

THE HAKLUYT SOCIETY AND MR. FROUDE.

British Museum, July 23, 1867.
I beg to thank Mr. Froude for his courteous expression of regret for what, I am quite sure, was done inadvertently, and I would thankfully accept his promise of reparation if it were extended to all the mischief that is being done to me. Unfortunately for me, two editions of Mr. Froude's *Essays* have been issued this year, the second this very month, in a cheap and popular form; thus diffusing and prolonging, in the most effectual manner, an injustice to my name which has existed for fifteen years, and postponing indefinitely the chance of reparation in a future edition.

Under such circumstances, I read with regret that while acknowledging one error Mr. Froude does not also acknowledge what every one else sees clearly and condemns—the injustice of his censure on me with respect to Columbus, and which he makes a ground for censure on the Hakluyt Society. That Society stands too high to need any defence from its former Honorary Secretary, but I may be excused for specially asking that this censure may be expunged; for I have a letter from Mr. Bancroft, who was Ambassador here at the time, in which he eulogizes, in terms so warm that I may not repeat them, the spirit in which I had written both of the sufferings of Columbus and of the touching language in which he had recorded them. This is exactly the contrary of what Mr. Froude's two editions are telling everybody that I have done. R. H. MAJOR.

IRON AND MAGNETISM.

52, Watling Street, London, July 23, 1867.
In reply to your Correspondent, Mr. T. Ingle, whose letter appears in your issue of the 13th instant, will you kindly allow me to state that the process for the purification of iron, of which notices have lately appeared in the papers, is the result of a perfectly independent course of investigation made by myself; that the agent employed is not direct electricity, but magnetism; that iron or steel so operated on is remarkable for its purity, density and toughness; and, lastly, that I took out a patent for the process in February, 1855, which was, I believe, some months before the meeting of the British Association to which he refers. I have had a brief account printed, giving a general outline of the process, of which I inclose a copy, and shall have pleasure in furnishing one to Mr. Ingle (if you will kindly take charge of it, or inform me how it can be sent to him), or to any other gentleman interested in the subject.

WM. ROBINSON.

THE PASTON LETTERS.

Public Record Office, July 22, 1867.
Mr. Furnivall's suggestion is a very gratifying confirmation of the opinion I myself entertain of the interest which a new edition of the Paston Letters would awaken among the public; but as, I must own, my views differ considerably from his as to the mode and plan of publication, you will, I hope, allow me to make one or two observations in reply.

Mr. Furnivall, while he agrees with me as to the desirability of recovering the lost originals, is opposed to the publication of a complete edition while those MSS. remain undiscovered. We want, he says, the additional letters first, as a supplement to the existing edition; and he thinks that the book would pay itself, as every possessor of the old edition would be sure to order it. Now the commercial prospects of this, as compared with a different mode of publication, I do not propose here to discuss; but it is my decided opinion that the literary and historical value of the new edition would be very much impaired by such a plan. Just fancy what it would be for the student of history to have to consult one letter of a correspondence in one volume, the answer to it in a second, and the reply to that again in a third! Even if every letter were distinctly dated at the end, this would be bad enough; but when, as is the case in this correspondence, the evidence of the date of almost every letter depends mainly upon their being read in sequence, it is quite bewildering to turn from one

volume to another in order to catch the thread of written conversation. Even the letters which Fenn published are in two separate series, and are therefore, in many respects, more consultable in Knight's handy little edition, where, though sometimes condensed and abridged as well as modernized, they are better arranged than in the quarto volumes. But if Mr. Furnivall's plan is followed, the historical student will have the collection divided into three series, and we shall probably never get one complete edition of the Paston Letters at all.

Finally, the errors in Sir John Fenn's chronology and notes will be much in danger of going uncorrected or unobserved. The editor, indeed, if he do his duty, will have to re-arrange, for himself at all events, the published and unpublished letters together: a process which will, in itself, tend to clear up obscurities and correct several inaccuracies, as the re-arrangement even of Fenn's two series has done in Knight's edition; but unless the old and imperfect arrangement be completely superseded, the most wary historical student will still be liable to be deceived by the mistakes of the old edition.

As to the question of the particular channel of publication, I have less to say; but I cannot see any good reason why the Master of the Rolls should decline to publish any English works but dull ones—a principle to which Mr. Furnivall seems to think him bound to adhere, in order that the sum placed in his hands may produce as many unsaleable books as possible. It is true that the immediate sale of any work in the Rolls series ought not to be considered a fair index of its real value; but where a publication is justified by its historical interest, and is otherwise well adapted to find a place in the Government series, I confess it seems to me a strange argument against its appearance there to say that it is likely to pay its own expenses. JAMES GAIRDNER.

AFRICAN DISCOVERY.

Rio de Janeiro, June 12, 1867.
I have but lately received your issues of March 30, of April 6 and April 20, 1867; and yet I venture to ask space for these lines. It must, I well know, curiously strike many readers to find a fresh notice of a discussion already three months stale. The distance between us, however, leaves me no remedy.

With Mr. Cooley, I cannot see upon what authority Dr. Livingstone has pronounced the Mazitu, or Wamazitu, to be of the "Zulu," or even of the true Kafir, race. If huge shields be the proof, many tribes of the East African interior opposite Zanzibar Island are, as I have shown in "The Lake Regions," armed with that defence.

