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Review: Melanesia

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Source: *The Geographical Journal*, Vol. 25, No. 3 (Mar., 1905), pp. 318-320

Published by: geographicalj

Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1776346>

Accessed: 27-06-2016 16:19 UTC

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## AUSTRALASIA AND PACIFIC ISLANDS.

## MELANESIA.

'Zwei Jahre unter den Kannibalen der Salomo-Inseln.' By Carl Ribbe. *Numerous Illustrations and three Maps.* Dresden: 1903. Pp. viii. + 352. *Price* 10s. 6d.

'Bilder aus der Südsee—Unter den Kannibalischen Stämmen des Bismarck-Archipels.' By Dr. Heinrich Schnee. 30 *Plates and Map.* Berlin: 1904. Pp. xiii. + 394. *Price* 14s.

Most naturalists are familiar with the name of Herr Ribbe, whose entomological, botanical, and ethnographic researches in Andalusia and Malaysia form the subject of numerous contributions to the transactions of the German Entomological Society, Dresden, and several other scientific periodicals. From Malaysia he extended the sphere of his investigations to New Guinea and Melanesia, where he spent altogether four years (1893–1896), devoting his attention more particularly to the northern section of the Solomon archipelago between about 6° and 9° S. lat. From his headquarters at the islet of Faisi, off the south coast of Alu (Shortland), several excursions were made to all the surrounding groups, which were carefully, one might almost say microscopically, studied in their manifold physiographical and biological aspects. Scarcely anything within the prescribed limits appears to have escaped the keen eye of this indefatigable observer, who here presents the grateful student with an all but complete picture of the fauna, flora, and ethnical relations in Rubiana (New Georgia), Ysabel, Choiseul, parts of Bougainville, and the "Shortlands archipelago." This expression, new to geography, the author proposes as a convenient comprehensive name for all the islets strewn over Bougainville strait, of which Shortland is the chief member, and which also comprised the important island of Fauro, known to us from Mr. Woodford's survey. This pioneer is briefly referred to now and then, but only one casual reference is made to Mr. Guppy, whose classical work on 'The Solomon Islands and their Natives' seems to be unknown to Herr Ribbe. He might else have dispensed with many details in his exhaustive account of these savages, whose daily life, weapons, domestic utensils, ornaments, tabu and totem systems, social and religious practices, scarecrows for driving away the circumambient demons, freemasonry, ailments, healing and cooking arts, industrial processes and languages, are all described with almost wearisome iteration. These treacherous and sanguinary head-hunting cannibals appear to have deteriorated rather than improved since their contact with the whites, and despite their artistic skill in woodcarving and one or two other commendable qualities, the author finds no epithets too strong for these "von Natur lügnersch, verrätherisch, räuberisch, hinterlistig, diebisch, und grausam angelegten Kannibalen," both in the German and English sections of the archipelago.

Herr Ribbe finds all existing maps, even those of Gotha and the British Admiralty, often most misleading, as in the Manning strait, where "had we trusted to these maps we should have found ourselves in the middle of the island of Ysabel!" It should, however, be stated that at this point the map of the Solomons in Dr. Guillemaud's *Australasia* (Stanford Series) corresponds exactly with that specially prepared for Herr Ribbe's work, except that the Cape Comfort headland appears as a peninsula in the former, and in the latter as an island barely separated by an extremely narrow channel from the mainland. Besides this there are two other maps on a larger scale, a pretty full index, a profusion of excellent illustrations, botanical lists, comparative anthropometric tables, and a good deal of linguistic matter, including vocabularies of six local dialects and sixty-eight words in thirty-four Melanesian, New Guinea, and Malaysian languages. Many of these

are found neither in Wallace nor in Codrington, and they thus supply fresh material for the study of the Oceanic tongues.

In his compact, well-printed, finely illustrated, and clearly written volume, Dr. Schnee gives us the results of his experiences during an official residence of over two years (1898-1900) in the Bismarck archipelago (New Britain, New Ireland, Duke of York), and some of the neighbouring groups. Coming from a careful and unbiassed observer, the book is all the more welcome since hitherto very little accurate information was available on the geographical and ethnical relations of this northern section of the Melanesian world. Even after the German occupation of over twenty years, Dr. Schnee is obliged to admit that these insular groups are still amongst the least-known lands in the world, and although he himself crossed New Ireland from west to east, most of the interior of the large islands remains a *terra incognita*. His own investigations were made chiefly in connection with various punitive expeditions to nearly all the groups between the Admiralty (now called Manus) and the Solomon archipelago. Hence he has little to say about the inland tracts and the bushmen, who are the true aborigines, and often differ markedly from the "Kanakas," as the better-known coast tribes are now generally called.

