

THROUGH THE DARK CONTINENT.

EXPLANATION.—PART I.

My new mission—The *Daily Telegraph*—"Yes; Bennett"—The *Lady Alice*—My European staff—Disappointed applicants and thoughtful friends—My departure for Africa. PART II. The sources of the Nile—Herodotus on the Nile—Burton on the Nile basin—Lake Tanganika—Lake Victoria—Speke, Grant, and Cameron—The Livingstone River—The work before me.

WHILE returning to England in April 1874 from the Ashantee War, the news reached me that Livingstone was dead—that his body was on its way to England!

Livingstone had then fallen! He was dead! He had died by the shores of Lake Bemba, on the threshold of the dark region he had wished to explore! The work he had promised me to perform was only begun when death overtook him!

The effect which this news had upon me, after the first shock had passed away, was to fire me with a resolution to complete his work, to be, if God willed it, the next martyr to geographical science, or, if my life was to be spared, to clear up not only the secrets of the Great River throughout its course, but also all that remained still problematic and incomplete of the discoveries of Burton and Speke, and Speke and Grant.

The solemn day of the burial of the body of my great friend arrived. I was one of the pall-bearers in Westminster Abbey, and when I had seen the coffin lowered into the grave, and had heard the first handful of earth thrown over it, I walked away sorrowing over the fate of David Livingstone.

I laboured night and day over my book, 'Coomassie and Magdala,' for I was in a fever to begin that to which I now had vowed to devote myself. Within three weeks the literary work was over, and I was free.

Soon after this I was passing by an old book-shop, and observed a volume bearing the singular title of 'How to Observe.' Upon opening it, I perceived it contained tolerably clear instructions of 'How and what to observe.' It was very interesting, and it whetted my desire to know more; it led me to purchase quite an extensive library of books upon Africa, its geography, geology,