

Illustrated Interviews.

No. LII.—SIR CLEMENTS MARKHAM AND THE ROYAL GEOGRAPHICAL SOCIETY.

BY WILLIAM G. FITZGERALD.



It is not usual to associate with the learned societies stories of weird adventure, and romance more strange, more thrilling than the wildest flights of fiction; but the magnificent Institution in Savile Row is the striking exception that goes to prove the rule. To realize this, it is only necessary to recall the marvellous exploits of such men as Schomburgk, Ross, Layard, Livingstone, Barth, Burton, M'Clintock, Franklin, Speke, Grant, Cameron, Baker, Stanley, Thomson, Greely, Emin Pasha, Selous, Littledale, Nansen, and many others whose names will be found recorded in the list of Gold Medalists in the entrance-hall of the Royal Geographical Society.

When a man is about to explore remote and unknown parts of the earth, he comes to the R.G.S. for a little coaching in methods of observation; and the moment he has returned from the wilds, the very first thing he does is to read a paper before that appreciative body. From this, then, some slight notion of the fascinating romance attaching to the Society may be obtained; but I hope to demonstrate conclusively, even in this brief sketch, that the R.G.S. is the most interesting institution in the world.

The distinguished President, Sir Clements Markham, K.C.B., F.R.S., whose portrait appears on this page, is well known as the leading British geographer and a voluminous writer on many subjects. My interview with him took place at the Society's head-quarters in Savile Row. He is a Yorkshireman, born at Stillingfleet in 1830. At fourteen he joined the Navy, and although his stay in that branch of the Service was short, yet he had plenty of stirring adventures, such as hunting

the Riff pirates in the Mediterranean. A few years later, we find young Markham going to the Arctic regions, with Austin's expedition, in search of Franklin; and on his return he passed his exam. for lieutenant, and then left the Service. That was in 1851.

The next phase of Sir Clements' career was his work in Peru, where he went to study the language, explore the ruins, and search for antiquities. But his greatest achievement

was certainly the introduction into India of the cinchona plant, with the result that the price of quinine—most indispensable of drugs to sojourners in tropical lands—gradually fell from the prohibitive guinea an ounce to a shilling, or even less. In 1854 Sir Clements joined the R.G.S., in 1862 he became secretary, and held that position for twenty-five years, receiving the gold medal on his retirement. He became President in 1894.

The R.G.S. possesses a museum of interesting objects, besides a collection of original autograph maps by General Gordon, Livingstone, Grant, Speke, Baker, Littledale, Curzon, and

others. It may well be imagined that these autograph maps are fascinating to contemplate, by reason of the extraordinary circumstances under which they were prepared. Mr. St. George Littledale, for example—virtually alone in the untrodden wilds of Tibet (his only companion being his almost prostrate but plucky wife)—never failed to work at his map-making every night, notwithstanding the piercing cold, which caused his frozen fingers to stick to the brass mountings on his instruments.

But poor Sir John Franklin's Admiralty certificate, which is next reproduced, is perhaps the most interesting thing to be seen at the Society's head-quarters. It was found



SIR CLEMENTS MARKHAM, K.C.B., F.R.S., ETC.
(President of the Royal Geographical Society.)
From a Photo. by The Van Der Weyde Light, Regent Street.

James Fitzgibbon (Captain H.M.S. Erebus and Terror)
 Captain & Surgeon R.N.
 and Staff on Imberton 26th
 for Boats fresh Bunker

H.M.S. Erebus and Terror
 Wintered in the Ice in
 28 of May 1847
 Lat. $70^{\circ} 5' N$ Long. $98^{\circ} 23' W$

Having wintered in 1846 - 7 at Beecher Island
 in Lat $74^{\circ} 43' 28" N$ Long $91^{\circ} 59' 15" W$ after having
 ascended Wellington Channel to Lat 77° and returned
 by the West side of Cornwallis Island.

