

THE LAST JOURNALS
OF
DAVID LIVINGSTONE,
IN CENTRAL AFRICA,
FROM 1865 TO HIS DEATH.
CONTINUED BY A NARRATIVE OF



DAVID LIVINGSTONE

INTRODUCTION.

In the midst of the universal sorrow caused by the intelligence that Dr. Livingstone had lost his life at the furthest point to which he had penetrated in his search for the true sources of the Nile, a faint hope was indulged that some of his journals might survive the disaster: this hope, I rejoice to say, has been realized beyond the most sanguine expectations.

It is due, in the first place, to his native attendants, whose faithfulness has placed his last writings at our disposal, and also to the reader, before he launches forth upon a series of travels and scientific geographical records of the most extraordinary character, to say that in the following narrative of seven years' continuous work and new discovery *no break whatever occurs*.

We have not to deplore the loss, by accident or carelessness, of a single entry, from the time of Livingstone's departure from Zanzibar in the beginning of 1866 to the day when his note-book dropped from his hand in the village of Ilala at the end of April, 1873.

I trust it will not be uninteresting if I preface the history with a few words on the nature of these journals and writings as they have come to hand from Central Africa.

It will be remembered that when Mr. Stanley returned to England in 1872, Dr. Livingstone entrusted to his care a very large Letts' diary, sealed up and consigned to the safe keeping of his daughter, Miss Agnes Livingstone. Upon the confirmation of the worst news, this book was examined and found to contain a considerable portion of the notes which her father made during his travels previous to the time of Mr. Stanley's meeting him.

The Doctor's custom was always to have metallic note-books in use, in which the day's jottings were recorded. When time and opportunity served, the larger volume was posted up with scrupulous care.

It seems, however, that in the last three or four years of his life this excellent rule had to give way to the toils of travel and the exhaustion of most distressing illnesses. Whilst in the Manyema country he ran out of note-books, ink, and pencils, and had to resort

to shifts which at first made it a very debateable point whether the most diligent attempt at deciphering would succeed after all. Such pocket-books as remained at this period of his travels were utilized to the last inch of paper. In some of them we find lunar observations, the names of rivers, and the heights of hills advancing towards the middle from one end, whilst from the other the itinerary grows day by day, interspersed with map routes of the march, botanical notes, and carefully made drawings. But in the mean time the middle portion of the book was filling up with calculations, private memoranda, words intended for vocabularies, and extracts from books, whilst here and there the stain of a pressed flower causes indistinctness; yet the thread of the narrative runs throughout. Noting but his invariable habit of constantly repeating the month and year obviates hopeless confusion. Nor is this all; for pocket-books gave out at last, and old newspapers, yellow with African damp, were sewn together, and his notes were written across the type with a substitute for ink made from the juice of a tree. To Miss Livingstone and to the Rev. C.A. Alington I am very much indebted for help in the laborious task of deciphering this portion of the Doctor's journals. Their knowledge of his handwriting, their perseverance, coupled with good eyes and a strong magnifying-glass, at last made their task a complete success.

In comparing this great mass of material with the journal brought home by Mr. Stanley, one finds that a great deal of most interesting matter can be added. It would seem that in the hurry of writing and copying despatches previous to his companion's departure, the Doctor rapidly entered up as much from his note-books as time and space permitted.

Most fortunately, he still carried the greater part of these original notes till the time of his death, so that they were forthcoming when his effects were subsequently saved.

This brings us to the second instalment of the journals, for we have thus acknowledged the first to have reached us on Mr. Stanley's return.

When the battered tin travelling-case, which was with Livingstone to the last, was opened at the Foreign Office in the spring of this year, not only were these valuable papers disclosed which I

have mentioned, but it was found also that Livingstone had kept a copious journal during his stay at Unyanyembé in some copy-books, and that when his stock of note-books was replenished a daily record of his subsequent travels had been made.

It was with fear and trembling that one looked to see whether all had been saved or only part, but with satisfaction and thankfulness I have subsequently discovered that his men preserved every single line, besides his maps, which now come to light for the first time.

