

ASIA

A REGIONAL AND ECONOMIC GEOGRAPHY

BY

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WITH 372 MAPS AND DIAGRAMS

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TO
MY WIFE
IN MEMORY OF BULLOCK-CART DAYS
AND IRRAWADDY NIGHTS

PREFACE TO THE THIRD EDITION

ALTHOUGH it is only six years since the appearance of the first edition of this book—followed eighteen months later by the second—so much has happened in the intervening time that it has proved essential to rewrite completely many sections. In the first place events in China, Manchuria and Japan have considerably altered the picture of the Far East and the passage of what will probably in the future be called the Great Depression has affected in very different ways the progress of development in Asiatic countries. In the second place the results of many detailed geographical studies have been published in the last decade. American geographers have been the outstanding leaders in this work—G. T. Trewartha, R. B. Hall, D. H. Davis and J. E. Orchard in the case of Japan ; J. W. Coulter and J. W. Baylor in Korea ; E. E. Ahnert, Owen Lattimore, and G. T. Trewartha in Manchuria ; G. B. Cressey in China. The study of geography has assumed an ever-increasing importance in both Japan and China and the wealth of material is gradually being made available to non-Oriental readers. In the third place it has been desirable to alter somewhat the balance of the book. It was natural that, in the first edition, India should bulk largely as being the scene of my own work during five years of residence and as being of paramount importance to British readers. But Japan has become increasingly significant in world affairs and has now been accorded a fuller treatment. America is even more intimately concerned with the development of Japanese and Far Eastern affairs and the popularity of this book in America affords a further justification for the complete recasting of this section. Twelve months in America in 1933-4 enabled me to discuss many of the problems at first hand with those who have undertaken their investigation, and I gratefully acknowledge all the help thus received during the most stimulating and delightful year of my geographical education.

The selection of material and its presentation in this book have resulted in interesting discussions on several occasions regarding the nature, content and scope of geography. In a world which is of necessity becoming increasingly international

we are inevitably forced to learn something of the life of the other man in the other country. It must be the function of a geographical training to enable disconnected fragments of knowledge to be put into their proper places in a connected and intelligible picture of the whole. Geography is thus a discipline and a point of view or mode of thought. In content it deals with the natural environment, the earth viewed as the home of man, the stage on which man plays his part and with the interactions between man and his environment considered dynamically and not statically—that is with the sequence of human occupancy.

Whilst the environment is a living and connected whole it can be analysed into its component parts, and each of those parts may be considered *per se* or as they influence the life of man. In the latter sense they may be called the geographical factors, and in the consideration of any area large or small the geographical factors group themselves into (a) those which are related to the position of the area relative to the world as a whole and to neighbouring areas; (b) those which are related to the physical build of the area—the influence of land and sea, mountain and plain; (c) those which are related to the geological structure of which physical features are but the outward visible evidence; (d) those which are related to weather and climate; (e) those which are related to vegetation, itself an index of the interaction of the preceding factors; and (f) those which are related to animal life, so largely dependent upon vegetation. In a primitive world the influence of each of these factors upon the life of man could be considered in sequence, but man has himself so altered his environment that each geographical factor is more appropriately considered not only as it influences human life but as man has reacted to and altered that influence. Thus the occurrence of minerals and their exploitation is appropriately considered with geological structure; the influence of natural vegetation cannot be divorced from a consideration of the vegetation as altered by man.

In an area so vast and so diverse as Asia no apology is needed for taking the great political units—which are, in so many cases, geographical entities also—as the basis of description in the second and larger part of this book. In each case the treatment, varied according to special requirements, follows the scheme already outlined. Introductory details are followed in order by a consideration of physical features; geology, structure and minerals; climate; vegetation and agriculture. Then comes the consideration of man himself, his activities, his industries and trade.

In all the larger political units of Asia, the environment varies

greatly from one part to another. Hence the necessity for the division into regions. I have called my regions 'natural regions' because they are in the main delineated by natural features of topography, structure, climate and vegetation. But each, in the course of the long occupation by man, has been changed, some in small measure, others very greatly. Features, such as the character of agriculture, which are the result of man's activities in many cases have become the obvious or outstanding ones of the region, but in so much as these secondary characteristics have been made possible by the fundamental or natural ones the regions remain 'natural'. Others prefer the term 'geographical region'. My regions are, in fact, environmental regions and I make no apology for the fact that the outstanding characteristics of some of them to-day are the direct results of human occupance. I contend, however, that they are fundamentally important in helping us to understand the life of man under conditions different from those of our own home environment.

In the preparation of this edition I have been helped by Mrs. E. Beaver, B.A., whose work I gratefully acknowledge. I have again followed in the spelling of place-names the lists issued by the Permanent Committee on Geographical Names of the Royal Geographical Society. I have continued to follow the course of selecting references which are intended mainly as a guide to the student and general reader seeking further sources of information. They are, therefore, almost restricted to books and periodicals likely to be readily available; as far as possible they are to works in the English language except where French or German publications fill a gap which could not otherwise be occupied. My special thanks are due to the American Geographical Society of New York for permission to reproduce a number of maps from the pages of the *Geographical Review*.

