

calls Comacine architecture as a style bearing the marks of a single school of builders, and common to all parts of Europe. The monuments stand as witnesses to the fallacy of any such theory.

The parts of this book that treat of the great corporation which the author supposes to have had so large a share in the architectural activities of the Middle Ages, might have value if the statements which she makes were based on unquestioned facts. But many of her statements lack due evidence, and her knowledge of medieval history is imperfect. Taken altogether, her work is a mass of confusion. Its only real value consists in the interesting plates with which it is adorned.

*The Expansion of Egypt under Anglo-Egyptian Condominium.* By Arthur Silva White, Hon. Fellow (formerly Secretary and Editor) of the Royal Scottish Geographical Society; Hon. Corresponding Member of the Société Africaine de France. London: Methuen & Co. 1899. Pp. xvi+484.

On the front cover of this book is stamped a quotation from the Qur'an in the original, beautifully written in an ornamental hand. Translated, it would run, "And everything We have reckoned in a clear record"; but Mr. White nowhere gives any clue to the meaning of what, for the most of his readers, must be simply a bit of effective decoration. This is a pity, for it exactly describes his book, even to a certain cocksureness corresponding, with reverence, to the divine "We." Everything about the Egypt of the present is reckoned here, and the record of it is clear. Mr. Penfield's book, which we noticed recently, was similar in a way. It, too, was about present-day Egypt, and had no lack of clarity and insight. But the touch was light, and details were skipped; it was a holiday book for a holidaying public. Mr. White's book is for study, and careful study. It is swollen with details and bristles with statistics, mercifully arranged, for the most part, in careful tables. The touch is light enough, but it is also firm; the weight of facts is carried easily and even gracefully. Mr. White has mastered the art of the bookmaker.

There go three elements to the making of this record. First, Mr. White has his theory—a theory well sponsored—that Egypt is to be regarded as an island, and must fall to that power which has command of the sea. So he traces the history of the country from point to point, and, of course, abundantly finds his dogma there. Buttressed with Capt. Mahan, his case will certainly bear stating. One weak point, however, is Syria. Egypt and Syria have always historically gone together. He recognizes that, and would rather have Syria German than French. The possibility of that arrangement and its ultimate advantages may be doubtful. So far, history; but the second element in order is the future of Egypt, and Mr. White has no more doubt as a prophet than he had as an historian. In or before 1905, England must proclaim a protectorate over the whole valley of the Nile. That follows of necessity from the situation. What, then, is that situation? The answer is the third element—a plain and full description of things as they are in and around Egypt. This description, can

hardly be praised too highly. We may think as we please of the theory of the sea power and of the destiny of England in the valley of the Nile, but no one can question the wonderful fulness and clearness of this account of Egypt and of the work of England in Egypt. The physical factors are here—practically the Nile, for the land is the gift of the river, and everything depends upon irrigation. Nubar Pasha is reported to have said that Egypt needed two things, justice and water. The political situation, too, in all its bewildering ramifications: the Sultan's suzerainty, firmans, capitulations, *Caisse de la Dette*, international control and English control, a Walpurgisnacht of ghosts and realities. The population, too, and its characteristics according to the census of 1897; how that population is governed and how it governs itself; how it is educated, taxed, judged; how it buys and sells and smuggles—all this with tables galore. The Suez Canal at length, with its dreary history of squabbles and cheating, and its present as an international crux; then the situation in the Sudan, the native races, the loss, the reconquest, the Condominium—almost as beautiful a word as Mesopotamia. Finally, what is aptly called "The Title-deeds of the Nile Valley"—a lucid *précis*, based on Hertzslet's 'Africa by Treaty,' of the documents and rights involved. This is brought down to the latest agreement with France in March of the present year, which is given in full.

