

SATURDAY, JULY 11, 1885.

No. 688, New Series.

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LITERATURE.

CHINESE GORDON.

The Journals of Major-General C. G. Gordon, C.B., at Kartoum. Printed from the Original MSS. Introduction and Notes by A. Egmont Hake, author of "The Story of Chinese Gordon," &c. With Portrait, Two Maps, and Thirty Illustrations after sketches of General Gordon.* (Kegan Paul, Trench & Co.)

THIS portly volume contains so little for the reviewer proper that he must perforce adopt the pleasant modern fashion and review the writer. "Chinese Gordon," as his old friends preferred to call him, and as he is entitled in a host of books and papers between the days of Andrew Wilson and Samuel Mossman, has of late been the sport of fortune. Party spirit, which seems the only tangible trace of Old England now left to Young England, no longer finds a tool in him. His first silly little book on Palestine did no good to his great and glorious name; it proved his mastery of the tongue biblical, that Jacobian dialect which by a strange freak of fate still predominates in the English vocabulary; it showed that while most men read volumes of controversy he was satisfied to rest upon his instincts and to see in Jerusalem what no eye yet saw there; and it represented him suffering very severely from that curious complaint, "Holy Land on the Brain," which latterly took the form of "establishing the boundaries" of Ephraim, &c. Lastly, he has been "levelled down" by certain friends, fussy sympathetic, those burrs which cling to the skirts of a great man, and which rise, as Easterns say, like beetles borne in roses upon the heads of kings. In their thirst for notoriety they have managed to weary the public of his name—a fact made unpleasantly evident by the falling off of subscriptions. Who, in these times, has a right to more than the normal nine days? The *Journals*, however, will go far towards reviving general interest in a moribund theme. They are being extensively read and universally appreciated, because they show the writer not only *en deshabille*, but stark naked. They have the charm of certain confessional autobiographies lately published, and they enable the reader to take his own measure of a man whose perfect truthfulness and integrity, whose disinterested spirit and whose sys-

* Pp. lxxv and 587, including an excellent Index. Notes sometimes pointed and sometimes not. Physically too fat: should have been split into vol. i. *Journals* and vol. ii. *Appendices*. Portrait most unlike original yet seen. Fair sketch map at end, and at beginning, of "Kartoum" (=Khartoum, the elephant's trunk—i.e. the Raas, or nose of the Doab). The normal blunder "Blue Nile" (repeated in text) a wilful falsification by Bruce of Bahr al-Azrak=Blue River.

tematic suppression of miserable selfishness made him a phenomenon in the nineteenth century.

These Ephemerides, divided into six books, and covering only three months (Sept. 10–Dec. 14, 1884), are the jottings and scribblings of everyday life under the most peculiar and adverse circumstances. The writer had been implored to return to his old home, and his going had been incontinently deplored by those who forgot to support him, because he could not cope single-handed with a country fighting for a cause based upon religion and patriotism, however deformed by fanaticism and imposture. As might be expected the *Journals* are utterly deficient in the graces of literature. Their only ornaments are capitals and school-girl italics, and they are full of such mistakes as "Touran" for Imran (p. 19). Written on the spur of the moment they are contradictory in the extreme; they repeat the same words sometimes thrice, and even oftener; they heap commonplace upon commonplace; they show the hallucinations (e.g., concerning M. Renan) to which all African travellers after a time become subject, *teste* Livingstone; and they trifle (twice) about a turkey-cock when the shells are sighing, and the Nordenfeldts are growling. They evidence the strangest temper in the world. With Gordon one never knew what would happen next; to-day your intimate, he would forget your name to-morrow. And this was no vulgar caprice, but thinking and acting under a *Controul* as peculiar as the *dæmon* of Socrates. They preserve his Biblical phraseology (pp. 117, 173), about which he even "chaffs" himself (p. 216); and "the very feeblest of the conies" (p. 326) and "Shimei dusting David" (p. 376) contrast strangely with "a corker" and "black sluts" (*passim*). The natural querulousness bred by the situation (pp. 92, 112), the trenchant satire upon the crass ignorance of public offices (p. 201), and the most galling contempt of "the Dignities," whom he quizzes and caricatures with a humour often expanding into drollery, are curiously balanced by an insight of which few can boast, and by instincts which belong to himself. And the scratchy and sketchy, the blurred and blotted picture is lit up with a golden glory; the man is the very soul of honour, the embodiment of what every gentleman should strive to be.

