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Alexander Low Bruce

Henry M. Stanley ^a & J. G. Bartholomew ^b

^a Richmond Terrace, Whitehall, London

^b Hon. Secy., R.S.G.S. ,

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interesting; the work of a genius is everywhere apparent. In many places the canal is not broader than 25 mètres (82 feet), so that, when steamers of 7000 tons pass through, the water visibly rises up the banks.

The homeward voyage through the Mediterranean, past the Ionian Islands and the coasts of Greece, is a relief after the discomforts of the Red Sea and Suez Canal. On passing the island of Crete we hailed with peculiar satisfaction the high mountain Ida, famous in the legends of ancient Greece, and the blissful feeling that we were approaching our native soil, furnished with material for the study of new scientific problems, had a soothing effect on our minds after such a long and fatiguing voyage. But all the impressions received on the Hawaiian islands, that Paradise of the Pacific, will ever remain with undimmed lustre in our recollection. I hope my readers may not regret having been carried in imagination to a country which has been favoured in the highest degree by nature, which has played an important part in the history of geographical discoveries, and which now may claim also a by no means unimportant place in the history of geodetical investigation.

ALEXANDER LOW BRUCE.

ONLY a few days ago, many like myself boasted that in Alexander Bruce we possessed "the best friend in the world," and yet on Thursday last some hundreds of his friends from London, Manchester, Glasgow, Edinburgh, and other parts mustered around his grave, and saw his remains consigned to the ground in Morningside Cemetery. The members of the Royal Scottish Geographical Society need not to be informed that by this lamented death the country has been deprived of the services of a strong man, and of one who, for his healthful moral influence, deserved to be called a great man. They will feel, that had he lived a few years longer, few public men would have excelled him in public love and esteem. But, unfortunately, before the people at large could know what a rare and charming personality was amongst them, and have the opportunity to pay their homage to his worth, he has been suddenly snatched away, leaving those who had come in contact with him sincerely grieving. As we saw no cause for anxiety on his account, we flattered ourselves that, wide and noble as had been his influence of late years, the future would only exhibit it in a magnified sphere, and always wholesomely useful. For, to our minds, he appeared wonderfully free from all symptoms of approaching elderliness or declining vitality. His industry continued to be amazing, his energy in business unabated, his appetite for work uncloyed; he was a picture of health and of vigorous and enduring manhood. We were, therefore, rejoicing that such a man as our friend lived, and that the world was more and more sharing our esteem for him, when we were startled by the news of his serious illness, from an attack of influenza and pneumonia, to which three days later he succumbed.

This painful event, as is natural, considering his exceeding lovable-

ness, is mourned as a great misfortune in many cities and lands. From Caledonia to many remote parts of Central Africa the telegraph has flashed the sad news with its usual brevity, and many men will doubt that they understand it aright. They will ask, "Can it be our Mr. Bruce, who appeared so blooming and youthful-looking, that is dead?"

We at home can best appreciate what this loss means when we look around the various circles where his familiar figure was always welcome, and where he was known as so eminent for sound judgment, attention to affairs, and earnestness of purpose. Where can we now find a person so capable and so devoted to the cause of unifying, strengthening, and expanding the empire as he was? I know of none living so richly endowed with those gifts of head and heart which made him so powerful for influencing others. He was at once so good-natured, cheerful, high-principled, zealous, persuasive, forbearing, self-sacrificing, and tirelessly industrious. There are many in whom a few of these qualities are conspicuous, but those who unite them all are most rare, and therefore the world can ill afford to lose so valuable a factor in its interests.

The several commercial businesses which Mr. Bruce upheld and animated will miss him also greatly. The various societies of which he was an honoured fellow, and for whose benefit he was never sparing of his services, will most keenly feel his absence. Religious missions in Africa have lost in him a strong advocate and strenuous supporter. Exploring and trading companies are deprived of a helpful and hopeful element, where his level-headedness and strong controlling spirit were felt to be essential for the success of their enterprises; and social life, which he used to kindle with his honest and genial presence, warm by his glance, and flavour with his conversation, is bereft of one of its most kindly characters. It would be superfluous to add that to his family, to whom he was unvaryingly affectionate and protective, and all that a Christian husband and father should be, his removal will have caused a void which can never be filled again.

