

The little kinematical, or rather quasi-corpuscular, *excursus* to which pp. 71-74 are devoted, is one of the richest pieces of *paradoxing* (in De Morgan's sense) that we have ever met with. Here is a little bit of it:—

"Pouillet, having ascertained the number of thermal units imparted to the water in his pyrheliometer of 3.93 ins. diameter, imagined that he had measured only the energy of the rays contained in a pencil of 11.9 square inches section; whereas, in reality, he had, at the end of his experiment of five minutes' duration, subjected his instrument to the action of the entire number of rays contained in a passing pencil or sunbeam, the section of which we ascertain by multiplying the orbital advance of the earth during five minutes, 28,836,000 ft., by the diameter of the pyrheliometer, 0.305 ft."

Thus it is the *number* of rays, not the time of exposure to one ray, which determines the result!

One more quotation, a very short one, must be given. It is from p. 136, and we put two words in italics:—

"In view of the fact that projectile force *diminishes inversely* as the square of the depth of the medium penetrated. . . ."

It is not easy to fix on the exact meaning of this very curious statement. Hence we must take it literally, whatever be the consequences. Discussion of penetration would obviously be useless in such a case, for the whole projectile force (even were it infinite) would be gone before penetration had commenced!

The immense expense which has been lavished on this volume, and on its truly wonderful illustrations, is calculated to produce reflections even more painful than those evoked by the perusal of the text itself. From the materials here given, *something* may yet be made, but certainly not on the lines chosen by the author.

We hope, shortly, to return to our store, and to select for the instruction and warning of our readers a few additional specimens, by no means inferior in quality to those just dealt with.

G. H.

#### PROFESSOR FLEEMING JENKIN, LL.D., F.R.S.

ON Friday last, most unexpectedly and greatly to the grief of all his friends, died Prof. Fleeming Jenkin at Edinburgh, at the age of fifty-two. He had been in somewhat delicate health for a considerable time, but was, as usual, personally directing the engineering operations in connection with telpherage in London and Sussex, and seemed to have greatly gained in health and strength when he started for Edinburgh some days before his death. But blood-poisoning succeeded a slight surgical operation, and his death rapidly followed.

He was born in Kent in 1833, and was the son of the late Capt. Charles Jenkin, R.N. His school-days were spent at Jedburgh, Edinburgh, and Frankfort-on-the-Maine, while he took his M.A. degree at the University of Genoa, and began his engineering career in Marseilles, thus acquiring a wide knowledge of languages and of peoples which was most valuable to him afterwards in his scientific and social life.

In 1851 he returned to England, and was apprenticed to Messrs. Fairbairn's in Manchester, from which time his progress was rapid. We hope that the interesting and highly creditable history of his subsequent introduction as a well-trained mechanical engineer to submarine telegraphy (then in its extreme youth) and to Sir William Thomson, which led to his soon taking charge of the testing of the first Atlantic cable in 1858, and to a friendship and partnership with Thomson and Varley, will yet be told by some one who can do full justice to it. Our grief at Varley's loss is yet fresh, and we deeply sympathise with Sir William Thomson at the close of this partnership, the existence of which has been synonymous with the progress of submarine telegraphy.

On the appointment of the Committee of the British Association on Electrical Standards Jenkin's services were

solicited, and the good work that he did as a member of this Committee is amply shown by his large contributions to the Reports on Electrical Standards, and which contain an account of his absolute measurement of the capacity of a condenser, the first such determination ever made; and the chapters that he wrote in connection with these Reports on the subject of "Absolute Units" formed the only available text-book for the student of mathematical electricity before about the year 1872. Appended to these reports are the Cantor lectures which he delivered on the construction, laying, and testing of submarine cables, and these lectures showed as wide an acquaintance with the practice of electrical science as do the other chapters referred to with the theory of the subject.

In 1865 he was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society and Professor of Engineering in University College, London, and in 1868 he became Professor in the University of Edinburgh, where he created a School of Engineering to which considerable numbers of prominent Engineers and Professors of Engineering acknowledge their indebtedness. In the following year the Royal Society of Edinburgh elected him a Fellow, and subsequently he became a Member of the Institution of Civil Engineers, having been made an Associate of that Institution as early as 1859. In 1883 the honorary degree of LL.D. was conferred on him by the University of Glasgow.