L. D. S.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

ILLUSTRATIONS	xiii
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PART I—THE CONTINENT OF ASIA

CHAP.		PAGE
I	THE OROGRAPHY OF ASIA	I
II	THE STRUCTURE OF ASIA	10
III	THE CLIMATES OF ASIA	19
IV	THE VEGETATION OF ASIA	41
V	THE POPULATION OF ASIA	49
VI	THE EUROPEAN EXPLORATION OF ASIA	54
VII	ASIA'S POSITION IN THE WORLD	66

PART II—THE COUNTRIES OF ASIA

I	TURKEY—THE THRESHOLD OF ASIA	69
II	ARAB ASIA	106
III	THE IRANIAN PLATEAU	150
IV	THE INDIAN EMPIRE	170
V	CEYLON	370
VI	SOUTH-EASTERN ASIA AND THE EAST INDIES	391
VII	CHINA	463
VIII	MANCHURIA	540
IX	THE DEAD HEART OF ASIA	559
X	THE JAPANESE EMPIRE	579
XI	ASIATIC RUSSIA	650
	INDEX	689

ILLUSTRATIONS

ASIA—THE MOUNTAIN-HEARTED	<i>Frontispiece</i>
FIG.	PAGE
1. STRUCTURAL SKETCH-MAP OF ASIA	2
2. THE CENTRAL MOUNTAIN COMPLEX	5
3. MAP SHOWING TREND OF MOUNTAIN RANGES. (<i>From C. P. Berkey and F. K. Morris, Publications of the Asiatic Expeditions of the American Museum of Natural History, No. 29</i>)	6
4. KROPOTKIN'S CONCEPTION OF THE STRUCTURE OF ASIA	7
5. SECTION ACROSS ASIA FROM SOUTH TO NORTH	8
6. STRUCTURE OF ASIA	12
7. DIAGRAM OF GRANITIC MASS ON BASALT	13
8. OLD ELEMENTS IN STRUCTURE OF ASIA	13
9. OLD MASSIFS BEFORE DISRUPTION	14
10. DIAGRAMS SHOWING THE INFILLING OF A GEOSYNCLINAL TROUGH	15
11. SECTIONS THROUGH FOLD MOUNTAIN CHAINS	16
12. DIAGRAM OF THE STRUCTURE OF TERTIARY FOLD MOUNTAINS ACCORDING TO ARGAND	17
13. THE TERTIARY FOLDED BELTS OF ASIA	18
14. WINTER CLIMATIC CONDITIONS IN ASIA	20
15. WINTER RAINFALL AND WINDS IN ASIA	22
16. SUMMER CLIMATIC CONDITIONS IN ASIA	23
17. SUMMER RAINFALL AND WINDS IN ASIA	24
18. THE CLIMATIC REGIONS OF ASIA	26
18A. KÖPPEN'S CLIMATIC DIVISIONS OF ASIA	36
18B. THORNTHWAITHE'S CLIMATIC DIVISIONS OF ASIA	39
19. THE NATURAL VEGETATION OF ASIA	42
20. THE FORESTS OF ASIA	44
21. THE POPULATION OF ASIA	49
22. THE RELIGIONS OF ASIA	51
23. MEDIEVAL TRADE ROUTES.	55
24. THE POLITICAL DIVISIONS OF ASIA	57
25. THE AREA AND POPULATION OF ASIA	66
26. DIAGRAMS SHOWING THE PRODUCTION OF STAPLE FOODSTUFFS IN ASIA	66
27. DIAGRAMS SHOWING THE PRODUCTION OF STAPLE TEXTILE MATERIALS IN ASIA	67
28. DIAGRAMS SHOWING THE PRODUCTION OF METALS IN ASIA	67
29. THE POSITION OF ASIA IN CONNECTION WITH COAL	67
30. THE PRESENT EXTENT OF TURKEY	69
31. THE EXTENT OF THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE, 1566	70
32. THE EXTENT OF THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE IN 1910	71
33. PHYSICAL MAP OF TURKEY IN ASIA. (<i>Based on 'The Times' Survey Atlas</i>)	75
34. THE WEST COAST VALLEYS OF TURKEY	77
35. THE CLIMATE OF TURKEY—JANUARY AND JULY ISOTHERMS.	79

