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LITERATURE.

How I Crossed Africa. By Major Serpa Pinto. Translated from the Author's MS. by Alfred Elwes. In 2 vols. (Sampson Low.)

(Second Notice.)

THE second volume opens with August 25, 1878, and becomes far more sensational. Let all those who are disposed to prefer the Pagan before the Moslem African turn over these pages and see what a sink of iniquity, a scene of abominations, of licentiousness, and of brutal drunkenness a Negro Court is. It is some satisfaction to know that all the actors who figure in the villainous drama submitted to the public have been killed off, except, perhaps, one Mashauána, head-boatman to the Munari (missionary?) Livingstone, who is shown in one of his illustrations (p. 498) taking a frog-like header when a hippopotamus capsized the canoe. Our explorer briefly fills up (chap. ix.) the gap between the conquest of Lui by Chibatano, or Sebuitane, and his Basuto, who became "Ma-Kololo," a mixed multitude. He shows King Libossi, a fat lad, in billycock hat, overalls, socks of Scotch thread, and patent leather shoes. The *billet-doux* found in the pocket of a Portuguese uniform worn by one of the princes is suggestive. Lastly, we have a profile likeness of Gambella, Prime Minister and murderous villain, who has charge of the "War Office" and the "Foreign Office." These are wild beasts in human shape, apeing civilised man.

The first step was to forbid, under pretext of a civil war in which Muzungos (Wazungu, or whites) were aiding the enemy, Major Pinto from marching east upon the Zambeze. This line, *via* Cainco, on the River Loengwe, and through the Chuculumbé country, would have shortened the journey by a third. The explorer was invited to act against the Europeans, who proved to be Mr. Selous, an English antelope-hunter lately returned home. He refused; accordingly, his party was reduced by desertion to fifty-eight men, and a felon attempt was made to assagai him. As the attack was checked by the revolver, his camp was fired on September 6; two of his "braves" were killed, and the scene is described as follows:—

"It was like a glimpse of the infernal regions to behold those stalwart Negroes, by the light of the lurid flames, darting hither and thither, screaming in unearthly accents, and ever advancing nearer, beneath the cover of their shields, while they brandished in the air and then cast their murderous assegais. It was a fearful struggle, but wherein the breech-loading

rifles, by their sustained fire, still kept at bay that horde of howling savages."

Nitro-glycerine won the day; and the murderers, a hundred to one, fled from the explosive balls.

King Lobossi denied all complicity in the attempt, and proceeded to starve out the explorer. Serpa Pinto retired to a neighbouring village, Catongo, where he could find fish. Then the last card was played. The traitor, Caumbuca, "second in command," who had disappeared during the attack, came into camp, made an excuse which was accepted, and superintended the desertion of the whole party, except eight, of whom two were women. Major Pinto was again in despair; "it must be in some such state of mind as the one in which I was then plunged that men commit suicide." Yet he had by his side the brave Augusto, the politic Verissimo, and the faithful Camutombo. The fugitives had walked off with the ammunition; but they left "the King's Rifle" and thirty cartridges, which were eked out by making others. And again things had come to the worst. The explorer was informed that a Macia (English) missionary had applied for leave to enter Lui, and resolved to march upon his station, Patamatenga Kraal, distant 375 miles. He honestly tells us that he would have preferred a Frenchman (ii. 98); and a sub-acid flavour runs through his book when speaking of England and the English who treated him so hospitably. Such is Portuguese feeling in our day. National benefits are so far contrary to the "quality of mercy" that they curse those who give and those who take.

When African "kings" fail to murder you, they become, after a fashion, subject. Lobossi was told to his face that he was a "crafty knave, a robber, and an assassin;" consequently, he supplied three canoes, he gave the truth-teller a "tusk of ivory," and they "parted the best of friends."

