
Review: The Moors

Source: *The Geographical Journal*, Vol. 21, No. 1 (Jan., 1903), pp. 68-69

Published by: geographicalj

Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1775298>

Accessed: 27-06-2016 03:36 UTC

Your use of the JSTOR archive indicates your acceptance of the Terms & Conditions of Use, available at
<http://about.jstor.org/terms>

JSTOR is a not-for-profit service that helps scholars, researchers, and students discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content in a trusted digital archive. We use information technology and tools to increase productivity and facilitate new forms of scholarship. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.



The Royal Geographical Society (with the Institute of British Geographers), Wiley are collaborating with JSTOR to digitize, preserve and extend access to *The Geographical Journal*

Africa. Even before 1895, when he started on his first important mission to the far north, his thoughts had, during several years' service in the colony, been turned with longing towards the great lake of the Central Sudan, but it was only in the year mentioned that his opportunity came, by promptly seizing which he soon acquired a foremost place among French African pioneers. The present narrative starts from the expedition of 1895-98—which resulted, as is well known, in the placing of the first steamer on the waters of the Shari and the successful navigation of that river to Lake Chad—and recounts the various stages in the story of the French advance, until the last obstacle was removed by the defeat and death of Rabah. M. Gentil's principal attention is naturally directed to the events which are the theme of his book, and the geographical information conveyed is merely incidental to the course of the story. Something is, however, to be learnt of the hydrographical system of the Shari, which throughout played so important a part as a highway to Lake Chad, as well as of the various tribes which inhabit the country and the native politics of the Central Sudan. The fear inspired by Rabah in the peoples he oppressed is frequently insisted on, and there is no doubt that by overthrowing his arbitrary power, M. Gentil and his coadjutors advanced the prospects of civilization in this region. The direct relations maintained between the adventurer and the Mahdists was shown by the capture of two standards sent by Mohamed Achmet to the usurper of Bornu, as symbols of suzerainty. Some light is thrown also upon the position of affairs in Wadai and the spread of the Senussi movement, though the most recent developments in this direction have occurred since the book was written. M. Gentil does not confine himself solely to his own personal work, but speaks also of that of his coadjutors, giving information, *e.g.*, as to the mission of M. Bretonnet, as well as on the ill-fated mission of M. de Behagle, whose death seems in great measure to have been occasioned by his own rashness. The purely geographical results are summarized in an appendix which tabulates the astronomically fixed positions. Of these the latitudes were obtained by circummeridian altitudes of the sun and stars, while the longitudes of the principal points are based on equal altitudes, and of the rest, by a double transport of time from the first. The main climatic characteristics of the territory are also sketched, three distinct zones being described as lying between 5° N. and 6° 45'; 6° 45' and 9°; and 9° and 13°, respectively, the last-named parallel marking the commencement of Saharan conditions.

THE MOORS.

'The Moors. A Comprehensive Description.' By Budgett Meakin. London Sonnenschein. 1902.

In this, the concluding volume of Mr. Meakin's important "trilogy" on Morocco, its people and history, we are presented with an amount of original matter which to some extent gives the work an even higher claim to recognition than its two predecessors. In dealing with the history and geography of the country, Mr. Meakin was naturally dependent more or less on previously published matter, though his untiring researches through the whole range of Moroccan literature, much of it little known even to students, placed his volumes far above the level of mere compilations. The present work, however, is based almost entirely on investigations at first hand among the people themselves. In the execution of his self-imposed task of describing the Moors in their most intimate social and religious relations, Mr. Meakin spared no pains to qualify himself by long residence in the country, during which he lived as a native in native dress, and was thus able to study the people, not as an outsider, but as one of themselves; while the accuracy of his

picture is further vouched for by the fact that every one of his notes was submitted to the criticism of a representative group of natives before being incorporated in the work. In this way many inaccurate ideas respecting the Moors have been brushed away. The various aspects of Moorish life and character are depicted in an exhaustive fashion, the author taking as his model Lane's famous treatise on the Modern Egyptians. Some of the information is of considerable value in connection with current events, especially that relating to the general attitude of the people to outsiders and the conditions of trade and industry in the country.

NIGERIA.

British Nigeria. A Geographical and Historical Description of the British Possessions adjacent to the Niger River, West Africa.' By Lieut.-Colonel A. F. Mockler-Ferryman. London: Cassell. 1902.

This is an extension of the section on Nigeria in the author's former work on British West Africa, the old matter being revised and partially re-written. It forms a useful compendium of the history of the Nigeria Protectorate, both under native rule and since the first introduction of British influence, with a sketch of its present condition and prospects. The people and their customs are described at some length, with some items of folk-lore.

TRIPOLI AND TUNIS.

'Aus den Staaten der Barbaresken.' Von Dr. E. Dagobert Schoenfield. Berlin: Dietrich Reimer. 1902.

This work consists of two parts; the first dealing with Tripoli, the second with Tunis. The section on Tripoli is perhaps the more valuable, as existing literature on that country is more scanty. The author spent three winters there, made a journey in the Fezzan deserts, and visited the ruins of Leptis Magna; but besides describing his own experiences, he has much to say on the general characteristics of the land and its inhabitants, and the present political situation. The illustrations are of unusual excellence.

AMERICA.

IRRIGATION IN THE UNITED STATES.

'Irrigation in the United States.' By Frederick Haynes Newell. New York: Crowell & Co. 1902.

Mr. Frederick Haynes Newell has, for twelve years, been engaged in investigating the problem of irrigating the arid regions of America. His book does not profess to be a technical one, but rather one which will give, to the amateur and the farmer, a general idea of the methods and systems by which homes may be made in tracts which, at first sight, seem inhospitable and desolate. He speaks of water as the substance which, more than any other, affects the health and industries of man, especially in all agricultural pursuits. The first chapter gives a map, showing that, while the well-watered lands near the east and west coast of America have passed out of the hands of Government into private occupation, there remains in the central arid regions a vast area of vacant public land, about two-fifths of the whole area of the States, which should, both in the interests of the State itself and of the increasing population, be made available for settlement as far as the available sources of water-supply admit. Mr. Newell points out that the laws, which regulate the disposal of public lands