

PROCEEDINGS
OF THE
ROYAL GEOGRAPHICAL SOCIETY
OF LONDON.



VOL. VI.

SESSION 1861-62.

Nos. I. to V.

EDITED BY F. GALTON AND W. SPOTTISWOODE,
HONORARY SECRETARIES.

Authors are alone responsible for the contents of their respective statements.

LONDON:
15, WHITEHALL PLACE.
1862:

many anecdotes illustrative of African character. As to the Gambia, which was a noble river, navigable to vessels of 300 tons for a distance of 300 miles from its mouth, little more was known of it beyond the falls of Baraconda than what travellers had told us two and-a-half centuries ago. Neither did the author consider this to be wondered at, for the nature of the country, its climate, and especially the jealousy and suspicion of the natives, presented almost insuperable barriers to the advance of the white man. "Aye, aye, Sir," said an old chief, "thankee, thankee; your words are sweet and your presents good, but, God be praised, we do not want to learn the white man's knowledge. The cities, the people, the fields, flocks, herds, rivers, forests, are now all ours, but once let you get your hand into our nation and you will take the dust from under our feet."

Speaking of the unscrupulous desire to make money, so common to Africans, he said, a negro trader asked his master why he left his own good land and risked his life in Africa? The white man replied, "To make money." "Good," said the black trader; "you are a wise man; but suppose you die, then whom do you make money for?" "For my child," answered the white man. "Ah!" exclaimed the African, "why not sell your child and make money of him?"

The President said he had listened to the paper with great interest, but at the same time with much pain; for, while they all knew how large a part of the anarchy and misery just alluded to was caused by the misdeeds of our ancestors, it was not so obvious from Col. O'Connor's paper that our settlements on the W. African coast had much tended to mitigate the wrongs we had inflicted. These settlements had been in our power for many years; we had lost able men, good servants of the public, in maintaining them; we now wanted to learn what good had arisen from them. It was a question on which he sought information from travellers then in the room. He, the President, had served on a Committee of the House of Lords some years since, when the then Governor of Sierra Leone was under examination. He had asked him, "What is the condition of the Africans that are taken and set free in your colony?" and was answered, "They are orderly, well conducted people; they do all the work of the colony: we could not get on without them." Again, he (the President) asked, "You have schools, and very good schools: what is the state of the children turned out of those schools?" The Governor replied, "Those children do not work; they are vagabonds, and without the immigration of the liberated Africans we could not get on at all." He, the President, did not take upon himself to say this was a just statement of the case; he hoped it was not, and therefore sought testimony to the contrary.

Referring to Dr. Livingstone's endeavour to civilise Africans by first obtaining an influence over them before beginning to preach the truths of religion, the President quoted the advice given by Loyola's successor on the course to be pursued in converting back to Catholicism the then Protestant city of Bologna. He said, "We will send missionaries to Bologna, but they shall not say one word about religion. They shall begin first by attending the hospitals, by attending the sick, by attaining influence over them, and establishing their repute as good men. Then let them begin to preach their religion, and they will be listened to."

Finally, the President called upon Mr. Freeman, the lately appointed Governor of the new British settlement of Lagos, to address the meeting.

MR. FREEMAN said that hitherto he had never visited Western Africa, but that he had resided for some years in Northern Africa, and there in Tunis and Tripoli, and especially in Ghadames, had seen a great deal of the commerce of Central Africa. He could not but be aware of the great importance of Lagos, in offering a new opening to that commerce. Until lately by far the greater part of it had been carried across the Sahara, a distance of five or six months' journey; too long to be remunerative, unless combined with a trade in slaves. But the slave-trade being now abolished in Northern Africa, the traffic across the Sahara was rapidly diminishing, and the commerce of the Soudan was consequently seeking a new outlet in some part of the western coast. Lagos was eminently suited to be that outlet, owing to its neighbourhood to the mouths of the Niger, and means of overland access to the confluence of the Benué and Chadda. Thence Kano, the chief emporium of Central Africa, might be reached in a fortnight, and both Sokoto and Timbuctu were accessible. He thoroughly agreed with the President on the importance of gaining an influence over the Africans before attempting to convert them, and he believed that by opening a trade from Lagos we should obtain that influence.

2. *Recent African Explorations*;—*Proceedings of (a) SPEKE, (b) PETHERICK, (c) LEJEAN, (d) PENNY, and (e) LIVINGSTONE.*

(a) *Extracts from a Letter by Captain SPEKE to Lieut.-Col. RIGBY, H.B.M.'s Consul at Zanzibar, dated Khoko in Western Ugogo, 12th December, 1860.*

"WE are now scarcely knowing what to do. Before us is the desert of M'Gunda M'Kali, and beyond that again the country of Tura—all famished, and without a grain of food to sell us; yet these are not a quarter of the difficulties we have to contend against. Our Kirangozi and nearly all the porters have run away, and our Mozigos are lying on the ground. The rains too are very severe, worse even than an Indian monsoon. Our losses in the rough amount to nine mules, twenty-five slaves of the Sultan, and eighty Wanyamwesis, so you may imagine our dilemma. But we are not out of spirits. Grant is a very dear friend, and being a good sportsman we get through our days wonderfully. At this place alone I have killed two rhinoceroses and three buffaloes, and Grant, a little further back, killed a giraffe. In addition to these, we have killed numbers and many varieties of antelopes, zebras, pigs, and hyenas.

