

Dr. Livingston's Recent Visit to Africa.

NOVA SCOTIA is not behind any part of Christendom in the interest it has shewn in behalf of the heathen, and the readers of the *Monthly Record* may be pleased to hear something of the result of that great expedition which was fitted out in 1858, to the Eastern Coast of Africa, under the auspices of the British Government, and of which Dr. Livingston was the ruling and guiding spirit. The world has recently been furnished with a complete narrative of the exploration, in the form of a large and deeply interesting volume, compiled from the notes of Dr. Livingston and his brother Charles, who accompanied the exploring party. The whole party consisted of the Dr. and his brother, Mr. Rae, Mr. Thornton, and Dr. Kirk, to each of whom a distinct task was assigned in the great enterprise. On board the vessel which conveyed this party, was embarked a body of missionaries despatched by the English Universities, at the head of which was Bishop McKenzie, one of the very few men with a Celtic name who has worn an Episcopal title. The mission, it will be remembered, was unfortunate: its enthusiastic chief fell a victim to his zeal in the good cause, and the mission was broken up under his successor.

The expedition left England on the 10th March, 1858, in Her Majesty's steamer "Pearl." Capt. Duncan, and reached the east coast of Africa in May following, and at once proceeded to explore the river Zambesi and its feeders. The principal mouths of the Zambesi are watched by British cruisers, to keep in check the infamous slave-traffic which the Portuguese eagerly pursue in these distant regions. Dr. Livingston has exposed and denounced, in the strongest terms, the truculent and deceitful conduct of the Portuguese Government in relation to this iniquitous business. The Portuguese Ministers pretend to discourage and suppress the slave-traffic, but this pretension is only a mask to conceal the active complicity of which they are guilty. Portuguese vessels, at every opportunity, fly up the mouths of the Zambesi, and return laden with wretched captives who are sold into slavery on the island of Cuba. The atrocities perpetrated in the pursuit of this horrible calling are revolting and sickening to read, and the result is, that all missionary effort among this people, on the part of white men, is rendered fruitless. The confidence of the natives is destroyed, and their very Demons are painted white. Here is a scene of horror and desolation which the travellers beheld. The man "Mariano" referred to was a native villain, half-caste, doing business for the Portuguese traders in human flesh:—

"The Shire having risen, we steamed off on the 10th of January, 1863, with the Lady Nyassa in tow. It was not long before we

came upon the ravages of the notorious Mariano. The survivors of a small hamlet, at the foot of Morambala, were in a state of starvation, having lost their food by one of his marauding parties. The women were in the fields collecting insects, roots, wild fruits, and whatever could be eaten, in order to drag on their lives, if possible, till the next crop should be ripe. Two canoes passed us, that had been robbed by Mariano's band of everything they had in them; the owners were gathering palm-nuts for their subsistence. They wore palm-leaf aprons, as the robbers had stripped them of their clothing and ornaments. Dead bodies floated past us daily, and in the mornings the paddles had to be cleared of corpses, caught by the floats during the night. For scores of miles, the entire population of the valley was swept away by this scourge Mariano, who is again, as he was before, the great Portuguese slave-agent. It made the heart ache to see the wide-spread desolation; the river-banks, once so populous, all silent, the villages burned down, and an oppressive stillness reigning where formerly crowds of eager sellers appeared with the various products of their industry. Here and there might be seen on the banks a small dreary deserted shed, where had sat, day after day, a starving fisherman, until the rising waters drove the fish from their wonted haunts and left him to die. Tinnane had been defeated; his people had been killed, kidnapped, and forced to flee from their villages. There were a few wretched survivors in the village above the Ruo; but the majority of the population was dead. The sight and smell of dead bodies was everywhere. Many skeletons lay beside the path, where in their weakness they had fallen and expired. Ghastly living forms of boys and girls, with dull dead eyes, were crouching beside some of the huts. A few more miserable days of their terrible hunger, and they would be with the dead."

To give some idea of the religious notions of these tribes, we shall add another quotation:

"The power ascribed to certain medicines, made from plants known only to the initiated, is the most prominent feature in the religion of the Africans. According to their belief, there is not only a specific for every ill that flesh is heir to, but for every woe of the wounded spirit. The good spirits of the departed, Azimo or Basimo, may be propitiated by medicines, or honoured by offerings of beer or meal, or anything they loved while in the body; and the bad spirits, 'Mchessi' of whom we have heard only at Tette, and therefore cannot be certain that they belong to the pure native faith, may be prevented by medicine from making raids and mischief in the gardens. A man with headache was heard to say, 'my departed father is now scolding me; I feel his power in my head,' and then