

Miscellaneous.

THE SOURCE OF THE NILE.

The *London Review* says of the recently published history of explorations in search of the source of the Nile, by Samuel White Baker—

Mr. Baker's work is full of interest—in parts, profoundly exciting; the pictures suggested, rather than described, are often wild in the extreme, while the narrative of personal suffering has been very seldom paralleled in the annals of travel. It must be observed, moreover, that Mr. Baker has not labored and endured in vain, since he has discovered one of the most extraordinary lakes hitherto known to exist in Africa. Having stated thus much, which we do with the greatest pleasure, we feel bound to add that, in imagining, he has solved the problem of the Nile—that is, found the spot at which its mysterious head emerges from the earth—he is cherishing a mere delusion. The source of the Nile is at this moment as little known as it was in the time of Julius Cæsar, and it almost surpasses our comprehension how a traveler so intelligent and so well-informed as Mr. Baker should fall to be unconscious of this. To make use of a common expression, Mr. Baker and all other travelers in Central Africa have been simply beating about the wrong bush, while the bird they are in search of lies hidden far off in another. Yet Mr. Baker, Captain Speke, and Captain Burton, may be almost said to have touched the great river with their finger, and to have looked wistfully in the direction from which, through utterly unknown lands, it comes rolling toward the Victoria Nyanza, into which it flows in a deep flood two hundred and forty feet in breadth, and with a current of four miles an hour. This is the Nile whose source it is necessary to discover—a thing which no one has yet done or even attempted; but, until this shall be done, it will be wrong to take credit among civilized nations for having thrown light upon a subject which philosophers and conquerors have desired to illuminate in vain. Bruce, Burton, Speke, Grant, Baker, have deserved well of the public for exploring new regions, and adding largely to our geographical knowledge; but, in spite of their efforts, old Nile keeps his secret still, his source being a virgin spring, of whose waters no civilized man has yet tasted. The Kitangule rises far away toward the southwest, and its course is known to the natives for eighteen days' journey before it reaches the lake. How much farther its stream must be followed ere the lake or tarn is reached in the Blue Mountains, whose lofty summits, from the shores of the Nyanza, may be dimly discerned by the telescope in the southwest, no one can decide, but wherever this tarn may be, that is the source of the Nile. We say this under the impression that the accounts which former travelers have given are correct. There may, however, be other rivers, still larger than the Kitangule, falling into the Victoria Nyanza, both from the east and west, and it will be necessary to trace every one of these to its well-spring before we can be said to have cleared up the mystery which for three thousand years has defied the learning, the enterprise, and the energy of man. To return, however, to the Kitangule; after pursuing a northeasterly course for thirty-five or forty days, it falls into the Victoria Nyanza, which it traverses in part, as the Rhone does the Lake of Geneva; it then, through a gap in the rocks, breaks forth from the lake, and pushes its way through a channel honestly marked in parts with dots in the maps, to intimate that no one has followed its current the whole way. It may be assumed to be the same river which is again fallen in with farther on, and which flows into the Albert Nyanza; but beyond this the uncertainty increases. No doubt Mr. Baker was told of a stream which issued from the lake, and this stream he fairly enough infers to be the White Nile; but before anything is positively stated about that river, much research and investigation will be needed. If Great Britain should think it worth while, the only plan for ensuring success would be to appoint a commission of travelers—ethnologists, geographers, geologists, botanists, photographers—who should survey the whole lake-region of Central Africa, and be accompanied by a military escort sufficiently strong to remove from the explorers all idea of danger. A small screw steamer should be taken, and put together on the lakes one after another, so that the whole of their shores might be examined and described. On the return of these commissions, after completing their labors, we might truly be said to have discovered the sources of the Nile—but not till then.

One practice of our travelers we cannot sufficiently condemn—we mean that of imposing English names on African rivers, lakes, mountains and falls. Why should the White Nile forfeit its ancient appellation, and be lost to geography by being transformed into the Somerset? What had Lord Ripon or Sir Roderick Murchison to do with the Nilotic cataraacts, that we should find their names associated with that of Mumbo Jumbo in the Mountains of the Moon? What has the Queen of these realms to do with one of the great lakes, or her lamented consort with the other? Our courier travelers forget themselves when they revolutionize geography after this fashion. If we had conquered the country and converted it into a colony, such a practice might be tolerable; but, as the case now stands, it is altogether absurd, and we trust that, through reverence for science, geographers will firmly set their faces against so incongruous a mixture of names. Should foreign travelers follow the example set them by our countrymen, what a strange aspect would the surface of Africa soon present, studded with Danish, Swedish, French, German, Italian, Spanish, Portuguese, and Greek names, jumbled up with negro appellations, unpronounceable by the European tongue, and with the grand nomenclature of the Koran! Having made