FIG.	PAGE
36. THE RAINFALL OF ASIATIC TURKEY	80
37. THE POPULATION OF TURKEY	84
38. HELLENISM IN ASIA—150 B.C.	85
39. SKETCH-MAP SHOWING RAILWAYS IN TURKEY IN 1932	87
40. THE ROAD SYSTEM OF ASIATIC TURKEY	88
41. EXPORTS OF TURKEY ¹	89
42. IMPORTS OF TURKEY	89
43. DIRECTION OF FOREIGN TRADE OF TURKEY.	89
44. MERRIAM'S NATURAL REGIONS OF ASIA MINOR (From <i>Economic Geography, Vol. II, 1926</i>)	90
45. THE NATURAL REGIONS OF TURKEY	90
46. CYPRUS	104
47. BANSE'S NATURAL REGIONS OF SYRIA AND MESOPOTAMIA (Based on the map published by E. C. Semple, <i>Geographical Review, Vol. XI</i>).	107
48. THE STRUCTURAL UNITS OF SOUTH-WESTERN ASIA	108
49. THE DESERT ROUTES OF SOUTH-WESTERN ASIA	114
50. THE NATURAL REGIONS OF PALESTINE	116
51. JEWISH LAND IN PALESTINE	120
52. THE PRESENT SYSTEM OF RAIL AND ROAD COMMUNICATIONS IN PALESTINE	122
53. THE PROPOSED NEW SYSTEM OF TRUNK ROADS FOR PALESTINE. (From <i>Stamp, Highway Development in Palestine, Modern Transport, 1928</i>)	123
54. GENERAL MAP OF SYRIA	126
55. THE POSITION OF DAMASCUS	131
56. GENERAL MAP OF ARABIA	136
57. GENERAL MAP OF 'IRAQ	141
58. LOWER 'IRAQ, SHOWING THE AREAS TO BE IRRIGATED	144
59. DATE-CULTIVATION IN 'IRAQ	145
60. THE CULTIVATED LAND OF LOWER 'IRAQ	146
61. THE RAILWAYS OF 'IRAQ, 1928	148
62. THE FOREIGN TRADE OF 'IRAQ	149
63. THE DIRECTION OF THE FOREIGN TRADE OF 'IRAQ	149
64. THE IRANIAN PLATEAU OF PERSIA AND AFGHANISTAN	152
65. THE MAIN ROUTES OF PERSIA. (From a map published in the <i>Report on the Economic Conditions of Persia, Dept. of Overseas Trade, U.K.</i>)	158
66. THE FOREIGN TRADE OF PERSIA	159
67. THE DIRECTION OF FOREIGN TRADE OF PERSIA	159
68. THE NATURAL REGIONS OF AFGHANISTAN	162
69. THE RACES OF AFGHANISTAN	164
70. THE ROUTES OF AFGHANISTAN	167
71. RUSSIAN EXPANSION AGAINST THE NORTHERN FRONTIER OF AFGHANISTAN	168
72. THE POSITION OF INDIA	171
73. THE PRINCIPAL PROVINCES AND STATES OF INDIA	172
74. A SIMPLE PHYSICAL MAP OF INDIA	173
75. THE CHIEF ROUTES ACROSS THE MOUNTAIN WALL OF INDIA	175
76. THE ESSENTIAL FEATURES IN THE PHYSICAL GEOGRAPHY OF THE INDIAN PLATEAU. (From <i>Stamp, Intermediate Com- mercial Geography, by permission of Longmans, Green & Co., Ltd.</i>)	177
77. GEOLOGICAL MAP OF INDIA	180

FIG.	PAGE
78. SECTION THROUGH THE FOOTHILLS OF THE HIMALAYAS IN THE PUNJAB	182
79. THE MINERAL PRODUCTION OF INDIA	183
80. JANUARY ISOTHERMS	189
81. ACTUAL TEMPERATURES IN JANUARY	189
82. THE CLIMATE OF INDIA—JULY ISOTHERMS	191
83. THE CLIMATE OF INDIA—ACTUAL TEMPERATURES IN JULY	191
84. DIAGRAM OF MONSOON CONDITIONS. (<i>From Kendrew, Climates of the Continents, by permission of the Clarendon Press, Oxford</i>)	193
85. MAP OF INDIA SHOWING DIRECTION AND STRENGTH OF MONSOON WINDS IN JULY	194
86. RAINFALL MAP OF INDIA FOR THE WHOLE YEAR	196
87. THE COLD WEATHER RAINFALL OF SOUTHERN INDIA	197
87A. THE VARIABILITY OF RAINFALL IN INDIA. (<i>From Geographical Review, Amer. Geog. Soc., New York</i>)	198
88. THE CLIMATIC REGIONS OF INDIA. (<i>From Kendrew, Climates of the Continents, by permission of the Clarendon Press, Oxford</i>)	199
89. RAINFALL GRAPHS FOR TOWNS CHARACTERISTIC OF THE CLIMATIC REGIONS OF INDIA	200
89A. TEMPERATURE GRAPHS FOR TOWNS CHARACTERISTIC OF THE CLIMATIC REGIONS OF INDIA	201
90. IRRIGATION MAP OF INDIA	204
91. THE PERCENTAGE OF THE SOWN AREA OF INDIA UNDER IRRIGATION	204
91A. TANK IRRIGATION IN INDIA	205
92. THE NATURAL VEGETATION OF INDIA	207
93. THE USES OF LAND IN BRITISH INDIA	211
94. MAP SHOWING THE DISTRIBUTION OF RICE IN INDIA	214
95. DISTRIBUTION OF WHEAT IN INDIA	216
96. THE DISTRIBUTION OF MILLET IN INDIA	217
97. THE DISTRIBUTION OF COTTON IN INDIA	221
98. THE DISTRIBUTION OF JUTE IN INDIA. (<i>Adapted from French and Stamp, North-East India, by permission of Longmans, Green & Co., Ltd.</i>)	223
99. THE DISTRIBUTION OF SHEEP IN INDIA	231
100. THE DISTRIBUTION OF CAMELS IN INDIA	232
101. THE DISTRIBUTION OF POPULATION	233
102. THE POPULATION OF INDIA—DENSITY IN 1921	234
102A. THE POPULATION OF INDIA—DENSITY IN 1931	235
102B. POPULATION CHANGES IN THE DECADE 1921-31	236
102C. INTER-PROVINCIAL MIGRATION IN INDIA	237
103. THE DISTRIBUTION OF LANGUAGES IN INDIA	239
104. THE DISTRIBUTION OF RELIGIONS IN INDIA	242
105. THE OCCUPATIONS OF THE PEOPLE OF INDIA	245
105A. MAP SHOWING THE POSITION OF JAMSHEDPUR	247
106. THE PRINCIPAL RAILWAYS OF INDIA	250
107. GRAPH SHOWING THE FLUCTUATIONS IN THE VALUE OF THE EXPORTS OF INDIA	252
108. THE EXPORTS OF INDIA	254
109. THE EXPORTS OF THE PRINCIPAL PORTS OF INDIA	254
110. THE APPROXIMATE HINTERLANDS OF THE THREE LEADING PORTS OF INDIA	255

