SIR WALTER SCOTT'S "WILLIAM GORDON".

A LETTER FROM TIBETO-CHINA.

THE LITERARY VIGNETTES.

THE SCOTTISH "CLASSICS".

"DARK" AND "FRIGHTENED" COAL.

NEW COMIC PRINTING-BUSINESS.

"CHRISTMAS CAROLS".

THE BISHOP'S SNARE.

THE ANDERSON MEMORIAL MEETING.

THE DRUMMOND FAMILY.

THE PAMPAS OF SOUTH AMERICA.

THE ACADEMY.

THE RIGHI METHOD IN PRACTICE.

THE UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH.

THE SCOTTISH JOURNALIST.

THE AMERICAN PUBLIC MEETING.

THE LITERARY AND ACADEMIC WORLD.

THE LITERARY APPRENTICE.

THE REVIEW OF REVIEWERS.

THE CONTEMPORARY BIBLICAL SCIENCE.

THE WESTERN FRENCH BELLE.

THE "DIEULOIS".-THE "BEAU REGARD."
worse in 1865. There he met "the old settler, Silva Porto," the best-known European name in the South-African interior. The veteran, who was preparing his notes for publication, had taken the ease and confidence of letters and advice, especially the following: "In the heart of Africa distrust everybody and everything until repeated and irrefutable proofs will allow you to bestow your confidence" (p. 79). Put with a little more neatness, the "punctuality" is equally applicable to the other three quarters of the globe—at least, such is the experience of most men after the sad tenth latitude. The three companions distributed the work. Drs. Heine took charge of geography, Capello of meteorology, and Serpa Pinto of general management.

The expedition-caravan left Benguela town with colours flying on November 12, 1877. This was summer and the rainy season. It was the last of the age of the Cuitte (kites); and it had some fifty, including fourteen drunken noo-de-wos called soldiers, and not including six riding assess, headstrong brutes, like all African animals. There were, however, the ten Benguela braves who formed the backstay of the expedition. Two of them fell in flight, four followed Capello and Tvens, one lost his senses at the Caanza, and three endured to the end.

The fertile valley of Domba Grande and the quilquengues (Kwilinges) station were passed without adventure. At the Caconda Fort the explorers met the naturalist, José d'Anchieta. From this point Major Pinto made an excursion to the Cunene River flowing to the south-east. He had originally intended to explore this great stream, which he called the "Native River." The line still awaits inspection; and good work would be done by ascending it to the upper lakes, returning via the Swakop River to Walfisch Bay. At Caconda the party separated, and Major Pinto marched on alone. Here, too, his companions, settled in the interior, made all arrangements for his utter and complete failure. These obstacles will last as long as Africa is barbaric and unenlightened. Perhaps some man, who pays respect to the blacks and sells dear to the whites, has had personal experience of the prejudices against quiete negroes among the traders of Zanzibar; and I know that all the troubles on the Num, or Lower Niger, were originally brought about by the English agents in the Brass River.

The most notable point was the passage of the upper waters of the Cubango, the great artery which heads, like the Cubene, in the highlands of the Édouard, flows through the Cuito, and a host of smalls, and dies of droughts in the Ngami Lake. The section ended at Silva Porto's thatched cottage, Belmonte, in Biah, mentioned by Camerón. The march up the glorious plateau, which rises to a height of 5,500 and even 8,200 feet, records little beyond fever and rheumatism; the Mucanos (mucanees) of all; the insouciance of chiefs; perpetual troubles with the inordinate randomness who carried, robbed, and abandoned the packs; and, last but not least, African thunderstorms and tropical rain-drenchings. The only risks were from the charge of the buffalo (Bos cephalus), from the attack on a village to recover stolen goods, and from a squabble with a bullying headman. The Bihéños are described as "profoundly violent": they are, however, like the Wanyamwezi, born travellers and explorers, who have covered every practicable line in the interior. Their cannibalism is sporadic, as is that of the Qabon Mpane (Fancs); and, like these people, they are outliers of the great anthropophagic race which occupies the vast white blot in Central Africa. If they have a general "mediocre" into three, the medico proper, the rain-maker, and the sorcerer, or rather poisoner, they are progressing—the wrong way. And here the reader will regret that Ladjak, Mogar's admirable scion of the religion, manners, and customs of the Biah people has not been consulted. Had the author done so, we should have read more about the "ghost" and less about the "soul."

The three companions met once more at Belmonte. After this Capello and Tvens fade out of the story, and set out to visit the Caanza. There had evidently been some unpleasantness about forwarding the luggage; but the author is reserved upon the subject, and we cannot do better than avoid it.