Commander
 Sir John Franklin commanding the Expedition
 All well

WHOEVER finds this paper is requested to forward it to the Secretary of
 the Admiralty, London, with a note of the time and place at which it was
 found: or, if more convenient, to deliver it for that purpose to the British
 Consul at the nearest Port.

QUINCONQUE trouvera ce papier est prié d'y marquer le tems et lieu ou
 il l'aura trouvé, et de le faire parvenir au plutot au Secretaire de l'Amirauté
 Britannique à Londres.

CUALQUIERA que hallare este Papel, se le suplica de enviarlo al Secretario
 del Almirantazgo, en Londrés, con una nota del tiempo y del lugar en
 donde se halló.

EEN ieder die dit Papier gevonden, wordt hiernede verzogt, om het
 zelve, ten spoedigste, te doen zenden aan den Heer Minister van des
 Marine der Nederlanden, of wel aan den Secretaris der
 Britsche Admiraliteit, in London, en daar by te voegen eene Nota,
 inhoudende de tyd en de plaats alwaar dit Papier is gevonden geworden.

FINDEREN af dette Papiir ombedes, naar Leilighed gives, at sende
 samme til Admiralitets Secretairen i London, eller nærmeste Embedsmand
 i Danmark, Norge, eller Sverrig. Tiden og Stædit hvor dette er fundet
 ønskes venskabeligt paategnet.

WER diesen Zettel findet, wird hierdurch ersucht denselben an den
 Secretair des Admiralitets zu London zu senden, mit gefälliger angabe
 des ortes und zu dem ort, wo er gefunden worden ist.

A party consisting of 2 Officers and 6 men
 left the ships on Monday 24th May 1847
 James Ross
 John Ross

and Luting was deserted on
 21st April. Fitzgibbon N.M.W. of
 103 souls - under the command
 of 8 Officers and 6 men
 in date 6th June 1847
 for the Cape of Good Hope
 in the Cape of Good Hope

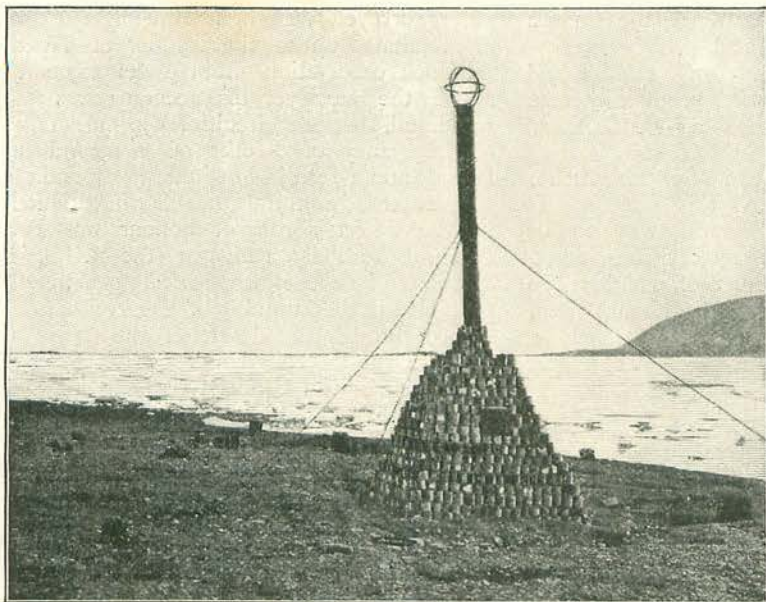
the total loss
 by death in the Expedition has been 63 officers & 85 men
 the total loss
 on the 11 June 1847

James Ross had been deposed
 after James Ross's failure had not
 been forgiven to the position which
 Sir John Franklin died on the 11 June 1847

James Ross had been deposed
 after James Ross's failure had not
 been forgiven to the position which
 Sir John Franklin died on the 11 June 1847

James Ross had been deposed
 after James Ross's failure had not
 been forgiven to the position which
 Sir John Franklin died on the 11 June 1847

RECORD FOUND IN A CAIRN IN THE ARCTIC REGIONS, TELLING THE FATE OF THE FRANKLIN EXPEDITION.