Thus much on the material of the diaries: it remains to say a few words on the Map which accompanies these journals. It has been compiled from Dr. Livingstone's original drawings and note-books, with the corrections and additions he made from time to time as the work of exploration progressed, and the details of physical geography became clearer to him. The compiler, Mr. John Bolton[1], implicitly following the original outline of the drawing as far as possible, has honestly endeavoured to give such a rendering of the entire work, as the Doctor would have done had he lived to return home, and superintend the construction; and I take this opportunity of expressing my sincere gratification that Mr. Bolton's rare technical skill, scientific knowledge, and unwearying labour have been available for the purpose.

Amongst almost the last words that Livingstone wrote, I find an unfinished letter to myself, in which he gives me very clear and explicit directions concerning the geographical notes he had previously sent home, and I am but carrying out the sacred duty which is attached to a last wish when I call attention to the fact, that he particularly desired in this letter that *no positions gathered from his observations for latitude and longitude, nor for the levels of the Lakes, &c., should be considered correct till Sir Thomas Maclear had examined them.* The position of Casembe's town, and of a point near Pambetté at the S.E., and of Lake Liemba (Tanganyika), have been computed and corrected by Sir T. Maclear and Dr. Mann. The observations for latitude were taken at short intervals, and where it has been possible to test them they have been found very correct, but I repeat that until the imprimatur of his old friend at the Cape of Good Hope stands over the whole of Livingstone's work, the map must be accepted as open to further corrections.

The journey from Kabwabwata to Mparru has been inserted *entirely* from notes, as the traveller was too ill to mark the route: this is the only instance in all his wanderings where he failed to give some indication on his map of the nature of the ground over which he passed. The journey from Mikindany Bay to Lake Nyassa has also been laid down from his journal and latitudes in consequence of the section of this part of his route (which he left at Ujiji) not having arrived in England at this date.[2] It will be observed that the outline of Lake Nyassa differs from that on any published map: it has been drawn from the original exploratory survey of its southern shores made by Dr. Livingstone in 1861-3. For some reason this original plan was not adhered to by a former draughtsman, but the Lake has here been restored to a more accurate bearing and position.

How often shall we see in the pages of this concluding chapter of his life, that unwavering determination which was pre-eminently the great characteristic of David Livingstone!

Naturally endowed with unusual endurance, able to concentrate faculties of no ordinary kind upon whatever he took in hand, and with a dread of exaggeration which at times almost militated against the importance of some of his greatest discoveries, it may be doubted if ever a Geographer went forth strengthened with so much true power. Let us add to these a sincere trust that slavery, the "great open sore of the world," as he called it, might under God's good guidance receive healing at his hands; a fervent hope that others would follow him after he had removed those difficulties which are comprised in a profound ignorance of the physical features of a new country, and we have the marching orders of him who left us in August 1865 never to return alive.

Privileged to enjoy his near personal friendship for a considerable period in Africa, and also at home, it has been easy to trace—more especially from correspondence with him of late years—that Livingstone wanted just some such gigantic problem as that which he attacked at the last to measure his strength against: that he finally overrated and overtaxed it I think all must admit.

He had not sufficiently allowed for an old wound which his constitution received whilst battling with dysentery and fever, on his

celebrated journey across Africa, and this finally sapped his vital powers, and, through the irritation of exhaustion, insidiously clouded much of his happiness.

Many of his old friends were filled with anxiety when they found that he intended to continue the investigation of the Nile sources, for the letters sent home by Mr. Stanley raised the liveliest apprehensions, which, alas! soon proved themselves well grounded.

The reader must be warned that, however versed in books of African travel he may be, the very novelty of his situation amongst these pages will render him liable perhaps to a danger which a timely word may avert. Truly it may be said he has an *embarras de richesses!* To follow an explorer who by his individual exertions has filled up a great space in the map of Africa, who has not only been the first to set foot on the shores of vast inland seas, but who, with the simple appliances of his bodily stature for a sounding pole and his stalwart stride for a measuring tape, lays down new rivers by the hundreds, is a task calculated to stagger him. It may be provoking to find Livingstone busily engaged in bargaining for a canoe upon the shores of Bangweolo, much as he would have secured a boat on his own native Clyde; but it was not in his nature to be subject to those paroxysms in which travellers too often indite their discoveries and descriptions.

