

## Meeting of Dr. Barth and Dr. Vogel.\*

On the 1st of December, 1854, it fell to the share of Dr. Barth—he who had already been believed dead—to meet in “very good health and spirits” Dr. Vogel:—to see once more the face of a European and grasp the hand of a countryman who had been sent to join him.

Dr. Vogel had left Kuka in the latter end of November, to proceed in a westerly direction *en route* for Zinder, the north-western frontier town of the Empire of Bornu,—being anxious to extend his astronomical and other observations to that place. Happily in the beginning of the journey, he received a letter from Dr. Barth, dated Kano, the 24th of October; and this was the first direct news he had received from him. According to this letter, Dr. Barth had left Kano *en route* for Kuka, about the same time that Dr. Vogel had departed from the latter place to proceed westward, on the very road which the former had chosen. Thus, both travellers had started to meet without knowing it themselves. Dr. Vogel, keeping on the Kano road, and leaving Zinder on the right had the happiness to fall in with Dr. Barth at Baudi, a small town situated about 110 geographical miles north-east from Kano, and nearly 200 geographical miles due west from Kuka. As only a few preliminary hasty lines from Dr. Vogel, written in pencil, have come to hand, the particulars of this event have not yet transpired; but it may easily be conceived what it must have been to Dr. Barth. It was exactly six years since he left Europe, in company with Mr. Richardson and Dr. Overweg; and since the decease of the latter, on the 27th of September, 1852, not only had his communications with Europe been all but entirely cut off, but he had indeed been isolated from the civilized world, and left to battle with manifold hardships and dangers.

Dr. Vogel writes, that Dr. Barth had moved on to Kuka, whence he intended to proceed, without further delay, home, *via* Murzuk and Tripoli. As to himself, he continued his journey to Zinder; whence he despatched a letter with the above news, dated the 4th of December last, and which took nearly four months to reach Tripoli by way of Ghadamis.

Since the above was written, letters from Dr. Barth himself have come to my hands, which, though written before his meeting with Dr. Vogel, are of great interest, as they contain the first news respecting his journey from Timbuktu back to Sudan, and the first positive information ever received from a European traveller of the River Kowara between that place and its lower course.

It appears that Dr. Barth had been detained at or near Timbuktu several months beyond the date of his last letters despatched from that region, namely, the 23rd of March, 1854, between which date and the time of his arrival at Kano, which took place on the 17th of October last, nearly seven months intervened. Dr. Barth himself says:—“After a protracted stay of nearly a year at Timbuktu—the ‘Queen of the Desert,’ as it is justly called by the natives—I retraced my steps eastwards along the shores of that magnificent river, which the undaunted Scotchman [Mungo Park] descended about fifty years since, fighting his way through numerous fleets manned by Tuareks and Sudans—lost labor to science, his journal having perished with him;—while I went along reconciling and befriending those very people, and obtaining full security from their chiefs for any English visiting their territories, whether by land or by water.” Thus, Dr. Barth has been able to realize his great wish, namely, to trace this river between Timbuktu and Say; which latter place is situated in about 13° 10′ north lat. and 3° east long., Greenwich. This, its middle course, seems everywhere navigable and enlivened with large fleets, its shores densely inhabited by people, who received and treated Dr. Barth most kindly, and implored him to stay with them altogether, or to return soon in an English ship. They learned from him with astonishment as to whence the river—which forms the basis of their existence and wealth—comes from, and where it terminates.

Dr. Barth alludes to a large map of the river drawn by him, which he had sent to the Foreign Office. He has also transmitted with the present letters some of a former date, which has been despatched by him while on his way to Timbuktu, but which, as he found on his return to Sudan, had not been forwarded, probably, because their envelopes and addresses had been lost. These letters are dated “Dore, in Libtako, 16th July, 1853,” which is about midway between Sokoto and Timbuktu (see map in my ‘*Geographische Mittheilungen*,’ part I.), or in lat. 14° 30′ north, and close upon the meridian of Greenwich, and they contain a full account respecting that region, which was entirely unknown before.