I must be allowed a few words on these "instincts" and insight. The former are not unfrequently prophetic, e.g., "NOW MARK THIS" (the figures of print are not mine), "if the Expeditionary Force, and I ask for no more than 200 men, does not come in ten days, the town may fall; and I have done my best for the honour of our country. Good bye" (p. 395, dated December 14). His "insights" are too many for quotation; but here are a few. "Simmons and I agree on one subject—that Egypt is useless to us unless we have command of the seas; and if we have command of seas, Egypt is ours; therefore, it is not worth bothering about. We will [shall?] never be liked by its peoples, we do not go the right way to be liked" (p. 130). Quite true: we are not men enough to govern Egypt: our hands are tied. We must dance *en sabbots* to the tune of progress, philanthropy and other *mauvaises plaisanteries*. The identity of "standing orders" and "dead letters" in

the East (p. 160), touches the thing with a needle-point. The uselessness of those wretched (Hindu) Sepoys, "Snake-like creatures whose faces show that they hate us" (p. 189), is an old truth told in a new way; and nothing can be better than the suggestion of garrisoning India by Chinese and Negroes. And mark this, "It is a great question of doubt to me if public officials ought to sink their personality" (p. 233). England is now ruled by the worst of bureaucracies, a permanent clerkery which openly declares that executives are made only to obey orders, that the most commanding mind must be directed by its diminutive, and that personal influence is an insult to the uninfluential governing many-headed. But "England was made by adventurers," and is being rapidly unmade by offices. It will be a bitter pill for Englishmen to read *chivalry* France (p. 311), "If you can find no *chivalry* in your own house you had better borrow it from your neighbour." And it is bitterer still for Englishmen to realise the fact that England is the only place where they are not derided and despised, while minds like Gordon are beginning to despise England for her gross and abominable worship of the Golden Calf.

I am unwilling to touch upon such disputed points as introducing into Egypt the Turks whom Mohammed Ali the Great made the business of his life to expel; as admitting the French, whose government almost equals our own in energy and consistency; and as evacuating the Sudan, which we may abandon, but Europe will not, thereby preparing for ourselves not a nest but a hive of hornets. Nor can one discuss Gordon's strictures on the Intelligence Department (p. 154) without falling into personalities: I can only repeat my assertion that in the scandalous affairs with Osman Digna after Major Moric's death not an English officer could speak Arabic, and the most delicate work was entrusted to the most lying of men—hired dragomans. But however invidious the task, every reviewer must be prepared to quote the weighty words in p. 234, easily supplying the hiatuses:

"There are times when men like . . . ought to obey, and there are times when they ought to disobey or to resign. Now, if . . . had only hinted his resignation, the Governments were so placed as to be obliged to listen to him. I have a strong suspicion . . . did know how to act. It was . . . and a wish to be agreeable to Her Majesty's Government, which prevented him acting according to his own ideas. His amiability did for him."

What a commentary upon our present national motto "Too late"—ever too late!

And now for a few personal details. Shortly after Gordon was appointed to the Sudan in 1874 he consulted me about an Eastern harbour of export. I suggested one north of the equator, which should separate Egypt from Zanzibar: my advice was disregarded and poor Admiral McKillop brought upon himself much trouble. In 1876 my correspondent offered me command of the Eastern Sudan with £1,500 per annum; but as I asked £2,000 he was nettled, and wrote that he hardly expected so much devotion to £ s. d. My answer was that every farthing (and something more) would be spent in the country; but the amount to spend would represent the measure of my power and influence. This satisfied him; and yet I could not accept the offer. We were at once

too like and too unlike to act together without jarring. We did not meet till 1879 at Cairo, and I was astonished to find how unlike were all his portraits. No photograph had represented those calm benevolent blue eyes and that modest reserved and even shy expression, blent with simple dignity, which, where he was intimate, changed to the sympathetic frankness of a child's face.

