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Review: The South-Eastern Desert of Egypt

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Source: *The Geographical Journal*, Vol. 42, No. 3 (Sep., 1913), pp. 284-285

Published by: geographicalj

Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1778763>

Accessed: 29-03-2016 15:41 UTC

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recent researches, and is therefore in many respects the most interesting. An important section is devoted to the *régime* of the rivers of the Riesengebirge and the causes and results of the summer floods. Equally valuable is the author's fine description of the Niederschlesisch Lausitzer Heide, in the course of which he discusses a striking instance of the geographical importance of forest belts. Here also (p. 586) he introduces a new method of exhibiting graphically the relief-energy of any region and the device which he uses is a valuable addition to the methods of practical geography.

The monograph exhibits on every page the author's remarkable grasp of facts and events. His method of treatment is consistently historical, with the natural result that enhanced interest is given to the discussion of the larger questions, while minor matters are somewhat overburdened with detail. His conscientious description of the smaller towns and villages tends to become tedious, and much of his material might have been given in gazetteer form. The monograph is apparently unaccompanied by orographical and other maps of the province, while the various volumes are remarkably poorly equipped with distribution maps and those other devices of modern geography which prove of such advantage to the student. Little attempt is made to state the industrial and commercial position of the country in statistical form, and the figures given in the earlier volumes are not even brought up to date in the last. To Dr. Partsch geography is apparently mainly historical and descriptive, and from his own point of view he has achieved a remarkable success. He has provided in these closely printed volumes a mass of exact information which will prove invaluable in future to all geographers, however much their methods and their outlook may differ from his own.

J. D. F.

### AFRICA.

#### THE SOUTH-EASTERN DESERT OF EGYPT.

'The Geography and Geology of South-Eastern Egypt.' By John Ball, PH.D., D.SC.  
Cairo: Government Press. 1912. Price 40 P.T.

Geography has gained largely by this survey of the south-eastern desert of Egypt, which was necessitated by the demands for mining and prospecting concessions. It was carried out during the winter seasons of 1905-08, and the results are given in the 'Report on the Geography and Geology of South-Eastern Egypt' which has just been issued. The work of earlier travellers is summarized, but their results are somewhat meagre, since they were gained by rapid traverses only; now for the first time we have an accurate survey based on a careful triangulation extending from lat. 22° to lat. 25° N., and from the Nile valley to the Red sea, covering an area of about 22,000 square miles. The present volume contains an orographical map of this region on the scale of 1: 750,000, and a geological map on the same scale of all the region east of long. 34° E.; while several special maps on larger scales are also provided. All this is based on an extensive triangulation in which sixty-nine points were occupied, and more than four hundred others were intersected. Besides this, many local pieces of triangulation connected to short local bases were utilized to control the topographical survey.

The chapter dealing with the survey methods which were employed is particularly interesting, since the local conditions led to several modifications of ordinary field methods. The survey of the coast-line was mainly effected from the hill stations by a free use of depression angles, as was described in a Departmental Paper of the Egyptian Survey which was published a short time ago;

the detailed topography was mapped by tacheometric methods, largely controlled by triangulated points, and much useful work was done by using a boldly graduated staff in conjunction with very long tacheometric sights. Equal altitudes of three stars were employed as the most convenient means for determining latitudes, but the accepted positions are due to the triangulation which was carried from the Nile valley chain to the Red sea with satisfactory precision. The west coast of the Red sea is thus fixed by a more reliable method than chronometric longitudes, and its cartographical position is somewhat altered in consequence. This free employment of theodolite measurements has provided many determinations of altitude, not only of peaks and triangulation stations, but also of many points on spurs, foothills, and on the valley floors, so that the orographical map is exceptionally well controlled.

So much of the country has not hitherto been traversed or mapped, that a large part of the report is taken up by descriptions of all the different valleys, hills, mountains, and water-supplies which were visited, and which it is necessary to record in an accessible form; but this has doubtless hindered Dr. Ball from dealing fully with the land-forms which erosive agencies have produced, and the various stages of erosion which are represented in this region. A discussion of these will doubtless appear in due course, for he must have an exceptionally valuable collection of data to work upon, and his photographs show most interesting examples. The three great drainage systems which flow towards the Nile, having average gradients of less than 1 in 500, contrast strongly with the numerous small systems which drain steeply towards the Red sea; but among these latter, one at least, the Wadi Hodein, drains a wide area, and its head lies far inland.

The last part of the report is more strictly geological, and deals with the various types of rock which occur within the region, and with the general structure of the region. The whole report is of great value and interest, and furnishes a wealth of information on a part of Northern Africa which was previously but little known.

H. G. L.

#### THE DUKE OF MECKLENBURG'S SECOND AFRICAN EXPEDITION.

'Vom Kongo zum Niger und Nil: Berichte der deutschen Zentralafrika Expedition, 1910-1911.' Von Adolf Friedrich Herzog zu Mecklenburg. 2 vols. Leipzig: F. A. Brockhaus. 1912. *Maps and Illustrations.* Price 20M.

The Duke of Mecklenburg's expedition to Central Africa of 1910 and 1911 consisted of eight Europeans besides himself—three military men, three scientists, an artist, and a valet. The expedition entered Africa by way of the Congo, crossed to the Shari and descended that river, then divided into four separate subdivisions. Two of them, returning to the headwaters of the Shari, went to the Ubangi, and thence eastward toward the Nile. The attempted traverse of Dar Kuti had become impossible on account of the unsettled state of the country.

From Yakoma, on the Ubangi, the parties took different roads. One traversed the Azande country by way of Rafai, Semio, and Tambura, and passing through the Gazelle River Province, reached the Nile and Khartum. The second, following the Welle river through the Mangbettu country, took the motor road through the Lado enclave to the White Nile. The third subdivision had branched off from the main party at Kunda on the Congo, ascended the Sanga river through the newly acquired German territory, and by a circuitous route through southern Kamerun, ended at Kribi on the Guinea Coast.