say that it was not so, but it was not yet proved to his satisfaction that the Welle fell into the Congo: he was rather inclined to think that it went to the Niger. He wished to ask Dr. Junker what was the nature of the country at the farthest point which he had reached. From Lado (Gondokoro) down to Unyoro it was a rolling country with ranges of hills. The whole plain north of that was a more or less flat land with no great elevations, but with enormous forests. What reason therefore was there for the Welle flowing south? He wished to ask Dr. Junker what reasons he had for believing that the Welle joined the Congo. Another question he wished to ask was where they place the origin of the Niger? For modesty of speech, for the length of time he had remained in Africa, for truthfulness in his description of the people, the Makarakas, Niam Niams, and others, for the immense natural history collections that he had made, they were all greatly indebted to Dr. Junker, and they trusted that in future they should hear a great deal more from him.

Dr. Junker, in reply, said that when he reached Zanzibar in December last, he had not the least idea of the discussion that was going on about the Mobangi. Since he had heard of Mr. Grenfell's journey up that northern tributary of the Congo he thought it very likely that the Welle-Makua ran into it. When he was in the region he thought that the natural thing for it to do was to go into the Shari, but as the Mobangi was 6000 or 7000 feet wide at its mouth the question was where that great supply of water came from.

A cordial vote of thanks having been given to Dr. Junker for his paper the proceedings terminated.

Notes on a part of the Western Frontier of British Honduras.

By William Miller, Assistant Surveyor-General British Honduras.

The portion of country shown on the accompanying map extends from lat. 17° 3' 40" to 17° 59' 27" N., a part of British Honduras concerning which all existing maps are more or less erroneous, and of which we have just completed the survey.

I am sorry that I have not time to supply the Society with a more finished map. The firm black line shown as the frontier on the plan has been cleared through the bush for the entire distance shown, and has been cut 12 feet wide. Several surveyors have been in charge of the party at different times, and had to return to Belize on account of sickness, which is caused chiefly on account of want of good water. For the last twenty-three miles I was myself in charge of the work, so I can assure you that the map is correct.

It will be seen that for a considerable distance the line runs through logwood swamp, but in all other parts fine timber grows; all the varieties common to this part of the globe being present, as mahogany, sapodilla, rosewood, &c. The portion of land available for cultivation is very small, and I found no indication of minerals, the hills being all of a limestone formation. No open country was met with, the thick bush
Plan of Portion of the Western Frontier of the Colony of BRITISH HONDURAS

Sketch Map of BRITISH HONDURAS

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only giving way to the logwood swamps, which are full of a very unpleasant, tall, tough grass, about 12 feet high, called very correctly "cutting grass," which will adhere to anything which touches it, and, unless carefully put off, it will cut through thick clothing, and make a nasty gash in the flesh.

These swamps, however, are full of orchids of many species, the beauty of which takes off some of the monotony of working through these somewhat dismal swamps. The bush was so thick that with a gang of fifty men I could only cut through half a mile per day.

Chan Cheēch creek, which will be found marked, is in the dry season only a succession of pools, but in the wet season it is a rushing roaring river, and at this time the whole of the low lands are under water, whilst in the dry season no water is obtainable. This creek no doubt connects with Booth’s river or the Rio Bravo, but no person has followed it up to settle this point.

The long narrow lagoon at the northern end of the line marked “Ishnoha creek” joins Blue creek at the point shown. No white man has followed this down, but we have this information from an Indian. I tried to follow it, and went so far as shown upon the map, where I was stopped by thick, prickly bamboo, armed all over with sharp spines, about an inch long, through which it was impossible to penetrate.

Although game of all kinds was met with all along the line it was not so plentiful as might be supposed. The following species were shot at different times:—Antelope, peccary and waree, gibnut, baboons, quash, armadilla, and of birds, the quam, currasow, partridge, and toucan. The only place, however, where game abounded was upon Ishnoha lagoon, where birds were met with upon every tree, and so tame that they did not fly away at our approach. There were cranes, carpenter birds, and the big barking gaulin, and the alligators were so thick that they could be seen at almost every few yards, and so bold that they attacked a rough log which I had had hollowed out to form a canoe in which to explore the river, and we had to shoot them to keep them off.

The villages shown on the map are inhabited by Indians, but Cayo (usually called “The Cayo”) is an exception, as the great majority of the inhabitants there are negroes; and at Benqueviejo they are half-breeds of mixed Spanish and Indian descent.

The Indians of these villages are not savages. They cultivate the soil and grow maize, rice, and beans, and raise pigs and fowls. They are, however, to a certain extent dangerous, as so lately as 1872 they made a successful raid on, and burnt, Orange Walk, one of the chief towns of the colony, where there was a fort and a garrison. They are armed to a considerable extent with old Enfield rifles and the machete, a kind of cutlass, without which travelling is impossible in this country.

All the roads which I have marked are mere paths through the bush,
the majority of them so bad that even a mule could not travel on them. The road from The Cayo to Benqueviejo is, however, an exception as it is a well-cut road of about 24 feet wide, and in dry weather very good for mule traffic.

The position of Ycaiche has always been doubtful, but I think I have marked it on just about correctly as 30 miles to the northward of the head of the frontier. The doubt concerning this town is to be accounted for by the terror which the Ycaiche Indians inspire. Last Christmas, I applied for leave to visit this town, but permission was refused by the Colonial Government. The town is described to me as being of considerable size, but scattered; and there are supposed to be about 2000 fighting men there. These Indians dress in trousers and cotton shirts, and their staple food is the tortilla cake made of pounded maize baked over the fire into little round flat cakes. They have a rough idea of municipal self-government and elect alcaldes among themselves, who have powers to try and to punish offenders.

WILLIAM MILLER,
Assistant-Surveyor General B.H.
Belize, British Honduras, 21st March, 1887.

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Russian Geographical Work in 1886.

From Russian Sources, by E. Delmar Morgan.


From the Otchet (Report) of the Russian Geographical Society for 1886, we learn the losses by death of its members have been unusually severe during the past year. Among the geographers mentioned in the obituary record are those of Abich, who devoted about thirty of the best years of his life (1844 to 1877) to the study of the geology of the Caucasus, and whose name will live for ever in its annals; Abramof, whose article on the Karateghin was translated for our Journal (vol. xlii.). He too initiated Fedchenko's expedition to the glacier named after this naturalist, and to Iskander Kul, as well as that to the Alai, Pamir, and boundaries of Kashgar, where such men as Middendorf, Mushkétof, and Sévertzof found a field for their talents. Among other well-known names lost to science is that of Poltoratski, who, together with Major-General Ilyin, founded the cartographical establishment now known under the name of his colleague. Poltoratski gave great assistance to the first Russian explorations in Central Asia, and himself led the Chatir Kul expedition in 1867, which first crossed the Naryn and brought Russian surveys to Kashgar ('Journal,' vol. xl.). Lastly, we must not omit mention of R. K. Maack, one of the first travellers on the Amur, in the Ussuri country, which he explored in 1857, and in the Viliui district, giving to the world the results of his investigations in three separate works relating to each of these journeys.

The Report goes on to speak of recent expeditions organised by the Society. First, that of Potanin, lately noticed in our 'Proceedings' (May 1887), in which three branches of geographical science had their representatives, viz. ethnography, in the person of M. Potanin himself; natural history, in that of M. Berezin; and