these remarks—which apply to the proceedings of nearly all recent travelers, who, considering their strong propensity to transform everything, may deserve our gratitude for not obliterating Cairo and Damascus from the map of the world, and calling one Hutchison and the other Murchison towns—we go on to observe that, viewed merely as a book of travels, Mr. Baker's work is entitled to high praise. It would be difficult to exaggerate the intrepidity displayed both by him and his wife, who may truly be regarded as one of the most unflinching and devoted of her sex. It is impossible to contemplate without strong sympathy, not the perils she encountered, which we estimate as nothing, but the miseries from fever, from ague, from hunger, from thirst—above all, from the effects of sun-stroke, which nearly put a period to her existence in the most odious solitudes on the surface of this globe. The portions of Mr. Baker's book in which these trials are described may be regarded as among the most touching passages of a traveler's autobiography to be found in any language. He enters into the details like a man, and, though everything is drawn with a delicate and refined hand, he places himself before you, sitting by his wife's bedside, with the frankness of a private revelation. Under a tree, or in some wretched hut in a wild African forest, enveloped in thick darkness, with the howl of the jackal breaking now and then upon the ear, the husband and wife, fever-stricken, half-famished, and surrounded by the most groveling and bestial of savages, pass the livelong night, one in deep agony; the other in utter unconsciousness. No one who has any feelings to be moved can read Mr. Baker's narrative without extending to him and his noble wife the warmest sympathy. Sometimes as we read, we regret that a delicate woman should have been exposed, though by her own choice, to so rude a trial of love; but, throughout life, the remembrance of those hours must be her reward, and her husband's too. The fame arising from scientific discoveries, from passing over untrodden ground, from pursuing, through unknown regions, the course of a mighty river, is doubtless sweet; but the satisfaction of sharing and reaping that fame with a true and heroic wife, must be a thousand times sweeter.

It would be absurd to reproach Mr. Baker for not performing impossibilities: we repeat that he has accomplished more than it falls to the lot of a traveler to accomplish once in a thousand years; but he should be careful that he does not claim too much. The discovery of the source, or sources, of the Nile remains to be achieved by some future explorer, more fortunate, though not more bold or persevering, and we may add, cherishing juster notions of what the source of a river is. It may be all very well to soothe the pangs of disappointment by calling such a river as the Kitangule an affluent of the Victoria Nyanza; it is such an affluent as the Rhone is to the Lake of Geneva, and as other rivers may be to the Albert Nyanza, of which Mr. Baker has only obtained a glimpse. That lake, for aught that is hitherto known, may rival in dimensions the Caspian Sea, and be fed by one river, among many others, thrice as large as the Kitangule, which may be pronounced, as soon as seen, to be the real Nile. This, we say, may or may not prove to be the case. If it be, then the Kitangule loses its claim to be any other than an affluent of the Nile. If it be not, to the Kitangule itself belongs the name of Nile, and the discoverer of its source will be the solver of the great geographical problem of Africa.

It is not possible to do justice to the new work in many respects inferior to the old, less dignified in style, less elevated in tone, in form less scholarly, in spirit less manly. Almost all that is good in the new is derived from the old; but there is much that is good, or at least respectable and presentable, in the old which we miss in the new. The truths, though Dr. Strauss is profoundly unconscious of the fact, he has been somewhat soured by the success of Renan, and the noise made about a book which he saw to be, in comparison with his own, a clumsy performance. He formally extends the hand of fellowship to the Frank, but he whiffs aside his theory of the raising of Lazarus with the air of a gruff schoolmaster putting away the slovenly thesis of a schoolboy; and he hardly disguises his contempt for the French sentimentality to which he traces that acceptance of the Gospel of John as historical, which he pronounces the organic fault of Renan's book. One cannot help thinking of the relation between Strauss and Renan as somewhat similar to that described by Carlyle as subsisting between Frederick William of Prussia and George II. of England: the former a man of parts, but uncouth and heavy-footed; the other a pretty gentleman, of high, airy ways, and with much lace and bedizement upon him, but at bottom a far lighter article. I hope it is not disrespectful to the Herr Professor, but my imagination insists obstinately on representing him under the similitude of a wild boar of the German woods, strong tusked, indomitable, grubbing at the roots of the forest oaks, looking up, now and then, with a jerky grunt of much contempt, at high-flying rationalists like Ewald ("eagle of Göttingen," grunts Strauss), or sentimental poets like Renan, and then sinking his head in the ground again, and going at it with invincible snout and tusks of great ferocity.