Despite the perpetual struggle between latitude and altitude, and the alternate worries of burning suns by day and chilling winds by night, Serpa Pinto found his health and strength improve. He had a long rest, for the porters who left Benguela in November did not reach him till early May. He now formed the placid resolution of marching upon the Upper Zambeze. His men seem to have deserted as fast as they came in; but he was aided by that Jos. Alves who figures so pleasantly in camerón's book; and he was respected by a black slave. Still he had to destroy sixty-one loads: had he distributed them among the carriers these men would have wanted more; and had he left his goods among the natives other carriers would have been persuaded to desert. Thus he was reduced to a party of seventy-two.

On June 6 the camp at Biah was broken up; and the"Chobe" made the beautiful Caanza affluent of the Congo-Zaire, "winding through a plain from a mile and a half to two miles broad, enclosed on either side by gentle green slopes clothed with trees." The description of its transparent waters, flowing over unrolled white sand, reminds us of Southern Abyssinia.

Immediately east of Biah lies the previously unexplored land of the Quimbândé tribe, watered by the Cuana, Vítrio, Omuh, and other head-streams of the Cuango. Here begin the new land of clayey clays and micaceous contrasting with the plutonics of Biah; and the traveller is now falling into the great lacustrine basin, whose rivers, flowing south, have no cutaways. The country is charming, suggesting the well-known simile of the "English park." The trees are perfectly splendid, and the summits of the lofty hills which border the Vítrio River are very richly wooded; beyond it, the wealth of vegetation is, if possible, even greater. The illustration of Lake Llugui (fig. 44) certainly bears out the excitement. The local productions are sugar-cane and castor (much used for hair-oil), beans and manioc, wax and cork. Among the latter, the massango, or pennisetum, curiously called "canary-seed," comes in for the author's hardest language; it is horrible, abominable, and almost cursed. Iron is everywhere along the growths we must not forget that "terrible hymenopterist," the Quinsone ant (R. atros?); coloured a light chestnut, and one-eighth of an inch long. It draws blood, and puts caravans to flight.

The Quimbanda is a clan of the great Gangueela family. Their features are sub- "Caucasian," and somewhat Jewish. Yet they are a lazy, useless race, very unlike the energetic Bihéños; and their "tendency in the direction of body-clothing" is not pronounced. The cover is in the usual elaborate style, which takes two days to build and lasts two months: I would suggest that it is simply an imitation of the European style, and the东南- to the east—of the latter are the Ambumbe, described as the blacks nearest the race.

Crossing the Bitovo rivulet, one year after taking leave of his father, the explorer remarks that the waters are flowing to the north; and the north-south tracts to become "slight and the southerly one to become more pronounced." The northerly current (fig. 336) has its further axis disposed from west-north-west to east-south-east; and the young explorers note this fact as "one of the largest currents of the Zambesi." The first to come down the Cuango was the veteran Silva Porto, who embarked his goods upon the head-water called Cucushi, and descended safely toannyanti in 1848. Hence, probably, the "Chobe River"—a name, we are told, absolutely unknown to the people—applied to the Cuango by Dr. Livingstone.

The Cuango flows through a "sponge" rich in sponges, and speedily becomes navigable. Here the river-beds are of two varieties—either clean sand, or sand covered with marsh-mud. The latter produces a luxuriant growth of aquatic plants, forming islands, floating meadows, and virgin forests of nemaphor and Victoria-regia. Here we have again Capt. Späke's bridges of water- lilies and the well-known Sudd (wall, or dam) on the Upper Nile. An instance of the clear bottom is the Chobe River, which flows in a dry valley, with long sweeps and without "water-gardens." The explorer reached it on July 23, after floating down the Cubango River in his mackintosh boat, and crossing the water-meadow with the delicate pinnaculaceous Oicó. He had now passed from the Luchae to

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to the Ambaullia country. Lions were heard, but had not been seen. We are
told of a female (Leopardus jubatus), apparently
purblind, which uses its ears in preference to its
eyes. There are also interesting notes concerning the Quichőst or Bushi, a ruminant
apparently semi-ambiguous. The antelope has some resemblance in manna to the
bip. 