FIG.	PAGE
78. SECTION THROUGH THE FOOTHILLS OF THE HIMALAYAS IN THE PUNJAB	182
79. THE MINERAL PRODUCTION OF INDIA	183
80. JANUARY ISOTHERMS	189
81. ACTUAL TEMPERATURES IN JANUARY	189
82. THE CLIMATE OF INDIA—JULY ISOTHERMS	191
83. THE CLIMATE OF INDIA—ACTUAL TEMPERATURES IN JULY	191
84. DIAGRAM OF MONSOON CONDITIONS. (<i>From Kendrew, Climates of the Continents, by permission of the Clarendon Press, Oxford</i>)	193
85. MAP OF INDIA SHOWING DIRECTION AND STRENGTH OF MONSOON WINDS IN JULY	194
86. RAINFALL MAP OF INDIA FOR THE WHOLE YEAR	196
87. THE COLD WEATHER RAINFALL OF SOUTHERN INDIA	197
87A. THE VARIABILITY OF RAINFALL IN INDIA. (<i>From Geographical Review, Amer. Geog. Soc., New York</i>)	198
88. THE CLIMATIC REGIONS OF INDIA. (<i>From Kendrew, Climates of the Continents, by permission of the Clarendon Press, Oxford</i>)	199
89. RAINFALL GRAPHS FOR TOWNS CHARACTERISTIC OF THE CLIMATIC REGIONS OF INDIA	200
89A. TEMPERATURE GRAPHS FOR TOWNS CHARACTERISTIC OF THE CLIMATIC REGIONS OF INDIA	201
90. IRRIGATION MAP OF INDIA	204
91. THE PERCENTAGE OF THE SOWN AREA OF INDIA UNDER IRRIGATION	204
91A. TANK IRRIGATION IN INDIA	205
92. THE NATURAL VEGETATION OF INDIA	207
93. THE USES OF LAND IN BRITISH INDIA	211
94. MAP SHOWING THE DISTRIBUTION OF RICE IN INDIA	214
95. DISTRIBUTION OF WHEAT IN INDIA	216
96. THE DISTRIBUTION OF MILLET IN INDIA	217
97. THE DISTRIBUTION OF COTTON IN INDIA	221
98. THE DISTRIBUTION OF JUTE IN INDIA. (<i>Adapted from French and Stamp, North-East India, by permission of Longmans, Green & Co., Ltd.</i>)	223
99. THE DISTRIBUTION OF SHEEP IN INDIA	231
100. THE DISTRIBUTION OF CAMELS IN INDIA	232
101. THE DISTRIBUTION OF POPULATION	233
102. THE POPULATION OF INDIA—DENSITY IN 1921	234
102A. THE POPULATION OF INDIA—DENSITY IN 1931	235
102B. POPULATION CHANGES IN THE DECADE 1921–31	236
102C. INTER-PROVINCIAL MIGRATION IN INDIA	237
103. THE DISTRIBUTION OF LANGUAGES IN INDIA	239
104. THE DISTRIBUTION OF RELIGIONS IN INDIA.	242
105. THE OCCUPATIONS OF THE PEOPLE OF INDIA	245
105A. MAP SHOWING THE POSITION OF JAMSHEDPUR	247
106. THE PRINCIPAL RAILWAYS OF INDIA	250
107. GRAPH SHOWING THE FLUCTUATIONS IN THE VALUE OF THE EXPORTS OF INDIA	252
108. THE EXPORTS OF INDIA	254
109. THE EXPORTS OF THE PRINCIPAL PORTS OF INDIA	254
110. THE APPROXIMATE HINTERLANDS OF THE THREE LEADING PORTS OF INDIA	255