POST-OFFICE CAIRN IN THE POLAR REGIONS, MADE OF EMPTY MEAT-TINS.

among the stones of a big cairn by Sir Leopold M'Clintock's search expedition of 1857. The paper, which is stained with rust spots, was contained in a tin case, and is, in fact, *the* record of the long-lost expedition.

Besides Franklin's own notes—and, by the way, he was a Vice-President of the R.G.S.—much additional information is given round the margin of this historical document: "Sir John Franklin died on the 11th June, 1847; and the total loss by deaths in the expedition has been to this date, nine officers and fifteen men."

In order that it may be fully understood what a cairn is, I reproduce here a singularly interesting one, erected by the Nares Arctic Expedition of 1875-6. This is a "post-office" cairn, established at the winter quarters of the *Discovery* in

collection photographic records of the wonderful sights they behold at the ends of the earth.

The next photo. shown was also taken during the Arctic Expedition of 1875-6. The precipice depicted was near the spot where the *Discovery* took up her quarters for the winter, and the official description



A MOUNTAIN OF PURE COAL.

August, 1876. It is built entirely of empty meat tins. Records are frequently left in these cairns; provisions, too, are buried under them; whilst others are erected for survey purposes.

I imagine the R.G.S. possesses the most interesting collection of photographs in the world. The traveller's Alma Mater is not neglected; her fellows are always in touch with her wheresoever they may be, and they delight in adding to her already unique

beneath the view tells us that "the smooth face of the rock is pure coal."

The very evolution of the Royal Geographical Society was of peculiar interest. I say "evolution" instead of "inception," for the Society grew out of the Raleigh Club, founded in 1826 by Sir Arthur Broke. According to this gentleman's original scheme, the world was to be mapped out into so many divisions, corresponding with the number of members, so that the Society collectively should have visited nearly every part of the known globe.

The dinner given at the first regular meeting was a remarkable function—mainly by reason of the outlandish "wittles." Sir Arthur Broke himself contributed a haunch of reindeer venison from Spitzbergen; a jar of Swedish brandy; rye cakes baked near the North Cape; a Norway cheese; and—by way of dessert—some preserved cloudberrries from Lapland. A ham from Mexico next figured on the festive board, as also did a loaf made from wheat brought by the donor from Heshbon, on the Dead Sea. Food for reflection, truly. The Raleigh Club was the immediate forerunner of the Royal Geographical Society. The original list of members of the latter contained 460 names, and the last original member died in 1896. To-day, the R.G.S. has nearly 4,000 Fellows. The library contains nearly 70,000 volumes and pamphlets, and the map-room, 120,000 sheets of maps (including atlases) and about 12,000 photographs.

The histories of the various expeditions promoted or encouraged by the Society is one long series of marvellous, magnificent records, commencing with Burnes's amazing journey to Bokhara, and Chesney's survey of the Euphrates in the thirties, right down to Nansen's world-famous expedition to the Polar regions. The infinite care and patience exercised by the heroes of the R.G.S. are well exemplified by the eminent Indian surveyor, Capt. T. G. Montgomerie. This

officer surveyed Kashmir and the mighty mass of mountains up to the frontier of Tibet. He took observations from peaks 20,000ft. above the sea, yet his accuracy was so wonderful, that in a circuit of 890 miles only a discrepancy of 8-10ths of a second in latitude and 1-10th in longitude was found.

Another adventurous traveller mentioned in the Society's roll of honour was Dr. Arminius Vambéry, a Magyar (the R.G.S. is catholic in its scope), who in 1865 penetrated to Khiva in the disguise of a Dervish, and thence through the deserts of the Oxus to Bokhara and Samarkand. Livingstone's connection with the Society is well known; his sextant may now be seen in the museum at Savile Row.

