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Author(s): E. R. W.

Review by: E. R. W.

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visits to Siam and China are of first interest, for it was during the mission which he accompanied to Siam that the idea originated of the journey across Southern China into Burma. There is in the present volume a succinct account of this journey, with its extraordinary hardships, which brought him a prominent position among explorers and the Gold Medal of this Society. But all through the book one is impressed with his power of impressing his own individuality upon any work he took up, and of developing some new interest out of it, whether it be his scheme for a railway from Burma through Siam and Southern China, which he actively, though vainly, pushed forward after his travels there, or what not. Apart from this particular journey, his book deals rather with men and matters than with geography in any form, but we are able to gather not a few geographical pictures here and there—the sojourn in South Africa, for example, when Mr. Colquhoun was associated with Rhodes, provides several. One cannot, in conclusion, refrain from the remark that the tone of this, the most difficult kind of book to write in such a way as to offend no reader, is wonderfully successful. The author's modesty is unstudied, and in analysing the feelings of those with whom he has come into disagreement, he tries, with admirable justice, to put himself into their position.

O. J. R. H.

EDUCATIONAL.

- 'Lands beyond the Channel.' By H. J. Mackinder. London: Philip. 1908. Pp. xii., 276. *Maps and Illustrations.* 1s. 9d.
- 'Practical Geography.' By J. F. Unstead. Oxford: Clarendon Press. 1908. Pp. 120. *Maps and Diagrams.* 1s. 6d.
- 'Practical Exercises in Physical Geography.' By W. M. Davis. Boston: Ginn. 1908. Pp. xii., 148. *With Atlas of 45 Plates.* 3s. 6d.

School "geography" is looking up. It must be, for the educational publishers of to-day were never so busy before with school geographies. To compile a list of the works which, published in 1908, are adapted to satisfactory up-to-date teaching in the schools of to-day is no mean task. These are three of the latest, two of which are eloquent of the present demand for books which shall make the boy or girl think out and work out problems of geographical import, and the third typical of the best and most suggestive kind of the now rather old-fashioned reader.

To begin with the last-named, Mr. Mackinder's 'Reader.' In using the adjective "old-fashioned" it should be understood that no deprecation is implied, for 'Lands beyond the Channel' is written up to the high-water mark of twentieth-century "Readers," and this should tell even in the case of the many schoolmasters who do not care for this type of book. It is the second volume of the author's 'Elementary Studies in Geography,' the first of which was reviewed in the *Geographical Journal* of May, 1907, p. 560. Vol. 2 deals with Europe and the Mediterranean, and, as promised, provides an advance in subject and method on its predecessor. The method is mainly historical, and therefore pre-eminently *human*. Throughout, indeed, and much more so than in "our own islands," history is to the front. Treated in this way, the connection between geography and history is one of cause and effect, and both subjects gain in consequence. The importance assigned to France is symbolical; one-third of the whole book is given to "our nearest neighbours, both, geographically and historically." In a book of this nature, it was necessary in the early chapters to correlate a variety of data in order to give a vivid conception of any foreign land. Mr. Mackinder begins with allusion to the history and character of the French people. The growth of Paris and the geographical works thereof follow. The results in the radiation of road and rail from the capital are made use of in a scamper through the country—to Normandy and Brittany, the Spanish borderland, Marseilles and the Riviera, the central tableland,

and the eastern frontier. The last-named is particularly an example of the interrelation of geography and history, and its famous "gates" are well emphasized with Sedan and Waterloo as supreme witnesses. A chapter on "Political France and its Government," and a brief comparison with the United Kingdom in point of size, distribution of population and pursuits, close the section. The rest of the book is on the same lines—cause and effect, geography and history. The pictures are illustrative, and there are plenty of them. One misses the explanations and questions which in vol. 1 added point to the sketch-maps. It should surely, also, be counted as a defect that not one single map throughout the book, large or small, painted or plain, has any indication whatever of longitude and latitude.

Mr. Mackinder taboos exercises. "A geographical text," he says in his preface, "should aim at literary form," and you cannot have literary form if it is constantly to be broken in upon by exercises. Mr. Unstead and Prof. Davis supply the exercises which nowadays should at all events supplement the teaching of the text-book. These two books contain exercises and nothing but exercises. They eschew literary form. The *magnum opus* of the great Colenso of famous memory in another branch of knowledge may be compared for literary form with latter-day treatises on "Practical Geography." But both these talented compilers lay stress on the fact that exercises are only one part of geographical work in school, and that all such practice must be correlated with descriptive work, whether oral or text. The need of exercises is universally admitted, and indeed enjoined, by such arbiters of scholasticism as Boards of Education, Boards of Studies, *et hoc genus omne*. The worst failing of the modern teacher is that he will do too much of the work of the class himself, and will not insist on his charges thinking out and working out problems which will lead up to geographical facts. These two books of exercises give him his opportunity. Prof. Davis puts it well: "The careful performance of the exercises will lead the pupil to observe, to describe, and to generalize; to make inferences, to invent explanations, and to test theories; to express new ideas verbally and graphically. If the teacher is patient and *does not infringe too often on the pupil's right of discovery*, the pupil may make so much progress in these various processes, and at the same time acquire so good a knowledge of a great group of natural phenomena, that he will really be led to make a beginning in the formation of scientific habits of thought."