That which was one great charm of Mr. Bruce was an endowment of nature. He was blessed with such an unceasing flow of geniality, that he could not help comforting and befriending wherever he went. His company was a tonic against depression, and dispelled gloom. He stimulated the faint-hearted and roused the lukewarm. Being without a trace of narrowness and self-interest, he was able to warm others into taking a more generous aspect of personal or public affairs. His native humour, assisted by a pair of speaking eyes, ever sparkling brightly and radiating hope, penetrated the frigid reserve and thawed the temper of those who, a few minutes before, were hugging their discontent and exaggerating dismal trifles. He appeared so insensible to despondency in his own person, that the face darkening from low spirits quickly brightened at the comic, humorous glance, which seemed to ask, "Well, what has come over you that you look so grieved?" The manner was irresistible, and, encouraged by the sympathy which was always ready and sincere, the questioned would unfold his tale of private misery, to be lightened and consoled. If such a cheerful spirit was a physic to dolefulness, it was no less useful in strengthening the sense of happiness. In its effects

it was as sunshine. Distress was solaced, despondency was comforted, and the measure of content became overflowing.

Though I had known Mr. Bruce for nearly twenty years, I obtained a profounder knowledge of his character while staying with him and his family last year at Dunnolly Castle, which he had rented for the season. At his hospitable house, No. 10 Regent Terrace, I had often lodged and feasted, remarking meanwhile his cordial reception of his guests and generous manner of entertainment; but at Dunnolly, relieved as I was from the flurry of former visits, I became a witness of the domestic felicity and the beautiful customs of his household. I then understood whence sprang much of that perennial cheerfulness, and the inspiration of the countless good deeds for which he was distinguished. Each day was regularly ushered in by prayer for grace, and closed by heartfelt thankfulness. The efficacy of this custom cannot be questioned, for with him every working hour showed his rectitude and uncorrupted heart. In his conversation and dealings with all sorts of persons, as well as by every act, he proved his motives to be pure and his principles upright.

Those who have been favoured with his intimacy were no doubt struck by this or that prominent and distinguishing quality, but I think we shall all agree that he was insatiable for work. Perhaps some will go so far as to say that the absorbing zeal, variety, and quantity of the duties he voluntarily undertook, eventually proved harmful to his health. This may be doubted, for up to the day of his illness his physique bore no signs of overstrain. His death was due to an accidental exposure to a cruel blast, which during the ill-condition of the atmosphere this season has proved so pernicious in several parts of Great Britain. It may be that he postponed too long taking a holiday in sunnier regions for rest and relaxation, but he was not a man to fly away until compelled by necessity. A week previous to his death he was as well and hearty, seemingly, as could be wished, and one would need to be a prophet to foretell danger for one of his vitality. Therefore, to within six days of that fatal Monday, the 27th of November, he continued to be engrossed in various subjects, labouring strenuously and devotedly for the promotion of human well-being, politically, commercially, socially, by religion and civilisation.

However numerous his public or business engagements had become through increase of popularity, he never neglected what was due to private friendship. His letters appeared at regular intervals, excellently written in free, bold characters, cogently and lucidly expressed, each line stamped with his energising individuality, and revealing his sound common-sense and acute mind.

He was so well adapted by his talents to aspire to a commanding public position, that many marvelled why a man of his intellect and judgment, and at his mature age, had not been brought forward to represent some influential constituency in Parliament; but the truth is that, in spite of undoubted fitness and repeated solicitations, he was so retiring and modest that he preferred to assist in the elevation of others rather than to be forward in his own behalf.

When he became son-in-law to David Livingstone, it may have stimu-

lated him to be worthier of the connection with the Apostle of Africa, and to equip himself fully for the career just closed; but the lady who became his wife must have discerned those noble qualities which to-day—in Canada, the United States, the Cape, Central and East Africa, no less than in several parts of these British Islands—are linked inseparably with his name.

I must leave to other pens the writing of the formal obituary which should find a place in the *Magazine* of the Geographical Society which he was instrumental in establishing. I have but availed myself of your kind permission to record my personal knowledge of a dear and valued friend, who was as remarkable for the fidelity of his friendship as he was unsurpassed for activity in business, good judgment, modesty of manner, and kindness of heart.