FIG.	PAGE
III. GRAPH SHOWING THE FLUCTUATIONS IN THE VALUE OF THE IMPORTS OF INDIA	256
II2. THE IMPORTS OF INDIA	256
II3. THE DIRECTION OF FOREIGN TRADE OF INDIA	257
II4. THE OVERLAND FOREIGN TRADE OF INDIA	258
II5. THE NATURAL REGIONS OF INDIA	259
II6. THE EASTERN HILLS REGION	264
II7. THE CLASSIFICATION OF LAND IN THE EASTERN HILLS REGION	265
II8. SECTION THROUGH THE EASTERN HIMALAYAS. (<i>From Stamp, Intermediate Commercial Geography, by permission of Longmans, Green & Co., Ltd.</i>)	267
II9. THE VEGETATION BELTS OF THE EASTERN HIMALAYAS. (<i>From Stamp, Intermediate Commercial Geography, by permission of Longmans, Green & Co., Ltd.</i>)	267
120. } SECTIONS THROUGH THE WESTERN HIMALAYAS	270
121. }	
122. THE WESTERN PART OF THE HIMALAYAN REGION AND KASHMIR	271
123. THE DRY HILLS REGION OF THE NORTH-WEST	274
124. THE CLASSIFICATION OF LAND IN THE NORTH-WEST DRY HILLS REGION	275
125. THE CROPS OF THE SETTLED PARTS OF THE NORTH-WEST DRY HILLS.	276
126. BALUCHISTAN	278
127. POLITICAL MAP OF NORTH-WESTERN INDIA	281
128. LOWER INDUS VALLEY	282
129. THE SUKKUR OR LLOYD IRRIGATION SCHEME	283
130. THE PROPORTION OF THE CULTIVATED LAND OF SIND WHICH IS IRRIGATED	284
131. THE CLASSIFICATION OF THE LAND IN SIND	284
132. THE CROPS OF SIND	284
133. POSITION OF KARACHI	285
134. THE PUNJAB PLAINS	286
135. THE THREEFOLD DIVISION OF THE PUNJAB PLAINS	287
136. DIAGRAMS SHOWING PROPORTION OF CROPPED LAND IRRIGATED IN THE PUNJAB PLAINS	288
137. THE PUNJAB CANALS	289
138. FRAGMENT OF CANAL MAP OF PART OF THE GANGES-JUMNA DOAB	291
139. THE CLASSIFICATION OF LAND IN THE PUNJAB PLAINS	292
140. THE CROPS OF THE PUNJAB PLAINS	292
141. THE POSITION OF DELHI	294
142. THE PROPORTION OF CROPPED LAND IRRIGATED IN THE UPPER GANGES VALLEY	295
143. THE IRRIGATION CANALS OF THE UPPER GANGES VALLEY	296
144. THE CLASSIFICATION OF LAND IN THE UPPER GANGES PLAIN	296
145. THE GANGES PLAIN	297
146. THE CLASSIFICATION OF LAND IN MIDDLE GANGES PLAIN	299
147. THE CROPS OF THE GANGES VALLEY	300
148. THE DELTA REGION	303
149. THE CLASSIFICATION OF LAND IN THE GANGES DELTA REGION	304
150. THE WATERWAYS OF THE DELTA	305
151. THE BRAHMAPUTRA VALLEY	307
152. THE CLASSIFICATION OF LAND IN THE BRAHMAPUTRA VALLEY	307
153. THE CROPS OF THE BRAHMAPUTRA VALLEY	308

FIG.	PAGE
154. CUTCH, KATHIAWAR AND GUJARAT	309
155. THE WEST COAST REGION (NORTH)	311
156. THE CLASSIFICATION OF LAND IN THE WEST COAST REGION	312
157. THE CROPS OF THE WEST COAST REGION	312
158. THE POSITION OF BOMBAY	313
159. POLITICAL MAP OF SOUTHERN INDIA	315
160. THE WEST COAST REGION (SOUTH)	316
161. SOUTHERN INDIA	318
162. THE CARNATIC OR TAMIL REGION	319
163. THE CLASSIFICATION OF THE LAND IN COASTAL PARTS OF THE CARNATIC REGION	322
164. THE CLASSIFICATION OF LAND IN WESTERN PARTS OF THE CARNATIC REGION	322
165. THE CROPS OF THE COASTAL PARTS OF THE CARNATIC REGION	322
166. THE CROPS OF THE WESTERN PARTS OF THE CARNATIC REGION	322
167. THE NORTHERN CIRCARS REGION	324
168. THE CROPS OF THE NORTHERN CIRCARS REGION	325
169. THE CLASSIFICATION OF LAND IN THE NORTHERN CIRCARS REGION	325
170. THE SOUTHERN DECCAN	327
171. SECTION ACROSS THE DECCAN PLATEAU. (<i>From Stamp, Inter- mediate Commercial Geography, by permission of Longmans, Green & Co., Ltd.</i>)	328
172. CLASSIFICATION OF LAND IN THE SOUTHERN DECCAN	328
173. THE CROPS OF THE DECCAN PLATEAU.	329
174. CLASSIFICATION OF LAND IN THE DECCAN LAVAS REGION	331
175. THE CROPS OF THE DECCAN LAVAS REGION	331
176. THE NORTH-EASTERN PART OF THE INDIAN PLATEAU	333
177. THE CLASSIFICATION OF LAND IN THE CHOTA NAGPUR PLATEAU	334
178. THE IRRIGATED AREA OF THE CHHATTISGARH PLAIN. (<i>From French and Stamp, Peninsular India, by permission of Longmans, Green & Co., Ltd.</i>)	335
179. THE CENTRAL INDIAN FORELAND	337
180. THE RAJPUT UPLANDS	338
181. THE CLASSIFICATION OF LAND IN THE RAJPUT UPLAND REGION	339
182. THE CROPS OF THE RAJPUT UPLANDS	339
183. GENERAL MAP OF BURMA	342
184. THE STRUCTURAL UNITS IN EASTERN INDIA AND BURMA. (<i>From Stamp, The Connexion between Major Structural Features and Commercial Oil Deposits, Jour. Inst. Petr. Tech., 1928</i>)	344
185. THE OILFIELDS OF BURMA. (<i>From the Geographical Review, Amer. Geog. Soc., New York</i>)	345
186. SECTION ACROSS BURMA	346
187. THE POSITION OF THE YENANGYAUNG OILFIELD OF BURMA. (<i>From Chhibber and Stamp, The Mineral Resources of Burma, Macmillan & Co., Ltd., 1935</i>)	347
188. THE CLIMATE OF BURMA	348
189. THE NATURAL VEGETATION OF BURMA. (<i>From Stamp, Geogra- phical Journal, 1924</i>)	350
190. THE RESERVED FORESTS OF BURMA. (<i>From Stamp, The Vegetation of Burma. Calcutta, 1925</i>)	351
191. THE USES OF THE LAND IN BURMA AND THE CHIEF CROPS	352
192. THE POPULATION OF BURMA	356

