

of the Red Sea ; she may even have been fair to look upon, as was her ancestress Sarah at a greater age still ; but it rather shocks one's sensibilities to find this ancient maiden lady described as a "tender virgin" and to hear that Joshua paid assiduous court to his blushing grandmother. Of course she was not his grandmother, but she might have been such with far less exercise of the imagination than it takes to make him her lover. Zoroaster, Joshua, and similar books shew how miserably deficient we are in definite information concerning the history of the ancient world. Full twenty different dates are given for the period of the Persian prophet, and half that number of claimants appear for the unenviable position of the Pharaoh of the Exodus. Ebers supposes the latter to have been Menephtah, which he certainly was not. In a work of the imagination, even in a children's story, verisimilitude is most important. If but one circumstance, however small, is known to be at variance with truth, the whole narrative loses its value. Happily there is no need to despair of restoring the page of ancient history. Speedily, we may hope, and more rapidly than we think, the veil that hides it may be removed, and the Ebers of the future may have more reliable material for the foundation of their romantic stories of love and war. Still, to a lover of the Bible it is pleasant to find good men, even now, writing on and reading about the characters of Scripture. Faith in the sacred narrative is the necessary substratum of faith in Him whom the narrative gradually reveals, and such books subserve this faith.

Is Stanley's Darkest Africa on our book-shelves? Yes! Have I read it? No! but I have dipped into it, and have been interested in the pygmies, appalled by the gigantic dark overgrown forests, amused by the apes and monkeys, awestricken by the vast solitudes, irritated by its tale of incapacity on the one hand, of cowardice and cruelty on the other, filled with intense admiration for the generalship and pluck of the great explorer and his gallant lieutenants, damped a little by regret for a somewhat unnecessary waste of human life such as a Livingstone would not have sanctioned, and uplifted with gratitude to God that Stanley, like Gordon and hosts of other men who have been raised up to do great and hard things, learned to realize the nearness of Him who is in all as well as over all, and to put his trust in the "Divinity that shapes our ends, rough hew them how we will." Whatever defects may appear in the character and actions of the hero of the day, and these are few compared with his virtues, his heroism and his faith combined