On February 24 the expedition started down the Liambai; but as the three craft would carry only three men, the rest marched along the bank, including Cora, the goat. She met with the fate of most pets; but Calungo, the parrot, who travelled on his master's shoulder, reached Lisbon. There is little to say of the voyage. The Itufa house (ii. 77) explains the Numidian "Magalia": the cats must have been brought there by some trader. The shooting of game (a lion and an elephant) and of rapids is described picturesquely. The Liambai, which runs through the great salt plain of Lui, lacustrine in ancient days, is broken in the lower bed by a succession of rapids and cataracts. The "gigantic Gonha" is forty-nine feet high; and the last bar, called "Cattina-Morira" (fire-extinguisher), reminds one of the Cachoeira Tira-calçoens (off with your trowsers!) on the Brazilian São Francisco.

These features make pretty pictures; snowy foam sparkling and dashing over coal-black rocks; emerald vegetation on the hilly banks and various gem-like aits; clear air, in which the mirage shows herds of animals with hoofs turned skywards; and no noise, the trees acting as mufflers. These features are caused by the fall of the country eastwards, and by walls of eruptive basalt crossing the stream.

The same is the case with the "largest cataract in the world," the Mosi-wá-tunya Falls on the true Zambeze, composed of the Liambai and the Cuando. Major Pinto would call the upper Zambeze the river from its sources to the Main Falls; the middle course from these to the Kebrabassa Rapids; and the lower to the Indian Ocean. I should prefer the terms Liambai-Zambeze, upper Zambeze, and lower Zambeze. He visited this "wonder of the Zambeze," and erroneously translates it "the Great Water." The words Mosi (smoke, spray) wá-tunya (does thunder)—*i.e.*, "Thundering Spray"—form the Sisuto (Basuto) name fairly rendered by Dr. Livingstone; it may be "cumbrous," but it is picturesque and appropriate. The explorer took immense trouble with his sextant, and ran some risk. It is to be hoped that a geologist will presently visit the country and determine the centre of eruption whence the basaltic dykes originally flowed. Like the extinct craters of Auvergne, the volcano must have been upon the border of a great lake.

"The Coillard Family" (the second part of the book) opens with meeting two white men, Dr. Benjamin F. Bradshaw (zoologist) and his assistant, Mr. A. Walsh. Presently appeared the Rev. François Coillard, ex-director of the Leribe station, and one of the French missionaries who have overspread Basutoland. This gentleman settled an unpleasant and even serious "palaver" with the greedy and treacherous natives, and went northwards on business. Major Pinto travelled south-east to Luchuma, where he found "two guardian angels," Mdme. and Mlle. Elise Coillard, who poured hot tears over "checks that were parched and cracked with fever."

Good nursing, chloral, and laudanum enabled the traveller to visit the grand "Thundering Spray." On this trip he again describes those mighty storms which all African travellers have encountered and which none can forget. They dwarf the petty meteors of Europe. In Unyamezei I was able to read small print by the electric light, which was continuous as that of the Aurora Borealis in the Far North; and the roar of the thunder was an incessant bass, varied, but not broken, by the rattling treble when the "bolt" is supposed to fall. On Camarones Mountain I saw the "Roman-candle"-like display described by Major Pinto. The fireballs in the blazing air separated near the ground into two, three, four, and even five, which darted along horizontally and struck as many different points—I made my men lie down under their blankets. The Africo-Portuguese explain these meteors by the universal presence of iron in the soil. Their violence must be due to electrical conditions which call for scientific investigation.

As provisions fell short at Patamatenga Kraal and Daca, the missionary family, fifteen souls, including Major Pinto and his men, in four waggons set out (December 2) for "thirty days in the desert." They skirted the Eastern edge of the "Sahara of the South, the terrible Kalahári," a counterpoise of the great North-African waste; the two lie south and north of the regular Tropical rains, and taught both ancients and moderns the stock phrase "desert in Central Africa." The vast Kalahári sands intersecting the stiff clays

swallow up the huge streams fed by the highlands nearer the Equator; and hence the enormous salinas. The typical "pan" called Masaricare is an elliptical depression 9 to 16 feet deep, and measuring 120 to 150 by 80 to 100 miles in length and breadth. The double flow of the Zouga or Botletle River, the lowest course of the Cubango, is confirmed and well explained by Major Pinto. He has named the great tract between the Zambeze and the Kalahari "Baines Desert;" and that energetic explorer, so harshly treated during life, well deserves the posthumous honour.