The plan of the book is excellent. Instead of slavishly following a chronological order, which has but a passing interest, the author devotes a number of chapters to those subjects of permanent importance which are more or less common to all the groups and their inhabitants, and then fills in the details of those vivid "pictures from the South Sea" according as the opportunities present themselves during the numerous expeditions in which he took part. Thus, to give one instance, Mussau (St. Matthias), scarcely mentioned in the general chapters, is dealt with very fully in connection with the punitive expedition of 1899 to that group. It was found to consist, not of one island, as still figured on nearly all maps, but of quite a little cluster of islets and reefs, with one conspicuous member, inhabited by full-blood Papuan savages, speaking apparently a stock language, with a decided taste for weaving, but also for human flesh. Indeed, cannibalism, with all its associated horrors, such as the lingering death of the victims and the bartering of dead bodies with neighbouring "markets," is everywhere present to a far greater extent than had hitherto been suspected, a fact fully confirmed by official returns.

In the chapter dealing with the native languages, a most interesting account is given of the "pidgeon English," which has become the chief medium of intercourse in all the groups, not only between the whites and the aborigines, but often, as in China, between the natives themselves. Almost all the words are English, although sometimes corrupted beyond all recognition, and there is no grammatical structure to speak of. But Dr. Schnee is wrong in stating that the only pronouns are *me* and *you*, which with *all* are made to serve every purpose, even a dual, "a trial," and plural, both inclusive and exclusive in conformity with this striking feature of the Melanesian tongues. *He* and *him* are certainly also current, as in *master head belong him he big fellow too much* = "the master has a very large head." This specimen will serve to show that this strange Oceanic *lingua franca* has been developed on much the same lines as that of the Chinese seaboard.

At present the seat of the German administration, and the chief centre of trade, industry, plantation enterprise, and missionary zeal, is the fertile and relatively healthy Gazelle peninsula, which forms the northern extremity of Neu Pommern (New Britain). Here the soil and climate are distinctly favourable, and the prospects of plantation culture excellent, if the difficult labour question can once for all be satisfactorily settled.

The author's brother, Dr. Paul Schnee, contributes a valuable chapter on the indigenous flora and fauna, and this *vade mecum* of German Melanesia is provided with a copious index and a large-scale pocket map.

A. H. K.

### PHYSICAL GEOGRAPHY.

#### THE NEW SEISMOLOGY: TWO NEW TEXT-BOOKS.

'Handbuch der Erdbebenkunde.' Von August Sieberg. Pp. 362. Braunschweig: Friedrich Vieweg und Sohn. 1904. Price 7.50*m*.

'Earthquakes in the Light of the New Seismology.' By Clarence Edward Dutton, Major U.S.A. Pp. 314. London: John Murray. 1904. Price 6*s. net*.

These two works, differing as they do in character, are alike in proving the ascendancy of the new seismology and the direction in which the science is trending. Time was when earthquakes were regarded as belonging solely to the geologist; they were considered as the cause of the upheaval of mountains and the contortion of strata, but it became gradually recognized that the earthquake is an effect, not a cause; the discovery that the cryptoseismic disturbance, set up by a great earthquake, could be recognized all over the world, ushered in the new seismology and a new series of problems. Seismology has become more and more a science of wave-motion, and the study of the effects of earthquakes, which belongs rather to geography and engineering than to geology, is in danger of being neglected.

The first of the two works heading this notice is a compilation pure and simple, from sources so limited that the list of principal authorities consulted does not mention the name of Mallet nor the transactions of the Seismological Society of Japan. The sections devoted to the old seismology are scanty, and follow strictly on the lines of previous text-books; the sections devoted to the modern development of long-distance observations are more complete, but the limitation of the sources of information consulted by the author has in more than one case led to his ascribing priority to the wrong person. The most remarkable instance of this is where he attributes the initiation of earthquake investigation in Japan to Knipping and Naumann—an injustice to his own countryman Wagner, who introduced the use of the multiplying index in seismographs and constructed the instrument with which Knipping worked. It must, however, be allowed that the compilation, so far as it goes, is well done, and the book is in a manner up to date, for the paper by Prof. Milne in this *Journal* of January, 1904, is fully noticed.

Of a very different character is the second book. Himself a master of the old seismology, Major Dutton has a thorough knowledge of, and sympathy with, the new; practised both as an observer and a writer, he has produced what is indubitably the best handbook of seismology now available, and the only fault to be found is that the space required for its recent developments has crowded out what is the most practically important branch of the science—that is to say, the effects of earthquakes on human constructions, and the means of minimizing, if not preventing, the havoc wrought by them.

Too much importance is, perhaps, given to the supposed distinction between quakes of volcanic origin and dislocation or tectonic earthquakes, and in devoting an entire chapter to each of these classes Major Dutton seems to have followed his Teutonic predecessors in attributing importance to a distinction of doubtful validity. With few, if any, exceptions, all earthquakes—not counting as such the tremors which originate naturally or artificially at the surface of the ground—arise from a sudden relief of strain: the rocks composing the crust of the Earth are thrown into a state of strain, which gradually increases in amount till it becomes too great to