His letters to me show a many-sided man utterly unlike the mere puritan, the bibliolator of popular belief. In predestinarianism, he was more fatalistic (not Calvinistic) than any Moslem; and, as the *Journals* show, a transition to El-Islam would not have been violent. Having prayed and taken counsel with his soul and his Guide, he acted unreservedly, and he often wrote: "Anyone could do this as well as I can: I am a mere machine in the hands of God." He appeared by no means surprised when I told him he was a rank Spiritualist, a tool in the hands of his Controul. Hence, it appears to me, the curious changes of policy and conduct which perplexed his best friends, such as his slavery-proclamation at Khartum after his hanging the unfortunate slave-dealers, a measure which I, not being a "Christian hero," never would have taken had they not actually committed murder. Hence his fury against Zubayr Pasha, and then his extreme anxiety to re-employ him; also his convicting an employé of deliberate money-theft and promoting the same man to a Pashalik a few months afterwards. Hence, apparently, he forgot to insist at headquarters upon his being followed at once by a body of English troops—500 or 5,000 bayonets mattered but little—and his stinging sense of being deserted till they were sent up under General Too Late. And so in minor matters; for months he would drink nothing but water, and then prefer, very decidedly, water with whisky. Thus, finally, I explain a host of seeming contradictions, which to him (and to none other) seemed natural and consequent.

I have lately been asked, Are you sure of his death? and I answer, No. All accounts of his being killed are so discrepant, so *louches*, that I should not be surprised to hear of him somewhere in the direction of the Congo slowly making his way south. Of course, every week without intelligence dims our hopes; but I cannot yet persuade myself to despair of shaking hands once more with Chinese Gordon, and of congratulating upon another quasi-miraculous escape the man I have ever looked upon as the Soul of Honour.

RICHARD F. BURTON.

Carlyle, Personally and in his Writings. By David Masson. (Macmillan.)

THERE is about this little book an odour of stale surprise, of what its author terms "belatedness," which is not quite explained by the circumstance of its original form having been that of lectures to Edinburgh audiences. If any living man of letters has been influenced for good by Carlyle in his career and in the general tendency of his labours—perhaps also for evil in his style—it is Prof. Masson. He was personally acquainted with his master for thirty-seven years, and can say with perfect truth and without any false modesty, "All in all, few persons now

living can have seen more of Carlyle than I did, or can have known him better." That, on seeing the popular portraits of Carlyle as "the whining sage" and "the jealous sans-culotte" drawn with such freedom, after the publication of Mr. Froude's portentous biographical performance, Prof. Masson should have put his hand to his head in amazement and indignation, and have said, "Neither of these hideous daubs is the Carlyle of my acquaintance," was natural enough. But such a protest or corrective as this, being largely of a personal character, ought to have appeared a little sooner. As it stands, however, it must be regarded as one of the most important of recent contributions to the now formidable literature which has for its object the vindication of Carlyle's memory, if not the rehabilitation of Carlyle's character. It is cordial, good-natured, unaffected, and transparently sincere. Above all things, it is valuable as a view of Carlyle, expressed after much deliberation, by a man who, obviously the reverse of a pessimist, yet "loves him, on this side idolatry, as much as any."