On the last day of 1878 the party entered unwholesome Shoshong, the capital of Khama, convert and king of the widespread Bamangwato tribe, the "most notable nation of South Africa." Shoshong is a big bee-hive of 15,000 souls; the native cells are mud-and-thatch huts; the missionaries and merchants prefer brick, roofed with galvanised iron. The explorer was well treated by the hard-riding king and the English settlers; it is again a wonder that "beefsteaks, potatoes and ham, tea and cigars," did not kill him. Mr. Taylor supplied him with "Fly," a "horse of the desert," that had been "salted"—why call it *salé*?—and a loan of £200. This enabled him to hire a travelling waggon, in wretched condition; from a poor devil of a Transvaal-Englishman, called Stanley, and on January 14, 1879, to set out for Pretoria.

After losing the way, our explorer crossed the Limpopo, Oori, or Crocodile River, and entered the Transvaal, a name which has come to smell strong in the British nostril. The journey produced nothing but a few sporting episodes with antelope and ostrich, leopard and lion. Presently he reached a Boer camp, and was hospitably received, "because Portuguese, not English." He has no illusions about these Africaners; he tells us openly that, "though Europeans in colour and professing the faith of Christ, they are the veriest barbarians in customs and behaviour" (i. 355). Yet most pathetic, as he tells it, is the tale of these unfortunates, whose treatment by the weakness of the Colonial Office and by the rapaciousness of the English colonist is a scandal to our history. Their wanderings for liberty and conscience' sake, their successive expulsion from the Cape to the Orange River, from the Orange to the Vaal River, from the Vaal to the Transvaal, and from the Transvaal to the drouthy desert, is a commentary on the Jewish exodus as told by the Jews. We may remark that Major Pinto gives no specimens of Boer "barbarism;" he was everywhere well treated by them. Nor can he now complain that "so little has been written about the Boers." One of his sentences sounds quasi-prophetic. "It is devoutly to be wished that they may not one day be goaded into proving their valour on the heads of those who so systematically slander them" (ii. 305).

Major Pinto, "speaking with greater frankness than usual," declares that the sin of discrediting the Boers lies with the missionaries. He is in no wise anti-missionary; but he paints in vivid colours the practice of pitting the African against the European. "To tell the ignorant savage that he is the equal of the civilised man is a false-

hood; it is to preach revolt; it is a crime. It is to be wanting in all those duties which were imposed upon the teacher when he set out for Africa. It is to be a traitor to his sacred mission." These brave words deserve to be read between Sierra Leone and Cape Town.

At "Soul's Port" mission-house took place the last death in Major Pinto's reduced party; here he buried Marcolina, the wife of the brave Augusto. The survivors reached Pretoria on February 12, 1879. The miserable Zulu War then raging prevented his making Lourenço Marques. After enjoying society, and not enjoying the impertinence of a booby lieutenant who could not see a gentleman under an old coat, he travelled to Durban by a dog-cart and the railway. Here he embarked (April 19), touched at various African ports, and crossed Egypt to Lisbon. He carried with him the "remnant of the expedition," reduced to seven, and photographed *in memoriam*.

We have now crossed Africa from sea to sea with Major Pinto. His book has one great merit—it makes us thoroughly acquainted with the author, body and mind; while the consensus of reviews pronounces him an uncommonly good fellow. His sentimentalism comes naturally from a Southron; in the case of an Englishman we should think of that sleeve-wearing of the heart that attracts daws. Hence he prefers the sugared insipidities of Dom Jayme, the "blossoms of the soul," to the glorious song of Camoens. A "man of feeling," he is subject to fits of anger, of despair, of excitement; he even believes in the unluckiness of the thirteenth day, and storms affect him with the horrors. He is energetic as Dr. Livingstone in freeing slaves by main force; and he is not rebuffed even when the slaves assure him that they do not want his freedom. He testifies to the change worked in inner Africa by the suppression of the export trade, and his testimony encourages us to hope for the best. Slavery, cannibalism, and polygamy were universal, prevailing at different times in all regions; and the former did good work by saving life and by laying the first feeble foundations of human society. But now they have ended their task; they are looked upon as abominations, like other effete things, by civilised society. And civilised society is right; only it ought to recognise the reason of its abomination—the injury done to the slave and the evil effects upon the slave-master. Finally, he suffers from "terrible attacks of spleen and home-sickness;" and it is "hard lines" for a man to be delayed for months by runaway porters when a young wife and a fair child are awaiting his return. The song tells us that