FIG.	PAGE
192A. THE DISTRIBUTION OF RICE IN BURMA. (<i>From the Geographical Review, Amer. Geog. Soc., New York</i>)	359
192B. THE FOUR CHIEF DRY ZONE CROPS OF BURMA. (<i>From the Geographical Review, Amer. Geog. Soc., New York</i>)	360
193. THE FOREIGN TRADE OF THE SEAPORTS OF BURMA	361
194. THE NATURAL REGIONS OF BURMA	364
195. PHYSICAL MAP OF CEYLON	370
196. THE AVERAGE ANNUAL RAINFALL OF CEYLON	373
197. THE POPULATION OF CEYLON	375
197A. THE NATURAL REGIONS OF CEYLON	378
198. THE CROPS OF CEYLON	379
198A. TANKS IN CEYLON	381
198B. MALARIAL DISTRICTS OF CEYLON	382
198C. THE RICE LANDS OF CEYLON	383
199. THE RAILWAYS OF CEYLON	384
200-3. THE DISTRIBUTION OF FOUR LEADING CASH CROPS OF CEYLON	387
204. THE FOREIGN TRADE OF CEYLON	389
205. THE DIRECTION OF THE FOREIGN TRADE OF CEYLON	389
206. THE ARTIFICIAL HARBOUR OF COLOMBO	390
207. THE MAJOR TECTONIC FEATURES OF THE EAST INDIES	392
208. THE PREVAILING WINDS OF THE EAST INDIES. (<i>From Kendrew, Climates of the Continents, by permission of the Clarendon Press, Oxford</i>)	393
209. A PHYSICAL MAP OF MALAYA	396
210. CULTIVATED LAND IN MALAYA	399
211. THE SHARES OF BRITISH AND DUTCH ASIA IN THE RUBBER PRODUCTION OF THE WORLD	402
212. POLITICAL MAP OF MALAYA	406
213. THE POSITION OF SINGAPORE	408
214. THE COMMUNICATIONS OF MALAYA	412
215. THE FOREIGN TRADE OF THE STRAITS SETTLEMENTS	413
216. THE FOREIGN TRADE OF BRITISH MALAYA	413
217. THE DIRECTION OF FOREIGN TRADE OF BRITISH MALAYA	413
218. POLITICAL MAP OF THE EAST INDIES	414
219. CHANGES IN THE DENSITY OF POPULATION IN JAVA	416
220. THE POPULATION OF JAVA: DENSITY IN 1920	416
221. PHYSICAL MAP OF JAVA AND MADURA	417
222. SKETCH-MAP SHOWING THE LARGE AREA OF VOLCANIC ROCKS IN JAVA	419
223. THE RAINFALL OF JAVA	420
224-227. THE CHIEF PLANTATION CROPS OF JAVA	423
228. THE RAILWAYS OF JAVA	425
229. SUMATRA	426
230. THE FOREIGN TRADE OF JAVA AND MADURA	427
231. BORNEO AND CELEBES	428
232. THE TRADE OF THE DUTCH EAST INDIES	433
233. THE DIRECTION OF THE TRADE OF THE DUTCH EAST INDIES	433
234. THE PHILIPPINE ISLANDS—PHYSICAL MAP	438
235. THE CLIMATE OF THE PHILIPPINE ISLANDS	439
236. THE PRODUCTION OF COPRA IN THE PHILIPPINE ISLANDS	443
237. THE POSITION OF THE PHILIPPINE ISLANDS IN WORLD PRODUCTION OF COPRA AND COCONUT OIL	444
238. GRAPHS SHOWING FLUCTUATIONS IN VALUE OF TRADE OF THE PHILIPPINE ISLANDS	445

