

Java, with excursive sketches of the other islands in the great Eastern group. In the preface to his new volume, he mentions that, abandoning the idea of a second edition, he has preferred to supersede his former work by a general account of the Indian and Philippine archipelagos, treated alphabetically. We wish he had reconsidered this decision, and remodelled the three volumes on Java in a more attractive form, giving them a less inaccurate title. His new attempt is only a partial success. It is at once unnecessarily meagre, and unnecessarily voluminous. The most interesting topics are dismissed with the slightest notices—Mr. Crawford says from want of materials; but he seems to have neglected half the literature of the subject. His account of piracy is an example of inexcusable neglect or astonishing scantiness of information. It seems to have been compiled from three or four books out of a dozen, and occupies two pages, leaving the largest proportion of ascertained facts unrecorded. Scarcely one page is devoted to the illustration of the recent history of Sarawak, though Mr. Crawford amplifies at leisure over the monotonous and meaningless annals of other Archipelago States. Surely, Sarawak was worth a serious description; surely, also, the remarkable experiment in administration which Sir James Brooke has applied with such triumphant success to that province of Borneo would have furnished a writer not so weary of his task as Mr. Crawford with materials for more than twelve cursory lines. At all events, these are the matters which the reader expects to find treated in a book of encyclopædic pretensions, "probably the most comprehensive," says the diffident author, "that has yet been published."

Had he translated M. Temminck's volumes—which, though not so ambitious, are, as far as they go, admirable—his praise would have been better applied. Indeed, to write a new book, on this scale, thirty-six years after the publication of three large volumes, was not a discreet undertaking. Some bold corrections and omissions would have rendered the work on Java a necessary addition to Indian Archipelago literature; but, in the attempt to cover the whole ground, Mr. Crawford imposed upon himself a task unjustified by the extent of his studies. No parts of the world are more inviting to research than the vast groups of the Eastern seas. Their early annals are as romantic as those of America, their natural aspects are of astonishing beauty, their inhabitants suggest ethnological questions of the highest importance, and many problems of physical science are connected with their geological formation. That Mr. Crawford should not have entered at large into all these subjects, multiplied anecdotes and pictures of private life, introduced among his articles a biography of the first man who ever founded a humane government in Borneo, or traced the curious story of the spice trade, is not, perhaps, to be imputed to his book as a fault. The nature of a dictionary implies formality and dryness of detail, which, however, are not the invariable characteristics of Mr. Crawford's writing, since he writes, at times, with a fulness of information and an ease that force us the more sincerely to regret that he has cut to pieces his descriptions of Java, to incorporate the fragments with a mass of less interesting, because less satisfactory, materials. We say we did not expect the picturesqueness of history or the precision of special studies in this alphabetical body of articles; but we have a right to complain if Mr. Crawford, assuming to supply a manual, glosses over some of the most important subjects in a style that implies a deficiency of knowledge, or of appreciation. An encyclopædia is nothing unless it be up to the level of the time in which it is published. But the student of Eastern Archipelago geography, natural history, or politics, after consulting Mr. Crawford's Dictionary, will find himself compelled to look elsewhere, in connexion with many points, even for slender summaries. This being the case, the work is not entitled to the rank claimed for it by the author.

THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF AN INDIAN CHIEF.

The Life and Adventures of James P. Beckwourth, Mountaineer, Scout, and Pioneer, and Chief of the Crow Nation of Indians. Written from his own Dictation, by T. D. Bonner.

Sampson Low.

T. D. BONNER testifies to the veracity of J. P. Beckwourth; but who will testify to T. D. Bonner? He took the story down, he says, literally, day by day, from Beckwourth's dictation. Now, Beckwourth had kept no journal, and relied on his memory alone; but as he is personally acquainted with "thousands of people on both sides of the mountains," has been employed by the United States Government, and has been politically recognized as the Chief of the Crow Indians, it follows that—part of his narrative may be an invention. We hope it is. He may "compete with refined gentlemen" at San Francisco, but he competed with the worst brutes in nature at the Beaver River, where he tried to brain his wife for dancing without his permission.

He is a Virginian by birth, his father having fought for the American cause during the revolutionary war. Transplanted, at an early age, to St. Louis, on the Mississippi, he became familiar with the incidents of wild life, with Indian traffic, and blockhouse perils. Eight scalped children, in fact, figure among the reminiscences of his infancy. Apprenticed, in his fourteenth year, to a blacksmith, he fought his master with a hammer, menaced a one-armed constable with death, and so tortured his father that he obtained permission to travel, and set off with a horse and four hundred dollars for enterprizes in the Indian country. There he became a favourite, and hunted and mined so profitably that, in eighteen months, feeling quite opulent, he first travelled home, and then to the Rocky Mountains. The account of this expedition is naturally worded, and full of interest. The autobiography then becomes slightly suspicious, being interspersed with dramatic passages of sentiment, enunciated with mock simplicity. Judging Beckwourth, however, upon his own evidence, we find him swearing fidelity at home to a certain Eliza, his betrothed, and then penetrating the country of the Flat Heads and Black Feet, taking part in a murderous battle between those nations, sharing their festivals of peace, and becoming the son-in-law of Heavy Shield, a warrior and chief of the Black Feet. Soon afterwards occurred a "slight difficulty in his family affairs," which Beckwourth, or his "autobiographer" thus refers to:—

A party of Indians came into camp one day, bringing with them three white men's

scalps. The sight of them made my blood boil with rage; but there was no help for it, so I determined to wait with patience my day of revenge. In accordance with their custom, a scalp-dance was held, at which there was much additional rejoicing.