It will be seen that we have here the necessary continuation and supplement to Milner's 'England in Egypt,' and Wingate's 'Mabdlism.' Of special points of interest, the book is full: the damming of the Nile, and the character of the present Khedive; educational institutions in Egypt, and missionary enterprise; the Gordon Memorial College at Khartoum, and the Abyssinian difficulty; Tripoli and its relation to the Senussi dervishes—a thorny matter. Seven excellent maps are added. These are among the most beautiful, full, and accurate that we have ever seen. The last, of political boundaries and data, gives the absolutely latest agreements and delimitations for the valley of the Nile. It will stand most careful study. The fourfold shading in red, from the British Protectorate in British East Africa, through a British Sphere of Influence in the Bahr el-Ghazal and the Condominium of England and Egypt between Fashoda and Wadi Halfa, to Egypt proper with its British Occupation, and the red-bordered white of the desert with its awkward Senussi question, are a triumph of cartography and put the situation in vivid brevity. Whoever wishes to understand that situation and Egypt generally, should turn to this book. Its timely importance cannot be exaggerated.

*A History of Wireless Telegraphy, 1833-1899.* By J. J. Fahie. Dodd, Mead & Co. 1899. 8vo, pp. 325.

Everybody who seeks general information about Marconi's method of telegraphing and its relation to those of Preece, by ordinary dynamic induction, and of Lindsay and others by conduction through water in two paths, will be able to gather a somewhat better idea of these matters from this book than from the little volume of a quarter of the size by Richard Kerr. He will also learn here of some thirty earlier attempts. Stein-

hell the elder, in 1839, first proposed to telegraph by means of radiation otherwise than by vision. Morse, in 1842, first had the idea of erecting ordinary telegraphs along the two banks of an estuary or strait in order to make two conducting paths through the water. O'Shaughnessy in 1849 tried naked wires under water. Mahlon Loomis in 1872 proposed to telegraph through the upper air. Henry early telegraphed by means of the induction of coils, a method which Stevenson in 1892 practically developed.

The book has two faults that are common to almost all writings of practical men. The first is that it is needlessly technical. A good many people would like to read it who would have been thankful for a glossary explaining what an Obach cell, a D'Arsonville galvanometer, a Theiler sander, a Cardew vibrator, a Rich exciter, and the like, are; for they will probably search for such expressions in vain in their encyclopedic dictionaries. The other fault is a want of logical distinctness in the thought. The very title of the book illustrates this. Contrivances that depend upon the vision of distant signals are, we believe, the only strictly wireless telegraphs that have ever been proposed. These, too, are the types to which the word "telegraph" was first appropriated. Yet this subject, which has been much studied by soldiers and sailors since 1838, is omitted by Mr. Fahie. On the other hand, Edison's contrivance (really due in its essence to Willoughby Smith) for communicating with a moving train cannot properly be called telegraphy, since it is only designed to close a gap of a few feet, while a telegraph is an apparatus for transmitting all sorts of messages faster than sound to distances beyond the reach of a man's voice. Nor do experiments with bare wires laid across the bed of a river come under the head of wireless telegraphy. The same defect is shown when Mr. Fahie professes not to understand what physicists mean by calling electricity a kind of matter, saying that engineers understand it to be a form of energy. If there were any real dispute upon such a point, we may be sure, from the nature of their studies, that it would be the students of theory who were right. But, in fact, it is a mere verbal discrepancy, best mended by confining the word "electricity" to vaguely denoting all phenomena depending on the luminiferous ether. Of course, optics is now universally acknowledged to be a branch of the science of electricity.

Notwithstanding these two faults, the work may be profitably read by anybody having a good elementary acquaintance with electricity.

*Laxdala Saga.* Translated from the Icelandic by Muriel A. C. Press. London: J. M. Dent & Co. 1899. Pp. viii+272.

The Laxdala Saga is, next to the Njals Saga, the longest of the sagas specifically Icelandic that have come down to us. In literary style it ranks among the very best of its kind, and far beyond many that have long been accessible in an English translation. It is, furthermore, one of the most romantic of all the sagas in its action, and one of the least removed by the strangeness of environment and the unfamiliarity of motive from the comprehension and sympathy of present-day readers. These are all good reasons for