"We often think of you and the great service you have rendered to the expedition by giving us Baraka and the others of your crew; they are the life of the camp. As to Baraka, he is the 'father' of his race, and a general of great distinction among the serviles. I do not know what we should have done without him. Bombay, with all his honesty and kind fellow-feeling, has not half

the power of command that Baraka has. Would that I had listened to Bombay when at Zanzibar, and had engaged double the number of his 'free men,' for they do all the work, and do it as an enlightened and disciplined people—so very different from the Sultan's slaves, in whom there is no trust whatever. Many of the Sultan's men I liberated from slavery, and gave them muskets as an earnest of good faith, at the same time telling them they should eventually receive the same amount of wages as all the other 'free men;' but they have deserted me, carrying off their weapons, and so reducing my number of guns.

"Travelling here is much like marching up the grand trunk road in Bengal; the only things we want are a few laws to prevent desertion, and all would be easy. We are moving to-day with ten days' rations, but only in half-marches, sending the men back from each camp, to bring up the remainder of the loads. It is a tiresome business. At Tura I shall leave many things behind, and push on to Kazeh, to hire more men to fetch them up."

(b) PETHERICK.

Mr. Petherick's last communication is dated Korosko, August 9th, 1861. He was then engaged in sending his effects across the Nubian desert, by the overland route to Khartum, and was in daily expectation of the arrival of his new boat from Cairo, together with two members of his party who had not yet joined him.

(c) LEJEAN.

One if not both of the expeditions that had preceded Mr. Petherick to explore the White Nile, have come to a premature termination. M. Lejean penetrated no further than the Barri country, whence he returned, wearied with the people and suffering from ill-health; and Dr. Peney, after adding materially to our knowledge of the neighbourhood of Gondakoro, has unhappily died.

(d) PENEY.

The last two letters that were written by Dr. Peney are now just published in the 'Nouvelles Annales des Voyages.' They were addressed to M. Jomard. The first of them is dated Gondakoro, February 20th, 1861. It states that he had returned from a journey due West to the district of Mourou, in the province of Niam-barra. He was eight days in reaching it, but only thirty-one hours of actual travel. He therefore places Mourou on the same parallel of latitude as Gondakoro, and one degree of longitude more to the westward.

There he arrived at the river Itiéy, running to the N.W. It was

described to him as continuing the same course through the province of Niam-barra, then through the tribe of the Allah, next bounding the Niam-Niam-Maharaka, then penetrating the Djour country, and finally reaching the Bahr el Ghazal, of which it was one of the principal affluents.

Upwards from Mourou, at a distance of 20 leagues s.e., the river passed through Monda; but of the country above Monda no satisfactory information could be obtained.

Dr. Peney's last letter is dated May 20th, 1861, and is written after his return from a preparatory journey, partly in boats and partly on foot, up and beyond the cataracts of Makedo. His boats had received damage at the commencement of his voyage, and he lost so many ropes and spars as to render them useless for the moment; but he found small lateral arms of the main river, up which he felt assured he could navigate them on a future journey. The natives reported that beyond the limit of his journey, the river spread out into a broad sheet of water, of great depth, but sluggish current. Animated by this account, he was preparing for a second boat expedition southwards in the month of July, as soon as the rising Nile should have made the navigation more practicable, when his plans were cut short by death. His furthest limit was close upon that of Galuffi, and he places it on the same meridian as Gondakoro, and one degree to the south of it. M. Debono was associated with him at the time of his death, but we have no knowledge at present of Debono's movements.

MR. GALTON said that Dr. Peney, in his first journey, seemed to have fallen upon the southernmost portion of Mr. Petherick's route, at a distance of only 60 miles from Gondakoro. Although Mr. Petherick's name does not appear in Dr. Peney's account, which might have been written in entire ignorance of what Mr. Petherick had published, there could be little doubt that the district explored by the two travellers was the same, the tribes' names Mourou and Monda, Niam Niam, and Djour, in addition to the account of the river, being common to both narratives. If this were the case it would involve an enormous amount of rectification of Mr. Petherick's positions, both in actual distance travelled and in the direction of his course from the Bahr el Ghazal. Neither of these corrections surpass the bounds of possibility: for Mr. Petherick's reckoning of 19 miles' journey per diem, in a straight line, is double what other travellers under similar circumstances are found to accomplish; and as to the direction of his route, not only do the rough compass-bearings, on which alone he depended, admit of that large error, but there is the following additional reason to believe in its existence; namely, that the rough map by the brothers Poncet, compiled from various cross routes of traders, places the Djour and Niam Niam countries closely in the position assigned to them by Dr. Peney, and far more eastwards than in the map of Mr. Petherick. Now that the latter traveller has returned to the Soudan, well provided with astronomical instruments and instructed in their use, we may hope for a corresponding degree of accuracy in the geographical data that his future explorations may afford to us.