The present secretary of the Society, Mr. J. Scott Keltie, is peculiarly well fitted for the position, which calls for an encyclopædic knowledge of men and things and places. Almost the very first thing returned travellers do on arriving in England is to seek Mr. Keltie's office; from which it may be inferred that the secretary's work is more than interesting, apart from its arduous nature.

Let me recall the circumstances of my own visit. The man who has just gone in to Mr. Keltie has been delimiting some unsettled boundary of the Amir's dominions, and he wants to arrange with Mr. Keltie about reading a

paper on the wild places and peoples bordering on Afghanistan. Waiting below is a disappointed traveller, who failed to reach Lhasa, the mysterious sacred city of Tibet; and whilst waiting for an interview with the secretary, he enters into conversation with another occupant of the waiting-room, who, having done some good business for a pearl-fishing company in the Torres Strait, took it into his head that he would like to cross the broadest part of New Guinea, where no white man had ever been before.

Then, perhaps, the two men will pass on the stair Sir Harry Johnston, the scourge of



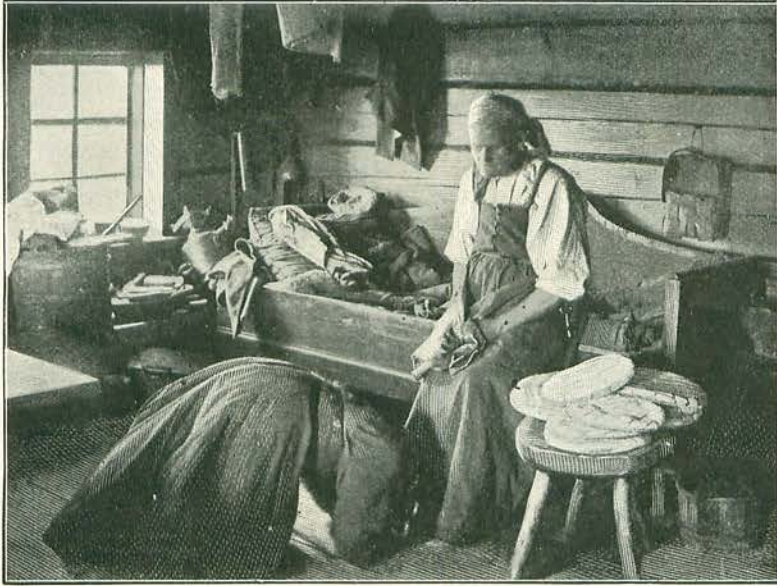
MR. J. SCOTT KELTIE.
(Secretary of the Royal Geographical Society.)
From a Photo. by J. Thomson.

slave traders, yet the daintiest of Central African heroes, who has his table spread in the wilderness with immaculate napery. Sir William Martin Conway will turn up a little later for a chat about Spitzbergen, and may encounter Colonel Trotter, just home from the source of the Niger, or the veteran Sir Erasmus Ommanney, who has come in to talk about Nansen. A wonderfully interesting place, the R.G.S. head-quarters.

Mr. Keltie, on geographical impostors, is more than entertaining. Here is a pen-

some faint idea of the extraordinary sights witnessed by travellers in various parts of the world — strange customs and marvellous natural phenomena.

As to queer customs, the accompanying photograph surely illustrates one of these. It is one of a set presented by the Geographical Society of Finland, and it shows how a newly-married girl has to pay homage to her mother-in-law. One doesn't quite know whose house it is in which the ceremony is taking place; presumably it belongs to the



AN EXTRAORDINARY FINNISH CUSTOM—NEWLY-MARRIED GIRL PAYING HOMAGE TO HER MOTHER-IN-LAW.

picture of a little comedy enacted quite recently in his office. Enter a cultured gentleman from Scandinavia. Knows Nordenskjöld, Andrée, Nansen — thought he would just call and pay his respects, as he was in town. Chats for a long time, and then—"Dear me! What a muddle I'm in about that cheque—been expecting it these three days. Mr. Keltie—ah—I *don't* like asking you; but *could* you, as a favour, lend me" and so on.