On the Cushihi insubordination was abated
by attacking a Pemboire’s pate.” “Wounds in
the head, if they do not kill at once, soon heal up.” From this point the traveller
made a most interesting visit to a camp of the Mucasseque people (S. lat. 19°). They are certainly the Kasekel or Makān-
ala of Magyar and the “Kaseker” or “Bushmen” of Dr. Livingstone, who prob-
able learned the name from Silva Porto. This forest tribe feed on honey, game
(though without saus, and; roots; they are abjectly miserable, ignorant, weak, cloth-
ing, and; their only arms are bows and arrows. The explorer defines their
relation to their Ambaullia neighbours as that of savages to barbarians and, judging
from their peculiar intonation and their dirty-yellow
colour, they were wandering thieves taken,
the “Hottentot branch of the Epochi-

The explorer received at Lalui, the
capital, by Loboshi, king of the Luinas,
or Barotse, with a “programme” and a display of
a 1200 warriors. Everything was un-
pleasantly civilised in Lui or Ungonga
(Barotse-land); “the vast empire of
South Tropical Africa.” And here, with an “un-
personal atmosphere,” the explorer, in August
24, 1878), the first volume, and with it end
the geographical novelties of the journey.

Richard F. Burton.

Essays and Phantasies. By James Thom-
son, Author of “The City of Dreadful
Night, and other Poems,” &c. (Reeves
& Turner.)

It is impossible to criticise this volume with-
out a feeling of what Carlyle used to call
“sorrowful doubtings;” first, because the
extremely heterogeneous character of its con-
tents makes it hard to appreciate as a whole;
secondly, because, when a veiled and sardonic
humour appears heavy, ill-sustained, and dull
to the critic, he can hardly remember that
Santar Resorts also seemed so on its first appearance;
lastly, because a writer so warmly commended and encouraged by “George
 Elliot” as Mr. Thomson has been must have
the spiritual qualities and insight of his common
kind. She, we may feel assured, did not
lightly ascribe such qualities as “distinct
vision and grand utterance.”
The book may be divided into three parts—
(1) Prose-poetry; (2) Theology; (3) Literary
Criticism. Of these, the first— as exhibited in
the opening piece, called “A Lady of Sorrow” — seems to be a very able but, at the same
time, a very laboured imitation of De
Quincey: “A Lady of Sorrow” is a dream of
bereaved solitude in London. And the
pathos and poetry, in the description of Sorrow, personified as the
Angel—the “image in beatitude of her who
died so young”—then as the Siren, the
blind and sorry impulse that drives her victim,
a second Faust, through a weary round of
griefs there is no debating point, slightly
compared to the tavern of Omri Khayyam,
till the world is “laughed back into chaos;”
finally, as the Shadow, the veiled goddess of
Despair, the “dominant metamorphosis” of
Sorrow. The style is that of De Quincey, but
the voice is that of Heine or Leopardi.

Whether pessimism has a sound philosophy
may be a question; that it has a real poetry
cannot be doubted. The only criticism I
should venture to make on this part of Mr.
Thomson’s work is that it is dream-litera-
cure. The essay itself is a long passionism;
unforgettable charm of works like De
Quincey’s “Dreams— Fugue,” or Colderidge’s
Kubla Khan, is that they combine the fa-
unciality of dreams with their apparently
effortless reality; surprising as they are in
our waking hours, never surprising to the
dreamer. This quality is not reached by Mr.
Thomson. His work reminds me rather of
such works as George MacDonald’s
Phantastes, or Alice in Wonderland, where dream-life is rep-
icent with greater sequence and literary force
than by the indefatigable touch of inspired
personal experience.

The second, or theological, side of the
volume is mainly represented by a long essay entitled “Proposals for the Speedy Ex-
tinction of Evil and Misery.” This essay is in-
trduced by a wearisome mystification, wherein
the question of the author’s sanity is raised,
the verdict of the critics forestalled by parody-
ing their manner, and counsel is darkened and
comprehension obscured by a tiresome indi-
cution. The essay itself is a long pessimistic
diatribe against Christianity and most other
religions, against modern politics and social
arrangements, without any tangible sugges-
tion for their amendment—unless the absurd
oracle that Nature can be coerced by a threat
of universal suicide on the part of Man be
considered such. The ruling influence is
clarly that of Swift, for whom Mr. Thomson
clearly (pp. 231-83) expresses his profound
admiration. But of that great writer’s bitter
unimportance, his “suan indignato,” his intense
pity for the miseries and inequalities of the
human lot, there is here no trace. One power
of Swift’s—that of producing nausea by a
single phrase—Mr. Thomson has got inde-
.

With apologies to the readers of the
Academy, I am not about to enter into
the upheavals of the dead, in a certain journal,
are said (p. 97) to be so “rancidly unctuous that
the corpse of the victim thus lubricated has
turned and vomited its heart up in the grave.” If this is a sentiment of dread
of the kingly pessimistic man of the future,
may be allowed a satisfaction, hitherto
unfelt, that one lives in the days of the
journal thus assailed.

So ugly a lapse in taste and feeling might
be pardoned if it stood alone. I am con-