Mr. Unstead's 'Practical Geography' belongs to the series of 'Oxford Geographies,' now being edited by Dr. Herbertson. It contains a large number of exercises—412 in all—designed to test and practise pupils in causes and effects, and to accustom them to use statistics in suggestive and intelligent fashion. Figures are supplied for the purpose—figures of rainfall and temperature, of population, of agriculture, mining, and commerce. The book is set out in four sections: Maps and plans, the home district, the weather, the British Isles. Most of the exercises are unimpeachable, but some appear to challenge criticism. "Collect specimens of the following rocks, whether they form part of the ground of your district or not, and also specimens of any others you can yourself find: granite, slate, marble, limestone, chalk, shale, clay, sand, gravel, sandstone," reminds one of question 1 in an erstwhile famous classical examination paper: "Write out the Latin grammar"! But the book is good if used rightly. A too slavish adherence to it would take much of the human interest out of geography—a remark which applies even more emphatically to the scholarly work of Prof. Davis. His exercises, again, are legion, and very few of them of "human" interest. There is much of the mountain as a base for measuring elevation and determining the temperature at different levels, and very little of the mountain as affecting the life and condition of the surrounding peoples. The professor designedly leaves such humanistic questions

to the teacher, who will probably omit them for want of time. As it is, he implies the time difficulty and places many of his enormous collection of exercises between brackets, thereby signifying that these may be omitted if necessary. Interest, too, tends to flag a little with page after page of this type of exercise: "What is the altitude of river Y 4 miles from its mouth? At what distance from its mouth is the altitude of river Y 160'? What is the altitude of the N.E. branch of river V at 14 miles from its mouth? In 24 the baseline represents sea-level; the spaces between the vertical lines represent distances of 2 miles: how are altitudes indicated?" and so on—some of a set which the author specially draws attention to as being particularly stimulating. However, one can always select, and the wise teacher will do so. Incidentally, he himself will learn much, for the examples are naturally mostly American, and many terms as yet unknown to English school textbooks will arrest his attention. "Accordant" and "discordant junctions," "elbow of capture," "misfit stream," "interfluve," "monadnock," are some of them. The maps and plans in the atlas are good and very suggestive, though the continental maps at the end of the book seem unnecessary.

E. R. W.

HISTORY OF THE MONGOLS.

'The Mongols: a History.' By Jeremiah Curtin. With a Foreword by Theodore Roosevelt. Pp. xxvi. + 426. London: Sampson Low. 1908. 12s. 6d. net.

This is a posthumous work introduced with a flourishing "foreword" by President Roosevelt, who took a personal interest in the writer and perhaps rated him somewhat too highly. At least, it seems excessive eulogy to assert, in the face of Sir H. H. Howorth's encyclopedic 'History of the Mongols,' that "in this particular field no other American or English scholar has ever approached him." Although his name is little known in England, Mr. Curtin was certainly a diligent writer with a remarkable knowledge of languages, which enabled him to deal with a great variety of subjects—such as Irish and Slav folklore, native American mythologies, and his better-known translations of Sienkiewicz's Polish novels. But this last product of his versatile pen can only be described as a modest compilation from generally accessible sources, without any pretensions to original research, and mainly restricted to the historical period from the rise of Genghis Khan to the absorption of the Mongol peoples in the Chinese and Russian empires.

It is a well-executed manual, brightly written, and mostly free from errors of detail. Being, moreover, furnished with a carefully prepared map of the Mongol empires in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, and with a fairly copious subject-index, it will be found a convenient book of reference for students not needing to consult larger and more exhaustive works. But it suffers considerably from the lack of final revision by the author. Thus the Meru (Merv) of Turkestan is spoken of as "renowned in Sanskrit poems," being thus confused with the Meru of Hindu writers. Then we have "Cairo in Europe," Nanking on the Hoang-ho, though rightly placed on the map; Michael Palaeologus; Humboldt's mythical "Bolor" range, and a few awkward expressions—such as "all Turk nations"; "he was a man of more courage than art thou"; Khovarezm for Khwarezm, and some other misprints.

A. H. K.

SHORT NOTICES.

Europe.—'Mountaineering in the Land of the Midnight Sun.' By Mrs. Aubrey Le Blond. (London: Fisher Unwin. 1908. Pp. xi., 304. *Map and Illustrations.* 10s. 6d.) This is a delightful volume which should appeal to a wide circle of lovers of Norway, not only to mountaineers. Mrs. Le Blond was climbing not far from