

original. In the writer's opinion, the principal change required, before launching another edition, is a complete alteration of the order of the chapters, backed up, perhaps, by a slight amplification of the index.

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THE HISTORY OF GEOGRAPHY.

The Dawn of Modern Geography. By C. R. Beazley. Pp. xvi + 532. (London: Murray, 1897.)

THE practical value of scientific geography has, during the last few years, become so evident to all classes, that the number of students of this fascinating subject has increased to an almost incredible extent, and the growing popularity of the Royal Geographical Society is a standing proof of the fact. The men who travel for the sake of duty or pleasure hasten to communicate to this body the results of their notes and observations, and their "papers" or books supply us with details, often most minute, of the remote countries and regions which we have for long considered to be inaccessible.

Supplied as we are with abundant information about the present conditions of the habitable globe, it is, perhaps, a little difficult for us to bear in mind how small were the beginnings of modern geography, and how little is known about them.

As the documents which formed the libraries and private property of individuals in Egypt and Western Asia become better known to us, we realise that a great caravan commerce was carried on between the peoples of countries which we have hitherto thought to have been entirely separated by impassable deserts and trackless mountains. But though we may recover the names of places by the score, we know nothing about them, and can only dimly guess at their positions; and we find trade or religion, or both, were the causes which induced men to move to any considerable distance from their native cities. Victorious armies brought home specimens of the animals and plants and trees from the countries whither they had marched, but their annalists tell us nothing of the situations of the scenes of their conquests.

The first to set down in writing in our own times a connected account of ancient geography was the late Sir Henry Bunbury; and now, following in his steps, Mr. Beazley has produced an interesting volume in which he has undertaken to trace the history of exploration and geographical science from the conversion of the Roman Empire to A.D. 900.

After the introduction come four chapters which describe the travels of pilgrims, merchants and missionaries; one chapter is devoted to the pseudo-science of the "Dark Ages," and another to Muslim and Chinese geography. The narrative is fully illustrated by a large series of reproductions of early maps. The revision of the whole of Chapter vi., on "Geographical Theory," together with Mr. Beazley's account of the history and use of mediæval maps for the whole book—although Mr. Beazley omits to state the fact—is due, we understand, to Mr. C. H. Coote, of the Map Department of the British Museum. Mr. Beazley could not have fallen into better hands, for Mr. Coote's experience in this branch of cartography is unrivalled.

Mr. Beazley's general sketch of the subject which he

gives in his introduction is excellent; it is carefully done, and what is almost as good, there is an absence of "fine writing" throughout, which befits the work. He has read widely, and his remarks will form a useful guide to the early geographical literature of Europe, both in manuscript and print. When, however, he undertakes to discuss Oriental texts and literature, it at once becomes clear that he is only quoting at second-hand, and we feel that it is not his fault that he does not do full justice to the early Oriental missionaries. Whether there be historical evidence of the fact extant or not, it is quite certain that some of the Apostles and their immediate successors made their way into Armenia, Mesopotamia, Persia and the Far East. Already before the end of the second century of our era Bar-daisân, who was born at Edessa A.D. 134 or 154, became a Christian missionary in Armenia, and he wrote polemical treatises against the polytheism of the heathen. Before the end of the third century Mâr Mattai had founded his famous convent on Jebel Maklûb near Nineveh, and there is proof that several other religious houses existed in the neighbourhood at this period.

From a passage in "Arnobius" (ed. Leyden, 1651, lib. II, p. 50) it is pretty clear that Christians existed in the Seres (China), Persia and India; and if this be so, which there is no good reason to doubt, many missionaries must have travelled over the country between Palestine and China, or at least voyaged to the latter country by sea. Early in the fourth century Mâr Awgîn set out for the East with seventy disciples, and founded a great religious house near Nisibis, and about 363 A.D., with Sapor's consent, he sent out seventy-two missionaries to found monasteries in Shiraz and Huzistan. A century later Christianity had extended along the shores of the Persian Gulf as far as the Island of Bahrên, and the Gospel had been preached by Nestorian missionaries in the south of the Arabian peninsula.

The monastic history of Thomas of Marga would have supplied a number of important facts bearing on the early travels of monks who went from the East to visit the Scete desert and Palestine, and Assemani's dissertation in "Bibl. Orientalis" would have given Mr. Beazley many more. As to the genuineness of the Singanfu bilingual inscription there is no doubt whatever, and we may remark that the Patriarch Hênân-Îshô' II. died in 780, and not in 778, as we are told on p. 217, note 3; the first Nestorian bishop was consecrated in China in the seventh century. All these are, however, matters which Mr. Beazley may put right in a second edition; and we hope that some attempt will be made to alter barbarisms like "Jesu Jabus" (p. 213), "Anan-Yeschouah" (p. 217), and "Massoudy" (p. 458), &c. And why does Mr. Beazley hesitate to identify "Douk-Karnain" with Alexander the Great? Alexander claimed Ammon of Egypt as father, and a well-known title of this god is "provided with two horns," a phrase literally translated by the Arabic "Dhu'l karnên."

We gather from a footnote that Mr. Beazley intends to continue this "History of Modern Geography"; and if this be so, we shall welcome a further contribution to the literature of this important subject by so able a writer. In conclusion, we cannot help remarking that the index is so small as to be almost useless.