

Review: The Western Sudan and Nigeria

Reviewed Work(s): A Tropical Dependency: An Outline of the Ancient History of the Western Soudan, with an Account of the Modern Settlement of Northern Nigeria by Flora L. Shaw (Lady Lugard)

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the Hamitic family. The inference is obvious that the substratum is negro, while in the process of somatic fusion there has been no linguistic fusion, but one of the two rival languages has simply perished, in accordance with the principle always insisted on by me that, while all races normally intermingle, there is no true linguistic miscegenation ('Ethnology,' ch. ix.).

In his treatment of the Masai language, Mr. Hollis has adopted a highly practical method, by which the laws regulating the formative and other structural elements are stated in the fewest possible words, and then illustrated by copious examples. The rigid and unnatural distinction drawn in most grammars between accident and syntax is thus got rid of with excellent results, and without any sacrifice of clearness. Since the sentence, and not the word, is the true unit of speech (Sayce), it must be obvious that this is the real scientific method, and the student will be all the more grateful to Mr. Hollis for having extended it to the whole of the volume. The numerous Masai texts, comprising cosmic myths, moral and religious tales, folklore stories, proverbs, riddles with their answers, and the like, are generally given with interlinear verbatim translations, and then followed by free English versions, so that this second and larger section of the volume serves as a continuous application of the grammatical rules occupying the first part. Some of the tales and wise saws bespeak a people gifted with a fair share of natural intelligence, and far from destitute of a measure of moral sense fully adequate to the maintenance of their by no means primitive social conditions. Thus "the night has ears" = our "walls have ears;" "the charcoal laughs at the ashes" = "hodie mihi cras tibi," or "your turn next;" "the arrows come by the hind-leg," *i.e.* if arrows come, there are foes behind them, = "no smoke without fire;" "we begin foolishly and end wisely" = "experientia docet." And here is just one riddle—What escapes the prairie fire? The bare spot (where no grass grows).

A. H. KEANE.

#### THE WESTERN SUDAN AND NIGERIA.

'A Tropical Dependency: An Outline of the Ancient History of the Western Soudan, with an Account of the Modern Settlement of Northern Nigeria.' By Flora L. Shaw (Lady Lugard). London: Nisbet. 1905. Pp. viii. + 508.

Miss Shaw, now Lady Lugard, will long be remembered as the brilliant correspondent of the *Times* on Colonial affairs. To the composition of this more solid piece of work she has brought to bear the same remarkable qualities—thorough grasp of the subject, clearness of exposition, and an easy fluent style—which made her Articles such pleasant and instructive reading. To these has here been added an unwearied industry in the collection and discriminating study of the copious materials which had to be consulted in the preparation of the present work, which covers an immensely wide field, far wider even than might be gathered from its rather full explanatory sub-title. This will at once be seen when it is stated that the 'Outline' is by no means confined to the 'Western Soudan,' but ranges over the whole of North-West Africa and Spain, thus enabling the gifted writer to deal intelligently with the manifold relations which Arabs, Berbers, and Europeans have had with the Negro and Negroid peoples between the Atlantic and Lake Chad throughout the historic period. It is a tremendous programme, and the wonder is that the author did not break down under the weight of her self-imposed burden. Within the elastic framework of this kaleidoscopic picture are comprised such varied and often obscure topics as the spread of Islam throughout North Africa and Iberia; Arab and Berber political and cultural supremacy in Spain; the successive rise and fall of the strictly Sudanese empires of Ghana, Melle, the Songhay, Hausas, Fulahs, Kanembu, and Kanuri (Bornuans); possible early

Egyptian (Pharaonic) influences in the Hausa lands; Europe in West Africa; European and local slave trade, slave raiding, and domestic slavery; the Royal Niger Company; Northern Nigeria, its settlement, economic relations, and prospects.

Uniform excellence in the treatment of such diverse subjects was not to be expected, and it will perhaps be generally felt that the book would have been all the better for a little pruning. Certainly those sections dealing with the shadowy Egyptian relations had better have been omitted, and here, I think, too much confidence has been placed in M. de Lauture's rather wild speculations regarding Asiatic traditions, and in M. F. Dubois' still wilder theories about Pharaonic invasions and settlements in Western Sudan. The *Ungaras*, "of whom many were Fulani," are associated with the Indian epic of the Ramayana, because of a Raja of *Ungar*, which "must have been a province of Persia," while the origin of the Fulani themselves must also "be sought in India (de Lauture), although they had previously been identified with the Arabian Wahabi (Denham). Nor is Heeren quite a safe guide, besides being a little out of date.