Jenkin's book on Electricity and Magnetism, published in 1873, was a revelation to non-mathematical and even to many mathematical men, of the ideas which had until then been wrapped up in the mystery of mathematics or in the practice of the submarine cable testing-rooms. Sir William Thomson had been publishing many detached papers on electricity in the mathematical journals, and had been applying his knowledge in practice, so that an exact science of electrical quantities had been growing up among submarine cable engineers; but the electricity of the text-books remained as unscientific and primitive as of old: the knowledge of the practical men had become indeed far more scientific than the knowledge of the schools.

Fully recognising this, Prof. Jenkin made in his book a totally new departure, and presented electricity and magnetism for the first time in a text-book as subjects capable of quantitative study. To understand the great effect produced by this book, which has now passed through many editions, it must be remembered that neither Clerk-Maxwell's treatise, nor Thomson's reprint of his Mathematical Papers appeared until 1873, and that at that time "electric potential," which to-day has its commercial unit, was to every one, except the engineers of submarine telegraphy, a mere mathematical function.

In 1882 a lecture was delivered at the Royal Institution on Electric Railways, and the system devised by Profs. Ayrton and Perry for effecting an absolute block, and thus enabling any number of electric trains to be run without the employment of drivers, guards, or signalmen, was described and exhibited by a working model. An account of this was read by Prof. Jenkin, and he at once saw that it contained the solution of a plan that he had been thinking over for doing on a large scale by electricity what had previously been done on a small scale with pneumatic tubes. *Telpherage*, or the automatic electric transport of goods, was the outcome, and the development of practical methods of running carriers electrically along a steel rod suspended in the air from wooden posts, occupied him, with the other two inventors, during the last three years of his life, the system being one which needed new invention in every one of its details. His inventive power is described by his assistants as wonderfully active and prolific, and he had energetic characteristics which only seldom accompany inventive genius, and which made his cooperation invaluable to the other directors of the Telpherage Company. It is deeply to be regretted that, having busied himself so actively in the long series of telpherage experi-

ments carried out in Hertfordshire, he did not live to see the completion of the first commercial "telpher line" now being erected at Glynder in Sussex.

The building of houses on sanitary principles interested him largely, and the Sanitary Protection Associations in Edinburgh and in London owed their existence to his initiation, and their success was largely due to his constant exertions. His article on "Bridges" in the "Encyclopædia Britannica," his book on "Healthy Houses," and his primer on "Magnetism and Electricity," are well known to scientific readers, but not perhaps to the readers of his numerous articles in the quarterly reviews and monthly magazines, the last of which was his recent article on "Telpherage" in *Good Words*. His numerous scientific papers published since 1864 are to be found in the *Proceedings* of the British Association, the *Philosophical Magazine*, the *Proceedings* and *Transactions* of the Royal Societies of London and Edinburgh, the *Journal* of the Society of Arts, the *American Journal of Science*, and the *Journal* of the Society of Telegraph Engineers.

Technical education much interested him long before it acquired its present interest for the public, and he presided at meetings of the Society of Arts and other societies when papers on that subject were brought forward. As a director of the Watt Institute in Edinburgh for several years he helped to advance technical education in Scotland.

He was an enthusiastic admirer of ability in other men, and he was especially warm in his encouragement of beginners, whether they were his own pupils or not. To gain his help it was only necessary to let him see that it was anxiously wished for, and that the recipient was not likely to make a mean use of it. He had marked dramatic power, and the plays acted in his drawing-room will long be remembered by his friends; while to his conversation, his general reading and wide sympathies gave a charm which was as powerfully felt as it is now regretfully remembered by all who were fortunate enough to know him.

