

A STORY OF THE PHILIPPINES.¹

MOST people, after reading the latest work of that indefatigable traveller Mr. Savage Landor, will be disposed to question the appropriateness of his title "Gems of the East." Beyond the attraction of remoteness (which always possesses a fascination for the

American troops, coast exploration, collisions with cannibals and head hunters, &c.—which recall the exploits of the Savage Landor of Tibet and Baluchistan; but they are no longer the mainstay and objective of the work.

The present book contains far more of patient and honest scientific research than of those fantastic performances as an explorer which have made Mr. Landor famous. His manner of writing is familiar and colloquial, occasionally almost ungrammatical. Taking the reader by the arm (metaphorically, for he is careful to explain that he always travels alone), he leads him gently to the outermost verge of civilised existence, and there introduces him to a race of people scattered in innumerable tribes through the islands of the Philippine group, who are so little understood, even by their American administrators, as to be amongst the most interesting of those aborigines of humanity who are still left struggling against the world-swamping waves of civilisation. They will doubtless "go under"—absorbed by the spread of those growing and expanding nations who will finally reduce the ethnographical conditions of the world to one dead level of uninteresting development. Judging from Mr. Landor's description of the countries which they occupy, and of the advance of American institutions amongst



FIG. 1.—Woman carrying Water in a Bamboo Cylinder. From "Gems of the East."

explorer), and the interest which still lingers round the records of the American occupation of those islands, there does not appear to be much in the humid, swamp-ridden plains, or in the volcanic hills of the Philippines to justify the suggestion of entrancing glitter and brightness; even if it justifies the production of two volumes of statistical detail about them.

In some respects this latest of Mr. Landor's works differs essentially from its predecessors. There is far less effort to maintain the interest of the reader by a narrative of perilous adventures and hairbreadth escapes, and much more appeal to the student of science generally, and of anthropology in particular—in which branch, indeed, Mr. Landor shows himself to be an expert. So far, perhaps, the author is to be congratulated, for there must certainly be amongst his assortment of observations on subjects geological, botanical and ethnographical, or purely anthropological, many which are new to science, and therefore valuable. Nor are the incidents of adventure by any means wanting. There is room in the book for new records of perils by land and sea—adventurous rock-climbing, rough and ready campaigning with

them, it will probably be long yet ere the Philippines assume a social condition analogous to that of Cape Colony or of India; but the process is none the less



FIG. 2.—Bontoc Igorrotes: showing resemblance to Ainu of North Japan. From "Gems of the East."

¹ "Gems of the East." By A. Henry Savage Landor. Pp., Vol. i., xii+328; Vol. ii., xi+460. (London: Macmillan and Co., Ltd., 1904.) Price 30s. net.

drifting finally into armed expeditions and the reduction of native strongholds.

American pluck and endurance are fully tested in these little frontier wars, which afford opportunities for the practical training of soldiers such as are rapidly disappearing on the borderland of the continental Red Indian. Cholera appears to be their deadliest foe in the field, allied to certain forms of local disease the exact nature of which is not readily recognisable from Mr. Landor's description. The author has no high opinion of modern medical science. The Filipinos (he tells us) are not yet foolish enough to believe in the mosquito theory for malaria. Nevertheless, they build their houses on piles so as to raise them sufficiently above the humid atmosphere of the ground level to ensure a free current of air. Nor does he himself believe in the efficacy of boiling water in order to render it free from germs and choleraic impurities. Precautions of any sort, indeed, do not appeal to his spirit of chivalrous adventure. When climbing precipices "I did not use ropes or other such nonsensical Alpinistic devices; my rule has always been to use common sense and avoid all accidents." This certainly is an excellent rule (if not entirely original), and one much to be commended to the Alpine Club. But combined with a proud disregard for such conventional appliances and precautions as usually become more valued by the geographical explorer the farther his experiences extend, Mr. Landor undoubtedly possesses that great faculty of human sympathy which enables him to deal with all classes of people, and to obtain the confidence (even the co-operation) of the aboriginal natives in branches of research which must have appeared to them exceedingly strange and suspicious. It is most difficult to persuade the brawny independent savage of the jungle to permit himself to be handled and measured, to have calipers applied to his head, and a minute examination made of all the features which nature has given him, for a purpose which is absolutely unintelligible to his limited understanding.