FIG.	PAGE
239. THE FOREIGN TRADE OF THE PHILIPPINE ISLANDS	445
240. THE DIRECTION OF THE FOREIGN TRADE OF THE PHILIPPINE ISLANDS	445
241. GENERAL MAP OF SIAM	447
242. THE NATURAL REGIONS OF SIAM	448
243. THE FOREIGN TRADE OF SIAM	453
244. THE DIRECTION OF THE FOREIGN TRADE OF SIAM	453
245. PHYSICAL MAP OF FRENCH INDO-CHINA	455
246. COCHIN-CHINA	457
247. THE RAILWAYS OF FRENCH INDO-CHINA	460
248. THE FOREIGN TRADE OF FRENCH INDO-CHINA	461
249. THE DIRECTION OF THE FOREIGN TRADE OF FRENCH INDO-CHINA	461
250. THE PROVINCES OF CHINA	464
251. THE PARTITION OF CHINA BETWEEN THE PRINCIPAL RIVER BASINS	465
252. THE NATURAL REGIONS OF CHINA	467
252A. THE NATURAL REGIONS OF CHINA ACCORDING TO CRESSEY	468
253. PHYSICAL MAP OF CHINA	469
254. THE STRUCTURE OF CHINA	472
255. LOESS OF NORTH-WEST CHINA	473
255A. THE COALFIELDS OF CHINA	476
255B. SIMPLIFIED SOIL MAP OF CHINA	479
256. THE CLIMATE OF CHINA—JANUARY AND JULY ISOTHERMS	480
257. THE CLIMATE OF CHINA—ANNUAL RAINFALL	481
257A. CYCLONIC STORMS, 1893-1924	482
257B. TYPHOONS, 1893-1924	483
258. THE CLIMATIC REGIONS OF CHINA	484
259. TEMPERATURE GRAPHS OF TYPICAL CHINESE TOWNS	485
259A. RAINFALL GRAPHS OF TYPICAL CHINESE TOWNS	486
259B. CLIMATIC REGIONS	487
260. AREAS OCCUPIED BY PRINCIPAL CROPS OF CHINA	489
261. THE DISTRIBUTION OF RICE IN CHINA	490
262. THE DISTRIBUTION OF WHEAT IN CHINA	491
263. THE DISTRIBUTION OF MILLET IN CHINA	492
264. THE POPULATION OF CHINA	498
265. THE FAMINE REGION OF CHINA. (<i>After Mallory, Famine in China</i>)	500
266. THE COMMUNICATIONS OF CHINA.	507
267. GRAPHS SHOWING FLUCTUATIONS OF THE TRADE OF CHINA	508
267A. ANCIENT HIGHWAYS	510
268. THE FOREIGN TRADE OF CHINA	511
269. THE LOESS PLATEAU OF NORTH-WEST CHINA	513
270. THE GREAT PLAIN OF NORTH CHINA AND THE SHANTUNG PENINSULA	517
271. THE RED BASIN	522
272. PHYSICAL MAP OF THE CENTRAL BASINS OF THE YANGTZE	526
273. THE REGION OF THE YANGTZE DELTA	528
274. MAP OF A SMALL PORTION OF THE YANGTZE DELTA REGION	529
275. THE PLATEAU OF YUNNAN.	532
276. THE BASIN OF THE SI KIANG AND SOUTH CHINA	534
277. HONG KONG	538
278. THE FOREIGN TRADE OF HONG KONG	538
279. THE RELIEF OF MANCHURIA	544
280. THE GEOGRAPHICAL REGIONS OF MANCHURIA. (<i>From Pioneer Settlement, Amer. Geog. Soc., New York</i>)	545