This turned out to be the very gentleman who posed as Dr. Nansen's brother in Edinburgh, and to whom a citizen of that classic city was about to give a big dinner. The detectives heard of the gentleman, however, and the gentleman heard that the detectives had heard of *him*, so he didn't wait for the dinner.

The photographs reproduced in this sketch of the Royal Geographical Society give

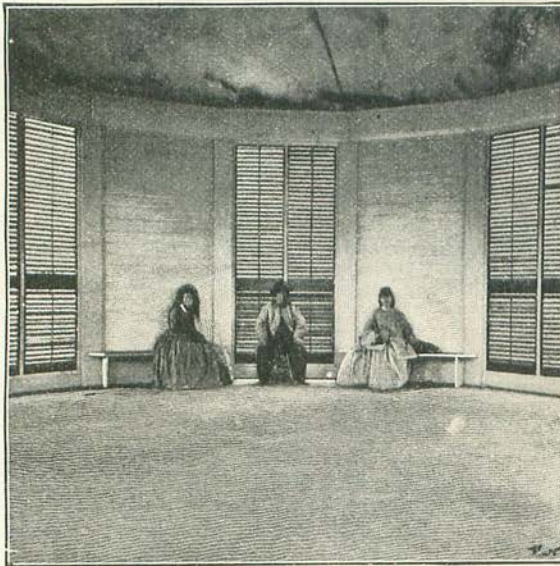
mother-in-law, a lady of unamiable aspect. The litter is deplorable, but probably it is washing-day.

As to the wonders of Nature witnessed by those who look upon the R.G.S. as their head-quarters, what can be more impressive than the giant trees of California? Two unique photos. from the Society's collection are here reproduced, which give a really adequate idea of the vast size of these trees. In the first we are looking through two of the giants at a huge domed building, which has been built on the stump of one of the trees. Of course, this building is dwarfed in the photo. by the enormous trunks in the foreground; but look at the second photo., which shows the interior of the structure. The floor is, of course, the top of the tree-stump, and who shall say that a county ball could not be given in this most extraordinary of rooms?



GIANT TREES OF CALIFORNIA—EXTERIOR OF HOUSE BUILT ON THE STUMP OF THE ORIGINAL BIG TREE.

I may say here that the R.G.S. is not merely the head-quarters of geographical science in Great Britain; it is virtually the head-quarters for the whole world. Its



INTERIOR OF HOUSE BUILT ON STUMP OF GIANT TREE REFERRED TO ABOVE.

awards are eagerly sought after by foreign explorers, and here are a few names from its long roll of heroes: "Baron C. von der Decken—founder's medal—for his two geographical surveys of the lofty mountains of Kilima-njaro. The Pundit Nain Singh—patron's medal—for his great journeys and surveys in Tibet, and along the Upper Brahmaputra, during which he determined the position of Lhasa. Dr. Gustav Nachtigal—founder's medal for his great journey through

the Eastern Sahara, during which he explored the previously unknown regions of Tibesti and Baghirmi." And lastly we have Dr. Nansen.

There is no more interesting department in this great institution than the one presided over by Mr. John Coles, who left the Navy at the close of the Russian War. It is Mr. Coles who coaches intending travellers, and among his more famous pupils may be mentioned Joseph Thomson, Mr. Littledale, and the Right Hon. G. N. Curzon. Practical demonstrations are carried out in the observatory on the roof of the building, and also on Mitcham Common, near Mr. Coles's own residence.

In the great map-room—which is subsidized by Government—Mr. Coles sits nearly all day, at the mercy of people who want to know things. Like his able colleagues, Mr. Coles is a very mine of information. And he has need of his extensive knowledge. The map-room being open to the public, the curator naturally receives some strange visitors. "I get," he said, "both verbally and by letter, a great number of inquiries respecting the climate of various regions. Insurance companies, even, write to say that they



MR. JOHN COLES.
(Curator of the Map-room).

From a Photo. by the London Stereoscopic Company.

are about to issue a policy for some big amount to an intending traveller; what sort of risks will he have to run from fevers, natives, and wild beasts where he is going?"