My wife came to me with the information that her people were rejoicing, and that she wished to join them in the dance.

I replied, "No; these scalps belonged to my people; my heart is crying for their death; you must not rejoice when my heart cries; you must not dance when I mourn."

She then went out, as I supposed, satisfied. My two white friends, having a great curiosity to witness the performance, were looking out upon the scene. I reproved them for wishing to witness the savage rejoicings over the fall of white men who had probably belonged to our own company.

One of them answered, "Well, your wife is the best dancer of the whole party; she out-dances them all."

This was a sting which pierced my very heart. Taking my battle-axe, and forcing myself into the ring, I watched my opportunity, and struck my disobedient wife a heavy blow in the head with the side of my battle-axe, which dropped her as if a ball had pierced her heart.

I dragged her through the crowd, and left her; I then went back to my tent.

The girl's father theatrically bestows a second daughter upon the champion of his race, who finds her "prettier than her sister," and who is proud of the change:—

During the night, while I and my wife were quietly reposing, some person crawled into our couch, sobbing most bitterly. Angry at the intrusion, I asked who was there.

"Me," answered a voice, which, although well-nigh stifled with bitter sobs, I recognized as that of my other wife, whom everyone had supposed dead. After lying outside the lodge senseless for some hours, she had recovered and groped her way to my bed.

"Go away," I said, "you have no business here; I have a new wife now, one who has sense."

"I will not go away," she replied; "my ears are open now. I was a fool not to hearken to my husband's words when his heart was crying, but now I have good sense, and will always hearken to your words."

It did really seem as if her heart was broken, and she kept her position until morning. I thought myself now well supplied with wives, having *two* more than I cared to have; but I deemed it hardly worth while to complain, as I should soon leave the camp, wives and all.

A series of battles, surprises, escapes; three years' wanderings, without the sight of a white man; a third marriage, with Still-Water, the daughter of a Crow chief; single combats; a long love episode concerning Pine-Leaf, a red-skinned amazon, whose feats would be astounding in a circus; the capture of many beautiful girls in war; three whippings inflicted by women on Beckwourth for violating the moral law of the Crows; his appointment as first councillor and chief of the nation, make up, it may be supposed, a very dramatic story. Finally, Beckwourth, after meeting with more adventures than Ulysses, and breaking the heartstrings of many a savage Calypso, settled in a valley near the Feather River, on the great Pacific road. Discovering in the mountains a pass—Beckwourth's Pass in the maps—which greatly facilitated the Californian immigration, his house became known as the hall of the pilgrims, and he was once more attached to semi-civilized life. "I think of my son, who is the chief," he says, "I think of his mother, who went unharmed through the Medicine Lodge; I think of Bar-chee-ampe, the brave heroine. I see her, tearful, watching my departure from the banks of Yellow Stone. Her nation expects my return, that I may be buried with my supposed fathers, but none looks so eagerly for the great warrior as Pine-Leaf."

We have a very decided opinion as to the merits of this narrative. It is not altogether fictitious, we know. Beckwourth is a real personage, who encountered the wildest adventures, and became the favourite of the Crow nation. His instincts were partly those of the barbarian, partly those of the restless trader; and, no doubt, he did leave a wife sighing for him in an Indian hut, as an English traveller—"let none him name"—deserted a young bride in an Ansayrieh valley. But the narrative is so injudiciously written, that every chapter suggests a suspicion of interpolated forgeries.

HOME TRAVEL.

Handbook for Travellers in Wiltshire, Dorsetshire, and Somersetshire.

Murray.

THE tide of travel begins, we trust, to set homewards. Switzerland, the Rhine, and even the East, have been so completely 'done' by the Great British tourists, that nothing now remains to Brown, Jones, and Robinson but to explore the natural beauties and antiquities of their own—their native land. To assist this most desirable retrogression, we are glad to find Mr. Murray, the 'guide, philosopher, and friend' of so many thousands of our wandering countrymen, undertaking to publish a series of Handbooks for home tourists on a similar plan to those immortal Manuals, which, even had Byron never lived, would have rendered the name of 'John Murray' famous through the world. Having started from Cornwall and Devon, Mr. Murray now takes us into the lovely county of Somerset, with its green English scenery so rich and soft, its luxuriant pastures, its purple distances of hills, its delightful Combes, its fine old church towers, its ancient British and Roman camps, and a hundred other interesting associations. We have looked through that part of the *Handbook* which is devoted to Somersetshire, having just acquaintance enough with that county to enable us to pronounce a trustworthy opinion on the merits of the Guide, and we can now conscientiously recommend it for its fidelity and accuracy. Indeed, the *Handbook* reveals to us much we were sadly ignorant of, even in places we have known familiarly and well. Of Dorsetshire and of Wiltshire we speak with less confidence, knowing little or nothing of those counties.

But, in truth, this *Handbook* is not only an inducement to us to make a tour at home, and infinitely useful in telling us how to do so in the best manner, but it will form one of a series, which, when completed, will be a valuable contribution to the library. To the 'intelligent foreigner,' these Handbooks for England will be as indispensable as the Continental Handbooks are to the Great Briton abroad.

"The Autobiography of an Indian Chief." *Leader* 30 Aug. 1856: 836. Nineteenth Century Collections Online. Web. 16 Feb. 2016.

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