HENRY M. STANLEY.

RICHMOND TERRACE, WHITEHALL,
LONDON, Dec. 5, 1893.

"In every work that he began . . . he did it with all his heart, and prospered."

—2 CHRON. XXXI. 21.

THE Scottish Geographical Society has great cause to honour the memory of Mr. A. L. Bruce. It is indebted to him for inestimable work as one of its founders, for constant support as one of its most active office-bearers, and for the energetic development of one of its greatest objects as the indefatigable promoter of exploration and civilisation in Africa.

In the preceding personal sketch, Mr. Stanley gives us such a telling picture of the kindly and enthusiastic worker, that to make it complete, I need only supply some facts more directly relating to his connection with this Society.

Mr. Bruce was born in Edinburgh in 1839, and educated at the High School. After some years of training in an office in Leith, he, in 1858, entered the brewery of Messrs. William Younger and Co., in Edinburgh, but was soon promoted to their London office.

In London he spent the next fifteen years of his life. Marrying his first wife in 1864, he subsequently became manager of the London office, where he was respected as an able man of business associated with many good works. Returning to Edinburgh in 1874, he became a partner in the brewery, and by his energy and enterprise greatly contributed to the development of this and other large commercial undertakings with which he was associated.

As a churchman and a politician, Mr. Bruce was a most zealous worker. He was one of the chief supporters of his church, and in politics a recognised leader of the Liberal Unionist party in Scotland. As an advocate of the "Cape to Cairo" programme in Africa, he was a strong Imperialist, and had great belief in the extension of British power. His association with the "British East Africa," the "African Lakes," and the "British South Africa" Chartered Companies is well known. To these companies he gave his money and time freely, with no motive of gain, but for the honour of his country and the advancement of civilisation.

His special interest in Africa may be said to date from his friendship with Dr. Moffat, which ultimately led to his meeting, and subsequent marriage with, Miss Livingstone in 1875. Thenceforward all his wife's enthusiasm in her father's work became his also, and under the inspiration of Livingstone he seemed to give his heart and soul to the cause of Africa. Everything that contributed to realise his aims in this direction secured his ready support, and no doubt it was this object that prompted him to lend his energies towards the establishment of a Geographical Society for Scotland. As soon as the project was mentioned to him, he took to it with such eagerness that immediate action towards its realisation was determined upon. To Mr. Bruce's public spirit and enthusiasm all seemed possible. Where others brought forward only difficulties and objections, he was encouraging and sanguine; not because he did not see the difficulties, but because his keen insight saw success beyond, and he set to work with such determination that success seemed a foregone conclusion. We commenced work at the end of July 1884, and by the end of October, the Society, with 400 members, was formally constituted at a meeting in the Edinburgh Chamber of Commerce. Then Mr. Bruce persuaded Mr. Stanley to give the opening address, and our success was assured. At this time Mr. and Mrs. Bruce gave the greater part of their time and thought to the promotion of the Society; members were secured, money was raised, lecturers were engaged, and the general organisation was set in motion. To such vigorous work at the early stages of the Society's existence its after-success and strength are largely due; and, indeed, it may be said that but for Mr. Bruce we should not have had our Scottish Geographical Society of to-day. As its treasurer, Mr. Bruce made sure that all was on a sound financial basis, and it was often with difficulty that he was persuaded to agree to even necessary annual expenditure unless he also had a good sum to add to his reserve fund.

The loss of such an ardent worker and leading spirit is a direct calamity, not only to the Society, but to all his colleagues individually. They will long feel the want of that energy and good counsel which pulled the Society through many difficulties, while his hearty and sanguine nature was a source of stimulus and encouragement endearing him to many friends.

J. G. BARTHOLOMEW,
Hon. Secy., R.S.G.S.

OBITUARY: 1893.

By J. W. McCRINDLE, M.A., M.R.A.S.

ALEXANDER LOW BRUCE.—Towards the end of the year that has just closed our Society sustained a most grievous loss by the unexpected death of its Treasurer, Mr. A. L. Bruce, who had taken a leading part in founding it, and afterwards spared no exertions in endeavouring to secure its success. In another part of this number of the *Magazine* will be found a record of his noble life, and a copy of the resolution adopted