

WILEY



Review: Nile Exploration

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Source: *The Geographical Journal*, Vol. 23, No. 3 (Mar., 1904), pp. 375-376

Published by: geographicalj

Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1775004>

Accessed: 27-06-2016 09:39 UTC

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illustrated volume. An opening chapter is occupied with a carefully annotated bibliography, ranging from Ruy de Pina's 'Chronica' (1440-1523) down to Captain Roupell's 'Original Notes' (1898), and with such scanty historical data as may be gleaned from the vague or disjointed remarks of Dapper, Nyendaël, Barbot, and other early observers looking at the place from a safe distance. From these and other more trustworthy or better-informed later writers, such as Landolphe, who gives his name to the *Landolphia* of botanists, Belzoni, Fawcner, and the ubiquitous Burton, are drawn sufficient ethnographic materials to fill the great bulk of the volume with a detailed account of the physical and mental characters, social and religious institutions, government, and general pursuits of the people, with a discussion on the local "architecture," its curious classical (?) or Portuguese (?) contacts, and ingenious drainage system.

This leads up to the concluding chapters on the Benin "School of Art," in which is, of course, centred the chief interest of the book. No doubt much has already been written on this fascinating subject, as, amongst others, by Messrs. Reade and Dalton, F. von Luschan, and Karl Knorr. But we have here, for the first time, a full statement of the case, with an accurate account of the technique and of the problems involved, the whole amply illustrated with faithful reproductions of the ivories, plaques, bronzes, in low and high relief and on the round, from specimens drawn from all available sources. It is impossible to enter into details in the limited space available, and it must suffice to give the general conclusion of the author, who holds that the bronze castings, if not the carvings, are certainly unique, there being "absolutely nothing like them in any other part of the world. . . . We have in them a form of real native art," in which "we can trace to some extent progress and decadence; and in the general carving and ornamentations we can see very clearly the process of the evolution of new forms out of the primitive realistic representation." He recognizes Portuguese influences at a certain stage of development, but still thinks the art is truly indigenous, antecedent to all foreign contact, marked by rude beginnings and a flourishing period followed by slow decline and extinction.

A. H. K.

NILE EXPLORATION.

'The Story of Exploration.' Edited by J. Scott Keltie.—'The Nile Quest.' By Sir Harry Johnston. London: Lawrence & Bullen. 1903.

It is particularly fitting that the first volume issued of this new series, which is to treat in turn of all the great episodes in the history of exploration, should be devoted to the problem which above all others has exercised a fascination on the minds of civilized men, but which, strange to say, has never yet received worthy treatment as an independent item in the general story.

The standing of Sir Harry Johnston, both as a writer and an authority on African affairs, is a guarantee that the theme has been treated in no commonplace style. The book is characterized, most of all perhaps, by the breadth of outlook which helps the reader to grasp, not a mere succession of facts, but the relation in which these stand to the general currents of world-history. Thus the influences which made for or against an advance in knowledge of the Nile at each successive epoch are briefly but clearly sketched. The early chapters trace the position of the problem during the ascendancy of the Egyptians, Greeks, Romans, Arabs, and Portuguese, while the latter part of the book is necessarily taken up with the more detailed story of modern exploration, in which Speke's great achievement receives the prominent place which is its due. There are many interesting items respecting travellers unknown to the general public, while in the case of the

better-known figures, the author's intimate relations with the world in which they moved have supplied a vivid personal element impossible in a mere compilation.

Among the questions dealt with, some, of course, are more or less controversial, and the author's views on certain of these may not be accepted by all. He has no doubt that Ptolemy's Nile lakes argue some real knowledge of the great equatorial reservoirs, though the opponents of this view could probably make out an equally strong case for the marshes of the White Nile and Sobat (combined with vague rumours of snowy mountains derived from the east coast) as the real suggestors of the "Nili paludes."* Most open to criticism, perhaps, is the treatment of the evolution of Nile cartography from the fifteenth century onwards, which fails to bring out the strictly Ptolemaic basis of the Dapper type of map, as shown by the gradual transformation of the picture through the maps of Waldseemüller, Mercator (from 1541 onwards), Gastaldi, Ruscelli, Forlani, Ramusio, Ortelius, and others, most of them more or less involved in the current of Ptolemaic criticism, and little influenced, as regards the delineation of the Nile, by information derived from Portuguese sources, to which the author ascribes the moving inspiration.† In regard to the work of the Jesuits in Abyssinia, and the narratives published by them, there are one or two slips which will doubtless be rectified in a second edition. Mention might then be made, perhaps, of D'Almeida, whose important chronicle exists in manuscript in the British Museum; of the journey of Father Fernandez, which first defined the limits of the Nile basin south of Abyssinia; and the treatise of Vossius, 'De Nili . . . origine.'

An interesting "roll of fame" gives the names and nationalities of the principal modern explorers of the Nile. Apart from the omission of Dr. Kandt, the explorer of the ultimate headstreams of the famous river, it neglects no important names, though opinions may differ as to the degree of merit assigned to each by variety of type. Many would rank Paëz rather above than below Lobo, and Baker than Schweinfurth, in relation to Nile exploration; while Böttge seems to deserve fuller recognition as the first explorer of the Sobat system, and Messrs. Crosby and Le Roux might perhaps have been mentioned as the first to bring to light the remarkable bend of the Blue Nile. But these are mere matters of opinion. Reference must be made, lastly, to the excellent series of photographs, which will greatly help the reader to picture the actual scenes; to the numerous reproductions of important maps; and to the remarkably tasteful general get-up of the volume.

E. H.

AMERICA.

SOUTH AMERICA.

'Trade and Travel in South America.' By Frederick Alcock, F.R.G.S. London: George Philip & Son, Ltd. 8vo. 573 pp.

This is an extremely valuable book for the merchant, the ordinary traveller, and reader who may be in search of general information regarding the states of South America. It is replete with commercial data, showing the growth and prosperity of the various nationalities, and also contains much that relates to their

* Otherwise the Sobat is not represented at all in the Ptolemaic system.

† Even the wall-paintings at the Vatican (to which, by the way, Sir Harry Johnston assigns a somewhat too late date) seem to fall in part within the Ptolemaic influence, as was shown long ago by Thomassy ('Les Papes Géographes').