\* *Athenæum*.

Libtako forms a portion of the very extensive Fellata dominions, and is a very important commercial point. The principal article of trade is the salt of Taodenni, which is brought thither by the Arabs of Timbuktu, while the Tuareks bring corn and butter, the people of Mossi their celebrated donkeys and their famous cotton manufactures, cheap black shirts and a large peculiar kind of guro nuts. The inhabitants of the country supply sweet and sour milk, and their manufactures consist chiefly of very handsome and cheap shawls made of cotton and wool, and of various colours. The market at Dore, the chief place of Libtako, is held every day. Cowries are almost the sole medium of interchange.

Libtako occupies an elevated, dreary plain, devoid of trees and shrubs, and suffering from the want of rain. Granite protrudes in many places out of the soil. Dr. Barth made many enquiries respecting the town of Adafudia, reached by Mr. Duncan, and which, according to the position assigned to it by that traveller, ought to be within 100 geographical miles from Libtako—but in vain; he could hear nothing whatever of it. Though the country was in a state of anarchy when Dr. Barth passed through it, he did not suffer on that account, but rather from the too exalted manner in which he was received everywhere, the inhabitants flocking from all quarters to receive his blessing. The Arabs looked upon him as no common Christian, owing to the information he possessed of topics specially interesting to themselves, and to the fact of his coming from the East. The Tillahas had christened him “Môdibo,” by which name he was universally known in those countries.

It was near Libtako where Barth was so fortunate as to make the acquaintance of one of the followers of the Sheikh el Bakay—the Pope of Timbuktu,—who subsequently became his best friend and greatest benefactor. This person exercises his influence over a very extensive region, nearly as far as Sokoto in the east; and he may be said to have created of Timbuktu a kind of African Rome,—the centre of the power of Islam.

The region between Libtako in the west and the river Kowara (here called Tsa, Say or Mayo) in the east is occupied by territories belonging to the large country of Gurma, only the northern part of which belongs to the Fellatas. The language of Gurma, has a few words in common with that of Benin. Within Gurma are various rivers, all tributaries of the Kowara, the largest being the Sirba, which Barth found twelve feet deep in the beginning of July, and which he had to cross by means of immense bundles of reeds fastened together, as boats are entirely wanting. The valley of the Sirba is very ill-famed as being most destructive to all kinds of cattle and horses. The soil along the course of the river swarms with black worms.

Dr. Barth's letters contain interesting extracts from the “*Tarikh el Sudan*,” an important work on the history of Sudan, hitherto unknown.

On his arrival at Kano, in October last, Dr. Barth, instead of finding letters and supplies from home, received information of the rumour of his death having been spread in Sudan, and even reached Europe, about which, not knowing exactly the origin and circumstances connected with it, he felt very sore and indignant, while the absence of all needful supplies put him to great straits and inconvenience. Happily these, as we know, he subsequently got over. His longing to reach Europe knew no bounds, as he declares that the being exposed to another rainy season (the sixth), or to remain much longer without the refreshing influence of European atmosphere and proper food, would be his certain death. Yet in the same sentence he speaks of ultimately returning to the field of his labours, and trying to penetrate into the interior of Africa from the coast of Zanzibar, after having strengthened his health!

The only cause of joy which awaited him in Kano was the news of the success of the Chadda Expedition, of which he seemed to have learnt all the particulars from the natives. Among others, he met an old acquaintance, the Governor of Hamarrua, a country situated on the shores of the upper course of the Chadda. This person told him that the exploring steamer *Pleiad* had also reached his country, that he had received the Expedition very friendly, and had made the commander a present of six oxen.

AUGUSTUS PETERMANN.

## Novel Arrangement of Picture Galleries.

After the late M. Rothmann had acquired a great reputation as a landscape painter, King Louis of Bavaria sent him to Greece, where that artist produced works highly spoken of by the German press. Some consider them the *ne plus ultra* of landscape delineation, each painting being a poem, representing in the perfect concordance of