But Mr. Landor succeeded admirably, and the result is undoubtedly a valuable contribution to anthropological science, although the constant repetition of tables of measurement might very well have been dispensed with in a book which (regarded as a popular work) is already too long.

The multitude of the islands forming the Philippine group, and the excessive variety of detail which permeates them, the differentiation between the many tribes which inhabit them, and even the enumeration of their extraordinarily abundant vegetable products, become confusing after a while, and it is a relief to turn to the story of pure adventure, and the occasional interludes of graphic description, which is what the world looks for from Mr. Landor's pen. Doubtless it is Mr. Landor's intention to pose seriously as a scientific observer, and there is quite enough in the book to justify the assumption; but it might have been better had he made a little wider separation between that which belongs to the realm of statistical detail and that which is narrative of personal adventure.

T. H. H.

A PROBABLE CAUSE OF THE YEARLY VARIATION OF MAGNETIC STORMS AND AURORÆ.

IN a previous number of this Journal (vol. lxxvii. p. 377) an account was given of the very close relationship which seemed to exist between the epochs of the occurrence of prominences in the polar regions of the sun and Ellis's "great" magnetic disturbances. In a later number, (vol. lxxviii. p. 257) it was shown

that the presence of these polar prominences synchronised also with the appearances of large "polar" coronal streamers as seen during total solar eclipses. Disturbances near the solar poles seemed to play such an important rôle both in solar and terrestrial changes that an inquiry was made to find out whether any effect is felt on the earth when either of these solar poles is turned towards the earth during the course of the year. The result of such an investigation, recently communicated by Sir Norman Lockyer and the writer to the Royal Society, will here be briefly stated.

During the course of a year the south pole of the sun is most turned towards the earth in the beginning of March, and the north pole most towards the earth in the beginning of September. At the two intermediate epochs, in the beginning of June and December, neither pole is turned towards or away from the earth, but occupies an intermediate position. Hence we see that the equinoxes occur in the same

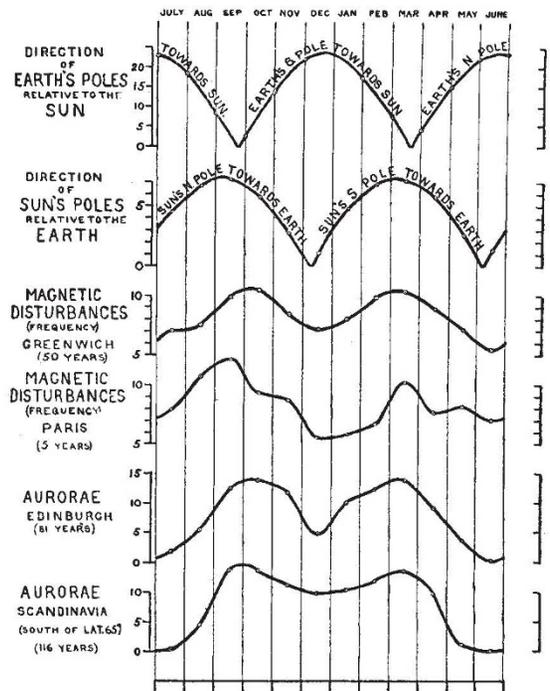


FIG. 1.—Curves showing the relationship between the positions of the earth's poles in relation to the sun, the sun's poles with regard to the earth, and the frequency of magnetic disturbances and auroræ throughout a year.

months as those in which one or other of the solar poles is turned towards the earth, while the neutral positions of the solar poles in relation to the earth occur in the same months as the solstices.

If, therefore, these solar polar regions are capable of disturbing the magnetic and electric conditions on the earth, then, when they are most directed to her at the equinoxes, the greatest effects during a year should be recorded, and when they are least directed the effects should be at a minimum.

With regard to the facts about the variation of magnetic disturbances and auroræ, Mr. Ellis has shown that the curves of frequency of magnetic disturbances at Greenwich and Paris are very similar, "showing maxima at or near the equinoxes, and minima at or near the solstices." These also, he further points out, are similar, with regard to the epochs of maxima, to the curve representing the