Men going abroad on service or on sporting trips, gravely consult Mr. Coles as to the details of their outfit; and all this information is readily and gratuitously given. Among the curator's correspondents there must be some very queer folk, judging from the extraordinary letters I have seen. "Would it be possible," wrote one man, earnestly, "to be in one island on a Saturday, and row across to another and find it Sunday?"

The very instruments used by Mr. Coles in his teaching have a romantic history. Take, for example, his theodolite. "Originally it was made for Dr. Mullins, who took it across Madagascar. It was then taken up towards Lake Victoria, in East Africa. After

possibly such instruments are used as ornaments. A theodolite would make an imposing brooch, and a couple of sextants a taking pair of earrings for some savage beauty.

I gladly acknowledge here the courteous assistance rendered me by Mr. Coles in the selection of the remarkable photos. that are reproduced in this article. Consider for a moment the accompanying illustration; it depicts the Akabar, or Great Caravan, which, starting from Morocco once a year, crosses the Sahara, and is bound for the Western Sudan and Timbuktu. The Akabar is usually composed of 10,000 camels, each carrying goods valued at £50. Observe the



THE GREAT CARAVAN CROSSING THE SAHARA—SHOWING HOW THE WOMEN ARE CARRIED.

Dr. Mullins died in Africa, the instrument was brought home. It was then taken by me across the mountains and untrodden paths of Iceland for a thousand miles. Next it was lent (as many R.G.S. instruments are) to a person who took it within the Arctic Circle for magnetic observations, and after that it was again sent out to East Africa for a year's surveying. It was later on returned to me, and has since been constantly used in giving instruction, for it is as perfect now as the day it was bought."

One wonders, by the way, what becomes of scientific instruments taken by savages from explorers they have murdered. Quite

great fan-shaped erections on the camels' backs. It is interesting to note that these contain the women of each household, who are in this way screened from vulgar observation.

In wading through the great boxes of photos. at the Royal Geographical Society, one envies the widely-scattered Fellows of that body, so wonderful are the peoples they meet and the places they visit. It is commonly supposed that all savages lead a lazy life, and have nothing else to think about but "knockin' the stuffin'" out of their peaceable neighbours. The head-hunters of Borneo take to collecting human heads much



KASHMIRI WOOD-CARRIERS—LOAD 240LB.

as our own leisured classes adopt slumming—solely as a light and interesting occupation, entailing much *kudos*. But travellers frequently come across real hard-

working people in savage lands. Look at the two Kashmiri wood-carriers depicted in the accompanying illustration. This photo. was presented to the Society, with others, by Captain H. H. Deasy, who has been recently attempting to reach the sacred city of Lhasa, in Tibet. Captain Deasy met these men near Bandipura, in Kashmir. "I weighed one load," he says, "and it turned the scale at 240lb." No wonder the poor fellows carry a pole to lean upon!

Hard work, we know, falls to the lot of woman among savage races. The next photo. shown was taken by Dr. Holub, an Austrian, in South Central Africa (Barotseland); and it depicts a woman of powerful build hoeing in the gardens. The institution of the *crèche* being unknown in the Barotse country, the big, comical baby accompanies its mother, being fastened securely on to her broad back.

One might, indeed, go on indefinitely reproducing photos. out of the Society's splendid collection—particularly as these show that there is hardly a square mile of the earth's surface that has not been visited by some daring Englishman armed with camera and gun. The next photo. illustrates the extraordinary growth of orchids on a tree.



NATIVE WOMAN AT WORK IN GARDEN—BAROTSE COUNTRY.



SHOWING HOW ORCHIDS GROW ON TREES IN NEW GUINEA.

