieties of relief. The book includes some interesting details on the secluded state of Andorra. I. ASSADA.

ASIA.

THE HEART OF ASIA.

'Unknown Mongolia: a record of travel and exploration in North-West Mongolia and Dzungaria.' By Douglas Carruthers. 2 vols. London: Hutchinson & Co. 1913. *Maps and Illustrations*. Price 28s. net.

In the present day an increasingly high standard is expected of explorers both in their work and in the books they write describing their work. They must have a good training for exploration, and be able to present their results in a readable form for the public. Mr. Carruthers has fully come up to this standard. In view of the fact that the detailed scientific results will be published separately, his book might possibly have been more acceptable to the general public if it had been more condensed, for people nowadays have so many books even of travel alone to read. But we can well understand that when a traveller has worked as hard as Mr. Carruthers did to get his information he does not like to leave a single item unmentioned.

It is certainly remarkable that a portion of Asia, presenting so much of interest politically, historically, and geographically, should have been so little explored, even by Russians, so that in the basin of the upper Yenisei, in north-west Mongolia, and in parts of Dzungaria, Mr. Carruthers found a virgin field for exploration. And the country proved to be not barren and worthless as so much else of Mongolia, but in many parts covered with forests, interspersed with lakes, and watered by great rivers; and in other parts furnishing rich grazing lands which might in future become one of the best cattle-rearing regions in the world. It proves, in fact, to be a land of great possibilities. And this is, perhaps, not altogether to be wondered at, considering that from here sprung the Mongols who gave a dynasty to China, founded an empire in India, and overran half Europe; the Turks who now rule at Constantinople and once ruled nearly up to Vienna; the Finns of Russia, and the Magyars of Hungary. And with Russia moving and China awakening, this part of Mongolia, so long now dormant, will certainly come into life again.

The labours of Mr. Carruthers and his companions, Mr. Price and Mr. Miller, were certainly well timed. They were also very thorough. Mr. Carruthers describes the zest with which he carried on his survey work, and the difficulties he had to overcome. In the upper Yenisei basin it was often hard to find whether a stream flowed to China or to Siberia. And he had to search diligently among a maze of bogs and lakelets for a water-parting. Often important peaks were hidden in mist. And the vastness of the unexplored area to be mapped was both oppressing and stimulating to the explorer.

In addition to purely geographical work, Mr. Carruthers' party had much else to occupy their energies. Mr. Miller studied the natural history, and has contributed three chapters of valuable information upon the fauna of those unfrequented parts. Mr. Price studied the botany and geology. And Mr. Carruthers himself also collected natural history specimens, and, most important of all, made a remarkably intimate study of the inhabitants.

The question this Society would naturally be most interested in is, whether there is anything in the geography of this region to account for the double phenomenon of great waves of conquering hosts rolling outward hence in ancient times and for the steady decadence of the present-day inhabitants.

On these points Mr. Carruthers will have more to say before the Research Department of the Society. But his book makes it quite clear that the part of Mongolia from which the successive waves of invaders burst forth upon Asia and Europe is good pasture land to-day, and must have been still better when those irruptions took place. The photographs and descriptions suggest that the open expanses and the vigorous climate may have fostered in the inhabitants an adventurous spirit, as the scenery of Greece fostered in the Greeks a sense of the beautiful. This may have been so, and the absence of any political boundaries and the pastoral habits of the people accustomed to wander about from pasture land to pasture land according as each was most favourable may have started the Mongols on the move. At any rate, if geography did not cause, neither did it place obstacles in the way of, migration. There were no great mountain barriers, such as enclose India, to shut in the Mongols. The mountain ridges are crossed without difficulty in the summer months.

