

AFRICA AS IT IS AND AS IT WAS

T. J. Alldridge Writes of Progress in Sierra Leone,* Alfred J. Swann of 26 Years of the Slave Trade.

TWO Englishmen, who spent long periods in Africa beginning at times not long subsequent to the years during which Livingstone and Stanley made their explorations and discoveries, have written books materially helpful to an appreciation of the great and beneficent changes that have taken place in the Dark Continent in the last quarter of a century.

One of these writers, Mr. Alfred J. Swann, went into Central Africa in 1882 and labored there under the direction of the London Missionary Society. He gives us vivid pictures of the days when the white man's life in Africa was full of adventure, hardship, and peril, and the black man's existence had not yet lost any of its hideousness. The other writer, Mr. T. J. Alldridge, formerly an official of the Crown Colony of Sierra Leone, bases his book both on his early experiences in the country and on a recent tour of observation, and shows how a wise and kindly British local Government has worked out a wonderful transformation.

In his opening chapter Mr. Swann fairly summarizes the situation he and his associates encountered when they began their work. As he put it, "The great partition of Africa by the powers had not taken place, and not one of the now great protectorates of East Africa, Uganda, and Nyasaland had become a part of the British Empire. The whole of the east coast and the interior was either in the hands of native chiefs, Arabs, or Marima half castes, who had all one object, and whose ambition was to sell and transport to the coast as many of the inhabitants as they could possibly capture." Out of this situation there had developed almost unbelievable brutality and inhumanity.

Mr. Swann had gone only a short distance from the coast when he met Tipu-Tibu's annual caravan of slaves which had been captured in the remote interior. From a conversation he had with one of the guards it is possible to get a pretty good idea of what Central Africa was like in 1882. The conversation opened when the guard's attention was directed to the fact that many of the slaves were unfit to carry loads. To this the guard smilingly replied: "They have no choice. They must go or die." Then came a series of questions and answers:

"Have you lost many on the road?"
"Yes, numbers have died of starvation."

"Any run away?"
"No, they are too well guarded. Only those who become possessed with the devil try to escape; there is nowhere they could run to if they should go."

"What do you do when they become too ill to travel?"

"Spear them at once. For if we did not, others would pretend they were ill in order to avoid carrying their loads. No, we never leave them alive on the road; they all know our custom."

"I see women carrying not only a child on their backs, but in addition a tusk of ivory or other burden on their heads. What do you do in their case when they become too weak to carry both child and ivory? Who carries the ivory?"

"She does. We cannot leave valuable ivory on the road. We spear the child and make her burden lighter. Ivory first, child afterward!"

This was Mr. Swann's introduction to the actual Africa of the time. He says he understood at once what Livingstone meant and felt when he wrote:

Thousands perish in interminable wars, waged for slaves with their own clansmen or neighbors; slain by the lust for gain which is stimulated by the slave purchasers. The many skeletons we have seen among the rocks and woods, by the pools, and along the paths of the wilderness, all testify to the awful sacrifice of human life which must be attributed directly or indirectly to this trade of hell.

It was to fight against slavery and other forms of inhumanity, and in every way possible to work for the uplifting of the African natives, that Mr. Swann

*A TRANSFORMED COLONY. Sierra Leone as It Was and as It Is. Its Progress, People, Native Customs, and Undeveloped Wealth. By T. J. Alldridge. With sixty-six illustrations and a map. Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Company. \$3.50.

FIGHTING THE SLAVE HUNTERS IN CENTRAL AFRICA. A Record of Twenty-six Years of Travel and Adventure Around the Great Lakes and of the Overthrow of Tipu-Tibu, Rumaliza, and Other Great Slave Traders. By Alfred J. Swann. With forty-five illustrations and a map. Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Company. \$3.50.

and Mr. Alldridge went out from England. Each has lived to see a great improvement in the section in which his activities were engaged, and each speaks hopefully of the future.

It was Mr. Swann's good fortune to be associated with a large and interesting enterprise. The London Missionary Society, having received a considerable sum of money to be used expressly in mission work in the region of Lake Tanganyika, decided it must have a steamboat on the lake. In pursuance of this decision it contracted for a steel vessel to be shipped in sections to Madagascar, whence it would be taken to the African coast for transportation on wagons to the lake that was to be its home. Mr. Swann was one of the party sent out to put the vessel together and to help in the work it was designed to facilitate. The vessel was very appropriately christened Good News, and there is no doubt whatever that it quickly proved itself a great boon to the tribes living along the Tanganyika coast line, which measures close to 1,000 miles.

Mr. Swann made many voyages in the Good News and came to know the Tanganyika country thoroughly and to be on friendly terms with its many peoples. He spent twenty-six of his years in Africa before his final retirement to England.

ADVENTURES OF AN A. D. C.

THE Adventures of an A. D. C." by Shelland Bradley, (the John Lane Company, \$1.50,) is not a first book, but should it chance to be the first from its author which has come into any readers' hands its immediate effect upon him will be to make him fare promptly forth and possess himself of the others. It is one of those delightfully intimate books about India which make Anglo-Indians of us all; not a novel, but a series of sketches of the fictitious men and women frequenting the Government House of the hill station of Monalag.

Encyclopaedias refuse to give interpretation to the cryptic "A. D. C.," which may stand for "aid de camp." At any rate the A. D. C. of the book is an aid to the Lieutenant Governor—the social secretary, arranger of functions, announcer of guests, and general arbiter elegantiarum at Government House. His pictures of natives and "heaven-borns," (i. e., civilians,) of social aspirants and of those who have arrived; of "globe-trotters," of the Governor and his family, are all as clever and as vivid as possible. The gossip as retailed by "Berengaria" is just as delightful as real gossip—and we "can't say fairer than that"—while the chapter containing letters and telegrams from "Babus" and others is simply delicious.

There is an illuminating conversation between "two A. D. C.'s and a Private Secretary," showing how England's Government of India is regarded by those English who view it from the inside. We note especially the objection to selecting members of the civil service on the ground of examination alone, "without regard to mental, moral, or physical fitness." The kind of man wanted is "not the bookworm, who has mugged up half a dozen subjects, but who has no physique and no more breadth of view than a porpoise, and no manners into the bargain. For if any place ever wanted a gentleman—a pucca Saheb—it is India. It is an insult to send some clumsy boor, with the tact and manners of an elephant, to rule over a courteous, high-born race, which is quicker to spot deficiencies of breeding than any other I have ever come across."

"The Adventures of an A. D. C." is a capital book to rest one's mind on, giving not the feather-bed kind of rest, but that far better sort, which comes from exhilarating exercise. As the above quotation shows, it is more than that, furnishing food for thought as well as a sparkling cup of enjoyment.

ENGLISH OFFICIAL DOCUMENTS.

A lot of curious matter is to be found in the transcriptions from old records which appear in the work entitled "A Formula Book of English Official Historical Documents," (Cambridge University Press, \$2.50,) edited by Herbert Hall of his Majesty's Record Office, who holds the post of Reader in Palaeography in the University of London. Part I. of this book, published not long ago, dealt with charters, writs, and letters; Part II., just issued, has to do with ministerial and judicial records, some of which date back to the early years of the ninth century. The records relate to assessments, surveys, inquisitions of various sorts, royal accounts, judicial proceedings, marriages and wardships, and a variety of matters pertaining to feudal tenure. Most of them are in Latin, but some of the most interesting are taken from fac similes of Anglo-Saxon manuscripts, and some, notably those of the reign of Henry VIII., appear in the quaint English of his day.