Unhappily, Capt. Speke ("Journal of the Discovery, &c.," p. 6), having seen the Amazulu at Delagoa Bay, pronounced the "Watuta" robbers of Unyamwezi to be of the same race. In East Africa, this consanguinity could be proved only—first, by the distinct tradition of the tribe; secondly, by a scholarlike comparison of dialects. In the case of the supposed Zulus, nothing of the kind was attempted. Similarly, Capt. Speke (chaps. 1, 9) made the Wahona race to be Gallas, when the former speak a South African tongue and the latter preserve an essentially Semitic dialect; in fact, one of the most idiomatically Arab that exists.

I must differ, *toto calo*, from Mr. Cooley's remarks (*Athenæum*, April 6) about Dr. Livingstone's last great feat. Dr. Kirk, H.M.'s vice-consul at Zanzibar, was closeted with the fugitive Johanna men, and concluded, with apparently the best of reasons, that the so-called Nyassa Lake ends a little to the north of where he placed it in the *Journal of the Royal Geographical Society*, vol. xxxv.—that is to say, about S. lat. 10° 30'. Dr. Seward also reports that Dr. Livingstone crossed to the western side of the Nyassa Lake, whose northern termination it was one of his principal objects to lay down, and that he found no obstacle to progress. We may, therefore, conclude that he had satisfied himself about a point concerning which most men, except Mr. Cooley, have long been satisfied.

Mr. Cooley still holds hard to his "single sea," as desperately as to the non-existence of those snows which the lamented Baron von der Decken saw

and felt. The forces which made him adopt the former unfortunate and ungeographical theory I have long ago analyzed. His chief informant was a Sawalili, aristocratically self-titled in London "Khamis bin Usman"; at home better known by the plebeian name, Khamisi wa Tani. This individual notoriously misled Mr. Cooley, who still fights for him, lance at rest, like the doughtiest of Don Quixotes, and who charges me with defaming the character of his Dulcinea. Even Mr. Cooley might, perhaps, modify his opinion if he had heard, at Zanzibar, Lieut. Col. Hamerton's account of the connexion between Khamisi and the murder of the unfortunate M. Maizan.

Highly characteristic of Mr. Cooley is his present treatment of the question—his unwillingness to collect facts. We have now at Zanzibar intelligent travellers like Dr. Kirk and Dr. Seward. How is it that the inventor of "Lake N'yassi" does not consult them about his "Sea of Ujiji," his "town Zanganica," his "carnelian currency," and other obsolete assertions of a similar nature? Dr. Kirk, guided by explorations already made, would send him in a few weeks an unbiased and unprejudiced statement of all that native explorers have seen and done in the Lake Regions since 1859.

But no! "*Son sidge est fait*"; and fresh facts would be, of all things, the least welcome to venerable (?) fiction. This geographical Vertot prefers even the African twilight of the Year of Grace 1845 to the clear dawn of A.D. 1867.

RICHARD F. BURTON.

THE PETRIFIED WOMAN OF BERTHIER, CANADA.

1, Bryanston Street, July 20, 1867.
I well remember the announcement of the discovery of a "petrified woman" at Berthier in 1845, for I was then a resident in Canada, and a pupil at McGill College. Berthier is a small village on the banks of the St. Lawrence, opposite Sorel, and is forty-five miles from Montreal. Several cuttings from newspapers are in my possession regarding this woman, one especially from the *Quebec Mercury*, in the form of a letter to the editor, under the signature of "J. C. P.," dated Quebec, April 17, 1845. The following extracts from it may prove of interest as relating to the subject of Prof. Daniel Wilson's letter in the *Athenæum* of July 6th.

"Passing through Berthier on the 21st of March, I paid a visit to the gentleman in whose house it is deposited, and received from him every civility and explanation that time would allow. The petrification, for such I must term it, is kept in a large chest made for the purpose, in a lower room of the house, under lock and key. On removing a fair linen cloth, one of the most extraordinary sights presents itself that probably ever came under notice. By a rare process of Nature, a body committed to earth in the ordinary way some twenty years since [in the churchyard of the village], in stead of crumbling into original dust, has become the petrified image of the human form, which once had being, life and motion. The body, which in life was composed of both solid and empty parts, is now entirely solid, hard, and seems to be as completely stone as if quarried by mortal hand. It has the appearance of one of those ancient statues, abraded by time and exposure, which are seen in niches on the outside of cathedrals in Europe. In colour it is dark grey, or nearly black. The nose and mouth are destroyed, and one of the feet, I think, was gone. The trunk was perfect. Where the foot is broken it has every appearance of mutilated stone.

"The small running stream, doubtless containing earthy particles, over which the coffin is supposed to have been originally deposited in the soil, presented, as I was informed, a bubbling spring, the exit of which was not larger than the palm of the hand. On either side two bodies had been interred about the time of the burial of the one in question. All these have entirely disappeared: a fact which shows that the influence of the petrifying spring, or lapidific fluid, did not extend beyond a narrow vein of the breadth or space occupied by the body which has suffered so extraordinary a change: *Ossa lapis fuit: intra quoque viscera sarum est*. I perceive that a New