At the same time these journals will be found to contain innumerable notes on the habits of animals, birds, and fishes, many of them probably new species, and on phenomena in every direction which the keen eye searched out as the great traveller moved amongst some of the grandest scenes of this beautiful world: it may be doubted if ever eye so keen was backed by so much perseverance to shield it from a mere superficial habit of noticing. Let his adventures speak for themselves.

Amongst the greatest facts recorded here the Geographer will perceive that the Doctor has placed it beyond doubt that Lake Nyassa belongs to a totally distinct system of waters to that which holds Lake Tanganyika, and the rivers running north and west. He was too sagacious to venture the surmise that Tanganyika has a subterranean outlet without having duly weighed the probabilities in the scale with his elaborate observations: the idea gathers force

when we remember that in the case of limestone cliffs, water so often succeeds in breaking bounds by boring through the solid rock. No more interesting problem is left to solve, and we shall yet learn whether, through the caverns of Western Kabogo, this Lake adds its waters to the vast northerly flow of rivers we now read of for the first time, and which are undoubtedly amongst the largest in the world.

I cannot close these remarks without stating how much obliged I am to Mr. James Young, F.R.S., of Kelly, for having ensured the presence of the Doctor's men, Chuma and Susi. Ever ready to serve his old friend Livingstone, he took care that they should be at my elbow so long as I required them to help me amidst the pile of MSS. and maps. Their knowledge of the countries they travelled in is most remarkable, and from constantly aiding their master by putting questions to the natives respecting the course of rivers, &c., I found them actual geographers of no mean attainments. In one instance, when in doubt concerning a particular watershed, to my surprise Susi returned a few hours afterwards with a plan of the whole system of rivers in the region under examination, and I found his sketch tally well with the Doctor's map. Known to me previously for years on the Zambesi and Shiré it was a pleasure to have them with me for four months. Amongst other good services they have aided the artist by reproducing the exact facsimile of the hut in which Dr. Livingstone expired, besides making models of the "kitanda" on which he was carried, and of the village in which his body lay for fourteen days.

I need not add what ready and valuable assistance I have derived from the Doctor's old companion Dr. Kirk wherever I have found it necessary to apply to him; some of the illustrations are more particularly owing to his kindness.

It only remains to say that it has been thought advisable to retain all the strictly scientific matter found in Dr. Livingstone's journals for future publication. When one sees that a register of the daily rainfall was kept throughout, that the temperature was continually recorded, and that barometrical and hypsometrical observations were made with unflagging thoroughness of purpose year in and year out, it is obvious that an accumulated mass of information

remains for the meteorologist to deal with separately, which alone must engross many months of labour.

A constant sense of great responsibility has been mine throughout this task, for one cannot doubt that much of the future welfare of distant tribes and races depends upon Livingstone obtaining through these records a distinct hearing for their woes, their misery, and above all for their willingness to welcome men drawn towards them by motives like his.

At the same time memory and affection have not failed to bring back vividly the man, the traveller, and the friend. May that which he has said in his journals suffer neither loss of interest nor depth of meaning at the compiler's hands.

HORACE WALLER.

TWYWELL RECTORY, THRAPSTON,
NORTHAMPTONSHIRE.

Nov. 2, 1874.

FOOTNOTES:

[1] Attached to Mr. Stanford's staff.

[2] In February last this section of the map (as we suppose), together with some of the Doctor's papers, was sent off from Ujiji by Lieutenant Cameron. Nothing, however, had arrived on the 22nd September at Zanzibar, and H.M. Consul, Captain Prideaux, entertained serious doubts at that time whether they would ever come to hand. All Livingstone's journals were saved through other instrumentality, as I have shown.

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