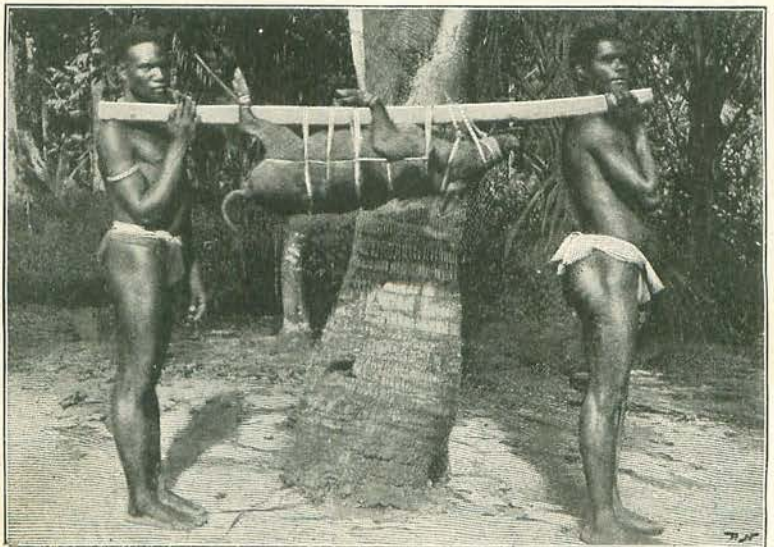
Those glorious exotics, we know, are parasitic plants, but I doubt whether an actual photo. of them *in situ* has ever before been reproduced in a popular magazine. Experienced orchid-hunters are sent out to Central America, New Guinea, and elsewhere, by such firms as Sander and Co., of St. Albans; and the adventures of some of these collectors would fill many volumes with thrilling narratives. So dense is the forest in many cases that, in order to get at the plants, the tree itself has to be felled; this, of course, necessitates a large and expensive retinue.

Vol. xiii.—19

The denseness of tropical forests, by the way, is illustrated in an interesting manner by the accompanying photo. Here we see how the natives of Guadalcanar (one of the Solomon Islands) carry a pig through the forest. They would carry in the same way a prisoner or a wounded man. It is difficult enough to "persuade" a pig along a London street, but it would be absolutely impossible to drive one through the dense undergrowth of a tropical forest. This photo., as well as its immediate predecessor, was presented to the R.G.S. by Mr. C. M. Woodford, who took them in 1886-7 in New Guinea and the Fiji and Solomon Islands.

The Royal Geographical Society instructs travellers in a wonderfully complete manner. That invaluable little book, "Hints to Travellers," issued by the Society, and used by travellers of all nationalities, contains information on outfit, by Mr. Douglas Freshfield, Mr. Whymper, Sir Harry Johnston, and others, and medical and surgical hints by a famous Army surgeon. Some elementary knowledge of medicine and surgery is obviously of vital necessity to explorers. The knowledge of the healing art possessed by "doctors" in savage lands may be peculiar, but it is rarely extensive. I reproduce here a portrait of the "koodoo," or medicine man, of a tribe in Siberia. According to our ideas he is not the kind of practitioner that compels one's faith and respect; but he is far from being the most forbidding medicine man ever encountered by travellers.

Besides Mr. Coles's lessons in observing



METHOD OF CARRYING A PIG THROUGH THE FOREST IN THE SOLOMON ISLANDS.



"KOODOO," OR MEDICINE MAN, OF TRIBE IN SIBERIA.

and surveying, there are other lessons given under the Society's auspices in photography, meteorology and climate, geology, botany, natural history, and anthropology. Lastly, the explorer is carefully instructed as to the taking of "squeezes." I hasten to explain. What is meant is wet paper "squeezes" of monuments, inscriptions, and similar things which cannot be bodily removed.

Dr. Hugh R. Mill, who presides at the R.G.S. over the finest geographical library in the world, is himself a scientist of distinction. Like Mr. Coles, the librarian also receives extraordinary letters from remote parts of the world. The "flat-earth man" (and there is a number of him) still afflicts the genial doctor, who, however, takes no notice whatever of his despairing argument, "Is the eye a perfect instrument?"