But why should the Mongols, who were once so virile and aggressive, be to-day in the selfsame region so tame and decadent? Mr. Carruthers says there is some reason to think that the climate may be slightly dryer, but this is not sufficient to account for the change. And he makes a number of observations throughout the book all tending to show the important part which religion has played in bringing about the result. Nothing is more remarkable than the difference which he observed between peoples of the same original stock and living under the same physical conditions, but of whom the one had adopted Buddhism and the other Mohammedanism. When Mr. Carruthers remarked this particularly, and when his observations are most noteworthy, was when passing in a single day's march from the Buddhist Mongols to the Mohammedan Kirghiz tribe of Kirei. The Buddhist Mongols—the very descendants, perhaps, of Jenghiz Khan's men—were dirty, lazy, and apathetic. The Mohammedan Kirei were clean, polite, and vigorous. And Mr. Carruthers attributes the difference, rightly in our opinion, to the debilitating effects of the Lamaistic form of Buddhism which the Mongols have adopted, and to the invigorating effects of Mohammedanism which the Kirei have embraced. These Kirei, indeed, seem to be a remarkably interesting people. They are said to be one of the purest branches of the Turks, and to be the truest example of the original Turks, but different from the Ugurs, with whose history their own is so much mixed up. They were also at one time Christian—Nestorian Christian—and the subjects of the fabulous Prester John, an isolated Christian tribe in the midst of pagan Asia. They were conquered by Jenghiz Khan and subsequently became Mohammedan, and, hence, according to Mr. Carruthers, their advancement in comparison with the Mongol tribes who became Buddhist.

Mr. Carruthers is evidently very much in sympathy with Mohammedanism, and his account of the way it is spreading in the eastern part of Asia, and of the good it is effecting, is worthy of the closest attention. His book is, indeed, a

highly valuable contribution to much more than Central Asian geography. And the work of Mr. Miller, the numerous and clear illustrations, and the specially executed map, add much to its value. F. E. Y.

AFRICA.

RHODESIA.

'Les Lois et L'Administration de la Rhodésie.' Par Henri Rolin, Judge au Tribunal de première instance, Professeur à l'Université de Bruxelles, etc. Brussels : Émile Bruylant ; Paris : A. Challamel. 1913. *Maps and Diagrams.* 12 frs.

Prof. Rolin has in this study of Rhodesia written a notable book. It will be for years the standard authority upon the subject. We know of no work in English at all comparable to it. The title of the volume scarcely reveals the full scope of the author's inquiry. He has not aimed simply at stating the laws in vogue in Rhodesia and describing the system of administration; he has sought also to show how the laws, and the administration, respond to abstract justice, what relation they have to history and to the social and economic conditions of Rhodesia. The British South Africa Company should be pleased, on the whole, with this verdict of an impartial inquirer on their record. There are three main sections of the book: (1) the political and judicial organization of Rhodesia; (2) the policy of the whites—officials and non-officials—towards the natives; (3) the material and moral position of the colonists. It will be seen that in a large measure Mons. Rolin deals with matters outside the scope of this journal. The whole treatise is, however, fitted into a geographical framework, and throughout the reader is made aware of the influence of the land on its peoples.

To a profound study of the written laws and a minute and patient investigation of the literature concerning Rhodesia Mons. Rolin adds personal acquaintance with the country, and in his opening pages we get a vivid impressionist sketch of the main topographical features of Africa—from Table Bay to Katanga. Then, after a short historical chapter (in which a sympathetic study is given of Cecil Rhodes), Mons. Rolin plunges into the consideration of a series of most perplexing problems, handling them with such lucidity and in so facile a manner that the grip of the book rarely relaxes. As he observes, the experiences of Rhodesia should be of much value to the Belgians in Katanga, the only part of their Congo colony where there is a likelihood of a considerable white population. One complaint may be made. The first chapter, as we have said, is topographical, and the first footnote reads as follows, 'Le superficie de la Rhodésie, en kilomètres carrés, est indiquée plus loin (II^e partie, chap. 1).' It would have been just as simple, and have avoided irritation, to have given the area of Rhodesia in the footnote, with an added reference to Part II. if desired. There are other footnotes of the same character; these and one or two small slips, such as "J. Cecil Rhodes" in one place, by no means impair the accuracy of the book as a whole.

Mons. Rolin's chief concern, as it must be that of all serious students of South African affairs, is the future relation of the white and black races to each other. Rhodesian policy leans towards the separation of the races. Some of the maps show the extent and position of existing native reserves. Of these the largest is the Barotse country, which is something more than an ordinary reserve, as there Lewanika still exercises sovereignty.] Other maps show the gold-bearing regions and the alienated lands in Southern Rhodesia; still another map shows the districts into which Southern Rhodesia is divided.

There is a very full bibliography, while in footnotes to the text the exact reference to the authority cited is given. The table of contents is also very full, and the index is of some use. F. R. C.