But besides the half-suppressed yet painful consciousness that Renan has had the chaplet which should have graced his own brows, Strauss suffers from the general conviction that he has been a hard-used man. The clergy have been against him; theologians have disputed his right to be called a theological teacher; and the laity have not been on his side. The generous candor with which Neander recognized his openness and love of truth—a fact of which Dr. Strauss might have made mention, but does not—appears to have had few imita-

tors. His experience, on the whole, has been that of a theological Ishmael. It is impossible not to perceive that he writes as an injured man; and an injured man, besides being naturally disagreeable, labors under well-known disadvantages both in the apprehension and communication of truth. Hence, there is not in these volumes that comparatively enjoyable sense of sky and air, that glow of sunny warmth, of which you are conscious in the earlier book; and the author falls into certain errors and contradictions which he avoided on the former occasion.

In his new book, Dr. Strauss shows himself exceedingly incensed against the clergy. It is hardly too much to say that he tries to excite the commonalty against them. To get rid of the clergy is a reward held out by him to incite us to get rid of miracles. Clerical opinion in theological matters is represented as utterly worthless, on the ground that the interest of the priesthood is too directly involved to admit of their judging fairly. This is not worthy of Dr. Strauss. He has got hold of a poor half-truth, and he parades it as if it were a whole truth. Every guild or profession is biased in favor of abuses from which it derives influence, honor, or bread. You do not expect lawyers to aid in the cheapening of legal proceedings; retrenchment in the military expenditure is not looked for from the colonels in the House of Commons; and neither the lawyer nor the soldier has more jealously guarded the privileges of his order than the priest. It is, nevertheless, indisputable that every profession is the highest authority on its own affairs. You consult the works of great lawyers if you wish to master the principles of law; you turn to famous captains if you mean to study the art of war. Why so? Because though greed is a characteristic of humanity, professional and unprofessional, there is a heat and force of coolness in all but the basest souls to raise the intellect, when engaged in the contemplation of important subjects, to an elevation, from which the flesh-pots of interest, lost in the expanse of landscape, become no longer visible; while the mountain-ranges of principle, seen in their mass and grandeur, fill the prospect. Man is bad enough, but not so bad that one in a thousand of those theologians who have devoted their lives to contemplation of the great themes, God, freedom, immortality, has been a mere special pleader for his order. The idea that Christian theologians, Origen, Augustine, Anselm, Aquinas, Luther, Calvin, incapacitated by professional bias to give an opinion, must stand aside while a few modern philosophers condescend to explain Christianity, is too paradoxical to command the assent of sober minds. Dr. Strauss would never have taken up with such a tap room argument, if the intellectual placidity which reigned in his first work had not been disturbed. He has some apology in the fact that the Ultramontane priesthood in Roman Catholic countries, leaving war to the knife against culture, and a large proportion of the Protestant clergy in Germany, State-fed and slavishly subservient to the power that feeds them, present unfavorable specimens of their class; but in both the Roman Catholic and Protestant churches of the Continent there are large-minded and open-minded clergymen to be found; and in this country, as every reader is aware, the clergy have not only their honored representatives in every branch of secular knowledge, but number in their ranks our ablest, boldest, most earnest, and most honest inquirers in theological science.—*Peter Bayne, in Fortnightly Review.*

CONVERSATIONAL TONES.

A correct adaptation of the voice to distances is what we need, to prove musical and agreeable talkers. The pitch of the voice and the volume of tone should be such as to render the person speaking easily audible without any undue straining of the listener's attention; and nothing more than this. An excess of conversational tone and a voice too high-pitched are excessively disagreeable, especially in society. It draws embarrassingly the attention of surrounding persons; the agreeable privacy of conversation ceases, and you become the declaimer to a small audience. The effect of this is almost inevitable to silence your companion, particularly if that companion be a lady, and of ordinary lady-like sensibility. There is an extreme of all this, however, which is equally to be deprecated. It is pitching the voice so low, and using so little tone, that remarks have to be repeated; more-over, imparting to the conversation a morose character, by which, when combined with a certain bending, or leaning toward the person with whom you are conversing, we have seen ladies excessively and justly annoyed.

It should be remembered that a clear articulation will always take the place of great volume of tone. Better, far better, a low tone with a clear articulation, than a boisterous tone with a thick and blurred articulation. The predominating tone of speech, then, should be calm, quiet, low. The low tones of most voices are the richest. We have heard women occasionally converse in deep, mellow, contralto tones, the effect of which was exceedingly rich and musical. The voices of our American women are apt to be far too high-pitched and screamsy. As the voice always has a tendency to rise in conversation, we should at least begin low. It is, moreover, a grateful relief to the ear, and a pleasant shade to the light of the conversation, to drop the voice occasionally from a high and animated pitch, and regain the cool, quiet key-note originally struck. * * * In point of sentiment the clear tone expresses gayety and light-heartedness. We hear it in merry children at play. In its excesses this tone becomes disagreeable, acrid and pointed. The voices of termagants and scolds illustrate this. On the other hand, the shaded and sombre tone expresses quiet, repose, calm. In its deeper shades, sadness and melancholy. In its extremes, horror and despair. It is the indispensable tone in high tragedy. Now the conversational tone is only heard in perfection when