Before me as I write is a specimen of the amazing letters that sometimes figure in Dr. Mill's correspondence. It is written from Dallas, Texas:—

MY DEAR SIR,—I beg to take the liberty of asking you to kindly decide a controversy on the following question, which at present agitates the mind of two of my friends. It is:—

IS ENGLAND IN EUROPE?

Kindly answer either in affirmative or negative, and greatly oblige,
Yours very truly,



DR. HUGH R. MILL,
(Librarian, Royal Geographical Society.)
From a Photo. by Mauld & Fox.

Dr. Mill's reply to this "poser" was a masterpiece of cautious diplomacy. Asked why, he said he suspected it was a bet. Formerly he used to take great pains in answering such letters; but one day he got a note thanking him most effusively for his reply, and stating, incidentally, that the writer had won a large sum of money.

"Do salmon go up Niagara?" was another question sent thousands of miles to the R.G.S.; and "Is there a town in any part of the world called 'Trilby'?" was another.

This latter, Dr. Mill tells me, was a trade-mark case—something connected with stockings; and no geographical name can be registered as a trade mark. Almost needless to say, there now *is* a town called "Trilby," and—equally of course—that town is in one of the Western States of America. Some of the earlier geographical works under Dr. Mill's care contain pictures of impossible human beings, strange and fearsome animals, and maps of utterly non-existent islands and continents. Written as valuable contributions to science, these books are extremely interesting, not to say funny; but there are also in this marvelously complete library examples of far more modern mendacity.

A certain gentleman—for reasons best known to himself—elected to pose as a great explorer, so he published a work on his supposed travels in New Guinea. The book was written diary-fashion, and it contained an abundance of detail—very startling detail, too. A wonderful fellow, the writer! He described tigers in this island where no one else ever saw a tiger; spoke of winged animals; and he had discovered a mountain 32,000 ft. high. He called it, appropriately, "Mount Hercules," and a picture of it forms the frontispiece of the book.

The newspaper reviews were great—simply great; and the "explorer"—who possibly had never been out of London—thought his fame had come to stay. But that mountain fell upon him, so to speak. You see, he was foolish enough, in his passion for detail, to give the latitude and longitude of Mount Hercules.

The late secretary of the R.G.S. (Mr. Bates) one day set himself to work out the exact position of this stu-

pendous mountain, which was, at length, triumphantly proved to be located 600 miles out at sea!

As might be expected, the Society's great collection of photographs contains many interesting ones bearing upon the religions of various native races. Whilst looking over these I came upon the accompanying curiosity. This strange object is a figure of Christ, which was made by the Indians for a chapel at Azara, in Paraguay. The traditional likeness is curiously suggested; notice, too, the long robe, the girdle, and the crown of thorns. This latter is a little anachronistic, for Christ is here supposed to be delivering the Sermon on the Mount. The head is of wood rudely but effectively carved, and painted with brilliant pigments.

It is a truism to remark that no instinct is more common to the human race than the worship of — *something*; even one's own ancestors. But perhaps the most extraordinary form of worship on record is that indicated in the last photo. reproduced here.



FIGURE OF CHRIST MADE BY INDIANS IN PARAGUAY.



BEARS' SKULLS SET UP FOR WORSHIP IN YEZO ISLAND.

This shows a number of bears' skulls set up for worship by the Ainu in the Island of Yezo. The photo. is one of a number taken by M. J. Revilliod and Professor Milne, the famous seismologist.

One parting word about the Royal Geographical Society. Its sphere of influence is the whole of this planet—of which, by the way, a goodly portion yet remains unexplored by civilized man. The secret of the North Pole having been almost definitely laid bare by the heroic Nansen, the R.G.S. fixes its corporate eye on the Antarctic Regions. A large part of South America is still *terra incognita*; and Central Asia, Africa, and Australia contain, even at this day, ample scope for the labours of the Society's most daring pupils. The R.G.S. has accomplished much, but the end is not yet. The Society grows in power and knowledge; it is in communication with every other Geographical Society in the world, even to the one organized at Irkutsk by the political exiles of Siberia.