#### THE GEOLOGICAL SURVEY OF BELGIUM

ALL who are interested in the careful and methodical investigation of the geological structure of the European continent will be sorry to learn that the Belgian Chamber of Representatives has cut down the vote for the prosecution of the detailed Geological Survey of Belgium so seriously as practically to suspend the work. It is miserable to see personal dislikes, religious differences and political antagonism imported into the discussion of a scientific project. Every competent witness must bear testimony to the minute fidelity and conscientious labour with which M. Dupont and his staff have carried out their Survey. If any fault can be found with his maps it is that they are too complete. They give more information than any ordinary reader can assimilate. Each sheet, indeed, is a detailed treatise on the area which it depicts. There are certainly no such elaborately exhaustive maps published in any other country; and Belgium may justly boast that she has led the way in an important advance in the delineation of geological features. It is an open secret, however, that the official geologists have all along encountered the determined opposition of the "géologues libres" who were not so fortunate as to be entrusted with the control of the work. The Survey having been planned by the Liberal Ministry, and being stoutly supported by the authorities, has until now been able to hold on its course. Much time was, no doubt necessarily, spent by M. Dupont in perfecting his system of colour-printing, and the delay in the appearance of his maps, possibly also the difficulty found by the malcontents in understanding them, were used as arguments for a total reorganisation of the staff. The

opposition has recently been renewed under the clerical Government now in power, and unfortunately with more success. From the published debate it is clear that the Minister in whose department the estimate for the Geological Map was prepared, and who was officially bound to support that estimate, sat still without speaking in its defence, and the House, taking this silence, no doubt, as an expression of the inclination of the new Government, cut down the vote. We are sure that this retrograde step will be regretted by all who wish well to the progress of science. Into the personal squabbles connected with the subject we have no wish to enter. But as a public act of unwisdom the vote of the House of Representatives will, we hope, be rescinded and the prosecution of the Survey will be again allowed to proceed. If any fault is found with the way in which the map has been prepared, surely the Commission contains talent and energy enough to inquire into this and set matters right without practically bringing the Survey to a stand.

#### THE CONGO<sup>1</sup>

THESE two welcome volumes from Mr. Stanley testify to the accelerated rate of events in these latter times. It is only twelve years since Livingstone died in the vain search for the sources of the Nile down by Lake Bangweolo, and under the belief that no river but the Nile could sweep past Nyangwe with such a breadth and volume as he found the Lualaba to have. He was not singular in cherishing such a belief; many geographers believed, like him, that the Congo could not fetch such a sweeping circuit, and that the Lualaba must make its way northwards in spite of differences of level and somehow add its waters to the Albert Nyanza. It is only eight years since Mr. Stanley dispersed the delusion, and solved the problem both of the Nile and the Congo; it is just about six years since he began operations as the agent of the International African Association. To judge from the narrative of his journey across the continent, there was no blacker part of the Black Continent than the river banks between Nyangwe and the Atlantic, and no more intractable people than many of the tribes through whom he and his men had to run the gauntlet. Yet already, almost solely by his exertions, this most unpromising region has become "A land of settled government," at least on paper. It has engaged the continued attention of diplomatists from all the great States of the world for months, and is the subject of as many treaties as if it had been founded a century ago.

In reality, however, it is something more than a paper State. No one can read Mr. Stanley's narrative without being convinced that all along the river from Vivi to Stanley Falls there already exists what may fairly be regarded as an organised Government, carried on from some twenty-four stations as centres. But with the merely political aspects of this successful undertaking we cannot deal here. It is certainly an interesting experiment, both from a political and social point of view, this attempt to raise into a State a region not yet redeemed from savagery. What the ultimate result will be it is hard to say; on the one side a great mass of savagery, and on the other the most advanced European influences in politics, in commerce, in industry, in religion. For already we find bands of missionaries everywhere, and as among them are many men of prudence, tact, and ability, Mr. Stanley acts wisely in encouraging their efforts; they will certainly be of service in helping him to accomplish the object he has in view.

Without the aid of the latest applications of science, Mr. Stanley could never have succeeded in accomplishing all he has done in the brief period of six years. Steam has been of infinite service to him, and engineer-

<sup>1</sup> "The Congo, and the Founding of its Free State." By Henry M. Stanley. Two Vols. (London: Sampson Low and Co., 1885.)