But with this and one or two other reservations on secondary matters, the rest of the volume, say nine-tenths of the whole, dealing also with those questions for which it will be mainly consulted, must be spoken of in language of unstinted praise; and this applies in a special manner to those instructive and eminently readable chapters which deal with all the native empires, with the overthrow of the Askani dynasty (Songhay) by the Hispano-Moroccan "Moors," with the overthrow of the Fulah emirs by the British, and with the resultant settlement of Northern Nigeria. In this last section there is a pleasant note of reasoned optimism, which ensures the sympathy of those at least who "think imperially," while at the same time conveying a well-earned tribute of recognition to Sir George Goldie, her husband Sir Frederick Lugard, and the other officials engaged in the rough and too often thankless pioneer work of empire-building in Central Africa. The staff, she remarks in one place, "was chiefly composed of that fine type of young Englishmen who, whether as soldiers or civilians, have it in their minds to serve their country to the best of their ability, in some adventurous capacity which will take them out of the common round of comfortable life. Their experience of Africa was mostly *nil*, but they had the training of the public school, the army, and the university, which fits men equally for the assumption of responsibility and for loyal subordination to authority. They were ready to go anywhere and to do anything, and . . . represented, in the eyes of the High Commissioner, the very best stuff of which the English nation is made."

An agreeable feature of Lady Lugard's style is the terse and epigrammatic way in which general conclusions are often summed up, which adds not a little to the charm of the work. After the capture of Kano and Sokoto, she writes, "The trial of strength had come and gone. The Fulani emirates were in our hands, and Great Britain was the acknowledged sovereign of Northern Nigeria." The political change suddenly brought about in a region several hundred thousand square miles in extent, with a population of many millions, is thus adequately stated in three lines. Again, after pointing out the wasteful character of transport by human agency, she adds, "Human carriage is a concomitant of slavery. With the abolition of slavery it becomes impossible." And reference is made in the same succinct way to the wise policy of ruling, "as far as possible, through the existing Fulani and Bornuese machinery, modified and controlled by the advice of British residents." Here is revealed in a few words the secret of the astonishing ease and rapidity with which the *pax Britannica* has been securely established throughout this great "tropical dependency."

Owing, evidently, to the frequent use of French documents, a faulty orthographic

system somewhat disfigures the text, though it has fortunately not ranged into the two large and most accurate maps supplied by Mr. Stanford. Thus we have Soudan and Sudan, Timbuctoo and Timbuktu, Audoghost for Audaghost (Barth), Cairouan for Kairwan, and other irregularities which should disappear in future editions. Then, also, the short index might be usefully enlarged.

A. H. KEANE.

## MATHEMATICAL AND PHYSICAL GEOGRAPHY.

### PRACTICAL ASTRONOMY.

'Handbuch der Geographischen Ortsbestimmung für Geographen und Forschungsreisende.' Von Dr. Adolf Marcuse (Privatdozent an der Universität Berlin). Mit 54 in den Text eingedruckten Abbildungen und 2 Sternkarten. Braunschweig: Druck und Verlag von Friedrich Vieweg und Sohn. 1905. *Price 10 Marks.*

Notwithstanding the rapid extension of surveys based upon triangulation, there are still many regions of the Earth where it would be impossible to obtain accurately fixed points for commencing a survey, and where consequently a geographical surveyor would have to depend upon his own astronomical observations for the determination of his initial positions. Hence it is most important that he should previously make a thorough study of the methods best suited for this purpose, and to that end such a work as Dr. A. Marcuse, of Berlin, has just published should prove of great assistance to him. It is true that many books of a somewhat similar character have appeared in recent years, but there are in this some special features that should recommend it to geographical surveyors and students of mathematical geography generally. It is essentially a book for students, and although it contains examples of the ordinary astronomical observations for the determining of latitude, longitude, and azimuth, it is more suitable for previous study than for actual practical work in the field. The methods described for the determination of latitude are for the most part those in general use, but the longitude observation from altitudes of the moon has of late years been practically discarded in this country on account of its unsatisfactory results. With larger and more exact instruments than those usually carried by travellers better results might doubtless be obtained, specially when the observations are properly balanced; but even then, and after the necessary corrections have been applied to the lunar tables, it is doubtful if the results of the observations would justify the time and labour spent upon them. With the exception of the occultation of a star, the methods of obtaining longitude which depend upon the moon's motion must be considered far too unreliable for the present time, and the character of work now required

In the section of Dr. Marcuse's book entitled "Rechnerische Hilfsmittel zur Geographischen Ortsbestimmung" is given a brief description and summary of contents of the principal nautical almanacs and ephemerides of different nations, as well as of various logarithmic and other tables arranged to assist in the computation of the observations.

In the third part of the book will be found a more than usually complete account of the principal instruments used in practical astronomy, with excellent illustrations. The description of the chronometer given here is specially good, as is also that of the various angular measuring instruments and levels.

Towards the end is given a chapter on the approximate computation of observations by means of Mercator functions (or meridional parts), another on methods of determining the position in aero-nautical navigation, and a third on rough methods of observation without angular measuring instruments. There are also