"Married men should stay away
From the hunting of the bear."

Perhaps Benedict, when young, could do better things than explore inner Africa.

Physically speaking, Major Pinto is not made for a life in Africa, where the weak must go to the wall. Dr. Livingstone advised the embryo elephant-hunter to test his nerve by standing in front of a railway train and jumping aside before it can touch him. I prefer two trials; how my novice enjoys a beefsteak and onions on waking at

four a.m., and how he can spend a week under a tree with the *minimum* of occupation. Major Pinto's emotional nature makes him, like a French *Alpiniste*, a traveller *malgré lui*; and his outer man is not tough enough. He sleeps in sheets; he uses spectacles; he wants salt with his meat—the condiment may be necessary with eggs, cereals, and vegetables, but a flesh diet contains sufficient salt to feed the blood. He yearns for bread; his eyes grow misty with tears at the sight of a loaf; harder travellers have not eaten bread for years, and hardly care to eat it again. He hates the "unholy chorus of jackals and hyenas;" to my ear few sounds are more pleasantly exciting than the music of the "golden dog." Lastly, he must carry a bath, make a toilette, and use perfumery; and he seems never to have tried the wholesome native practice of greasing the skin.

Prof. Elwes has done his work well; his translation appears Portuguese in the spirit only, not in the letter. Of course there are minor lapses. Why should the well-known M. Antoine d'Abbadie (i. 10) be called Antonio; or "Caffre-clicks," *cliques* (ii. 189); or a Kruboy, Keruboy (i. 18)? "Hystrix Africano" (i. 48), Fetus Arboreo (for Filix arborea, *Cyathea dregei*? i. 245), "infusory animalcula" (in the plural, i. 252), Numida meleagris, a guinea-fowl turned into a partridge (ii. 81), and Penicetum for Pennisetum (ii. 117) call for correction; while "*Audacia Fortuna juvat*" (i. 93) was certainly *not* a watchward of the Romans. "Kiosque," "wigwam," and "tomahawk" are used in the usual loose, vague way; sycamore is the vulgar English spelling for sycomore; gingerba (i. 244) is a misprint for jinguba, a ground-nut; malanco (i. 353 and ii. 84) stands for the mpalanca (*Hippotragus equinus*); and Calabri (in two places, ii. 225 and 323) for Kalahari; while tsee-tsee is better written tsetze; and Betania should be "Bethany." Scorpious sting but do not bite (i. 330); and a man never lies *perdue*. Here and there we have awkward English, like "the residences of white ants" for termite-hills (i. 248); "the spot was an arid one;" "the re-appearance [emersion] of a satellite;" "caustics" used for blisters (ii. 272); a "lot more requests;" a "convocation to war," and "consumed the remainder" for "ate the rest." We are puzzled to understand "In April 1878 the remains of the Swede, Oswald Dagger, were likewise consigned to the earth, and whose body lies in Luchuma" (ii. 172). The Portuguese *remedio* is better rendered "medicine" (a charm) than remedy; *cobra* should be translated generically, snake or serpent, not left to suggest a species; and *Negro* is not a "nigger;" the latter word, which occurs thrice in three pages, means, not a black man, but a black slave.

To conclude this long notice, which I have vainly attempted to shorten. Thanks to pen and pencil, to author and translator, to artist and publisher, *How I Crossed Africa* gives a peculiarly vivid and life-like idea of the country and its people; indeed, I know no other that in this point excels it.

RICHARD F. BURTON.