



---

Review: [untitled]

Author(s): L. C. Hopkins

Source: *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland*, (Jan., 1918), pp. 146-148

Published by: [Cambridge University Press](#)

Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/25209365>

Accessed: 22/08/2010 23:10

---

Your use of the JSTOR archive indicates your acceptance of JSTOR's Terms and Conditions of Use, available at <http://www.jstor.org/page/info/about/policies/terms.jsp>. JSTOR's Terms and Conditions of Use provides, in part, that unless you have obtained prior permission, you may not download an entire issue of a journal or multiple copies of articles, and you may use content in the JSTOR archive only for your personal, non-commercial use.

Please contact the publisher regarding any further use of this work. Publisher contact information may be obtained at <http://www.jstor.org/action/showPublisher?publisherCode=rasgbi>.

Each copy of any part of a JSTOR transmission must contain the same copyright notice that appears on the screen or printed page of such transmission.

JSTOR is a not-for-profit service that helps scholars, researchers, and students discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content in a trusted digital archive. We use information technology and tools to increase productivity and facilitate new forms of scholarship. For more information about JSTOR, please contact [support@jstor.org](mailto:support@jstor.org).



Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland is collaborating with JSTOR to digitize, preserve and extend access to *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland*.

<http://www.jstor.org>

a few years ago in connection with the late Herbert Spencer's scheme of organized intelligence; but one of the great philosopher's conditions of co-operation seems to have been that there should be no index! Hence the waste of time inevitable when a specialist wishes to "turn up" all that has been said on any given subject has often had the effect of consigning Mr. Werner's *magnum opus*—for such it really is—to a shelf, whence its sheer size and weight discourage removal, and this apart from the fatal lack of index: it would be a godsend to an interned prisoner to have the task of composing such an index at enforced leisure, instead of brooding upon the hardships of his cabined and confined lot. The silver price of the two Couling volumes was not high, though present rates of silver exchange unfortunately bring it nearer £4 than the original £2; but in any case every merchant's or banker's office interested in the Far East should be provided with a copy, and no doubt the various missionary bodies will see to it that their *respublica* takes no injury.

E. H. PARKER.

---

PREHISTORIC CHINA. Part I: Oracle Records from the Waste of Yin. By JAMES MELLON MENZIES, B.A.Sc. (Toronto). Shanghai: Kelly & Walsh, Ltd. 1917.

This volume neither demands nor admits a lengthy review. It consists of some nine pages of Preface and 247 pages of lithographic "reproductions of inscriptions on 2,369 selected fragments of tortoise-shell and animal bones. This selection was carefully made from a total collection of nearly fifty thousand, and is the first comprehensive publication of facsimiles of these inscriptions". Mr. Menzies must mean the first publication other than Chinese, for he has been preceded by Lo Chên-yü's great work in four volumes, the *Yin Hsü Shu Ch'i*, or *Records of the Tumulus of Yin*.

As regards the plates, Mr. Menzies' lithographs are of the fragments with the inscriptions on them copied by hand, very well copied; but the hand does not exist that can reproduce such characters with the accuracy of a photographed rubbing, such as fill the plates in Lo's book.

So much for the main and very meritorious part of the volume, which, however, must of necessity have an extreme caviare flavour for the general reader.

Not so the Preface. In this Mr. Menzies, lately a member of the Presbyterian Church in Canada Mission, stationed in Honan Province, now an Officer of a Chinese Labour Battalion in France, recounts what he knows by personal visits to the "Waste of Yin", as he renders the Chinese words *Yin Hsü*, the scene of the find of the Honan Bones, which he first saw in the spring of 1914. The circumstances of these visits seem to have inspired the ardent spirit of the author with the desire to carry out "an extended work on the dawn of history and the development of civilization in China", under the title of *Prehistoric China*. The second volume is to contain a dictionary of the characters appearing in the plates of the first (I noted this with a gasp of surprise), and "the life-history of each character through the five most distinct forms of it will be shown, with excerpts from actual inscriptions in each case". These forms are to be (1) the tortoise-shell form (those, namely, of the Honan Bones), (2) bronze forms of Chou dynasty date, to include the *Ku wen* or "ancient forms", the Greater Seal and certain Lesser Seal characters, (3) the *Shuo Wen's* Lesser Seal, (4) Early Brush forms or *Li Wên*, and (5) the present form as given in Kanghsi's Dictionary. "The third and following volumes will contain a dissertation on the early religion of the Chinese race," and "a dissertation on the earliest culture period in China with corroborative evidence from stone, bone and pottery objects, both of the chase and of the hearth, will follow".

Such are the author's ambitions. They are projected on generous, not to say grandiose, lines. So, too, was Gibbon's first dream of the *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, when at Rome in October, 1764, he "sat musing amidst the ruins of the Capitol, while the bare-footed friars were singing vespers in the temple of Jupiter". Let us wish Mr. Menzies a like fulfilment of his dream.

L. C. HOPKINS.

---

ECONOMICS OF BRITISH INDIA. By JADUNATH SARKAR, M.A., Professor, Patna College. Fourth edition, enlarged, re-written, and brought up to date. Calcutta: N. E. Sarkar & Sons. 1917. Price 5s.

This is a good little book on a big topic. The principal feature of the new edition is a chapter on the economic effects of the War on India. It contains much to astonish. In September, 1914, jute went a-begging, as it did not pay to cut it. Jute and cotton both declined in the following years in extent of cultivation, and the loss fell entirely on the Indian producers, as the European jute mill-owners had bought up cheap in 1914. In 1915 the demand for bags raised prices, but the profit went entirely to the brokers, one Narwari middleman being reputed to have cleared five *crores* in one year.

Possibly there is another side to this picture. Mr. Sarkar writes rather from the Calcutta standpoint. In Northern India the cultivator benefited largely by the War, though he lost in some ways. Wheat brought him excellent prices, though he had to pay more for labour, but it is possible that his economic master, the middleman, levied a heavy toll on his profits. The Government of India did not buy direct from the cultivator. If it had done so it might have solved to some extent the problem of landed indebtedness, which Mr. Sarkar hardly discusses, though he is excellent on the effects of Indian