both these shades of tone are brought into play. Persons who habitually use but one, command but half the resources of the speaking voice. Such is the case with most Americans. We use as a nation the hard, piercing quality of tone—we talk with contracted, rather than expanded throats. This contraction is not that modern one, which produces the agreeably clear tone described, but it is that excessive contraction, which produces a certain acridity and pointedness. Americans think and speak not so intensely—hence this intensity in their voices, we suppose. But for all pleasant, conversational purposes we should do better to allow the throat generously to expand, and suffer the tones to come out, as they then will do, rich and musical. Particularly would our American women gain greatly in attractiveness, if they would drop this sharp, Xantippe quality of tone so often heard, and allow that quiet, reposeful music to steal out which to every ear is so captivating.—*Once a Month.*

SCIENCE AND CHRISTIANITY.

I have no fear that the splendors of physical science will make the crown of the Christian faith pale and wax dim. Let them stand before the world, side by side, and let them both tell all they have to communicate concerning the nature of man and concerning the achievement of God. The human heart will declare that marvelous as are the manifestations of wisdom, and power, and beneficence in the material creation, they are nothing compared with the transcendent glory of His infinite love for man, as shown in the incarnation and death of the Lord Jesus Christ; and that, vast as are the benefits secured for the race by a deeper and wider knowledge of the laws of the material universe, they are utterly insignificant compared with rest for the agitated and weary soul, the peace for the troubled conscience, the hope and triumph in the hour of death, the blessedness of present communion with God, the recovery of His image, the certainty of eternal fellowship with Him beyond the grave, which Christ has brought within our reach.

Physical science may tell me of the rich and bountiful gifts which God has bestowed upon his creatures, and may dazzle me with the pomp, and splendor, and power of the ministers of His wisdom and love; but Christ takes me by the hand and brings me face to face with God himself; in His presence there is fullness of joy. He is the Father of my spirit, and you leave my deepest and intensest longings unsatisfied until you give me rest in His love and direct communion with His infinite and eternal bliss.—*Rev. R. W. Dale.*

UNBELIEF DISSIPATED.

There are now multitudes of inquirers who need to be dealt with as Mr. Patrick, of Scotland, dealt with a woman who had been long anxious but seemed to obtain no relief. Placing himself beside her and looking steadily in her face, he said, "Do you believe the Bible?" "I do," she replied. "Can ye tell me who made the world?" She smiled a little contemptuously, and after a pause said, "It was God!" To which he immediately replied, "How d'ye ken? Were ye there to see?" She seemed surprised, perceiving that there was evidently more meant by the question than she had supposed, and then remarked: "No, I was not there, but the Word of God says that He made it." "Ah, well, you believe 'a the Bible says, d'ye?" She said "Yes." "Ah, well, we'll see. This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye Him." "Who says that?" "The Father." "Well, will ye do as the Father bids ye? He commands ye to hear the Son." To this she assented. "Well, then, what does the Son say?" "Him that cometh unto Me I will in no wise cast out." "Come unto Me and I will give you rest." "Daughter, thins, which are many, are all forgiven thee; and will He not say the same to you? Is He not saying it even the no? Ye dinna believe that, ye dinna believe Him. I tell ye, ye dinna believe 'a the Bible." She instantly saw the shame and sin of not trusting in a promising, present Redeemer, and as instantly ventured on His mercy and found the peace she sought.

PERSONAL SKETCH OF TENNYSON.

A writer, styling himself "Harry Harwood Leach," sends to the *Home Journal* a letter about Tennyson, from which we make the following extract: "He (Tennyson) is, perhaps, five feet nine inches in height, but he stoops much as he walks, and thus looks shorter. He does not seem to be above fifty years of age, yet his gait is feeble, and the wearing of glasses adds to the impression of being older. His dress is extremely old-fashioned—indeed, he looked more like an old picture stepping out of a frame than a gentleman of the nineteenth century. His coat, short in the waist, was of a sort of linsey-woolsey material, of a gray mixed color, and fitted him very tight; vested and trousers of the same material. Around his ample shirt collar a black cravat was loosely tied. But nothing could be more picturesque than the long black hair, fine as silk, (but plentifully mixed with gray,) which fell over his fine head down even to his shoulders. "His eyes are dark gray, I think, and have the peculiar appearance about the lids common to all students, and especially night readers, which is very clearly perceived and defined by photographs of the poet. His mouth is constantly smiling, but his eyes seem to be absent while he is speaking, searching everywhere for something that is not present—that strange speculative look that is not easy to convey

by description, and must be comprehended rather than clearly defined. His voice is rich and sonorous, but he chooses his words slowly, and, I should think by this, betrays that in his composition he is equally careful and slow."

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