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Recent Arctic exploration

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terrestrial globe of which we have direct record, by Emery Molyneux of Lambeth in 1592. It bears traces of the influence of Raleigh, John Davis, Barents, and Willoughby, and shows the tracks of the voyages of Cavendish and Drake. Molyneux had not, so far as is known, any successor as a practical globe-maker in London for more than a century, till Joseph Moxon (1627-1700) issued a priced catalogue of his geographical publications from his shop, "At the Sign of the Atlas," in Russell Street. It is of interest that Moxon's First Meridian was not yet that of Greenwich, but that of "the Ile Gratiota, one of the Iles of Azores."

Towards the end of the seventeenth century globes began to be displaced by maps and charts in the relative importance which they had as seamen's instruments for use in navigation; and France, thanks partly to generous State subsidies, took the place of the Netherlands in the van of geographical science. Both changes are largely associated with the famous Guillaume Delisle (1675-1726), who, with the support of the King and the Royal Academy of Science of France, revolutionised map construction by using astronomical observations to determine longitude. In maps before his day, for example, the length of the Mediterranean had been shown as 62, instead of really only 42 degrees of longitude. About the middle of the century we have apparently the first recorded Scots maker of globes, James Ferguson (1710-76).

Enough has been said to show the great interest of Dr. Stevenson's book. It will certainly remain for a long time as the standard work on its subject, and indeed so thoroughly has it been done that it is difficult to think of its ever being superseded. W. R. KERMACK.

RECENT ARCTIC EXPLORATION.¹

THE volumes in which Messrs. Rasmussen and Stefansson state the results of their journeys are, from a general point of view, models of what such works ought to be. They are handsomely produced on good paper with excellent type, they are beautifully and abundantly illustrated, and their maps and indexes are adequate. Both books are written in an attractive style, and are of absorbing interest. The translation of Mr. Rasmussen's book is well done. The only adverse criticism we care to make of it is that we fail to understand what is meant by a "cooking barometer" on page xx of the Introduction.

¹ *The Friendly Arctic*. The Story of Five Years in Polar Regions. By Vilhjalmur Stefansson, author of *My Life with the Eskimo*. Illustrated. London: Macmillan and Co. Ltd. 1921. Price 30s. net.

Greenland by the Polar Sea. The Story of the Thule Expedition from Melville Bay to Cape Morris Jessup. By Knud Rasmussen. Translated from the Danish by Asta and Rowland Kenney. With Preface by Admiral Sir Lewis Beaumont, G.C.B. With numerous illustrations in black and white, eight colour plates, and maps. London: William Heinemann. 1921. Price, 36s. net.

By his long connection with the country and his numerous journeys in it Mr. Rasmussen has made Greenland his own. He speaks the language fluently, and is accepted by the Eskimo as one of themselves. This gives authoritative value to his ethnological pronouncements. The main object of the expedition—which was successfully accomplished—was to chart “the last unknown reach of Greenland’s north coast on the stretch between St. George Fjord and de Long Fjord,” and to pay special attention to the land between Nordenskjöld Inlet and Independence Fjord. It will be remembered that Mylius Erichsen had reached Peary Land from the east and had proved it to be joined to Greenland, and not an island as Peary supposed. This expedition reached it from the west.

Mr. Rasmussen had determined to “live off the country” to a large extent, and all went well until the break-up of the sea-ice in summer. Then seals became difficult to get, and many of those shot sank and were lost, so that the party set out homewards across the inland ice with inadequate provisions. All the dogs left were killed and eaten, and the party just managed to get off the ice, all of them in a very weak condition from hunger. Mr. Rasmussen and an Eskimo set off for Etah to obtain relief for the four men—two Europeans and two Eskimo—who were left behind; when a rescue party arrived three survivors only were found. It appeared that Dr. Wulff, the botanist of the expedition, being unable to eat the hares which were the only food obtainable, had completely broken down, and had insisted on his companions leaving him alone. The rescue party searched for his body, but were unable to find it owing to freshly fallen snow. It is a little difficult to understand why the party did not stick together, as they could not in any case hope to reach Etah without assistance, so that abandoning Dr. Wulff did not help the others much, if at all.

Mr. Stefansson’s book records the results of five years’ persistent and on the whole successful work in the region to the north of Canada. The most outstanding feats were the journeys over the unbroken Arctic Ocean to the west of Banks and Prince Patrick islands, and the discovery of new islands in the north of the Parry Archipelago. The author is a trained ethnologist, and in this book he has added much to our knowledge of Eskimo life and customs, a work so well begun in his former volume, *My Life with the Eskimo*.

We could say much in commendation of Mr. Stefansson, but we have space only for two or three very important matters on which we do not altogether agree with him. In the first place, it is clear, in spite of the author’s restraint, that there was a good deal of discord among the members of the expedition. The most serious result of this was the complete breach between the leader and his second in command, Dr. Anderson, who was a friend of several years’ standing, and who had been with him during his previous residence in the far north. We have not seen Dr. Anderson’s views, and can therefore only suspend judgment on the general merits of the question. But it appears that many

of the subordinate and some of the superior members of the party were merely hired servants, and belonged to many different nationalities. This does not encourage unity of purpose and action, nor is it favourable to good discipline.

Secondly, Mr Stefansson claims to be the first Arctic explorer to prove—and that in spite of the unbelief of all and the opposition of most of his followers—that it is possible to “live off the country.” This applies, he says, even to the ice-covered ocean far from land where all his predecessors, especially Peary, had seen practically no signs of life. Now the author, on leaving Alaska, had provisions (pemmican, etc.) for men and dogs which lasted until considerably after they had turned eastwards towards Banks Island. At their greatest distance from the mainland (200 miles) he says, “signs of game were getting fewer every day.” The first seal was killed about half-way between the turning point and Banks Island. When Mr. Stefansson at later periods did succeed in “living off the country” he was either on land or not far away from it. Lastly, the suggestion that the “fertile prairies” in the Arctic Archipelago will be a source of meat supply in the future can only be dismissed as an absurdity.

Thirdly, we strongly dislike the author’s treatment of his predecessors. It is not a question of direct attack, for that is avoided with some skill, but a subtle depreciation, combined with a cocksureness as to his own methods, which produces an unpleasant effect on the reader.

T. S. M.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE ROYAL SCOTTISH GEOGRAPHICAL SOCIETY.

At a general meeting of the Society, held on 16th September 1922, it was unanimously agreed to admit Scottish University Students as Associate members.

GEOGRAPHICAL NOTES.

EUROPE.

The Ordnance Survey.—The *Annual Report* of the Ordnance Survey for the year 1921-22 records the fact that there is no longer an Ordnance Survey of the United Kingdom. On January 1, 1922, the Survey of the Six Counties of Northern Ireland was transferred to the Government of Northern Ireland, and on April 1 the Survey of the rest of Ireland was transferred to the Provisional Government of the Irish Free State. The Survey of Ireland was founded in 1825, and the country was thereafter triangulated and surveyed by chain on the scale of 6 inches to 1 mile, the Survey being completed in 1840. In 1887