FIG.	PAGE
281-2. CLIMATIC CONDITIONS IN MANCHURIA. (<i>From the Geographical Review, Amer. Geog. Soc., New York</i>)	547
283. CULTIVATED LAND IN MANCHURIA. (<i>From the Geographical Review, Amer. Geog. Soc., New York</i>)	549
284. BEANS IN MANCHURIA. (<i>From the Geographical Review, Amer. Geog. Soc., New York</i>)	551
285. WHEAT IN MANCHURIA. (<i>From the Geographical Review, Amer. Geog. Soc., New York</i>)	551
286. KAOLIANG IN MANCHURIA. (<i>From the Geographical Review, Amer. Geog. Soc., New York</i>)	552
287. THE COMMUNICATIONS OF MANCHURIA	556
288. THE FOREIGN TRADE OF MANCHURIA	557
289. TIBET	561
290. THE TARIM BASIN	565
291. THE SULO HO AND ETSIN GOL BASINS	569
292. THE BASINS OF MONGOLIA	573
293. CROSS-SECTION OF A TYPICAL MONGOLIAN BASIN. (<i>From C. P. Berkey and F. K. Morris, Basin Structures in Mongolia, Publ. Asiatic Exped. Amer. Mus. Nat. Hist., No. 29</i>)	574
294. THE PRINCIPAL ROUTES OF MONGOLIA AND CHINESE TURKISTAN	577
295. THE JAPANESE EMPIRE. POLITICAL	580
296. A PHYSICAL MAP OF JAPAN	581
297. THE GEOMORPHOLOGICAL ZONES OF JAPAN	583
298. THE ACTIVE VOLCANOES OF JAPAN	585
299. THE CHIEF METALLIFEROUS DEPOSITS OF JAPAN	587
300. THE CLIMATE OF JAPAN—JANUARY AND JULY ISOTHERMS	590
301. THE WINTER RAINFALL OF JAPAN. (<i>Based on E. M. Sanders, The Climate of Japan and Formosa, Journal of Geography, September, 1921</i>)	591
302. THE ANNUAL RAINFALL OF JAPAN. (<i>From Bartholomew's Meteorological Atlas</i>)	592
303. THE MAIN CLIMATIC REGIONS OF JAPAN	594
304. THE CLIMATIC REGIONS OF JAPAN ACCORDING TO THORNTHWAIT. (<i>From Geographical Review, Vol. XXIV, 1934, Amer. Geog. Soc., New York</i>)	595
305. FOREST AND SOIL BELTS OF JAPAN	596
306. PRINCIPAL HYDRO-ELECTRIC SCHEMES IN MIDDLE JAPAN. (<i>From the Japan Year Book, 1926</i>)	605
307. THE MANUFACTURING BELT OF JAPAN	606
308. THE TOWNS AND CITIES OF JAPAN	610
309. THE POPULATION OF JAPAN	611
310. THE RAILWAYS OF JAPAN. (<i>Based on a map in the Japan Year Book, 1926</i>)	615
311. THE RISE IN THE EXPORTS OF JAPAN	616
312. THE RISE IN THE IMPORTS OF JAPAN	616
313. THE EXPORTS OF JAPAN	618
314. THE IMPORTS OF JAPAN	618
315. THE DIRECTION OF THE FOREIGN TRADE OF JAPAN	618
316. NATURAL REGIONS OF NORTHERN HONSHU	621
317. NATURAL REGIONS OF CENTRAL HONSHU	624
318. NATURAL REGIONS OF SOUTH-WEST JAPAN	630
319. FORMOSA	632
320. THE TRADE OF FORMOSA	633
321. SETTLEMENT IN HOKKAIDO, 1910	636

FIG.	PAGE
322. SETTLEMENT IN HOKKAIDO, 1930	637
323. PHYSICAL MAP OF KOREA	640
324. THE POPULATION OF KOREA. (<i>From Geographical Review, Amer. Geog. Soc., New York</i>)	643
325. THE CHIEF CROPS OF KOREA. (<i>From Geographical Review, Amer. Geog. Soc., New York</i>)	645
326. THE NATURAL REGIONS OF KOREA	647
327. THE TRADE OF KOREA	648
328. A PHYSICAL MAP OF RUSSIA IN ASIA	651
329. THE PHYSICAL DIVISIONS OF SIBERIA	652
330. THE STRUCTURE OF SIBERIA	655
331. LINES SHOWING THE NUMBER OF DAYS THE RIVERS ARE ICE-BOUND EACH YEAR IN ASIATIC RUSSIA. (<i>From Kendrew, Climates of the Continents, by permission of the Clarendon Press, Oxford</i>)	656
332. THE CLIMATIC DIVISIONS OF SIBERIA	657
333. THE MAJOR CLIMATIC REGIONS OF ASIATIC RUSSIA. (<i>From Kendrew, Climates of the Continents, by permission of the Clarendon Press, Oxford</i>)	658
334. THE SOILS OF SIBERIA	660
335. THE NATURAL VEGETATION OF SIBERIA	662
336. SIBERIA—DENSITY OF POPULATION AND CHIEF TOWNS.	666
337. THE DISTRIBUTION OF AGRICULTURAL LAND IN SIBERIA. (<i>From Economic Geography, Vol. III, 1927</i>)	667
338. CROP LAND IN SIBERIA. (<i>From The Pioneer Fringe, Amer. Geog. Soc., New York</i>)	668
339. THE COAL RESOURCES OF SIBERIA. (<i>After P. P. Goudkoff, Geographical Review, Vol. XIII, 1923</i>)	672
340. THE MINERAL DEPOSITS OF SIBERIA (EXCLUDING COAL)	673
341. THE COALFIELDS AND NEW INDUSTRIAL REGIONS OF WESTERN SIBERIA	675
342. SIBERIA—METHODS OF TRANSPORT	677
343. AIR ROUTES OF SIBERIA	678
344. PHYSICAL MAP OF RUSSIAN TURKISTAN	679
345. THE OLD POLITICAL DIVISIONS OF RUSSIAN CENTRAL ASIA	680
346. THE PRESENT POLITICAL DIVISIONS OF RUSSIAN CENTRAL ASIA	681
347. RUSSIAN TURKISTAN, SHOWING DESERT AREAS, ETC.	683
348. THE MOUNTAIN BORDER OF RUSSIAN TURKISTAN.	684
349. IRRIGATION CANALS OF THE KHOQAND OASIS	687
350. THE ADMINISTRATIVE DIVISIONS OF ASIATIC RUSSIA, 1933. (<i>After B. Semenov-Tian-Shansky, Russia, Territory and Population, Geographical Review, October, 1928</i>)	688

Figs. 81, 83, 86, 95, 96, 99, 100, 103, 106, 116, 121 (adapted), 124 (adapted), 128 (adapted), 129, 147, 148, 149, 150, 154, 155, 158, 160, 162, 170 and 193 are reproduced from Stamp, *The Indian Empire*, by permission of Longmans, Green & Co., Ltd.

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