

PROCEEDINGS
OF THE
ROYAL GEOGRAPHICAL SOCIETY.



VOL. XX.

SESSION 1875-76.

Nos. I. to VI.

EDITED BY THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY.

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

LONDON:
1, SAVILE ROW, W.
1876.

that region would be found to be very much more complicated than many at present fancied. Geographers had not taken into account the large rivers running immediately north of the Congo, between that river and the equator. He inclined to the opinion that the Rivers Mayumba and Quillo, and others, drained a large lake country in the interior. No gold-dust had ever been brought down to the coast; and he could not account for the report which Lieutenant Cameron alluded to. The principal produce now brought from the interior by the Congo was palm-oil.*

Mr. FRANCIS GALTON observed that Lieutenant Cameron's letters afforded another proof of how hazardous it was to speculate on the reports of the natives in Africa. Even so accomplished a traveller as Livingstone was wrong with regard to the Lualabas, the outlet of Tanganyika, and the Victoria Nyanza. One thing, however, was now certain, that the chains of lakes to the west of Tanganyika formed the upper basin of the Congo. What became of the river Uelle, no one could at present say; but there certainly was a large river to be accounted for, a river that had been spoken of by many travellers, Barth among the number. Every member of the Society would be most curious to hear more about the Lukuga, the outlet of Tanganyika. It appeared that the Lualaba into which it runs was only 1400 feet above the sea, and lying in a valley that was little more than a marsh, Tanganyika being only 120 miles distant, but 1300 feet higher. This shows that the outlet must have a most extraordinary succession of cataracts; probably Lieutenant Cameron knows of these, and will have something to tell us about them. The descriptions of Africa they had heard, brought strongly before his mind the strange spectacle that Africa would present to an eye placed some distance above the earth's surface. No other continent contained such marked contrasts; the broad Sahara in the north, the rich tropical vegetation between the tropics, a region of swamps, and then a dry district again in the south. He wished that some artist-geographer would paint in colours a bird's-eye view of Africa, as near the reality as the imagination could attain.

The Rev. HORACE WALLER said that Lieutenant Cameron's pluck and courage were almost unexampled in the history of geographical explorations. One circumstance underlaid much of the plan on which he had pursued his

* After the meeting, Mr. Robert Capper (late Lloyd's Agent for the Congo and its district) addressed a letter to the President, in which he gives some interesting details of native trade in the interior, corroborating the account given by Mr. Monteiro, especially with regard to ivory (Monteiro, 'Angola and the River Congo,' i., p. 139). He writes as follows:—

"Having traded some years in Africa, particularly on the Congo and the district lying between that river and St. Paulo de Loanda, it may interest you to know that the large quantity of ivory brought there is brought down by natives ignorant of the language in general use on the sea-board; they travel together in caravans, or 'cabuccas' in the native tongue, and their journey takes about three moons (or months). Africans do not travel fast, particularly in a body—on an average we had a 'cabucca' down every six weeks, and I have known 7000 tusks of ivory to come down at one time. These traders go to and fro, appearing again after about nine months. They have repeatedly told me they bought the ivory at a market on the shores of a large piece of water like that before them (the ocean) and it was conveyed there by the sellers in very large canoes, so large that the people lived on board and had fires in them. In coming down they pass by a large river now and then, and some of the villages and towns they pass through are not far from the banks of the Congo. I conclude this will be the Lake Sankorra of Lieut. Cameron. With reference to what he says as to palm-oil, I may mention that this product is only found in a belt along the line of sea-coast of not more than 150 to 200 miles in width, and I have never heard of any gold-dust about the Congo.

(Signed) "ROBERT CAPPER."

investigations, and he felt it would be hard to forget it in reviewing these interesting accounts. No doubt the good intention with which he set out had had much to do with his great triumph. When he found that Livingstone was dead, he felt that what that illustrious traveller had laid down his life for, should be taken up by successors who were hale and strong. In all probability, Cameron, when he inspected the effects of Livingstone at Unyan-yembe, when on their way to the coast, closely scrutinised the great traveller's maps and writings; in fact, Livingstone might be regarded as setting the lesson which the young explorer had most worthily and honourably carried out, and they had heard him referring to-night repeatedly to Livingstone's remarks. There was still a question to be settled with regard to the Lualaba. Livingstone traced the Chambeze into Lake Bangweolo, thence into Moero, as the Luapula, and out of that lake as the Lualaba, subsequently taking the name of the Ugarrowwa, to the north. Cameron had stated that the river leaving Moero was not the Lualaba, but he had not been there; whereas, Livingstone, who had visited the spot, said it was called by that name. It was now, however, settled that those waters were connected with the Congo, and not with the Nile. One other thing Lieutenant Cameron had done, namely, pointed out the iniquities of the abominable slave-trade. It appeared that Tipu tipu, the greatest slave-hunter of that part of Africa, whom Livingstone came across from time to time, had now shifted his quarters, until the slavers from the East Coast and those from the West met in the territories of Kasongo.

The PRESIDENT said he should not be doing justice to Lieutenant Cameron if he did not further allude to the extraordinary extent and value of the instrumental observations which had already reached England. Only a first instalment had, as yet, been received; but a cursory inspection of them had astonished the scientific officers who had seen them. They had not yet been computed, but the Curator of the Society had written a report upon them. "The following is a summary of the distances:—Zanzibar to Lunga Mandi's, near Lake Kassali, 2143 miles; Lunga Mandi's to Benguela, 810 miles; total distance of route travelled over, 2953 miles. About 1200 miles of this is over entirely new ground. The astronomical observations that have already been received, reach only to Lunga Mandi's, and they determine 85 positions by 706 observations for latitude and longitude. The observations for the heights of places are 3718 in number; they were read off, on the average, three times a day, and by means of these Lieutenant Cameron had drawn and sent home profile sections of the country along the line of his route. The longitudes of many important points have been determined by a numerous series of lunar observations: thus, for Nyangwe he has 61 lunar observations; for Kisenga (in the previously unknown region) 142; for Kanyenyi 35, and so forth." When it was remembered that the previous knowledge of the longitudes of the interior of Africa was founded upon one single lunar observation obtained at Ujiji, it would at once be apparent what an enormous difference Lieutenant Cameron's work had made in that respect. As far as the science of Geography was concerned, that was the great and essential value of Lieutenant Cameron's journey. The Royal Geographical Society was not instituted for the purpose of merely registering personal adventures or sensational journeys; they had a higher object in view, that of the advancement of pure, substantive, scientific Geography, and it was for his labours in that respect that their special thanks were due to Lieutenant Cameron. He was delighted to see the young explorer's parents present to hear the tribute of admiration which, in the name of the Society, he tendered to him. The crowded state of the meeting, and the attention with which the papers had been listened to, afforded an earnest of the hearty and cordial reception which they would give to Lieutenant Cameron when they had the happiness