Prof. Masson's criticism of Carlyle, as revealed in his writings, does not call for much comment, for it contains no element of novelty. That Carlyle was "a natural theist" and "a transcendental realist" or "a realistic transcendentalist," that his weakness lay in "his contentedness to remain always within the region of the dynamical generalities and refusal to concern himself with the specific practical problems of the when, the where, and the how"—all this we have heard before. It is an old story couched in the language of the metaphysical school to which Prof. Masson belongs. To the bulk of it, the thick-and-thin Carlylian, the disciple who is a Carlylian in creed and not merely like Prof. Masson in spirit, may reply that his master was a preacher who left to others the duty of putting his doctrines into practice. The more successful and interesting of the two lectures is that which tells of Prof. Masson's own experiences of Carlyle. By means of these he disputes Mr. Froude's representation of Carlyle as perpetually sunk in gloom. Thus referring to the week spent by Carlyle in Edinburgh on the occasion of the Rectorial Address, which closed so tragically with the news of Mrs. Carlyle's death, he tells how, at a social gathering in his own house,

"Carlyle was in the best of possible spirits, courteous in manner and in speech to all, and throwing himself heartily into whatever turned up. At the dinner table I remember Lord Neaves favoured us with one or two of his humorous songs or recitatives, including his clever quiz called 'Stuart Mill on Mind and Matter,' written to the tune of 'Roy's Wife of Aldivalloch.' No one enjoyed the thing more than Carlyle; and he surprised me by doing what I had never heard him do before—actually joining with his own voice in the chorus.

'Stuart Mill on Mind and Matter,
Stuart Mill on Mind and Matter,'

he chanted, laughingly, along with Lord Neaves, every time the chorus came round, beating time in the air emphatically with his fist. It was hardly otherwise, or only otherwise inasmuch as the affair was more ceremonious and stately, at the dinner given to him in the Douglas Hotel by the Senatus

Academicus, and at which his old friend Sir David Brewster presided. There, too, while dignified and serene, Carlyle was thoroughly sympathetic and convivial. Especially I remember how he relished and applauded the songs of our academic laureate and matchless chief in such things, Prof. Douglas MacLagan, and how, before we broke up, he expressly complimented Prof. MacLagan on having contributed so greatly to the hilarity of the evening."

The truth is that Mr. Froude has been weighed down by Carlyle's pessimistic creed, and has not sufficiently allowed for the fact that, like every man of genius, he had many moods. In all probability Carlyle had as great a share as other people of the happiness which comes of mood, and which is one half of life.

Prof. Masson does good service in exposing some of the mistakes into which Mr. Froude has fallen from his ignorance of the social conditions of life in Scotland. Thus he proves that

"there was nothing extraordinary whatever in the match between the educated son of a Scottish peasant and the daughter of a Scottish provincial surgeon; and that if Jane Welsh had not married Carlyle, and been promoted by that marriage to a sphere far higher in the world's affairs than would otherwise have been within her reach, she would probably have lived and died the equally drudging wife of some professional Scotch nobody."

Prof. Masson misrepresents Mr. Froude's offence—if it be an offence—in revealing the dissensions in the Carlyle household, and in making free with "those most secret self-communings of Mrs. Carlyle's spirit in its hours of solitude, which she had kept under lock and key." The story would certainly have found its way to the public in any case, and in a less accurate and more disagreeable version than Mr. Froude's. The true error which Mr. Froude has committed is an artistic one. He ought to have let his revelations, "Mrs. Carlyle's self-communings" and all, speak for themselves, and refrained from saying that either Carlyle or his wife "should" have done this, that, or the other thing. Still more ought Mr. Froude to have done justice not only to the domestic showers in Cheyne Row, but to the sunshine that succeeded them.

WILLIAM WALLACE.

A Historical Introduction to the Study of the Books of the New Testament: being an Expansion of Lectures delivered in the Divinity School of the University of Dublin. By George Salmon. (John Murray.)

THIS work, as the author explains in his preface, does not embrace all the subjects that are generally supposed to be included under the title of an Introduction to the New Testament. It does not enter on the criticism of the text, nor offer any analysis of the contents of the New Testament writings; but as an investigation into the origin and authorship of those writings, and a discussion of the various theories which have been propounded regarding them, it is sufficiently full, while at the same time it is thoroughly informed and overflowing with sense and learning. Prof. Salmon undertakes to deal with the books of the New Testament as he would with any ordinary writings, and in the general tone and spirit of his work it must